the word "holy" not in the sense of "canonized", and in the context of the Lutheran "priesthood of all believers". The author describes in detail the difficulties that the persecuted Puritans had to endure. However, Bradford considers such persecution not a curse, but rather, the grace of God, because, according to the words of Christ, "Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 5:10).

In the second book W. Bradford describes the life Puritans in the new lands, New Canaan – Americas. The narrative begins with 1620, the author shows the events in retrospect, writing his "History of the Plymouth settlement" from the middle of the seventeenth century. Bradford describes the hard life of his countrymen, describing thoroughly the incredible hardships they had to bear to achieve this goal.

The first settlers bravely fought for life, for the approval of their values. The main topics that affect Bradford can be summarized as three important concepts: resistance to sin, and the nature of dissent. They were ready to fight for the purity of their faith, to become only a "step" in the ladder of ascent to heaven for their descendants: "Lastly, (and which was not least), a great hope, and inward zeal they had of laying some good foundation, or (at least to make some way the run to) for the propagating, and advancing the gospel of the kingdom of Christ in those remote parts of the world; yea, though they should be but even as stepping-stones, unto others for the performing of so great a work" [3, p. 96].

The struggle with nature, "wild expanses" (wilderness) has become one of the *leitmotifs* not only of Bradford's creation, but of most authors in New England. Describing the experience of "savagery" of nature, the author notes "what could they see but a hidious & desolate wildernes, full of wild beasts & wild men?" [1, p. 168]. However, the Czech Americanist Martin Procházka about historicity described by Bradford writes: "Bradford's narrative gives only stylized descriptions of American scenes... Their primary purpose is to focus the attention of the reader on the fate of the Pilgrims" [4, p. 25].

Thus, Bradford's works are among the first documentary evidence of the life of Plymouth Colony, his works are of great value for lovers of the history of Christianity as well as for literary critics. The *History of Plymouth Plantation* illustrates the puritan understanding of freedom and its image of the "New Adam."

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<div align="center">**THE DIVERSITY OF MAGIC HELPERS IN TOLKIEN'S EPICS**</div>

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The article presents a study of the diversity of magic helpers in J.R.R. Tolkien's literary works and first of all "The Silmarillion", "The Lord of the Rings" and last but not least "The Children of Húrin". The main categories of characters-helpers are subdivided according to Propp' classification and then analyzed in Tolkien's textsvia comparative and descriptive methods. The functions magic helpers perform throughout Tolkien' epics are also regarded. This article material can be used during the lectures on Medieval English literature, on Mythology and Culturology as the theoretical basis of the work are the studies by C. Baura, E. Meletinskij, V. Propp.

J.R.R. Tolkien is a famous English writer whose literary creation has contributed not only to the history of the world literature but also to culture itself. Tolkien's art without doubt has become a notable phenomenon of the XX century. Probably, never before there were any books that caused such controversy and a schism among scholars. Rarely would a writer dare to create his own mythology and Tolkien did. And his profound knowledge of the medieval literature and Old Norse as well as Old English was of great help to him. As M. Drout notices,

"Medieval literature was not, for Tolkien, merely a quarry for interesting names or images: it was in fact the vineyard in which he labored every day and to which he devoted years of study and contemplation" [1, p. XXX].

But his love to Germanic epic heritage was not only the matter. Form his early childhood Tolkien started to invent the stories: "This business began so far back that it might be said to have begun at birth. Somewhere about six years old I tried to write some verses on a dragon" [2, p. 221]. Moreover, he was quite concerned about the lack of original English mythology, epics and traditional characters; the evidence of his greatest concern can be found throughout his letters: "There are no songs or stories preserved about Elves or Dwarfs in ancient English, and little enough in any other Germanic language. Words, a few names, that is about all" [2, p. 314].

Without doubt, Tolkien was greatly influenced by heroic poetry of Old Norse and Anglo-Saxon origins in rather its archaic than classical form: "As we move from the opening chapters set in the Shire to the wider canvas of Middle-earth, The Lord of the Rings manages to integrate the form of the modern novel back into the much longer tradition of epic poetry and heroic saga" [3, p. 17]. As it's well-known in early medieval epic poetrysome archaic influence can be traced on a significant scale. According to E. Meletinskij there are a few poems to which"Beowulf", "Elder Edda" and some other poems can be referred; they possess a number of features characteristic of fairy-tale: "heroic poetry develops as a direct extension of folklore traditions of archaic society, mostly on the basis of interrelation of mythological cycles on ancestors, cultural heroes and heroic tales or poems" [4, p. 55].

E. Meletinskij also states that "a specific feature of fairy tale is functioning of magic powers and with their help the main character reaches fairy-tale goals" [5, p. 164–165]. The scholar points out among magic powers some "magic creatures" [5, p. 165] as a means of overcoming of a demonic antagonist. Thus, acquiring some magic means is one of the most widespread topics in fairy-tales and archaic epic poems. Among various magic means can be mentioned magical artifacts, qualities and last but not least animals or supernatural characters [6, p. 42].

