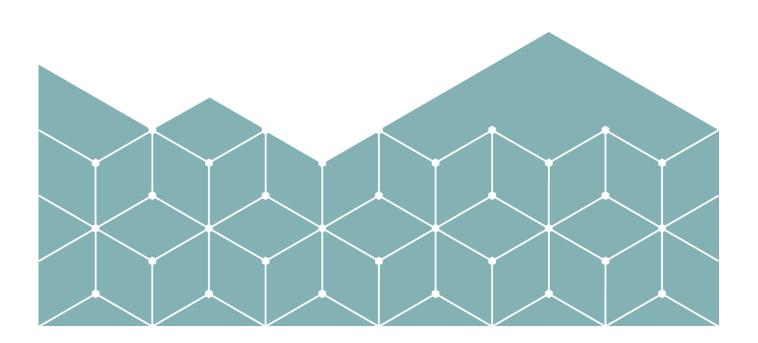# MASTEROPPGAVE

Promoting Intercultural Competence through J.J.R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*

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Abstract

Promoting intercultural competence is crucial in today's globalised world; therefore there is also a focus on the concept of culture in the curriculum. Culture inevitably involves the notion of stereotypes and the aim with this study is to explore if there is any basis for the claim that Tolkien's trilogy *The Lord of the Rings* is permeated by stereotypes of race and gender and furthermore, how the findings can be adapted to an educational setting in order to function as an eye opener regarding stereotypes in general. The findings indicate stereotypical depictions of both race and gender in the trilogy, something that is deeply problematic in today's context.

Racism works on two different levels throughout the trilogy. On the one hand there is explicit racism reflected in the stereotypical depiction of good and evil conveying traditional racist clichés of colonial Britain. On the other hand, there is implicit racism in the dividing of people into "better and lesser folks". The notion of blood is fundamental: better folks have purer blood and mixing of races always means degeneration. This implicit racism suggests a hierarchical world-view, placing the white man at the top and has striking similarities to the ideologies of Nazi-Germany.

Regarding gender, female characters are utterly stereotypically depicted and Middle-earth is a world of traditional gender-roles resembling the patriarchal views of Victorian and early twentieth century Britain. Males act and females react. The only exception is Éowyn, a potential rebel, but in the end she learns her place and conforms to the role as a wife and supposed child-producer. Order is thus restored.

What Tolkien is actually conveying is that in the perfect world men are superior to women and the white race is superior to lesser folks like the orcs who are black, ugly and brutal creatures. The stereotypical depiction of the orcs, resembling a classical racial cliché of tribal Africans, reinforces the suggestions that black is inferior to white.

In order to strengthen the capability to understand and empathise with the values and conditions of people from different cultures a teaching plan is suggested. From the reading project, students will hopefully develop a critical approach to culturally inherited stereotypes, not only in literature, but everywhere in their everyday life. Moreover, it is hoped that they will become aware of the negative consequences of stereotypes regarding race and gender in their own culture – an awareness that is much needed in an egalitarian multicultural society where tolerance and understanding are keywords.

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1. Introduction

This master thesis explores the stereotypes of race and gender as well as the notion of racism, both implicit and explicit, which arguably permeate J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*. Furthermore, the study suggests how the findings of the cultural analysis can be applied to intercultural learning in school. The overall goal is to suggest ways for students to develop their own critical approach concerning culturally inherited stereotypes, that is, to be able to read texts through the tinted lenses of stereotyping. Stereotypes slowly but surely influence people and might lead to prejudice and discrimination. To be aware of the negative aspects of stereotyping is important in order to explore and place one's own culture under the magnifying glass, as well as developing cross-cultural awareness and mutual understanding. What will emerge from the analysis is a suggested teaching plan intended for English 5, that is, year 1, in upper secondary school in Sweden.

The Tolkien Society (Gunner, 2014) claims that "*The Lord of the Rings* is one of the world's most popular books" and according to hubpages.com's list of the ten most read books in the world, *The Lord of the Rings* ranks number four. Number three is the Harry Potter books whereas number one is the Bible. Peter Jackson's film adaptation of *The Lord of the Rings* is considered to be one of the biggest film projects ever and viewed by millions it was a financial success. The films were praised by critics and greatly awarded; the trilogy was nominated for 30 Oscars and claimed 17. Hence, I would argue that the fact that most students know these works and also like them, will make the trilogy highly suited for use in the English classroom.

However, even if both books and films are praised by critics, one is justified in asking what kind of story is presented and what Tolkien is actually saying. These questions will be discussed and it will be argued that the world presented in the books is to a great extent racist and furthermore, that the portrayal of gender roles border on sexist. Others have observed this problematic perspective of the trilogy; Chris Henning (2001) claims that:

> [t]he appeal of the Lord of the Rings is fundamentally racist. Middle Earth is inhabited by races of creatures deeply marked off from one another by language, physical appearance, and behaviour. It is almost a parody of a Hitlerian vision: orcs are ugly, disgusting, brutal, violent – without exception; elves are a beautiful, lordly, cultured elite; in between are hobbits, short, hairy, ordinary, a bit limited, but lovable and loyal and brave when they have to be. (freerepublic.com)

Furthermore Henning opines that *The Lord of the Rings* "sets the racist mental framework in an appealing and unchallenging way" (ibid.). These statements are intriguing and this master

thesis will analyse at which levels racism works throughout the trilogy. I suggest that it is a story about cross-racial friendship, while at the same time it is a story coloured by racism and the belief that race determines behaviour.

The Lord of the Rings has been the subject of numerous interpretations. One is that it is an allegory of World War II, an interpretation repeatedly rejected by the author himself. Another theory is that the trilogy is a Christian allegory. However, Tolkien incessantly declared that the story does not have an inner meaning or any kind of hidden message. He also insisted that the Ring is not a symbol for the atom bomb and the War of the Ring is not World War II and that Christ is not portrayed in his novels. In an interview first broadcast in January 1971 on BBC Radio 4, Tolkien was asked if the books were to" be considered as an allegory." His answer was: "No, I dislike allegory whenever I smell it" (*Way of Life Literature,* 2015). Tolkien repetitively insisted that an allegorical interpretation was not possible, claiming that his story was a fairy-tale whose purpose was "to amuse, to delight and to evoke emotion" (Mote, 1997:393). Regarding the accusation of racism, Richard Crawshaw, a trustee of the Tolkien Society, said that "there was definitely no racial intention in his work. He [Tolkien] detested racism" (Crawshaw, as quoted in Bhatia, 2003).

Nevertheless, in this master thesis it will be argued that the whole story is based upon a concept of utopia permeated by racism; if evil can be kept in check, or even exterminated, a new and perfect society can be built. Tolkien's world is a strictly hierarchical one with hobbits, elves and men at the top and orcs at the very bottom. There is an extreme polarisation between white and black representing good and evil respectively. Steven Shapiro sums up: "Put simply Tolkien's good guys are white and the bad guys are black, slant-eyed, unattractive, inarticulate and a psychologically undeveloped horde" (Shapiro, as quoted in Bhatia, 2003). While Tolkien describes the heroes as white and ethnically pure, their enemies, the orcs, are a dark-skinned mass, very much like a stereotypical depiction of tribal Africans, thus a classic race cliché. I would argue that this stereotypical depiction of race can be traced to the views of European imperialists back in the late 1800s, who considered foreign races as primitive, inferior and often subhuman. Hence, it was the "white man's burden", to use Kipling's phrase, to spread the light of civilisation to the "wild and savage" people. After the civilising or perhaps extermination of inferior races, the utopian, ethnically pure society would be built. In *The Lord of the Rings*, the world presented after the malicious Sauron's overthrow has striking similarities to imperialist visions. In this new world, the "Fourth Age", there is no place for the orcs, the savage, primitive and evil people.

The Lord of the Rings was published in 1954-55 in three parts: *The Fellowship of the Ring, The Two Towers* and finally *The Return of the King*. Even though the books became popular,

it was not until the mid-1960s that American paperback editions of the trilogy reached numerous readers. At this time the books gained nothing short of cult status and became favourite in the anti-war counter culture and by "1968 The Lord of the Rings had almost became the Bible of the 'Alternative Society'" (Doughnan, 2016).

J.R.R Tolkien lived between 1892 and 1973. According to *Contemporary Popular Writer,* Tolkien is considered "the father of modern fantasy" (Mote, 1996:393). He was a professor of Anglo-Saxon (Old English) at Oxford as well as professor of English language and medieval literature. His interest in medieval literature, Celtic, Nordic and English folklore is expressed in the imaginary world of Middle-earth in *The Lord of the Rings*. Most of the inhabitants are derived from English folklore and mythology, or a kind of idealised Anglo-Saxon past. As pointed out in *Contemporary Popular Writers*:

> Tolkien's work with ancient northern language and poems such as "Beowulf" greatly influenced his stories, which contain many mythical icons such as dwarves and wizards. Primarily a philologist, Tolkien claimed that his work was "fundamentally linguistic in inspiration" and delighted in inventing new languages for the nonhuman race of his tales, and in drawing names from the northern texts he researched all his life. (ibid.:393)

The fact that Tolkien uses protagonists derived from an idealised Anglo-Saxon past has an influence on the way he describes gender roles as well as female characters. Regarding his description of women, in her essay Helen Conrad-O'Briain points out that "Tolkien has been accused of being perfunctory in his treatment of female characters and excused as being merely a man of his times" (www.bookrags.com). Yes of course, Tolkien is a man of his era and viewed through today's politically correct lens of gender equality he is both archaic and borderline misogynistic in his depiction of gender roles.

In *The Lord of the Rings*, which is primarily a story about men, women are generally very stereotypically depicted. They are seen as "maidens" who must adhere to male protection. This view is hardly unexpected from an author born in the reign of Queen Victoria and who spent most of his life in the men's club atmosphere of Oxford colleges. Britain in the beginning of the twentieth century was, to a great extent, a patriarchal society. Women, whose main task was to produce children, were considered subordinate to men and did not gain the full vote until 1928. As far as Oxford is concerned it was not until 2008 that women were admitted to all colleges.

1.1 Aim and research questions

The aim of this master thesis is to explore both implicit and explicit stereotypes of race and gender in the trilogy. Furthermore, in order to connect the thesis to an intercultural and educational perspective I intend to find out how the results of the analysis can be adapted to intercultural learning in the English classroom and propose a teaching plan. In more specific terms, the study seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. Is there any basis for the claim that *The Lord of the Rings* is permeated by stereotypes of race and gender?
2. If so, how is the stereotyping of race and gender expressed in the trilogy?
3. How can the findings be used to visualise the notion of stereotypes in order to promote intercultural competence?

1.2 Outline of the study

Chapter 2 constitutes a theoretical framework starting with a presentation of fantasy literature in general before moving on to deal with British imperialism and its views on other cultures serving as a historical background. It will be succeeded by a section dealing with women's situation, focusing on the Victorian Age and early twentieth century. Chapter 2 also deals with the notions of stereotypes regarding race and gender acting as a background to the suggested teaching plan. The chapter ends with a discussion about intercultural learning and intercultural competence. In Chapter 3 my research material and methodology will be described.

My background theories serve as a foundation for Chapter 4 where my findings will be presented and analysed. I will explore racial as well as gender stereotypes in *The Lord of the Rings*. The results lead to Chapter 5 where a teaching plan in order to promote intercultural competence is suggested. In the concluding chapter there will be a summary of the findings, a final discussion and suggestions on further research.

2. Theoretical framework

Historical background is important for a full understanding of the stereotypes in *The Lord of the Rings* and the purpose of this chapter is to show how the stereotypical depiction of race and gender has clear similarities to the contemporary views in colonial Britain. The chapter consists of five sections, each section dealing with one aspect of background information that is helpful in the reading of the trilogy and to link the findings to intercultural learning at

school. Section 2.2 is titled "Fantasy" and deals with fantasy literature in general and explores its basic features. It will be succeeded by a section titled "Views on other cultures in colonial Britain" which explores the concept of colonialism as a source of racism. Section 2.3 is titled "Women's situation in the Victorian Age and early twentieth century" and deals with the patriarchal views that permeated British society at that time. The following section explores the definitions of stereotypes regarding race and gender. The chapter ends with a section called "Intercultural learning and intercultural competence".

2.1 Fantasy literature

The Lord of the Rings is, according to *The Encyclopedia of Fantasy,* considered "the most influential fantasy novel ever written" (Clute, 1997:951). It was the first fantasy novel that became a huge success and it is not an exaggeration to claim that Tolkien set the standard for the whole genre of fantasy literature. The term "fantasy" refers to a "type of fiction featuring imaginary worlds and magical or supernatural events" (Encarta, 1999). This imaginary world, often called the "secondary world, is thus a contrast to our own ordinary world. The secondary, extraordinary world is a world populated by fantastic creatures and magical elements. Consequently, fantasy can be considered a "contrast to realism" (Clute, 1997:338). When set in this world "it tells a story which is impossible in the world as we perceive it; when set in an otherworld, that otherworld will be impossible, though stories set there may be possible in its terms" (ibid.).

Apart from fantastic ingredients, paradoxically enough, there also exists a kind of ordinary, down-to-earth life. Often the secondary world is a combination of the ordinary and the extraordinary. In the fantasy genre, it is common that life is based on an old-fashioned, feudal system with a king or his substitute at the top resembling an Anglo-Saxon past. On the whole, the protagonists' way of living seems to be static, and a common feature in fantasy literature is conservatism. In her essay *Robots and Romance*, Sara Lefanu points out:

> It is a literature through which there runs a strong element of conservatism, a nostalgia for a 'natural' order, in which distinctions of gender, class and function are pre-ordained and rigidly adhered to. Any expression of sexuality is trammelled into traditional sex-roles: males act and women react. (1988:123)

The conservatism described by Lefanu has been the norm in fantasy literature for a long time. Regarding the notion of class, as mentioned, there are similarities between the fantasy society and the feudal society with a king at the top. When it comes to the "natural order" regarding

gender roles, it means traditional roles where women are passive and their main task is that of being housewives and mothers. In *The Lord of the Rings* the female characters are very few and stereotypically depicted, always astonishingly beautiful and maiden-like staying at home while the men perform heroic deeds far away.

2.2 Views on other cultures in colonial Britain

At the turn of the last century the British Empire still controlled one quarter of the world's land surface. In order to expand and gain such enormous land areas, the British stipulated boundaries by conquest, or in some cases, partition treaties. British history during this time is, to a great extent, a history about colonialism as well as imperialism. According to *The Cambridge Illustrated History of the British Empire,* "huge movements of people took place within the empire, determining the ethnic composition of many countries" (Marshall, 1996:7). In other words, the British Empire was responsible for the fact that the indigenous people of the colonies were displaced and that the British ideas and beliefs were spread throughout the world.

Colonialism had enormous consequences for the colonised people. The indigenous people were generally seen as underdeveloped and backward and due to the fact that the British saw them through the eyes of their own culture, they came to see themselves as superior. This created an idea of "us" and "them" justifying the coloniser to become a conqueror and construct the country as he would like it to be. Consequently, Western ideas were considered superior to those of the "others". The spread of Western civilisation not only changed the colonised, but also the land in which they lived where resources were used in new ways. At the same time, while throughout their Empire the British changed other people's way of living, the Empire changed the British as well. For most British people, the possession of an empire has been an important part of their identity: "It shaped British people's view of their national identity as a people of a world-wide empire" (ibid.:10).