V. Propp regarding the so-called "magic creatures" highlights the category of magic helpers in his fundamental research "The morphology of fairy-tale". There are three types of characters-helpers: universal helpers able to fulfill multiple functions, partial helpers able to fulfill a few functions (different animals, except a horse; spirits, lore masters) and specific helpers capable of performing only one function (Propp relates magic objects only to this very category – O.V.) [6, p. 76]. It sould be said that a human or human-like beings can also become a helper according to the scholar [7, c. 152].

When it comes to getting so-called magic helpers there are several ways: a hero can be rewarded for successful accomplishment of some task or request. The main character can buy it, get it by chance or steal it. The magic means can be showed to the hero or appear out of the blue. And finally, various characters let the hero dispose them of their free will [6, p. 43]. It should be meant that the main character can acquire a helper just as a result of being courteous [8, c. 50].

There is a narrow range of helpers' tasks which can be transferred into a considerable number of realizations. Propp subdivides the following five main tasks: spatial movement, liquidation of misfortune or shortage, saving from pursuit, solution of difficult tasks, transfiguration of the hero [6, p. 73]. It should be also added that as soon as heroic mood in ancient epics is combined with archaic elements, a character can win against his enemy not only due to his valour and force but also with the use of magic. So, as C. Baura insists on the peculiarity of archaic epics: magic is the key to the victory [9, p. 12].

The figures of helpers are implied when it comes to some archaic motives such as fighting with monsters and matchmaking. There must be especially marked the motif of battle against a dragon. "Dragon or mythological worm, including in itself outer features of other animals (terrestrial, amphibious, those that live in water or fly), associated with water (the symbol of chaos and need of cultural irrigation) and fire, fertility, ritual of initiation and calendar renewal, eschatological myths and guarding of treasures, – a typical representative of chthonic monsters and demons against whom do characters of myth, fairy-tale and epic fight [10, p. 55]. The victory over such a monster would not only proclaime the glory of the epic hero but in deeper sense the victory of order over chaos. It should be mentioned that here we use the word 'worm' it just the way J.R.R. Tolkien understood and used it not only in his literary works but also in his essays: "A dragon is no idle fancy. Whatever may be his origins, in fact or invention, the dragon in legend is a potent creation of men's imagination, richer in significance than his barrow is in gold. Even to-day (despite the critics) you may find men not ignorant of tragic legend and history, who have heard of heroes and indeed seen them, who yet have been caught by the fascination of the worm" [11, p. 16].

The motif of matchmaking is also widespread and according to Propp, "can be combined with the accomplishment of difficult task" [6, p. 61]. This diffuct task or even tasks are given to test an eligible bachelor and at the same time they contain the element of enmity and are purposed to scare away the hero [7, p. 264]. It's

important that sometimes enmity comes from the future father-in-law, who rejects to accept the hero [7, p. 267]. And often not the hero himself may be tested, but the power "which is contained in magic-helper" [7, p. 264]. Anyway, all the facts stated above serve to glorify the main character, to show his triumph over evil forces whether they personified by monsters or even a father-in-law.

Tolkien follows the tradition when it concerns mythological and epic aspects, traditional motives and narration technics techniques, archetypal moments as well as archetypal polarity. There can be found a considerable diversity of characters-helpers in his literary works. First of all, the universal helpers able to perform a number of functions should be regarded. When it comes to Tolkien's narratives it should be accentuated that the writer reconsidered the motif of universal helpers and though they capable of many things Tolkien doesn't follow the pattern of universality blindly. His anthropological helpers, the first category we subdivide, should rely on not only magic, luck but also their heroic qualities: valour, courage, quick wits, force and skills which makes them closer to epic heroes then fairy-tale ones. «Heroic mood of archaic epics is not developed at a scale of classical epics. … Still, at an archaic stage in the history of epics some characters show a real heroic nature» [4, p. 61] which is true not only about the main character but also minor characters.

Tolkien's anthropological helpers can be distinguished as those who use magic and not. We also should define the term anthropological as human or human-like in this very case: in Tolkien's prose there are many characters who resemble human beings but not exactly the same. So when it comes to an outstanding helper-character who uses magic, Gandalf the Grey or Mithrandir should be mentioned. Firstly, Tolkien refers to Gandalf as a "wizard" in the texts of "The Hobbit" and "The Lord of the Rings." Secondly, the character has an interesting attribute: "Gandalf struck a blue light on the end of his magic staff" [12, p. 17]. And it's stressed that "But, of course, Gandalf had made a special study of bewitchments with fire and lights" [12, p. 90]. So the character uses magic as we may say at a professional scale. As a Propp' helper he also can appear out of sudden: "The old man with the casket threw aside his hood and cloak. "Here is Gandalf! And none too soon it seems" [12, p. 254].