During the time of colonisation the "majority of Europeans belittled the intelligence of Africans, dismissed many aspects of their culture as primitive, and treated them as an inferior race" (ibid.:354). For nearly all imperialists, to be British was synonymous with being white. The non-white citizens of the Empire were its subjects but they were not regarded as full citizens and racial stereotyping helped the white man to believe in his own superiority. This included a belief in a hierarchy with the British at the top and the people of the colonies in various degrees on inferiority below. This view helped Britain justify its claim for power: "More than any 'civilizing mission', ideas of natural racial superiority, of an undeniable, scientifically established racial hierarchy, provided a seemingly irrefutable defence of

Britain's imperial position" (ibid.:221). At the end of the nineteenth century discrimination was common or institutionalised in various degrees throughout the Empire, e.g. in South Africa. It was not until 1991 that the apartheid system was officially abolished, however it could be argued that remnants of apartheid still exist in various degrees.

The concept of colonisation has, to a great extent, been a subject of pride in Britain. This pride is a territorial British Empire dating at least "from the mid-eighteenth century and it continued until well after the Second World War" (ibid.:13). Many prominent citizens supported colonialism, among them Rudyard Kipling, who nurtured opinions of imperial patriotism. He did much in shaping the attitudes of a conservative British public towards the Empire before World War I. In his poem "The White Man's Burden" from 1899, he describes the inhabitants of the colonies as "fluttered folk and wild […] half devil and half child" (Eliot, 1963:136). Similarly, the Poet Laureate, Lord Alfred Tennyson, who was considered to be "a wise man whose occasional pronouncements on politics or world affairs represented the national voice itself" nurtured racial views (Abrams, 1996:1878). "Niggers are tigers, niggers are tigers" (Marshall, 1996:221) was the rhythmic refrain he delivered in 1865 as an answer to the basic cause of the troubles in Jamaica. Furthermore, for the imperial statesman and novelist John Buchan, the British Empire should be a

> closer organic connection under one crown of a number of autonomous nations of the same blood, who can spare something of their vitality for the administration of vast tracts inhabited by lower races – a racial aristocracy considered in their relation to subject peoples, a democracy in their relation to each other. (ibid.:60)

Hence, the imperialist view permeated many levels of British society and many public schools were very much committed to this view. Public school headmasters, like J.E. Wellden of Harrow, stated in 1899 that his pupils were "destined to be citizens of the greatest empire under heaven" and furthermore, that they must be inspired with "faith in the divinely ordered mission of their country and their race" (ibid.:63). In other words, the students were told that they were chosen by God to spread the civilisation of the white man to the indigenous people in the colonies. Similarly, in state schools "attempts were made to include what was regarded as 'sound' imperial material in the curriculum" (ibid.:62).

Many people were and might still today be proud of their colonial past. The rhetoric of the Empire was so embedded in thought and language that it is still used in order to describe any "other" culture. This is called neo-colonialism and refers to the "unequal economic and power relations that currently exist between former colonies and former colonizing nations"

(boundless.com). Neo-colonialism as well as colonialism has, of course, been the subject of massive critique, a critique considering colonialism as a source of racism as well as an obstacle to the development of a truly multicultural society. It has been argued that the very concept of colonialism is morally wrong due to the fact that it always involves the domination of one group by another.

Given the fact that Tolkien grew up when imperial views pervaded British society, it may not be surprising that his texts are heavily influenced by them. Thus, as will be shown, the stereotypes of races depicted in *The Lord of the Rings* have striking similarities with imperialist ways of stereotyping the colonised as wild, primitive and savage.

The aftermaths of colonialism still echoes an uncomfortable wave of right-wing populism sweeping across Europe. Therefore it is of great importance that educators always incorporate diversity in their teaching and encourage students to explore different cultural and racial perspectives in order to prevent stereotyping as well as prejudice.

2.3 Women's situation in the Victorian age and early twentieth century

In my reading of *The Lord of the Rings*, it seems quite clear that it is primarily a story about heroic men. Apart from being stereotypical, the female characters are surprisingly few and can be counted on the fingers of one hand. In order to analyse the view on women as well as gender roles in the trilogy, I have chosen to include a section about women's situation in Britain in the nineteenth and early twentieth century centuries, with focus on the Victorian age.

As in all previous centuries, the nineteenth century was a male-dominated world. There were of course exceptions, and an earlier attempt to break male dominance was Mary Wollstonecraft, one of the first feminists, who already in 1792 published her *A Vindication of the Rights of Women* in which she argues that women are not naturally inferior to men, but look as if they are because they lack education. As the century unfolded the issue of women's right to vote became more and more pressing and in 1869 women won the right to vote in municipal elections, but it was not until 1918 that an act was passed allowing women's suffrage for the first time. However, the full vote was first gained in 1928 when "a new Representation of the Peoples Act gave women the vote on equal terms with men" (Shultz, 1998:346). Yet, the reality of their new status was slow to gain ground because, as pointed out in *The Story of Britain*, "the ingrained attitudes of centuries were not easily shed" (Strong, 1996:491). Few made any progress in male-dominated professions and women's pay remained inferior to that of men.

The Victorian period between 1832 and 1901 saw dramatic changes, as there was a shift from rural to urban economy based on trade and manufacturing. The fast growth of the textile industries brought hundreds of thousands of lower-class women into factory jobs with very bad working conditions. Poor working conditions also drove many women into prostitution and contributed to the view on women as being inferior second-class citizens. Women were reduced to two labels; either as wives or angels put on a pedestal, or simply whores. On the one hand, this stereotypical view of women permeated all levels of society and was reflected in art as well as in literature. On the other hand, feminists worked hard for the improvements of women's situation. This led to what was called the "Woman Question" that concerned "issues of sexual inequality in politics, economic life, education and social intercourse" (Abrams, 1996:1844).

An important issue regarding female emancipation was education. The general opinion among men was that women were not receptive to higher education and by excluding women from advanced education; the right to gain power was efficiently denied them. As late as 1873 "it was argued that higher education for women would shrivel their reproductive organs and make them sterile" (Romaine, 1994:102). This patronising and over-protective view resulted in a stereotypical depiction of women as inferior, with the sole role of being child-producers. Much later, in her *A Room of One's Own*, Virginia Woolf quotes one Mr Oscar Browning who claimed that "the best woman was intellectually the inferior of the best man (ibid:55). Against such patriarchal opinions, advocates for women's rights worked hard to improve educational opportunities. In 1880 school attendance was compulsory and by the end of the nineteenth century, women could take degrees at twelve universities throughout Britain. However, it was not until 1974 that the University College of Oxford admitted its first women students. Thus, several years after Tolkien's death, the world of Oxford was still a strictly male-dominated world.

The masculine values that prevailed in Victorian society were reflected in literature as well. Rudyard Kipling; nurturing imperial views, was one of the authors that Woolf accused of chauvinism: "He celebrates male virtues, enforces male values and describes the world of men" (Woolf, 1996:100). Furthermore, Lord Tennyson held a very traditional view on women claiming their nature especially fit for a domestic role:

> Man for the field and woman for the hearth:
> Man for the sword and for the needle she:
> Man with the head and woman with the heart
> Man to command and women to obey. (Abrams, 1996:1845)

To summarise, Victorian and early twentieth century in Britain, was above all a patriarchal society in which women at every level were subordinate to men. I would argue that the stereotypical depiction of women in *The Lord of the Rings* shows clear similarities to the view on women as outlined above.

In this chapter I have dealt with the basic features of fantasy literature, a genre that is considered a contrast to realism. I have also given a short historical account of British colonialism in order to highlight the views on other cultures that permeated British society during this time. Finally, I have dealt with women's situation in Britain during the Victorian Age. These aspects serve as a foundation for the reader in order to understand the world depicted in Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*. My aim is to show that the stereotypes regarding both race and gender in the trilogy have striking similarities to the views in colonial Britain.

2.4 Stereotypes

This section discusses stereotypes in general. According to Richard Brislin, stereotypes "refer to beliefs about a group of people that give insufficient attention to individual differences among the group's members" (2000:198). According to Mary Crawford and Rhoda Unger, "stereotypes occur whenever individuals are classified by others as having something in common because they are members of a particular group or category of people" (2000:37). That is, stereotypes involve generalisations, attaching the same label on everybody in a group of people. Stereotyping often occurs in relation to gender as well as to religious, racial or ethnic groups where it is common to attribute "a range of fixed characteristics to individuals on the basis of their group membership" (Goddard, 1998:126). However, this kind of generalisation does not necessarily need to be something negative. On the contrary, as pointed out by John Derbyshire (2001) in his article "Stereotypes Aren't So Bad", stereotypes are often "useful tools for dealing with the world" (www.johnderbyshire.com). This is in line with Brislin who states that stereotypes "reflect people's need to organize, remember, and retrieve information that might be useful as they attempt to achieve their goals and to meet life's demands" (2000:198). The problem occurs when stereotypes involves biases like "gypsies steal" or "Finns drink Koskenkorva and fight with knives". If views like these are considered truth, then stereotyping is a negative phenomenon.

Larry A. Samovar, Richard E. Porter and Edwin R. McDaniel claim that stereotypes "are everywhere and they seem to endure" (2010:170). Why is this? One among many answers is that they are, like culture, learnt and passed, both explicitly as well as implicitly, from one generation to the next. Additionally, mass media, social media, TV, movies, advertisements

etc. convey stereotypical prejudices. According to Samovar et al. television "has been guilty of providing distorted images of many ethnic groups, the elderly, and gay people" (2010:171).

Educational settings, i.e. schools, have an important role teaching students to challenge negative stereotypes and make them aware of gender as well as race stereotyping in order to develop their intercultural competence. The suggested teaching plan will hopefully work as an eye-opener regarding stereotypes and prejudice.

2.4.1 Stereotypes of race

The starting-point regarding racism in my study is that the concept involves "a belief in racial superiority: the belief that people or different races have different qualities and abilities, and that some races are inherently superior or inferior" (*Encarta*, 1999). According to Brislin racism "centers on the belief that, given the simple fact some individuals were born into a certain out-group, those individuals are inferior on such dimensions as intelligence, morals, and an ability to interact in decent society" (2000:214).

Samovar, Porter & McDaniel argue that racism is destructive both for those who are recipients for the racist behaviour as well as the racist themselves. Furthermore, they state that racism "has been present throughout the world for thousands of years" (2010:177). Sadly enough our history is full of examples and the Holocaust is probably the most terrible and heinous crime against humanity throughout history. Also in Sweden there is a dark past as far as racism is concerned. Both the state and the church discriminated against people with Sami origin up to the sixties and the discrimination had race biological connotations. Racism occurs "when persons believe their race is inherently superior to another race" (ibid.:178). The so called superiority implies that one group of people can "mistreat another group on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, or sexual preference" (ibid.)

A quintessential element in this discussion, I would argue, is the notion of "race". Are there actually different human races? In biology the word race is used in order to classify subdivisions of species. As an example one could mention different races of dogs which are subdivisions of the species dog. In his book *The Myth of Race: The Troubling Persistence of an Unscientific Idea*, Robert W. Sussman (2014) claims that "the vast majority of those involved in research on human variation would agree that biological races do not exist among humans". Furthermore, he states that we are "more similar to each other as a group than we are to one another within any particular racial or genetic category". In 1950, UNESCO stated that the concept of race is a myth; all humans belong to the same species. This statement "was a summary of the findings of an international panel of anthropologists, geneticists, sociologists, and psychologists" (Sussman, 2014). The notion of race can therefore be seen as

a social and cultural construction, which is – sadly enough – deeply embedded in our history. It seems that the belief in dividing humanity into different races is deeply ingrained in our culture and although not biologically defensible, the notions of race and racism are still a reality. Bearing this in mind I find the word "race" problematic wherever it occurs, as in the above quote by Samovar, Porter and McDaniel, and hold the opinion that race is a social construction.

In spite of the fact that the concept of human races is a myth, the stereotypes of race are nonetheless ubiquitous, both in literature as well as in everyday life. A persistent image of African characteristics, dating back from the era of colonisation, is that of an underdeveloped, lazy and submissive creature, almost non-human. According to S. Plous and Tyrone Williams blacks were considered "mentally inferior, physically and culturally unevolved, and apelike in appearance" (1995:795). Theodore Roosevelt, who was the president of the USA between 1933 and 1945, publicly claimed that "[a]s a race and in the mass [the negroes] are altogether inferior to whites" (ibid.:796). The ninth edition of the *Encyclopedia Britannica* from 1884 stated that "the African race occupied the lowest position of the evolutionary scale" (ibid.:795). This view inevitably involves a hierarchy with the white man at the top and the black man at the bottom.

Other racial stereotypes involve the concept of a brutal savage from "The Dark Continent" in need of being civilised by the white man. Unfortunately, these negative connotations regarding black people still exist; therefore it is of great importance to educate people to challenge these old beliefs. I would argue that racial stereotypes have their origin in the thought that what is different is dangerous, therefore racial stereotyping must be challenged and this is what Chapter 5 deals with. The chapter suggests how the findings can be used in the classroom to pinpoint negative aspects of stereotyping.

Brislin separates intense racism from symbolic racism. The former is the most dangerous form of racism when "people believe certain individuals are inferior simply because they were born to parents from an out-group" (2000:234). Symbolic racism, on the other hand "involves the beliefs that outgroup members are getting more than they deserve and are receiving too much support in their struggle against discrimination" (ibid.). I would argue that the racism permeating *The Lord of the Rings* is the most virulent form: intense racism, which makes it an important as well as timely topic to deal with in school. Hence, it is of great importance to provide the students with strategies and skills in order that they can discover racial stereotypes in literature and media.

To go a little deeper into the notion of racism I would argue that, even though we live in Sweden in the year of 2016, we have not yet reached the point where racism is recognised as a

societal problem. In order to discourage racism, it goes without saying that it must be acknowledged at all levels in society and subsequently, comprehensive actions must be initiated. Here schools play a vital role because racism has definitely no place in a democratic society characterised by diversity. It is our mission, as teachers, to convey the perception that in all societies, the respect for human equality, as well as non-discrimination must be the unifying glue. Unfortunately, expressions of xenophobia, racism, discrimination and marginalisation still exist in Sweden; and therefore, considering Sweden's future, we must take actions to embody democratic values, for they are crucial elements in a society with equal rights and opportunities. These fundamental values are also expressed in the curriculum:

> Education should impart and establish respect for human rights and the fundamental democratic values on which Swedish society is based. […]. The inviolability of human life, individual freedom and integrity, the equal value of all people, equality between women and men, and solidarity between people are the values that the education should represent and impart. […].The school should promote understanding of other people and the ability to empathise. No one in school should be subjected to discrimination on the grounds of gender, ethnic affiliation, religion or other belief system, transgender identity or its expression, sexual orientation, age or functional impairment, or to other forms of degrading treatment. All tendencies to discrimination or degrading treatment should be actively combated. Xenophobia and intolerance must be confronted with knowledge, open discussion and active measures. (Skolverket, 2013:4)

2.4.2 Stereotypes of gender

In this section there will be a shift of focus from stereotypes of race to stereotypes of gender. As shown above, the importance of equality between men and women is clearly expressed in the curriculum and giving the students tools to examine and understand culturally inherited stereotypes of gender is crucial in order to prevent inequality.

Stereotypes of race and stereotypes of gender have something in common: the notion of hierarchy. Whites were considered superior to blacks in colonial Britain and gender stereotyping involves a hierarchy as well; women are subordinate to men. In *An Introduction to Literature, Criticism and Theory* Andrew Bennet and Nicholas Royle list some gender-stereotypes in literature: "the male is strong, active, rational, the female is weak, passive, irrational and so forth" (2009:181-182).

It can be argued that literature itself might be seen as a carrier of patriarchal structures due to the simple fact that most of the classic authors are men. In *Search of authority: An Introductory Guide to Literary Theory* Stephen Bonnycastle states that the canon of these authors is kept in place by male professors, critics and editors (1998:19). Bonnycastle deals with gender issues in individual works of literature. He asks many questions: How are men

and women presented? Are they presented as stereotypes? Do men dominate or vice-versa? Are men depicted as aggressive and women as compliant? According to Bonnycastle there are systematic omissions of female characters in literature. As an example he takes the works of Joseph Conrad and states that "[s]pecific exclusions or gaps can indicate a lot about an author's ideology" (ibid.:193). I would argue that the stereotypically depicted women, few as they are, in *The Lord of the Rings* bear witness to Tolkien's roots in the patriarchal society of the Victorian era.

Another interesting aspect is the notion of the team. According to Bonnycastle the existence of "a larger and formalized social structure (for example, the "team") makes it natural for a hierarchy to develop" (ibid.:189). In *The Lord of the Rings* The Fellowship of the Ring consists of nine members in a strict hierarchy of representatives from "Free Peoples of the World" (I:362). However, women and "lesser folks" are not included.

Stereotypes of genders are nothing that can be placed in the backyard of history. On the contrary, according to Holly Brewer "the biggest and most common stereotype put on women [is] that girls are supposed to wear dresses, serve food, and take care of babies" (Brewer, 2016). Both mass media and social media convey an objectifying picture of the perfect woman as being beautiful, slim and passive while men are depicted as strong, muscular handsome and active. These images must rightly be questioned, therefore, my findings might be used in an educational setting where stereotypes of gender are further examined and questioned.

In *Deconstructing Gender Stereotyping through Literature in L2* published at heacademy.ac.uk, Leticia Goodchild states that "literature fosters (inter)cultural learning" (Goodchild, 1). She conducted a research project the aim of which was "to use the narratives as a mirror for learners to see the *Self* through the eyes of the *Other* with a view to raising awareness of generalised, stereotypical, prejudiced and ethnocentric attitudes and reflect upon them" (ibid.:7). I would argue that, in an effort to challenge students to think critically, the stereotypes embedded in the narratives of *The Lord of the Rings* are excellent objects to be put under the microscope in order to be detected with the purpose of promoting intercultural competence. As Goodchild points out "collaborative learning enhances intercultural exploration" (ibid.:12). Therefore I think that close reading of excerpts from the trilogy can, as opined by Goodchild, "bring gender stereotyping out into the open and provide opportunities for intercultural education" (ibid.:14).

2.5 Intercultural learning and intercultural competence

Acquiring an intercultural competence is crucial in an increasingly globalised world. Furthermore, it is a prerequisite as far as understanding is concerned when living together in a multicultural context. According to Magne Dypedahl and Jutta Eschenbach, intercultural learning is a systematic educational process that helps to develop intercultural competence (2011:210). A person who is in possession of intercultural competence is according to Michael Byram "someone who is able to see relationships between different cultures – both internal and external to a society – and is able to mediate, that is interpret each in terms of the other, either for themselves or for other people" (2000:9-10). Furthermore, it is also "someone who has a critical or analytical understanding of (parts of) their own and other cultures" (ibid.: 10). In a multicultural society it is of great importance to acquire intercultural competence in order to understand and respect people from a cultural context that differs from one's own.

However, due to the fact that stereotypes and culture are related to each other, it seems fruitful to back up a little and discuss the utterly complex issue: How do we define culture? The simplest answer would perhaps be that everything is culture and reversely that culture is everything related to human beings. Yet, this is perhaps too wide an explanation which needs to be further developed. One definition according to Oxford Dictionary is: "The ideas, customs, and social behaviour of a particular people or society". Byram defines culture as "the beliefs and knowledge which members of a social group share by virtue of their membership" (1997:39). According to Geert Hofstede, Gert Jan Hofstede & Michael Minkov in *Cultures and Organizations: Software of the mind* the word culture has several meanings, however, in "most Western languages *culture* commonly means 'civilization' or 'refinement of the mind' and in particular the results of such refinement, such as education, art, and literature" (2010:5). This definition is, according to the authors, a narrow one and in social anthropology culture is

> a catchword for all those patterns of thinking, feeling, and acting […] not only activities supposed to refine the mind are included, but also the ordinary and menial things in life: greeting, eating, showing or not showing feelings, keeping a certain physical distance from others, making love, and maintaining body hygiene". (ibid.)

Despite my intention to examine the concept of culture in a wider context it seems that my original explanation that everything is culture and culture is everything, was not as farfetched as it first seemed to be. However, I will settle with the definition that culture is something that is constantly changing and constructed in meeting with other people. Thus, it is not something

a person has, but something that is created when encountering others (Dypedahl and Eschenbach, 2011: 213).

A prerequisite for the existence of culture is other people, for the mere fact that culture is always a shared phenomenon. Culture can be seen as the unwritten rules differentiating people from one group from another. It is not something we inherit genetically; it is learned and passed forward from generation to generation. Culture can be both visible and invisible and can be compared to an onion. Fons Trompenaars and Charles Hampden-Turner state: "Culture comes in layers, like an onion. To understand it you have to unpeel it layer by layer" (1997:24). The outer layer is composed of visible things, like buildings, food and clothes. The underlying invisible layers consist of norms, beliefs and values which are harder to recognize.

Acquiring intercultural competence is also closely related to foreign language learning. According to Byram, teaching for linguistic competence "cannot be separated from teaching for intercultural competence" (1997:2). Therefore the language teacher needs to convey an awareness of skills, attitudes and values which are essential in order to understand intercultural human relationships (Byram et al., 2002). Furthermore, it is important for teachers to explain that the way we think is culturally determined.

Even though the concept of intercultural competence is not explicitly stated in the syllabus it is tacitly understood that teaching involves intercultural learning. One of the aims of studying English in upper secondary school is that students " should be given the opportunity to develop knowledge of living conditions, social issues and cultural features in different contexts and parts of the world where English is used" (Skolverket). In the Swedish upper secondary school there are three English courses numbered 5, 6 and 7 respectively (year one, two and three). In English 5 one of the core contents to be taught is as follows: "Living conditions, attitudes, values and traditions, as well as social, political and cultural conditions in different contexts and parts of the world where English is used" (ibid.). English 6 also treats "[l]iving conditions, attitudes, values, traditions, social issues as well as cultural, historical, political and cultural conditions in different contexts and parts of the world where English is used" (ibid.). Finally, English 7 deals with [s]societal issues, cultural, historical, political and social conditions, and also ethical and existential issues in different contexts and parts of the world where English is used (ibid.). A common denominator is thus cultural conditions in different contexts where English is spoken.

Summing up, acquiring intercultural competence is a prerequisite in our globalised world. Encounters with people from different cultures is also enriching and benefit one's knowledge and help, if needed, to change one's perception of the world. Furthermore, if you know who you are and stand firmly in your own culture and traditions, encounters with different

unknown cultures are less frightening. To supply the students with lenses through which they can unveil explicit as well as implicit stereotypes is therefore an essential learning objective.

Later in this master thesis it will be demonstrated how the reading of *The Lord of the Rings* from a cultural point of view with a focus on stereotypes regarding race and gender, can be adapted to a classroom setting in order to promote intercultural competence.

3. Methodology and research design

My master thesis consists of two parts; the first part is a qualitative cultural analysis of *The Lord of the Rings* and the second part is a suggestion of how the findings of the analysis can be adapted to a teaching plan in order to promote intercultural competence.

When analysing the trilogy I have chosen a qualitative method which is suitable when seeking answers to a research question and collecting evidence supporting or objecting the thesis statement. According to *Qualitative Research Methods: A Data Collector's Field Guide* "[q]ualitative methods are also effective in identifying intangible factors, such as social norms, socioeconomic status, gender roles, ethnicity, and religion, whose role in the research issue may not be readily apparent" (1). My study explores both gender roles as well as ethnicity and therefore this method is relevant.

Just as literature is a product of its time, so are authors, and therefore analysing older texts through the lens of today's norms and values is always a hazardous project. I have chosen to read *The Lord of the Rings* through the spectacles of a critical view regarding stereotypes of race and gender. Every text gets its meaning from a simple equation, namely reader + reading situation + text = meaning. Therefore the meaning of a text changes over time and also depends on who the reader is. It is an often mentioned cliché that good literature stands on its own, however, I would argue that in order to fully understand a text, knowledge about its historical and cultural context is of great importance.

I am perfectly aware that many readers never even notice the prevailing stereotypes when reading the trilogy and may consider the reading from this perspective somewhat farfetched. Yet, I would argue that the stereotypes regarding race and gender are so striking that they must be taken into consideration if using the text in school. According to Edward T. Hall "today's problems are being solved in terms of yesterday's understanding" (1991:51). Bearing this in mind, my intention is not to solve today's problem regarding stereotypical depictions regarding race and gender, I am just trying to put focus on the issue and cast a critical glance at the text in order to highlight the notions of stereotyping. Consequently, my result should be considered with caution depending on how one chooses to read the trilogy.

4. Results and discussion

This chapter aims at exploring passages that will show the connection between the text and the prevailing views of colonial Britain discussed in Chapter 2. The chapter is divided into three sections and in the first section a brief summary of the plot is given. The second section, called "Racial Stereotypes in *The Lord of the Rings*", explores how the stereotypical depiction of the orcs can be linked to the racial views of imperialism. This section also discusses the notion of racism, explicit as well as implicit that permeates the trilogy. The third section, called "Gender stereotypes in *The Lord of the Rings*", concentrates on the female characters Arwen and Éowyn. Examples from the text will show that the depiction of their characters has similarities to the patriarchal view deeply embedded in British society during the Victorian Age and the early twentieth century.

4.1 Plot

However, in order to gain focus I will start this chapter by offering a brief summary of the plot. The story starts as Gandalf the wizard discovers that the magic ring once acquired by the hobbit Bilbo, is the One Ring of Power. This Ring was wrought ages ago by the evil Sauron (the Dark Lord), who wants it back in order to use its power to enslave all people of Middle-earth. The Ring, now in the hands of Bilbo's nephew Frodo, has to be destroyed in order to save the world of Middle-earth. The only possibility to destroy it is to cast the Ring into the furnace of Mount Doom at the centre of Sauron's kingdom Mordor, where it was once created. It becomes the mission of Frodo the hobbit, to fulfil this perilous quest. The Fellowship of the Ring is founded to accompany Frodo on the journey to Mount Doom. The Fellowship of the Ring consists of nine members, among them Gandalf and Frodo's hobbit-friends Sam, Merry and Pippin. The rest of the group represent "the other Free Peoples of the World: Elves, Dwarves, and Men" (I:362). The elves are represented by Legolas, the dwarves by Gimli and men are represented by Boromir and Aragorn, the latter being the returning king in disguise.

Aided by the Fellowship, also referred to as the Company, Frodo carries yet another terrible burden. The power of the Ring is very strong and anyone who carries and uses it – it is a ring that can make the owner invisible if needed – eventually becomes either a servant of Sauron, or if he is very strong, becomes Sauron himself, a new Dark Lord. There is no good in the Ring and there is no way of using it for good purposes. However, Frodo is forced to use it at times in order to avoid being killed and he consequently becomes weakened by its poisonous power and finally also corrupted by it and when he stands at the wide cleft of

Mount Doom he is unable to dispose of it. At that moment, Gollum, an insane creature who possessed the Ring before Bilbo, bites Frodo's finger off and both he and the finger bearing the Ring, fall into the abyss of Mount Doom and the mission to save Middle-earth is fulfilled. Thus, the trilogy arguably deals with evil on both a personal level as well as on a larger world scale.

4.2 Racial Stereotypes in *The Lord of the Rings*

As pointed out in Chapter 2, the clichés of colonial Britain were built on views that considered the inhabitants of the colonies as wild and savage. In this section it will be argued that this view is conveyed into the trilogy, mainly embodied in the orcs, the servants of the malevolent ruler Sauron. The depiction of these wild and evil creatures applies to the classical racial cliché of tribal Africans. While the orcs are combative villains, the hobbits are the opposite: "At no time had Hobbits of any kind been warlike, and they had never fought among themselves" (I:7). They kept to themselves and "[o]utsiders of any kind, great or small, did not make themselves a nuisance" (I:13-14). They are also very loyal to their kind: "We hobbits ought to stick together" (I:357). This creates an "us-and-them" setting, including the concept of insiders and outsiders, which permeates the story to a great extent. The hobbits live in their secluded world, however there were "rumours of strange things happening in the world outside" (I:57).

   One of the Company's first encounters with the orcs is in the mine of Moria. The Company are attacked by the orcs and have retreated into a sepulchral chamber. They know that the orcs are near because even their magical swords register evil. Gandalf's sword Glamdring "shone with a pale light" and Frodo's Sting "glinted at the edges" (I:424). The suspense is reinforced by drums: "*Doom, boom, doom* went the drums in the deep" (I:425). Suddenly there are arrows whining down the corridor and Gandalf cries: "There are Orcs, very many of them […]. And some large and evil: black Uruks of Mordor" (I:425). The Company retreats to the other side of the chamber but has no chance to flee. Suddenly there is a blow on the door and it begins to open slowly: "A huge arm and shoulder, with dark skin of greenish scales, was thrust through the widening gap. Then a great, flat, toeless foot was forced through below" (I:425). Frodo thrusts his sword into the hideous foot: "There was a bellow, and the foot jerked back, nearly wrenching Sting from Frodo's arm. Black drops dripped from the blade and smoked on the floor" (I: 426). The drums went on: *doom, boom, doom* and "a huge orc-chieftain, almost man-high, clad in black mail from head to foot, leaped into the chamber" (I:426). Furthermore, "his broad flat face was swart, his eyes were like coals, and his tongue was red; he wielded a great spear" (I:426-427). Suddenly

arrows fell among them. One struck Frodo and sprang back. Another pierced Gandalf's hat and stuck there like a black feather, Frodo looked behind. Beyond the fire he saw swarming black figures: there seemed to be hundreds of orcs. They brandished spears and scimitars which shone red as blood in the firelight. *Doom, doom* rolled the drum-beats, growing louder and louder, *doom, doom.* (I:432)

By this description, Tolkien sets the standard, as the face of evil shows clear similarities to classical race clichés of African warrior with spears, bows, arrows and drums. Not only the skin is dark, the blood is black as well, reinforcing the notion of black as evil. On the whole there is an extreme polarisation between white and black representing good and evil respectively. When the orcs were walking, the sweet grass of Rohan was "blackened as they passed" (II: 19). They are "ready at a signal to issue forth like black ants going to war" (II:300) and when they flee it looks like black smoke: "Like a black smoke driven by a mountain wind they fled" (II: 175). Even the language of the orcs is connected with the black colour, and is referred to as the "Black Speech". Other hideous creatures representing black evil are trolls. Once Pippin is in a fight with a troll:

> Then Pippin stabbed upwards, and the written blade of Westernesse pierced through the hide and went deep into the vitals of the troll, and his black blood came gushing out. He toppled forward and came crashing down like a falling rock, burying those beneath him. Blackness and stench and crushing pain came upon Pippin, and his mind fell away into a great darkness. (III:197)

Another image resembling stereotypical tribal Africans is created when Merry and Pippin are captured by the Isengarders, who are "a grim dark band, four score at least of large, swart, slant-eyed Orcs with great bows and short broad-bladed swords" (II:55). The image is further reinforced by the episode in Helm's Deep. The company is scattered and the two remnants, Legolas and Gimli, are fighting against the orcs on a high wall together with the Men of Rohan. Hundreds of ladders are lifted up against the wall and "Orcs sprang up them like apes in the dark forest of the South" (II:166). Here the orcs are likened to apelike primates from the south and the description reminds one of colonial Britain's views of Africa as a primitive "heart of darkness". The idea that evil comes from more southerly countries is stressed by the fact that Sauron has many terrible servants coming from "the South beyond the Great River's end" (II:312). They are much bigger but almost as bad as orcs:

> They are fierce. They have black eyes, and long black hair, and gold rings in their ears; yes, lots of beautiful gold. And some have red paint on their cheeks, and red cloaks; and their flags are

red, and the tips of their spears; and they have round shields, yellow and black with big spikes.
Not nice; very cruel wicked Men they look. (II:312)

This image yet again stresses the similarity to the stereotypical depiction of an African warrior, war-painted and carrying spear and shield. It would certainly seem that stereotypical African features are fundamental in the description of the evil orcs and some of them are also described as being "black-skinned, with wide and snuffling nostrils" (III:237). Furthermore, Sauron has also allied himself with the cruel Haradrim, who are citizens of lands in the south also resembling tribal Africans. Sam has heard terrible tales of them and tells about "folk down away in the Sunlands" who are called "swertings" and "ride on oliphaunts" that "throw rocks and trees at one another" (II:313). Embedded in the story is also an implicit conflict versus north/west and south/east, representing good and evil respectively. Aragorn, the future king in disguise, says: "But my home, such as I have, is in the North" (I:325). The east is connected to evil due to "the wild folk of the East" (I:321) and Mordor has allied itself "with the cruel Easterlings and the cruel Haradrim" (I:322). To go east is associated with danger and reluctantly "Frodo turned his back to the West and followed as his guide led him, out into the darkness of the East" (II:388). If we play with the idea to transfer the map of the Middle-earth to a world map, the equivalent of north/west would be Europe and North America while south/east would be Africa and the Arabic areas in the Middle-East.

The racial stereotyping is also emphasised by the fact that there are hints of cannibalism scattered throughout the story. About the orcs it is said: "Foul waters and foul meats they'll take, if they can get no better" (III:224). The servants of Sauron's allied, Saruman, refer to him as "the Hand that gives us man's-flesh to eat" (II:49). Merry and Pippin were once captured by the orcs and when starving Pippin was given some bread and raw dried flesh: "He ate the stale grey bread hungrily, but not the meat. He was famished but not yet so famished as to eat flesh flung to him by an Orc, the flesh of he dared not guess what creature" (II:55). Later on, when also Frodo is captured by the orcs, they discuss what to do with him and one suggestion is: "He might as well go in the pot" (II:436). I would argue that the evil orcs and their likes are depicted as being equal with people from the South, i.e. Africa and by using stereotypical racial clichés with roots in colonialism, *The Lord of the Rings* passes on racist views from imperial Britain. According to John Yatt, the story is filled with the logic that race determines behavior, that is, a predestined world view: "Orcs are bred to be bad, they have no choice" (Yatt, 2002).

In the *ABQ Journal*, Leanne Potts writes: "'The Lord of the Rings' trilogy – both the films and the books – is rooted in racism […] a white supremacist fantasy where the good guys are

white, the bad guys are black and behavior is predetermined by race" (Potts, 2003). As some kind of mitigating circumstance Potts quotes Leslie Donovan, a UNM professor, who points out: "As with pretty much all literature that has stood the test of time, the words can be interpreted in different ways depending on your perspective" (ibid.). However, even though a text can be interpreted in different ways, it would be fair to argue that a text is always a product of its time and thus engages the prevailing views of that particular time. Donovan, who has studied Tolkien and written articles on his works for academic journals, suggests that there are passages in the books that could be interpreted as racist. Keith Fraser, a moderator for a United Kingdom-based Tolkien website, puts it more simply: "He [Tolkien] was writing an Anglo-Saxon mythology, and therefore it is hardly surprising if the 'good guys' in his imaginary age are Anglo-Saxon in appearance and their enemies dark-skinned invaders from eastern or southern lands" (ibid.). According to Fraser, Tolkien just follows an old tradition in Western European culture where light represents good and dark represents evil. However, despite the fact that the story follows old and complex literary traditions, I would argue that Tolkien's unambiguous portrayal of good and evil can be considered as far too polarised and the genetic determination that white men are good and dark men are bad drives the plot in a most brutal manner.

    As pointed out earlier, my reading of *The Lord of the Rings* suggests that the story is permeated with the preoccupations and prejudices prevailing in colonial Britain. Even though it is a story about cross-racial friendship, because Tolkien actually unites the different "races" to combat an evil foe, it can be argued the whole story is based upon the assumption of the white man's superiority. The framework of the story is based upon two dividing lines resembling those of imperial Britain. The first one separates men from women, and the other one separates the different races. It seems that racism goes hand in hand with the patriarchal views on gender roles as being basically different. Under the surface lies a fear of mixing genders as well as races. In the world of Middle-earth, it is important to keep clear and distinct categories in order to retain the ties of kinship in a pure state. The notion of lineage and blood is thus of great importance, the purer the better, and people from houses of purer blood live longer (III:153). Pure blood implies good qualities, and even though a mortal man, Aragorn points out: "I shall have a life far longer than other men" (III:300). He will live longer because he is of "the race of the West unmingled" (III:300). The race of the West is, of course, the race of the ethnically pure white man. Aragorn is the foremost representative of the race of the West and according to Deborah C. Rogers he is "Tolkien's man par excellence" (2003:71). He is white, he is a hero and a future king and can thus be regarded the "epitome" of his race. Regarding the character of Aragorn, it seems to be implied that the

rightful position of man is to be the ruling creature on this planet and furthermore, "to administer it in the best interests of all the local creatures and to be God's viceroy" (ibid.:72). Actually, also Aragorn can be seen as a kind of Christ-figure, born to reign in the world of Middle-earth. The Christ-like comparison is stressed by the fact that he, like Jesus, resists temptations, heals the sick and brings the realm to good in the end.

However, as a contrast to people of "pure blood", the notion of blood can also be associated with bad qualities and the story suggests a division of people in "better and lesser folks". The inadequate guard upon the walls of Mordor in older times is explained by the fact that "the blood of Númenoreans became mingled with that of lesser men" (I:320). Later it is stated that the "wisdom and the life-span of the Númenoreans also waned as they became mingled with lesser men" (III:451). Consequently, mixing the pure blood of the Númenoreans and the men of Westernesse with blood from "lesser folks" always leads to degeneration. Another "natural" obstacle to mixed marriages is the notion of mortality versus immortality, an obstacle nobody tends to transgress. It is extremely effective as a deterrent to mixed marriages due to an old decree from the Valar, a higher god-like authority, saying that immortal beings who marry mortal beings become mortal. This decree thus prohibits a change of the composition of races; men must be men and die, elves must be elves and live forever. Arwen is one of the very few elves who transgresses the decree and chooses mortality in order to marry Aragorn, the returning king.

However, not only the concept of immortality is a natural hindrance between races, sexual relations between free and unfree people, that is better and lesser folks, are also disastrous and always involve degeneration. In the world of Middle-earth, the general rule is that there is no mixing of races among the free people. Mostly, this is a physical impossibility, but even if possible it seldom occurs. Hence, Sauron's and Saruman's genetically perverse crossbreeding between orcs and men is regarded with contempt by the free people. Such mixing does not only create beings like the warriors of Isengard, the fighting Uruk-Hai, but also squint-eyed half-men such as Wormtongue's accomplice at Bree. Another example of these mixed people is found in Gondor:

> They were reckoned men of Gondor, yet their blood was mingled, and there were short and swarthy folk among them whose sires came from the forgotten men who housed in the shadow of the hills in the Dark years ere the coming of the kings. (III:10)

Regarding crossbreeding, the fighting Uruk-Hai, are described as "half-orcs and goblin-men that the foul craft of Saruman has bred" (II:68). These half-orcs, looking like "small dwarf-

men" remind one of beasts: "Curses they heeded not, nor understood the tongues of western men, crying with harsh voices like beasts and carrion-birds" (III:105). Furthermore, they were man-high, but with goblin-faces, sallow, leering, squint-eyed" (II:206). The reason for Saruman's mixing of races is to breed indefatigable warriors. Ordinary orcs avoid the sun and cannot fight in daylight and through manipulations he breeds warriors that do not shun the sun and consequently fight both night and day. Treebeard, a.k.a. Fangorn says about the sinister and inhumane Saruman:

> I think I now understand what he is up to. He is plotting to become a Power. He has a mind of metal and wheels; and he does not care for growing things, except as far as they serve him for the moment. And now it is clear that he is a black traitor. He has taken up with foul folk, with the Orcs. Brm, hoom! Worse than that: he has been doing something dangerous to them; something dangerous. For these Isengarders are more like wicked men. It is a mark of evil things that came in the Great Darkness that they cannot abide the Sun; but Saruman's Orcs can endure it, even if they hate it. I wonder what he has done? Are they Men he has ruined, or has he blended the races of Orcs and Men? That would be black evil. (II:84)

These new strong creatures coming from the east are much feared, there are "countless companies of Men of a new sort that we have not met before. Not tall, but broad and grim, bearded like dwarfs, wielding great axes. Out of some savage land in the wide East they come" (III: 103).

It can be argued that due to the fact that Saruman is occupied with genetic manipulation it is possible to interpret his character as a metaphorical symbol for Nazi scientists, for example Dr. Josef Mengele, who were obsessed with the thought of creating powerful forces to carry out the aims of the higher power. The Uruk-Hai can thus be compared to the SS, whose function was to ensure the success of Hitler.

The notion of degeneration always implies some kind of hierarchy and the world of Middle-earth is no exception, it is a strictly hierarchical world inhabited, as pointed out earlier, by "lesser and better folk" reminiscent of an Aryan world-view. Hitler claimed that the German people were descendants from a great race called the Aryans who were wise, noble and successful conquerors. They were supposed to be tall, slender and athletic with blond hair and blue eyes. The notion of the Aryan race was originally a linguistic classification; however Aryanism "developed as a racial ideology that claimed that the Aryan race was a master race" (Wikipedia, 2016).

In the novel, the Riders of Rohan match this description, they were "tall and long-limbed; their hair, flaxen – pale, flowed under their light helms, and streamed in long braids behind

them; their faces were stern and keen" (II:29). The people of Rohan are worshipped and according to Faramir they are "tall men and fair women, valiant both alike, golden-haired, bright-eyed, and strong, they remind us of the youth of Men, as they were in the Elder Days" (II:355). Also the guards of king Théoden are depicted as Aryan-like: "Their golden hair was braided on their shoulders; the sun was blazoned upon their green shields, their long corslets were burnished bright, and when they rose taller they seemed than mortal men" (II:133). A Prince Imrahil is mentioned and he was "of high blood, and his folks also, tall men and proud with sea-grey eyes" (III:10). Also Éowyn, Lady of Rohan is Aryan-like in her appearance: "Very fair was her face, and her hair was like a river of gold. Slender and tall she was in her white robe girt with silver; but strong she seemed and stern as steel, a daughter of kings" (II:140). It is interesting to note that when the war of the rings is over a kind of paradise-like time comes, and new fair children were born: "All the children born or begotten in that year, and there were many, were fair to see and strong, and most of them has a rich golden hair that had before been rare among hobbits" (III:368).

I would argue that parallels can be drawn between the hierarchical world of Middle-earth and Nazi-Germany which placed the white Aryan at the top with Jews, gypsies and homosexuals at the bottom. Regarding the world of Middle-earth elves, men and hobbits are at the top while trolls, monsters and orcs are at the bottom. However, all beings in this world have different qualities and the description of them is utterly stereotypical. The elves are considered the fairest and wisest of all beings, much like the Aryans. Furthermore, they are immortal, in tune with nature and have often a gift of foresight. They do not get on very well with the dwarves who might represent the Jews in relation to the Aryan ideology. However, not only the Aryan ideology made a scapegoat of the Jews. In fact, stereotypes and prejudice of the Jewish creed still occurs. The roots of anti-Semitism go back 2000 years to the time when Jews were collectively blamed for killing Jesus, and by the late Middle Ages the image of Jews as greedy was established. The professions they had were trading, and money lending, which reinforced the myth of Jews as mean and avaricious.

The dwarves in *The Lord of the Rings* do not care much for the concerns of outsiders, and their main passion lies in the pursuit of wealth and riches in the mines up in the mountains. They are "a tough thrawn race for the most part, secretive, laborious, retentive of the memory of injuries (and of benefits), lovers of stone, of gems, of things that take shape under the hands of the craftsman rather than things that live by their own life" (III:514).

As mentioned, the race of men seems to desire power most of all, and in the end the race of men comes to power through Aragorn, at which point Middle-earth turns into an age of prosperity and peace while the other races disappear. In this new world there is no place for

the orcs, those who are not killed become a scattered and nomadic people, wandering in the outskirts of Middle-earth. The trilogy suggests that the different races can be categorised according to their different characteristics; in contrast to men, elves and hobbits representing the good, the orcs are synonymous with evil. Even though it is admitted in the text that evil corrupts also the good side, Tolkien constantly divides the ambiguous world into two unambiguous halves: good and evil, nice and nasty. The symbols are very simplistic, almost rigid, and as mentioned, they follow an old literary tradition using white to signify good and black to signify evil.

I would argue that the very distinct description of characters with exaggerated traits of good or evil, inevitably involves a racist view of the world involving Aryan preferences. The Fellowship is portrayed as extremely Aryan, that is, white and ethnically pure. The orcs come from the south, look cruel and wicked with wide nostrils, wild spears and ride on "oliphaunts." The stereotypical, racist view on other cultures with roots in colonialism is evident when it comes to the description of evil. As pointed out by Bhatia: "While Tolkien describes the Hobbits and Elves as amazingly white, ethnically pure clans, their antagonists, the Orcs are a motley dark-skinned mass, akin to tribal Africans or aborigines" (Bhatia, 2003).

On the surface, *The Lord of the Rings* is a story about tolerance and friendship among the different races of Middle-earth and as Michael Skeparnides states: "What the 'Lord of the Rings' seems to suggest, is that social and racial differences are overcome when the interests and freedoms of each [race] are threatened by invasion" (Skeparnides, 2002). However, it can also be suggested that there is nothing but the external threat to keep the races together. They are reluctantly forced to come together to fight an evil foe that threatens Middle-earth. It is the mission to destroy the Ring and thus save the world which creates the opportunities for racial integration. Before the perilous quest, the different races live separated and do not care about each other's problems. The Shire-hobbits for example, refers to "any others that lived beyond the borders, as Outsiders, and took very little interest in them, considering them dull and uncouth" (I:198). Thus, after the mission is completed, the different races intend to go back where they belong and consequently the condition for cross-racial friendship comes to an end. The friendship is not voluntary and when the quest is over everything goes back to normal again that is, the different races continue to live separately and order is restored.

To sum up, I would argue that racism can be found both explicitly as well as implicitly throughout the trilogy. The explicit racism, manifested in the stereotypical depiction of the orcs as representatives of evil, is rooted in the views of colonial Britain when black people were considered wild and uncivilised. Due to the fact that the portrayal of the orcs conjure up stereotypical images of tribal African warriors, old racial clichés are consolidated and passed

on to new readers. The implicit racism suggests a dividing of people in "better and lesser folks", giving prominence to the white man's superiority. The notion of lineage and blood is central: the purer the better. Mixing the pure blood of better folks with the blood of lesser folks always implies less goodness, less strength and a degeneration of the better race. This implicit racism involves a hierarchical world-view and, as pointed out in Chapter 2 parallels can be drawn to the hierarchical world-view in colonial Britain with the British at the top and the people of the colonies in various degrees of inferiority below. In addition, parallels can arguably be drawn to the Aryan views of Nazi Germany which, included the notion of racial hierarchy.

4.3 Gender stereotypes in *The Lord of the Rings*

This section aims to explore the stereotypes of gender with emphasis on women. The female characters in the trilogy are very few, and Tolkien's focus on narrative, not character becomes even more obvious in his description of women who are very stereotypically depicted. The fact that strong female characters are missing is something that he has been criticised for. Rebekah Denn writes: "The lack of strong female characters is cited as one of the classic flaws of Tolkien's series. And absence of sex or any non-courtly sexual tension in the trilogy is a bit bizarre" (Denn, 2001). However, *The Lord of the Rings* is a story about heroic men and it can be argued that it does not need so many female characters as the story was not intended to incorporate them. When this is said, this story about men does not lack female characters and some of them can in fact be considered strong, at least on the surface, as will be shown in this section.

    As pointed out earlier, the trilogy's view on women is a product of Tolkien's time and apart from being stereotypical, the depiction of the female characters is superficial and mainly focused on their appearance. In this section I will concentrate on two of the female characters, namely Arwen and Éowyn. What they have in common is that the description of them is basically focused on their beauty; both are handsome with long lovely hair. Their beauty is known far and wide and men are enchanted by their appearance. However, behind their physical magnificence, something else can be sensed; their beauty is also indicative of strength of will, determination and intelligence. In the case of Éowyn, this leads to an unexpected way of acting. Another common feature is that they are described as being the daughters of more important male characters. This narrative technique stresses the fact that the story is about heroic men and that female characters are less important. Another explanation to the gender imbalance in the story might be that the trilogy was written at a time when women had barely begun their quest for equality in society. As pointed out in Chapter 2,

the early twentieth century was a patriarchal society in which women, at all levels, were subordinate to men.

Another mind-set Tolkien dwells upon is the concept of the nursing woman. In the "Houses of Healing" there were men who were hurt in battle or dying. These men were tended by women "since they were skilled in healing" (III:148). The fact that women belong to the "weaker" sex is also unambiguously stated at the burial of King Théoden: "When the burial was over and the weeping of women was stilled, and Théoden was left at last alone in his barrow, then folk gathered to the golden Hall for the great feast and put away sorrow" (III:307).

The first female character that will be discussed is Arwen, the daughter of Elrond. Elrond is "the Lord of Rivendell and mighty among Elves and men" (I:297). He is a half-elven and had once upon a time the privilege to choose immortality. His daughter Arwen, also called the Evenstar of elves, is considered a "lady fair to look upon" and further, "her white arms and clear face were flawless and smooth, and the light of stars was in her bright eyes, grey as cloudless night; yet queenly she looked" (I:298). Arwen's beauty is so great that she I compared to Lúthien, who was "the fairest maiden […] of this world" (I:255). It is quite clear that Arwen's appearance has an enchanting effect on the opposite sex. At their first meeting Frodo is spellbound: "Such loveliness in living thing Frodo had never seen before nor imagined in his mind" (I:298). When Arwen looks on Frodo, "the light of her eyes fell on him from afar and pierces his heart (I:312).

Arwen's life is a life in the background and her place is in the home weaving banners for the battlefield. During the war of the Ring, she weaves a standard to be unfurled when the victory is won. The stark contrast between the male and female worlds, where males are active and females are passive, is further stressed due to the fact that while Arwen has to stay at home, her brothers "were out upon errantry: for they rode often far afield with the Rangers of the North, forgetting never their mother's torments in the dens of the Orcs" (I:298). We are never told whether Arwen objects to the traditional gender-roles or not. Her character functions mostly like an adornment and seems to be constructed only to embellish the story.

Arwen is in love with Aragorn, who is eventually revealed as the heir of the ancient kings of the West, and her love is reciprocated. However, their love is against the decree that forbids a change of the composition of races. As pointed out by Aragorn's mother: "For this lady is the noblest and fairest that now walks the earth. And it is not fit that mortal should wed with the Elf-kin" (III:416). Not only is mortality vs. immortality a hindrance, Elrond, Arwen's father has objections as well and tells Aragorn that "she [Arwen] is of lineage greater than yours" and furthermore, "too far above you" (III:417). Arwen is, like the "angles" in the

Victorian Age, put on a pedestal, and thereby suggested to be inaccessible for Aragorn. Elrond refuses to listen to Aragorn's proposal as long as he is only a homeless vagrant without possibilities to offer Arwen the high rank she deserves due to her birth and lineage. Elrond sets a condition to their union which implies that Aragorn should first gain the crown before they could marry. Later on when Aragorn actually becomes king, Arwen is allowed to choose between him and her father, who, together with all of his kindred, leaves Middle-earth for the ships that are going to take them into the Uttermost West. However, she chooses Aragorn, and thus a mortal life, a hard and painful destiny. The fact that immortally is preferred to mortally is obvious, because when Arwen first beheld Aragorn after a long parting "her choice was made and her doom appointed" (III:418). When it comes to Arwen's personality, it can be argued that obedience is an important character trait. The marriage to Aragorn implies that she must give up her immortality and become a being whose soul after her death will be separated from the souls of her kindred forever. However, when Arwen takes this step, and due to the fact that she patiently waits a long time for Aragorn to be king, she fulfils the conditions of her father.

In Western culture and literature, there are many prevalent stereotypes regarding female roles and identities. Conventionally, females are reduced to passive and submissive roles. It can be argued that the image of Arwen fits well into the stereotypical, patriarchal view of women prevailing in colonial Britain, that of staying at home performing their role. According to Skeparnides, *The Lord of the Rings* "has a somewhat definitive and chauvinistic appraisal of women as 'maidens' who must adhere to 'male' protectionism" (Skeparnides, 2002). Even though Arwen lets her heart decide and chooses marriage she is obedient and obliging, accepting her role, and is, therefore, never a threat to the heroic world of men.

The second female character in my discussion is Éowyn, Lady of Rohan. She is the daughter of Éomund and Théodwyn (Théoden's sister) and the sister of Éomer. When she is introduced into the story the focus is set on her appearance as well: "Very fair was her face, and her long hair was like river of gold, slender and tall she was in her white robe girt with sliver; but strong she seemed and stern as steel, a daughter of kings" (II:140). Éowyn too is trammelled into traditional gender-roles, albeit against her will. She is forced to take care of King Théoden who, because of the counsels of Wormtongue, has been completely unable to reign and further, incapable of taking care of himself. Éowyn develops a deep bitterness of life due to the fact that she has to stay at home when her brother and the other men ride away on errantry. This is a lot she detests: "Shall I always be left behind when the Riders depart, to mind the house while they win renown, and find food and beds when they return?" (III:55). To her great disappointment the answer to her question is: "You are a woman, and your part is

in the house" (III:55). In this statement, the views of patriarchal Britain are explicitly expressed. However, Éowyn objects: "But I am of the House of Eorl and not a serving-woman. I can ride and wield blade, and do not fear either pain or death" (III:55). What she does fear is the fate of being caged at home instead of doing great deeds together with the men and therefore she rebels against her inflicted destiny.

The character of Éowyn is the only female character that represents the potential of rebellion against the male power structure that characterises the trilogy's world. She resists being left behind and therefore takes the guise of a male soldier called Dernhelm and joins the host of Rohan. She rides on the same horse as Merry, one of the hobbits. He does not recognise her but sees in her eyes that she has the face of one without hope who goes in search of death. Thus, Éowyn is willing to offer her life for her rebellion. Nobody suspects her true identity until the battle of the Pelennor Fields. She closely follows King Théoden and when the Lord of the Nazgûl, a terrible flying monster, approaches to deliver him a death-blow, she intervenes. A prophesy has said that no living man could kill the Nazgûl and the terrible monster mocks her: "Hinder me? Thou fool. No living man may hinder me!" (III:129). Then Merry hears a laugh from Dernhelm/Éowyn who answers: "But no living man am I! You look upon a woman. Éowyn I am, Éomund's daughter" (III:129). Éowyn succeeds to kill the Lord of the Nazgûl: "A swift stroke she dealt, skilled and deadly. The outstretched neck she clove asunder, and the hewn head fell like a stone" (III:139). What is interesting is that she refers to herself as being the "daughter of Éomund", as well as the fact that she has to call out her sex, and it is this "overemphasis of gender that says a lot about the author's view on women" (Skeparnides, 2002). Significantly, Éowyn must take on male characteristics in order to overcome the evil powers of the Lord of the Nazgûl. Consequently, "women must become men and enter the world of men that is 'war' in *The Lord of the Rings* […] to defeat the evil of men (ibid.). It can be argued that by her way of acting, Éowyn is a threat to this world's strict division into male and female values and behaviour.

However, this threat is soon set aside due to marriage. Faramir, The Steward of Gondor, falls in love with her and convinces her to give up her projects. Faramir asks her to marry him, a proposal which she agrees to. She thus gives up the glory of the battle field for another life, the life of a married woman. When she marries Faramir, she becomes placid, mild and submissive. I would argue that, paradoxically enough, Éowyn is the female character that best fits into the stereotypical old-fashioned British pattern. Despite being a potential revolutionary, very strong on the surface, she represents the young woman who gives up her intentions and the role she prefers, learns what her place is and conforms to the more suitable

role as wife and mother. In other words, she regresses to the stereotypical submissive state of females performing traditional gender-roles. Order is restored.

Before summing up, a few considerations regarding evil and gender will be reflected upon. It is stated early in the trilogy that a matriarch is something negative. Bilbo says about the evil Gollum, a.k.a. Sméagol: "I have no doubt that Sméagol's grandmother was a matriarch" (I:75). Another evil monster is called Shelob and "she served none but herself, drinking the blood of Elves and Men" (II:141). All living creatures were her food and she multiplied in an intricate manner: "Far and wide her lesser broods, bastards of the miserable mates, her own offspring, that she slew, spread from glen to glen" (II:415). A not too farfetched interpretation might be that the female gender is associated with evil much unwanted in the world of Middle-earth.

To sum up, sections 4.2 and 4.3 have focused on racial as well as gender stereotypes in *The Lord of the Rings*. It has been argued that racism goes hand in hand with the view on gender. Examples of racial stereotypes from the texts have been given, examples which conform to conventional racist clichés of tribal Africans. It has also been argued that even though it is a story of cross-racial friendship, it is an external threat that unites the different races in Middle-earth. After the fall of Sauron, the different races will be separated again and in this new and better world there will be no place for orcs and lesser folks. Racism works explicitly as well as implicitly, the trilogy seems to have inherited many British imperialist assumptions regarding race, and old clichés are passed on. Due to the fact that, as pointed out by Jim McGuigan, the "legacy of the Empire carries with it the trace of white supremacy" (2010:63), the findings may be useful in an educational setting.

Regarding gender stereotypes, two female characters have been discussed. The aim has been to show how these characters fit into the stereotypical view of women in Britain when it was highly patriarchal in its structure. According to Kathryn Jacobs gender stereotypes in literature "can prevent young adults from reaching their full potential as human beings by depriving them of suitable role models and reinforcing age-old gender constraints in society" (2004:20). Bearing this in mind, the following chapter will, together with racial issues, delve more deeply into the question on how the findings can be adapted to the concept of intercultural learning at school.

Finally, as far as the first research question is concerned – if there is any basis for the claim that *The Lord of the Rings* is permeated by stereotypes of race and gender, I would argue that the answer is an unambiguous yes. Furthermore, the answer to my second question – how the stereotyping of race and gender is expressed throughout the trilogy is indicated – it is both explicitly as well as implicitly stated, the trilogy is passing on old clichés unseemly in the

21th century. That being said, how can these findings be adapted in a classroom setting in order to make the students aware of the notions of stereotypes?

5. A suggested teaching plan

5.1 Pedagogical approach

Chapter 2 dealt with the notions of intercultural learning and intercultural competence and in the previous chapter it was stated that *The Lord of the Rings* is permeated by stereotypes regarding both race and gender. The overall goal of this chapter is to provide a teaching plan for making students aware of the notion of stereotypes with focus on race and gender in order to promote their intercultural competence. The underlying thought of the teaching plan is Vygotsky's (1999) theory of how working together can move us through the zones of individual proximal development. He argues that students can, in cooperation and with help from others, do what they cannot yet do alone. To some extent Rosenblatt's (1994) reader-response theory also permeates the pedagogical approach and according to her "reading is a 'transaction' in which the reader and the text converse together in a particular situation to make meaning" (Wilhelm, 2008:27).

In the theoretical framework it is pointed out that stereotypes are passed on from one generation to the next, often without us realising it – therefore every new generation has to be enlightened about the negative consequences of stereotyping. This is in line with Barrett, M., Byram, M., Lázár, I., Mompoint Gaillard, P., & Philippou, S. who claim that intercultural competence is "not acquired automatically, but instead needs to be learned, practiced and maintained throughout life" (Barret et al., 2014:10). Intercultural competence is, among other things, acquired through formal education, therefore the classroom seems to be an appropriate learning context.

More than ever we are bombarded with stereotypical messages regarding race and gender in both mass media and social media. It is important that students be aware of the fact that the limits of stereotypes do not have to be accepted. Furthermore, they need to be aware that they, themselves, have the power to question the stereotypical images conveyed by media.

Changing attitudes is not easily done and teachers often have a feeling that their lectures on this subject fall on deaf ears. This is also in line with Barret et al. who claim: "Where real changes in *attitudes, knowledge* and *understanding, skills* and *action* are desired, lecturing does not have much of an effect" (2014:37). Instead they advocate what is called experimental learning or "learning by doing" involving "experience, comparison, analysis, reflection and

co-operative action" (ibid.). In the suggested teaching plan these keywords have been taken into consideration.

The teaching plan has both the theoretical framework and the findings as a starting point and is linked to the curriculum as well as the syllabus and the learning objectives will be offered for each teaching session. The intended target group is English 5 course in the Swedish upper secondary school, year 1. The knowledge gained from the project is hopefully a beneficial starting point to be used in the following courses, that is, English 6 and 7. The teaching plan comprises a three week project with two 80 minutes lessons per week, all in all six lessons (eight hours). The project starts by introducing the genre of fantasy as well as the author and the books. When the students have acquainted themselves with both the genre and the works, the next step is to explore the notion of colonialism as my findings indicate that the racist views permeating the trilogy have their roots in British colonialism. The students are also given an opportunity to compare the concept of colonialism with today's situation. Then the project moves on to discuss old and current stereotypes of race and gender with a focus on the US in the fifties. The novels were written in the middle of the fifties, and due to the fact that literature is a product of its time it seems important to explore the time they were published. The reason I have chosen the US is because racial discrimination and segregation have been major issues there since the era of slavery. The Civil Rights Movement, as the battle for racial equality is called, won its first victories in the Supreme Court in the fifties. Parallel to those legal cases were non-violent protests and marches, and Martin Luther King entered the arena as the movement's leader. Given the fact, that these momentous events mirror the spirit of the time, the US seems to be an appropriate choice.

The underlying theme in all lessons is how the *Lord of the Rings* can be used to visualise the notion of stereotypes of race and gender and two lessons are especially devoted to delve deeper into the matter. Finally, the project ends with a written examination. After finishing the project, the students will hopefully have developed a critical approach regarding culturally inherited stereotypes. Moreover, it is hoped that they will be aware of the negative consequences of stereotyping race and gender in their own culture, an awareness that is sorely needed in an egalitarian, multicultural society where gender equality is a fundamental value.

Due to the fact that the trilogy comprises more than 1350 pages it would be too vast a reading project to implement at school, therefore suggested excerpts (see appendices) will be used in order to explore the main features. These can act as starting points in order to define the notion of stereotypes. For the same reason I have also deliberately excluded the films, except the official trailer which I use to catch the immediate interest of the students.

5.2 Lesson 1 – Fantasy and *The Lord of the Rings* (80 minutes)

In the theoretical framework it was stated that fantasy is a genre dealing with imaginary worlds and magical or supernatural elements. By using the fantasy genre Tolkien could place his story in an idealised and conservative past. Furthermore, he could experiment with the characters more freely than in other genres. The findings suggest that the description of characters with exaggerated good or evil traits involves a racist world-view with Aryan preferences. Maybe the genre itself acts as a smoke screen that conceals both stereotypes and racism in a treacherous way.

In the first lesson the concept of fantasy will be discussed and Tolkien and the trilogy will be presented. The students will briefly discuss different genres before they will go more deeply into the fantasy genre by watching two YouTube clips. The first clip "Fiction Book Genres – What is Fantasy" does not mention the concept of stereotyping, however, I consider the clip worthwhile in order to present the genre in a catching way. Then they are going to read parts from the very first chapter and try to find special features of the fantasy genre. The lesson also includes some of the parts specified in syllabus for English 5 where it is stated that the teaching should cover:

- Literature and other fiction
- Content and form in different kinds of fiction
- Coherent spoken language and conversations of different kinds […]
- Processing of their own and others' oral and written communications in order to vary, clarify and specify, as well as to create structure and adapt these to purpose and situation
- Strategies for listening and reading in different ways and for different purposes (Skolverket.se)

Learning outcomes should support the central goal of the lesson or the course as well as describing what students should know at the end of each lesson or a course. In every lesson hereafter the intended learning outcomes are listed after what is stated in the curriculum and/or in the syllabus.

Intended learning outcomes
- Students will gain knowledge about different genres, especially fantasy
- Students will gain knowledge about Tolkien

- Students will extend their vocabulary (make believe, fairy tale, ogre, puberty, contemporary, quest, gazillion, portal, issue, protagonist, bully, conquer, average)

Preparation and materials
- The three books
- Equipment in order to show YouTube clips
- Appendices 1-3

Activity 1 – (15 minutes)
- The lesson starts by asking the students what different genres they know (the teacher writes on the whiteboard)
- Show two YouTube clips
- First clip: "Fiction Book Genres – What is Fantasy" (5:24)
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n_cqszvdTqk
- Second clip: "Fantasy Genre Trailer" (2:22)
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K922K4wtJyg
- Discussion: Have you seen some of the films in the trailer? Do you remember some characteristics regarding the fantasy genre mentioned in the clips? The teacher compiles the characteristics on the white board
- Then the discussion goes on with the question: Can one find any of these characteristics in the real world? Give examples!

Activity 2 – Presentation of Tolkien (15 minutes)
- Show the PP-presentation (*appendix 1*)

Activity 3 – Presentation of *The Lord of the Rings* (45 minutes)
- Show the three books and ask the students what they know about them
- Show some critics that just praise the trilogy/films (*appendix 2*)
- Show "The Lord of the Ring Trilogy (2001-2003) Official Supertrailer - Elijah Wood, Ian McKellan Movie HD" (5:10) from
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cnf4h5HT4dc
- Hand out the text excerpt from the very first chapter (*appendix 3*) and let the students read the text for themselves. They are also asked to underline unfamiliar words.

- Meanwhile the students are reading the teacher writes down the questions below on the whiteboard
- Discuss the unfamiliar words
- Discuss the following questions:
    1. What kind of fantasy features do you find in the text?
    2. Did the excerpt meet your expectations?
    3. What has caught your attentions?
    4. What is happening in your head when you read the very first paragraph?
    5. What are you imagining might happen next?

Closure – exit ticket (five minutes)

- Students fill in an exit ticket (*appendix 4*)

5.3 Lesson 2 – Colonialism (80 minutes)

The findings show that there is explicit racism in the trilogy reflected in the stereotypical depiction of good and evil conveying traditional racist clichés in colonial Britain. In the theoretical framework it was stated that racial stereotyping convinced the white man to believe in his superiority. This lesson focuses on the concept of colonialism as a starting point for stereotyping. The aim is that the students develop an understanding of how colonialism served as a breeding ground for stereotyping from their reading and analysing of Tolkien's text. In the curriculum it is stated that:

> [a] historical perspective in teaching enables students to develop an understanding of the present, and the preparedness for the future. Education should also develop understanding of the relativity of knowledge and the ability to think in dynamic terms. (Skolverket, 2013:6)

According to the syllabus, the course English 5 should cover:

- Living conditions, attitudes, values and traditions, as well as social, political and cultural conditions in different context and parts of the world where English is used.
- Spoken language, also with different social and dialect features, and texts that instruct, relate, summarise, explain, discuss, report and argue, also via film and other media. (Skolverket)

Intended learning outcomes

- Students will gain knowledge about the concepts of colonialism/imperialism

- Students will reflect on the current situation in the world as far as imperialism is concerned

Preparation and material

- Equipment in order to show a YouTube clip
- Photocopiable questions, see below (*appendix 5*)

Introduction – Short repetition (15 minutes)

- The teacher summarises the last lesson and gives a short lecture on colonialism

Activity – Film about colonialism and discussions (60 minutes)

Show the film "European Imperialism for Dummies" by Keith Hughes (23:46)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t_rHrGaoh4w

The class discusses what they have seen with these questions as a starting point. The questions are handed out to the students before the film.

1. What was the difference between colonialism and imperialism?
2. What four reasons, according to Keith Hughes are the driving forces behind imperialism?
3. What is "The White Man's Burden?
4. Why were missionaries sent to Africa?
5. What are the negatives of imperialism? The positives?
6. What is the difference between Spanish and British colonialism?
7. Why was it hard to get in to Africa?
8. What was "The Scramble for Africa"?
9. Why was/is Africa so coveted?
10. Reflections about the picture from the Boer war?
11. How is it today as far as superior and inferior parts of the world are concerned?

Summarising – (5 minutes)

- Exit ticket (*appendix 6*)

5.4 Lesson 3 – Old and current stereotypes of race and gender (80 minutes)

In the theoretical framework it was stated that literature is a product of its time. Tolkien grew up in a conservative environment with traditional gender roles and the trilogy was written

between 1954 and 1955 and patriarchal views permeated society. In the US, racial segregation was still existent and the racism was, to a great extent, institutionalised; "whites-only" buses is only one example. In the US the racial discrimination was more strikingly visible than in Britain, therefore I consider the US a relevant example. The aim with this lesson is to focus on stereotypes regarding race and gender in the fifties and compare them with today's situation as far as similarities and differences are concerned.

Earlier it was pointed out that stereotypes involve generalisations, attaching the same label on everybody in a group of people. Negative stereotypes fertilise our biases and prejudices and consequently have an enormous impact on our interactions with other people and may lead to discrimination of other people. School has an important role to promote tolerance and understanding of others, therefore exploring the negative consequences of stereotyping is an important objective.

The curriculum states that:

> [t]he school should promote understanding of other people and the ability to empathise.
> No one in school should be subjected to discrimination on the grounds of gender,
> ethnic affiliation, religion or other belief system, transgender identity or its expression,
> sexual orientation, age or functional impairment, or to other forms of degrading
> treatment. (Skolverket, 2013:4)

The lesson also covers the following parts of the syllabus in English 5:

- Oral […] production and interaction of various kinds, also in more formal settings, where students instruct, narrate, summarise, explain, comment, assess, give reasons for their opinions, discuss and argue

- Strategies for contributing to and actively participating in discussions related to societal and working life (Skolverket)

Intended learning outcomes

- To understand the notion of stereotypes

- To know about racism in the US

- To compare old and new stereotypes of race and gender

- To extend vocabulary (words from a film transcript)

<u>Preparation and materials</u>

- Equipment in order to show YouTube clips
- Quizlet accounts
- Transcript (*appendix 7*)

<u>Introduction - (ten minutes)</u>

- The teacher repeats what was said the last lesson about colonialism
- Brief discussion about stereotypes regarding race and gender

<u>Activity 1 - (20 minutes)</u>

The class is divided into smaller groups and the students discuss the following questions written on the white board:

- What stereotypes regarding gender are you aware of?
- What stereotypes regarding race are you aware of?

A spokesperson from every group presents their discussion and the findings are compared.

<u>Activity 2 - (30 minutes)</u>

- Watch the clip "Segregation in the southern USA (Jim Crow Laws period Photos)" (4:15)

  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c-7eNRB2_0Q&nohtml5=False
- The class discuss the photos. How is it today?
- Watch the clip "1950s vs. 2000s - A Comparison of Gender Roles, Family Life, and Social Life" (4:51)

  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=azvdwHySVjI
- Discussion of the clip

<u>Activity 3 - (15 minutes)</u>

- The students read the transcript from the film (*appendix 7)* and underline unfamiliar words
- Homework: Fill in your unfamiliar words on your Quizlet.com account and practise at home (test next time)

Closure – (five minutes)

- Exit ticket (*appendix 8*)

5.5 Lesson 4 – Stereotypes of race in *The Lord of the Rings* (80 minutes)

In the theoretical framework is was stated that racial stereotypes often involve the concept of an uncivilised savage from "The Dark Continent" in need of being civilised by the white man. Furthermore, the analysis of the trilogy clearly indicates that the white man is superior. Various expressions of xenophobia and discrimination are common in Sweden; therefore it is of great importance to promote intercultural competence by helping students discover racism, both explicitly and implicitly expressed. Literature is an excellent vehicle for such promotion as it encourages students to enter the experiences and perspectives of others and according to Jeffrey D. Wilhelm literature is "a doorway into the world of conversing with and understanding others" (2008:51). The aim with this lesson is to try to discover stereotypical descriptions of race in the text excerpts provided (see appendix 9).

According to the curriculum "[a]ll tendencies to discrimination or degrading treatment should be actively combated. Xenophobia and intolerance must be confronted with knowledge, open discussion and active measures" (Skolverket, 2013:4) and in the core content of the syllabus for English 5 it is stated that the reception skills should cover:

- Literature and other fiction
- Strategies for […] reading in different ways and for different purposes

Intended learning outcomes

- Create an awareness regarding the negative consequences of stereotypes regarding race
- Use reading strategies in order to discover stereotypes of race

Preparation and material

- Text excerpts (*appendix 9*)

Activity 1 – Test (five minutes)

- The students make the test on Quizlet.com (last lesson's homework) and show the teacher the result

Activity 2 – (five minutes)

- Presenting the task

The teacher presents a short repetition of the concept of stereotypes in order to gain focus. The students are asked to read the texts with a critical eye with the following questions in mind:

1. How is the enemy depicted?
2. What contrasts can you find in the texts?
3. What is said about different "races"?

Activity 3 - (40 minutes)

- Student read the excerpts, underline unfamiliar words and discuss in groups (40 minutes)

Activity 4 – (30 minutes)

- Discussion of findings in class lead by the teacher

5.6 Lesson 5 – Stereotypes of gender in *The Lord of the Rings* (80 Minutes)

The theoretical framework deals with women's situation in the Victorian age and early twentieth century. During this time patriarchal views permeated society and the world was truly male-dominated. This was reflected in literature as well, and my findings indicate that the stereotypes of gender are striking in the trilogy. Women are reduced to passive and submissive beings staying at home while men are active, strong and energetic.

In this lesson the students will use their knowledge about stereotypes in order to discover culturally inherited stereotypes of gender. This awareness is crucial for the promotion of gender equality. In addition, as most of the classic authors are men, it can be argued that literature itself might be seen as a carrier of patriarchal structures.

The curriculum states that equality between genders is a fundamental value that education should represent and impart (Skolverket, 2013:4). In the core content of the syllabus for English 5 it is stated that the reception skills should cover:

- Literature and other fiction
- Strategies for […] reading in different ways and for different purposes

Intended learning outcomes

- Create an awareness regarding the negative consequences of stereotypes regarding gender
- Use reading strategies in order to discover stereotypes of gender

Preparation and material

- Text excerpts (appendix 10)

Activity 1 – (five minutes)

- Presenting the task

The teacher presents a short repetition of the concept of stereotypes in order to gain focus. The students are asked to read the texts with a critical eye trying to explore stereotypes of gender.

Activity 2 - (40 minutes)

- Students read the excerpts and discuss in groups with the following questions in mind:
    1. How are women depicted?
    2. What about gender-roles?

Activity 3 – (35 minutes)

- Discussion of findings in class

5.7 Lesson 6 – Formal writing (80 minutes)

The teaching project ends with a written examination which paraphrases the layout of the national test. According to the syllabus the teaching should cover:

- Written production and interaction of various kinds, also in more formal settings, where students instruct, narrate, summarise, explain, comment, assess, give reasons for their opinions, discuss and argue
- Processing of their own and other's […] written communications in order to vary, clarify and specify, as well as to create structure and adapt these to their purpose and situation (Skolverket)

- Develop formal writing skills and use the acquired knowledge regarding stereotypes as well as appropriate vocabulary in the area

Preparation and material

- The students can choose from two topics. In the first one they are going to discuss when stereotyping might be an innocent fun and when it contributes to biases and prejudice. In the second one they are going to argue and take a stand on an issue on stereotypes with negative consequences. The word limit is 250-600 words, that is, the same word limit as in the national test
- The assignment is enclosed in *appendix 11*

6. Conclusion and further research

The purpose of this master thesis has been to explore the stereotypes of race and gender that permeate Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* as well as to show how the findings can be applied to the concept of intercultural learning at school. The starting-point regarding the term racism has been a "belief in racial superiority: the belief that people or different races have different qualities and abilities, and that some races are inherently superior or inferior" (*Encarta*, 1999). I would argue that this explanation can accordingly be applied to *The Lord of the Rings*, since the different races are categorised due to their characteristics. Middle-earth is inhabited by races that differ markedly from each other in appearance, language and behaviour. Orcs are black, disgusting creatures, ugly, brutal and violent. Elves and men are white, beautiful, lordly, a kind of cultural élite. Somewhere in between are the hobbits, quite ordinary but lovable, extremely loyal and very brave when they have to be. Individuals within the different races do not vary from the pattern; to know one is to know them all. Moreover, they are stereotypically depicted as either good or evil. Elves and men are superior, ethnically pure and Aryan-like. An orc is without exception an enemy and a hobbit would never ever be on the same side as an orc. What Tolkien seems to tell us is that orcs are bred to be bad and that they are inherently inferior. In combination with the stereotypical image of the orcs resembling stereotypical tribal Africans it is implicitly suggested that the black man is inferior to the white man.

In this master thesis I have explored racism working on two different levels throughout the trilogy. On the one hand, there is explicit racism reflected in the stereotypical depiction of

good and evil conveying traditional racist clichés in colonial Britain. On the other hand, there is implicit racism suggesting a dividing up of people into better and lesser folks. The implicit racism can also be seen in the notion of blood which becomes central: the purer the better and a mixing of races always results in a degeneration of better folks. This implicit racism further involves a hierarchical world-view, placing the white man at the top and showing striking similarities to the views of Nazi-Germany.

In *The Lord of the Rings*, racism goes hand in hand with the view on gender – the very few female characters are stereotypical and their role is the traditional one, staying at home while men are doing deeds far away in foreign countries. Males act and females react, and the only exception is Éowyn, a potential rebel, but in the end she learns her place and conforms to a more suitable role as a wife and potential mother, order is restored. The world of Middle-earth is a world of traditional gender-roles resembling the patriarchal views of Victorian and early twentieth century Britain. In Middle-earth, there are no dangerous feminists, not even in Mordor, the kingdom of Sauron.

Tolkien grew up in a predominantly white Britain when imperialist as well as patriarchal views permeated British society. Looking into the historical context of the trilogy, it is safe to argue that the fictional universe of Middle-earth has close links to an institutionally racist environment and that *The Lord of the Rings* passes on racist views with sources in colonialism as well as imperialism. The work depicts the never-ending theme of the fight between good and evil. I would argue that Tolkien's fictional heroes have basically the same racist attitude to the world as the Europeans imperialists in the 1800s. The trilogy tells us that in a perfect world the white man is superior and there is no place for the inferior, that is, lesser folks as orcs and the like. It is Tolkien's unambiguous polarisation of good and evil that provides deeply problematic elements, which in today's context appear blatantly racist.

However, the books make fascinating as well as enchanting reading and they give us suspense and also reassurance that all will be well in the end. It could be argued that most people do not read them from a racist perspective. However, as Henning points out, "we should see them for what they are and know that [racism] is their appeal" (Henning, 2001).

The second part of my master thesis deals with how my findings can be adapted to classroom activities in order to develop critical thinking and promote intercultural competence. A teaching plan of six lessons suitable for English 5 at upper secondary school has been suggested. The first two lessons deal with the genre of fantasy and the concept of colonialism. Then it moves on to discuss old and current stereotypes of race and gender before delving more deeply in to the specific stereotypes of race and gender in *The Lord of the Rings*. The project ends with a written examination based on the layout from the national test.

In conclusion, I suggest that text excerpts from *The Lord of the Rings* are appropriate to use when promoting intercultural competence in the classroom as both books and films are still enormously popular. I also suggest a cross-curricular cooperation between the subjects of history and English as there are many overlapping themes that can be explored, for example colonialism and the ideologies of Nazi-Germany. Hopefully, project work might culminate in a developed intercultural competence among those involved. A suggestion for further research is to conduct a study when the class is divided into two groups. The first group reads the excerpts with no previous preconceptions. The other group reads the same excerpts through a lens of stereotypes of race and gender as a point of departure. The readings of the two groups are then compared and analysed.

It goes without saying that highlighting the concept of stereotypes is a constantly recurring task for teachers and if this can be done using literature the students recognise and are attracted to, much is won. Hopefully, it will help to develop their critical thinking which is extremely important in a world rampant with prejudices and stereotyping galore. Our students are huge consumers of mass media and social media where xenophobia and intolerance flourish. This must be confronted with knowledge and open discussions in order to nurture the fundamental values of respect and tolerance in the world we all share.

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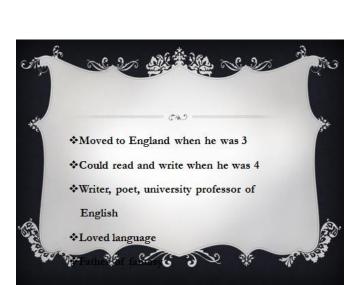McGuigan, J. (2010). Cultural Analysis. Los Angeles etc.: SAGE.

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Lesson 1 – PowerPoint presentation
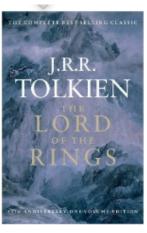
Lesson 1 – Positive critics

Fantasy Book Review: Lord of the Rings Book Review:

by Chris Smithson:

> Rating
> 10.0/10
> The Lord of the Rings a universal and all-embracing tale, a justly celebrated classic.

Concluding, J.R.R. Tolkien's classic trilogy The Lord of the Rings is a wonder to the imagination. The books are great in every aspect and could not be improved upon in any way. If there is only one fantasy book you read, make it Tolkien's Lord of the Rings.

Goodreads:

The Lord of the Rings (The Lord of the Rings #1–3)

by J.R.R. Tolkien

★★★★½ 4.46 · ▤ Rating Details · 378,213 Ratings · 8,297 Reviews

A fantastic starter set for new Tolkien fans or readers interested in rediscovering the magic of Middle-earth, this three-volume box set features paperback editions of the complete trilogy -- *The Fellowship of the Ring, The Two Towers,* and *The Return of the King* -- each with art from the New Line Productions feature film on the cover.

J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* ...more

Want to Read ▾

October 31, 1954

BOOK REVIEW | 'THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE RING'

The Hero Is a Hobbit by W. H. AUDEN

Mr. Tolkien has succeeded superbly, and what happened in the year of the

Shire 1418 in the Third Age of Middle Earth is not only fascinating in A. D. 1954

but also a warning and an inspiration. No fiction I have read in the last five

years has given me more joy than "The Fellowship of the Ring."

Lesson 1 - Text excerpt from the first chapter in part I

CHAPTER 1

A LONG-EXPECTED JOURNEY

When Mr. Bilbo Baggins of Bag End announced that he would shortly be celebrating his eleventy-first birthday with a party of special magnificence, there was much talk and excitement in Hobbiton.

Bilbo was very rich and peculiar, and had been the wonder of the Shire for sixty years ever since his remarkable disappearance and unexpected return. He riches he had brought back from his travels had now become a local legend, and it was probably believed, whatever the old folk might say, that the Hill at Bag End was full of tunnels stuffed with treasure. And if that was not enough for fame, there was also his prolonged vigour to marvel at. Time wore on, but it seemed to have little effect on Mr. Baggins. At ninety he was much the same as at fifty. At ninety-nine they began to call him *well-preserved*: but *unchanged* would have been nearer the mark. There were some that shook their heads and thought this was too much of a good thing; it seemed unfair that anyone should possess (apparently) perpetual youth as well as (reputedly) inexhaustible wealth.

'It will have to be paid for,' they said. 'It isn't natural, and trouble will come of it!'

But far trouble had not come; and as Mr. Baggins was generous with his money, most of the people were willing to forgive him his oddities and his good fortune. He remained on visiting terms with his relatives (except, of course, the Sackville-Bagginses), and he had many devoted admirers among the hobbits of poor and unimportant families. But he had no close friends, until some of his younger cousins began to grow up.

The eldest of these, and Bilbo's favourite, was young Frodo Baggins. When Bilbo was ninety-nine he adopted Frodo as his heir, and brought him to live at Bag End; and the hopes of the Sackville-Bagginses were finally dashed. Bilbo and Frodo happened to have the same birthday, September 22nd. 'You had better come and live here, Frodo my lad,' said Bilbo one day; 'and then we can celebrate our birthday-parties comfortably together.' At that time Frodo was still in *tweens*, as the hobbits called the irresponsible twenties between childhood and coming of age at thirty-three.

Twelve more years passed. Each year the Bagginses had given very lively combined birthday-parties at Bag End; but now it was understood that something quite exceptional was being planned for that autumn. Bilbo was going to be *eleventy-one*, 111, a rather curious number, and a very respectable age for a hobbit (the Old Took himself had only reached 130); and Frodo was going to be *thirty-three*, 33, an important number: the date of his 'coming age.' (I:27-28)

Days passed and The Day drew nearer. And odd-looking wagon laden with odd-looking packages rolled into Hobbiton one evening and toiled up the hill to Bag-End. The startled hobbits peered out of lamplit doors to gape at it. It was driven by outlandish folk, singing strange songs: dwarves with long beards and deep hoods. A few of them remained at Bag

End. At the end of the second week in September a cart came in through Bywater from the direction of the Brandywine Bridge in broad daylight. An old man was driving it alone. He wore a tall pointed blue hat, a long grey cloak, and a silver scarf. He had a long white beard and bushy eye-brows that stuck out beyond the brim of his hat. Small hobbit-children ran after the cart all through Hobbiton and right up the hill. It had a cargo of fire-works, as they rightly guessed. At Bilbo's front door the old man began to unload: there were great bundles of fireworks of all sorts and shapes, each labelled with a large red G   and the elf-rune, ᚼ.

   That was Gandalf's mark, of course, and the old man was Gandalf the Wizard, whose fame in the Shire was due mainly to his skill with fires, smokes, and lights. His real business was far more difficult and dangerous, but the Shire-folk knew nothing about it. (I:32)

Lesson 1 – Exit ticket

1.   What have you learnt about fantasy today?_____

_____

_____

_____

2.   Which was the best part of the lesson? Why?_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Lesson 2 – Colonialism

1. What is the difference between colonialism and imperialism?
2. What four reasons, according to Keith Hughes are the driving forces behind imperialism?
3. What is "The White Man's Burden?
4. Why were missionaries sent to Africa?
5. What are the negatives of imperialism? The positives?
6. What is the difference between Spanish and British colonialism?
7. Why was it hard to get into Africa?
8. What was "The Scramble for Africa"?
9. Why was/is Africa so coveted?
10. Reflections about the picture from the Boer war?
11. How is it today as far as superior and inferior parts of the world are concerned?

Lesson 2 – Exit ticket

1. What have you learnt about colonialism today?_____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

2. What do you remember best from today's lesson?_____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

Lesson 3 – Transcript

The 1950's. Known for its greaser styles, doo-wop music, and breakthrough advertising techniques, the 50's have remained memorable decades after its passing. Its styles and morals have continued to be an inspiration and find admiration even in today's life.
The 2000's. Technicolor, Technological, Techno-you-name-it. The 2000s completely re-mastered modern living. iPhones, emails, Jason Derulo - With such drastic differences, how could the 1950s and the 2000s be even remotely the same? Taking a closer look into gender roles, familial structures, and social norms, we discover the similarities and differences between these two eras.

We like to call the 50's "The Simpler Times." Romanticizing the past is fun and all, but if you look at some ideas of the time, the 50s may be better of referred to as the simple-minded times. Gender roles, for example, were extremely limiting. Men were claimed as the alphas - they made the decisions, they went to college, they ran the businesses, they brought home the bacon. Meanwhile, women were handed the submissive end of the stick, being expected to stay home, cook, clean, and watch the children. Their highest option for education was attending finishing school, and even then, marriage was still pushed onto them to be their one true aspiration. Women who wanted more for themselves were claimed to be crazy. Perhaps not the wisest thing to say to those who handle the household knives.
Jumping to today's time, women have more options than ever. College is not only available for everyone now, it's insisted upon. Women can hold jobs of high power, and can have further aspirations than motherhood or wifely duties. In fact, many households are now dual-income as women branch out into the workforce.

However, as much progress as the 2000's have made, the 50's sexism has still found a way to stick around. Though women have more options for jobs, their pay is still 23% less than that of men's, even when they perform the same amount of work for the same amount of hours. Furthermore, women only are 15% of the fortune 500 CEOS. So while many accomplishments have been made for women in the workforce, we still have ways to go.

The 1950's family life was white picket fence perfection. It consisted of a daily routine of dad leaving for work while mom got the kids ready for school, cleaned the house, and began dinner. By the time dad came home, dinner was on the table and the family would sit down and enjoy conversation with each other. Men, again, were the alphas, and were seen as the head of the household. They ran the family checkbook, and made decisions for the family. Though women basically kept the house afloat, they were seen as substandard to their husbands. Sons were expected to follow in their father's footsteps of one day being successful businessmen with a lovely doting wife, while daughters were brought up learning how to one day be the perfect wife and mother.

Today, families can be incredibly diverse. Instead of just finding heterosexual couples, you can find single parents, step-parents, and gay couples all living their lives as families. More

interracial couples are prevalent now, something that was once taboo in the 50's. Income provider role isn't set on one person, with many different variations available, and children of either sex are taught to want success in life, not just a marriage. Family lives overall these days lead to more open-minded, ambitious generations.

The 50's are probably most idealized for how they ran their social lives. The 50's are known for their time of drive-in-movie-dates, and their swell way of speaking. Physical affection during this time is always portrayed as very conservative - most couples even slept in separate beds. For high schoolers then, with communication means not quite so vast yet, speaking to friends meant meeting down at soda parlors or dancing while the jukebox played. These dances have become a trademark style of the era. Insert the selfie generation. With iPhones and the Internet kicking off in the new millennium, new ways to communicate were invented faster than you could post a selfie. No longer limited to just phone calls, new forms of communication included, texting, instant messaging, social media sites, and web calls. Now, reaching your friends was just a send button away. New slang was developed among these times as well, including with a variety of -cough cough- interesting new acronyms and phrases.

We've come a long way since the 50's, and many things have improved for the better. Gender roles have opened up, familial settings have become more diverse, and social norms are adapting to this crazy, technology-driven life. Hmm. Just think what'll have changed in the next 60 years.[1]

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[1] *1950s vs. 2000s - A Comparison of Gender Roles, Family Life, and Social Life.* Retrieved April 15, 2016 from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=azvdwHySVjI, published September 26, 2014.

Lesson 3 – Exit ticket

1. What have you learnt about stereotypes today?_____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

2. Which was the best part of the lesson? Why?_____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

Lesson 4 – Text excerpts from parts I, II and II

From part I, *The Fellowship of the Ring:*

There was a rush of hoarse laughter, like the fall of sliding stones into a pit; amid the clamour a deep voice was raised in command. Doom, boom, doom went the drums in the deep.

With a quick movement Gandalf stepped before the narrow opening of the door and thrust forward his staff. There was a dazzling flash that lit the chamber and the passage outside. For an instant the wizard looked out. Arrows whined and whistled down the corridor as he sprang back.

'There are Orcs, very many of them, 'he said. 'And some are large and evil: black Uruks of Mordor. For the moment they are hanging back, but there is something else there. A great cave-troll, I think, or more than one. There is no hope of escape that way.'

'And no hope at all, it they come at the other door as well,' said Boromir.

'There is no sound outside here yet,' said Aragorn, who was standing by the eastern door listening. 'The passage on this side plunges straight down a stair: it plainly does not lead back towards the hall. But it is no good flying blindly this way with the pursuit just behind. We cannot block the doors. Its key is gone and the lock is broken, and it opens inwards. We must do something to delay the enemy first. We will make them fear the Chamber of Mazarbul!' he said grimly, feeling the edge of his sword, Andúril.

Heavy feet were heard in the corridor. Boromir flung himself against the door and heaved it to; then he wedged it with broken sword-blades and splinters of wood. The Company retreated to the other side of the chamber. But they hand no chance to flee yet. There was a blow on the door that made it quiver:; and then it began to grind slowly open, driving back the wedges. A huge arm and shoulder, with dark skin of greenish scales, was thrust through the widening gap. Then a great, flat, toeless foot was forced through below. There was a dead silence outside.

Boromir leaped forward and hewed at the arm with all his might; but his sword rang, glanced aside, and fell from his shaken hand. The blade was notched.

Suddenly, and to his own surprise, Frodo felt a hot wrath blaze up in his heart. 'The Shire!' he cried, and springing beside Boromir, he stooped, and stabbed with Sting at the hideous foot. There was a bellow, and the foot jerked back, nearly wrenching Sting from Frodo's arm. Black drops dripped from the blade and smoked on the floor. Boromir hurled himself against the door and slammed it again.

'One for the Shire!' cried Aragorn. 'The hobbit's bite is deep! You have a good blade, Frodo son of Drogo!'

There was a crash on the door, followed by crash after crash. Rams and hammers were beating against it. It cracked and staggered back, and opening grew suddenly wide. Arrows came whistling in, but struck the northern wall, and fell harmlessly to the floor. There was a horn-blast and a rush of feet, and orcs one after another leaped into the chamber.

How many there were the company could not count. The affray was sharp, but the orcs were dismayed by the fierceness of the defence. Legolas shot two through the throat. Gimli hewed the legs from another that had sprung up on Balin's tomb. Boromir and Aragorn slew

many. When thirteen had fallen the rest fled shrieking, leaving the defenders unharmed, except for Sam who had a scratch along the scalp. A quick duck had saved him; and he had felled his orc: a sturdy thrust with his Barrow-blade. A fire was smouldering in his brown eyes that would have made ted Sandyman step backwards, if he had seen it.

'Now is the time!' cried Gandalf. 'Let us go, before the trolls returns!'

But even as they retreated, and before Pippin and Merry had reached the stair outside, a huge orc-chieftain, almost man-high, clad in black mail from head to foot, leaped into the chamber; behind him his followers clustered in the doorway. His broad flat face was swart, his eyes were like coals, and his tongue was red; he wielded a great spear. With a thrust of his huge hide shield he turned Boromir's sword and bore him backwards, throwing him to the ground. Diving under Aragorn's blow with the speed of a striking snake he charged into the Company and thrust with his spear straight at Frodo. The blow caught him on the right side, and Frodo was hurled against the wall and pinned. Sam, with a cry, hacked at the spear-shaft, and it broke. But even as the orc flung down the truncheon and swept his scimitar, Andúril came down upon his helm. There was a flash like flame and the helm burst asunder. The orc fell with cloven head. His followers fled howling, as Boromir and Aragorn sprang at them.

Doom, doom went the drums in the deep. The great voice rolled out again.

'Now!' shouted Gandalf. 'Now is the last chance. Run for it!' (I:425-427)

Arrows fell among them. One struck Frodo and sprang back. Another pierced Gandalf's hat and stuck there like a black feather. Frodo looked behind. Beyond the fire he saw swarming black figures: there seemed to be hundreds of orcs. They brandished spears and scimitars which shone red as blood in the firelight. *Doom, doom* rolled the drum-beats, growing louder and louder, *doom, doom*. (I:432)

From part II, *The Two Towers:*

The sky was quickly clearing and the sinking moon was shining brightly. But the light brought little hope to the Riders of the Mark. The enemy before them seemed to have grown rather than diminished, and still more were pressing up from the valley through the breach. The sortie upon the Rock gained only a brief respite. The assault on the gates was redoubled. Against the Deeping Wall the hosts of Isengard roared like a sea. Orcs and hillmen swarmed about its feet from end to end. Ropes with grappling hooks were hurled over the parapet faster than men could cut them or fling them back. Hundreds of long ladders were lifted up. Many were cast down in ruin, but many more replaced them, and Orcs sprang up them like apes in the dark forest of the South. Before the wall's foot the dead and broken were piled like shingle in a storm: ever higher rose the hideous mounds, and still the enemy came on. (II-166)

Gollum rose slowly and crawled insect-like to the lip of the hollow. Very cautiously he raised himself inch by inch, until he could peer over it between the two broken points of stone. He remained there without moving for some time, making no sound. Presently the voices began to recede again, and then they slowly faded away. Far off a horn blew on the ramparts of the Morannon. Then quietly Gollum drew back and slipped down the hollow.

'More Men going to Mordor,' he said in a low voice. 'Dark faces. We have not seen Men like these before, no, Sméagol has not. They are fierce. They have black eyes, and long black

hair and gold rings in their ears; yes lots of beautiful gold. And some have red paint on their cheeks, and red cloaks; and their flags are red, and the tips of their spears; and they have round shields, yellow and black with big spikes. Not nice; very cruel wicked men the look. Almost as bad as Orcs, and much bigger. Sméagol thinks they have come out of the South beyond the Great River's end: they came up that road. They have passed on to the Black Gate; but more may follow. Always more people coming to Mordor. One day all the people will be inside.'

'Were are the oliphaunts?' asked Sam, forgetting his fear in his eagerness for new and strange places.

'No, no oliphaunts. What are oliphaunts?' said Gollum.

Sam stood up, putting his hands behind his back (as he always did when 'speaking poetry'), and began:

> *Grey as a mouse,*
> *Big as a house,*
> *Nose like a snake,*
> *I make the earth shake,*
> *As I tramp through the grass;*
> *Trees crack as I pass.*
> *With horns in my mouth*
> *I walk in the South,*
> *Flapping big ears.*
> *Beyond count of years*
> *I stump round and round,*
> *Never lie on the ground,*
> *Not even to die.*
> *Oliphaunt am I,*
> *Biggest of all,*
> *Huge, old, and tall.*
> *If ever you'd met me*
> *You wouldn't forget me.*
> *If you never do,*
> *You won't think I'm true;*
> *But old Oliphaunt am I,*
> *And I never lie.*

'That,' said Sam, when finished his reciting, 'that's a rhyme we have in the Shire. Nonsense maybe, and maybe not. But we have our tales too, and news out of the South, you know. In the old days hobbits used to go on their travels now and again. Not many ever came back, and not that all they said was believed: news from Bree, and not sure as Shiretalk, as the sayings go. But I've heard tales of the big folk down away in the Sunlands. Swertings we call 'em in our tales; and they ride on oliphaunts, 'tis said, when they fight. They put houses and towers on the oliphaunts backs and all, and the oliphaunts throw rocks and trees at one another. So when you said "Men out of the South, all in red and gold, " I said "were there any oliphaunts?" For if there was, I was going to take a look, risk or no. But now I don't suppose I'll ever see an oliphaunts. Maybe there ain't no such a beast.' He sighed. (II: 312-313)

These are the Rohirrim, as we name them, masters of horses, and we ceded to them the fields of Calenardhon that are since called Rohan; for that province had long been sparsely peopled. And they became our allies, and have ever proved true to us, aiding us at need, and guarding our northern marches and the Gap of Rohan.

'Our lore and manners they have learned what they would, and their lords speak our speech at need; yet for the most part they hold by the ways of their own fathers and to their memories, and they speak among themselves their own North tongue. And we love them: tall men and fair women, valiant both alike, golden haired, bright eyed, and strong; they remind us of the youth of Men, as they were in the Elder Days.

'For so we reckon Men in our lore, calling them High or Men of the West, which were Númenoreans; and the Middle Peoples, Men of the Twilight, such as are the Rohirrim and their kin that dwell still far in the North; and the Wild, the Men of Darkness. (II: 355)

From part III, *The Return of the King:*

There dwelt a hardy folk between the mountains and the sea. They were reckoned men of Gondor, yet their blood was mingled, and there were short and swarthy folk among them whose sires came more from the forgotten men who housed in the shadow of the hills in the Dark Years ere the coming of the kings. But beyond, in the great fief of Belfalas, dwelt Prince Imrahil in his castle of Dol Amroth by the sea, and he was of high blood, and his folk also, tall men and proud with sea-grey eyes. (III:10)

At length they came to the Prince Imrahil, and Legolas looked at him and bowed low; for he saw that here indeed was one who had eleven-blood in his veins. 'Hail, lord!' he said. 'It is long since the people of Nimrodel left the woodlands of Lórien, and yet still one may see that not all sailed from Amroth's haven west over water.' (III:169)

They went two or three miles further, and the orc-hold was hidden from sight behind them; but they had hardly begun to breathe more freely again when harsh and loud they heard orc-voices. Quickly they slunk out of sight behind a brown and stunted bush. The voices drew nearer. Presently two orcs came into the view. One was clad in ragged brown and was armed with a bow of horn; it was of a small breed, black-skinned, with wide and snuffling nostrils: evidently a tracker of some kind. The other was a big fighting-orc, like those of Shagrat's company, bearing the token of the Eye. He also had a bow at his back and carried a short broad-headed spear. As usual they were quarrelling and being of different breeds they used the Common Speech after their fashion. (III:237)

'But I shall die,' said Aragorn. 'For I am a mortal man. And though being what I am and of the race of the West unmingled, I shall have life far longer than other men, yet that is but a little while; and when those who are now in the wombs of women are born and have grown old, I too shall grow old. (III:300).

Lesson 4 – Text excerpts from part I, II and II

From part I, *The Fellowship of the Ring***:**

Beren was a mortal man, but Lúthien was the daughter of Thingol, a King of Elves upon Middle-earth when the world was young; and she was the fairest maiden that has ever been among all the children of this world. As the stars above the mists of the Northern lands was her loveliness, and in her face was a shining light. (I:255)

In the middle of the table, against the woven cloths upon the wall, there was a chair under the canopy, and there sat a lady fair to look upon, and so like was she in form of womanhood to Elrond that Frodo guessed that she was one of his close kindred. Young she was and yet not so. The braids of her dark hair were touched by no frost; her white arms and clear face were flawless and smooth, and the light of stars was n her bright eyes, grey as a cloudless night; yet queenly she looked, and thought and knowledge were in her glance, as one who has known many things that the years bring. Above her brow her head was covered with a cap of silver lace netted with small gems, glittering white; but her soft grey raiment had no ornament save girdle of leaves wrought in silver.

So it was that Frodo saw her whom few mortals had yet seen; Arwen, daughter of Elrond, in whom it was said that the likeness of Lúthien had come on earth again; and she was called Undómiel, for she was the Evenstar of her people. Long she had been in the land of her mother's kin, in Lórien beyond the mountains, and was but lately returned to Rivendell to her father's house. But her brothers, Elladan and Elrohir, were upon errantry: for they rode often far afield with the Rangers of the North, forgetting never their mother's torments in the dens of the orcs.

Such loveliness in living thing Frodo had never seen before nor imagined in his mind; and he was both surprised and abashed to find that he had a seat at Elrond's table among these folk so high an fair. (I: 297-298)

Frodo halted for a moment, looking back. Elrond was in his chair and the fire was on his face like summer-light upon the trees. Near him sat the Lady Arwen. To his surprise Frodo saw that Aragorn stood beside her; his dark cloak was thrown back, and he seemed to be clad in elven-mail, and a star shone on his breast. They spoke together, and then suddenly it seemed to Frodo that Arwen turned towards him and the light of her eyes fell on him from afar and pierced his heart (I:311-312)

From part II, *The Two Towers:*

The woman turned and went slowly into the house. As she passed the doors she turned and looked back. Grave and thoughtful was her glance, as she looked on the king with cool pity in her eyes. Very fair was her face, and her long hair was like a river of gold. Slender and tall she was in her white robe girt with silver; but strong she seemed and stern as steel, a daughter of kings" (II:140)

From part III, *The Return of the King*

But as Aragorn came to the booth where he was to lodge with Legolas and Gimli, and his companions had gone in, there came the Lady Éowyn after him and called to him. He turned and saw her as a glimmer in the night, for she was clad in white; but her eyes were on fire.

'Aragorn,' she said, 'why will you go on this deadly road?' 'Because I must,' he said. 'Only so can I see any hope of doing my part in the war against Sauron. I do not choose paths of peril, Éowyn. Were I to go where my heart dwells, far in the North I would now be wandering in the fair valley of Rivendell.'

For a while she was silent, as if pondering what this might mean. Then suddenly she laid her hands on his arm. 'You are a stern lord and resolute,' she said; 'and thus do men win renown.' She paused. 'Lord' she said, 'if you must go, then let me ride in your following. For I am weary of skulking in the hills, and wish to face peril and battle.'

'Your duty is with your people, 'he answered.

'Too often have I heard of duty,' she cried. 'But am I not of the House of Eorl, a shieldmaiden and not a dry-nurse? I have waited on faltering feet long enough. Since they falter no longer, it seems, may I not now spend my life as I will?'

'Few may do that with honour,' he answered. 'But as for you, lady: did you not accept the charge to govern the people until their lord's return? If you had not been chosen, then some marshal or captain would have been set in the same place, and he could not ride away from his charge, were he weary of it or no.'

'Shall I always be chosen? She said bitterly. 'Shall I always be left behind when the Riders depart, to mind the house while they win renown, and find food and beds when they return?'

'A time may come soon,' said he, 'when none will return. Then there will be need of valour without renown, for none shall remember the deeds that are done in the last defence of your homes. Yet the deeds will not be less valiant because they are unpraised.'

And she answered: 'All your words are but to say: you are a woman, and your part is in the house. But when the men have died in battle and honour, you have leave to be burned in the house, for the men will need it no more. But I am of the House of Eorl and not a serving-woman. I can ride and wield blade, and I do not fear either pain or death.'

'What do you fear, lady?' he asked.

'A cage,' she said. 'To stay behind bars, until use and old age accept them, and all chance of doing great deeds is gone beyond recall or desire.'

'And yet you counselled me not to adventure on the road that I had chosen, because it is perilous?'

'So may one counsel another, 'she said. 'Yet I do not bid you flee from peril, but to ride to battle where your sword may win renown and victory. I would not see a thing that is high and excellent cast away needlessly.'

'Nor would I,' he said. 'Therefore I say to you, lady: Stay! For you have no errand to the South.'

'Neither have those others who go with thee. They go only because they would not be parted from thee – because they love thee.' Then she turned and vanished into the night. (III: 54-55)

When the burial was over and the weeping of women was stilled, and Théoden was left at last alone in his barrow, then folk gathered to the Golden Hall for the great feast and put away sorrow; for Théoden had lived to full years and ended in honour no less than the greatest of his sires. (III:307)

Lesson 6 – Written examination

Stereotypes

We have discussed stereotypes in general as well as the specific stereotypes of race and gender in Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*. Furthermore, we have discussed how stereotypes affect our interactions with others and how they might cause prejudices which inhibit rather than preserve mutual understanding and cultural difference.

> Choose one of the topics. You have **80** minutes to write your text. It should be at least **250** words but no more than **600** words. Make sure you have time to **check** what you have written.

Topic 1 – Discuss

> Title: Innocent Fun or Dangerous Behaviour

The weekly magazine *A Global World* will focus their next issue on the concept of stereotypes. Write your contribution to the magazine discussing the different stereotypes young people of today face and discuss when stereotyping might be innocent fun and when it contributes to biases and prejudice. Support your discussion by giving examples from what you have learnt during the project and/or from your own experience.

You may, as inspiration, consider some of the following questions:

- What kind of stereotypes are young people faced with in today's society?

- Is it possible to differentiate between a cultural generalisation and cultural stereotypes?

- In what way might stereotyping be an innocent fun?

- When might stereotyping lead to negative consequences?

- What kinds of strategies are needed in order to discover implicit stereotyping?

- Is a world without stereotypes possible?

Topic 2 – Argue

The weekly magazine *A Global World* will focus their next issue on the concept of stereotypes with negative consequences. Write your contribution, taking a stand on one of the issues below. Try to persuade the readers that your opinion is the right one and also remember to bring up some counterarguments. Define your thesis statement clearly. Develop and support your arguments with examples.

Use **one** of the following titles or **choose your own**:

> Title: Not all Swedes are shy and reticent
>
> Title: Women can do everything men can do
>
> Title: The immigrants do not take all our jobs
>
> Title: Not all immigrants live on benefits
>
> Title: Not all Muslims are fundamentalists