Gandalf guides characters and gives then sensible advice which allowsto relate him to helpers as "wisdom is one of the functions of character-helper" [6, p. 76] as well as guiding. The figure of Gandalf as a helper is also interesting in the way Tolkien mentions him in the "The Silmarillion": "With the Valar[3] came other spirits whose being also began before the World, of the same order as theValar but of less degree" [13, p. 23]. Here should be stressed the word "spirits". According to Meletinskij, archaic features are observed in fairy-tales and archaic epic as traces of primitive rituals and mythological outlook, and last but not as presence of spirits and anthropomorphous powers of nature [14, p. 24]. So this is the distinctive feature of genesis of Gandalf's image as one of the oldest creatures in Tolkiens world in human-like form of an old man appearing often out of sudden, and as the personage who has the oldest prototypes in world's mythology.

The other helpers are not less interesting. SamwiseGamgee is a hobbit. As it is said: "But Hobbits have never, in fact, studied magic of any kind" [15, 2]. So Sam has another reason to follow his master and friend: "`Safely! ' said Sam. `All alone and without me to help you? I couldn't have a borne it, it'd have been the death of me.' 'It would be the death of you to come with me, Sam,' said Frodo and I could not have borne that.' `Not as certain as being left behind,' said Sam" [15, p. 530].

Friendship was an important category in understanding of ancient Germans. The evidence can be found throughout epic heritage where the high value of friendship bounds is stated. This category was also essential in Tolkien's understanding and verified not only during Tolkien's lifetime but also on the pages of his books where he describes friendship between male warriors (Túrin and Beleg, Frodo and Sam, Legolas and Gimli) and proves its importance. Moreover, as Meletinskij states, hero-helper sometimes "acts not only for hero's sake but in hero's stead" [4, p. 50]. Tolkien proves this idea about Sam calling him "the chief hero" (Letters, 161). During the journey to Mordor Sam fights against Shelob, a huge spider, rescues his master from Cirith Ungol and helps Frodo to reach Mount Doom.

Another helper is an elf-man Beleg from "The Children of Húrin". Propp singles out among characters-helpers some lore masters or to be more precisely bowmen [6, p. 76]. Beleg was named Cúthalion, or Strongbow in one of the Tolkien's invented languages. The elf was skillfull with shooting his huge bow and was teaching Húrin woodcraft and archery and (which he loved best) the handling of swords" [16, p. 83].

There is another category mentioned above of animistic creatures that possess various features from huge size to ability to speak with human voice. One of the most outstanding animals-helpers in Tolkien's Universe is Huan the Hound. His abilities and help to Lúthien[4] as well as devotion make the dog a really prominent personage: "But Huan the hound was true of heart, and the love of Lúthien had fallen upon him in the first hour

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[3]Valar are deities of Tolkien's Universe (O.V.'s remark)
[4] Tolkien's elven maid, a princess, stolen by two brothers (O.V.'s remark).

of their meeting; and he grieved at her captivity. Therefore he came often to her chamber; and at night he lay before her door, ... Lúthien spoke often to Huan in her loneliness, telling of Beren, … and Huan understood all that was said. For he comprehended the speech of all things with voice; but it was permitted to him thrice only ere his death to speak with words" [13, p. 210]. Huan also performs the function of spatial movement: "and he humbled his pride and suffered her to ride upon him in the fashion of a steed" [13, p. 210].

The other two helpers are Gwaihir, an Eagle, and Shadowfax, a horse. Horsesand eagles or hawks as general images are quite traditional helpers throughout the history of world mythological and epic traditions. Both help characters when they get into troubles and their help mostly include spatial movement. The eagle though can talk and give advice. An important moment about them is that both descend from eagles and stallions of mythological times of Tolkien's world: "For Gandalf took the horse that is called Shadowfax, the most precious of all the king's steeds, chief of the Mearas, which only the Lord of the Mark may ride [15, p. 566]. And Shadowfax answers to Gandalf's call only as a sign of his loyalty, and distinctive appearance: "Does he not shine like silver, and run as smoothly as a swift stream?" [15, p. 658]. The horse also "knows the way through every fen and hollow" [15, p. 659].

So, as Propp emphasizes, "There is an eagle or another bird among hero's characters-helpers. Its function to transfer the hero to some distant kingdom" [7, p. 140]. When it comes to the Lord of the Eagles in "The Hobbit" or Gwaihir in Tolkien's trilogy, they save heroes from troubles getting them away from dangerous places: "The was allowed to climb on to an eagle's back and cling between his wings. The air rushed over him and he shut his eyes" [12, p. 106]. They could speak with human voice which is another archaic moment that can be found throughout ancient world literary heritage: "The Lord of the Eagles also was there and was speaking to Gandalf" [12, p. 102]. But transfer of characters and ability to speak are not all features. The eagles give enormous help in battle: "The wolves yammered and gnashed their teeth; the goblins yelled and stamped with rage, and flung their heavy spears in the air in vain. Over them swooped the eagles; the dark rush of their beating wings smote them to the floor or drove them far away; their talons tore at goblin faces" [12, p. 102]. Thus, Tolkien enriches the range of birds-helpers functions in his epics. The writer also stresses his eagles' connection to mythological times: "There came Gwaihir the Windlord, and Landroval his brother, greatest of all the Eagles of the North, mightiest of the descendants of old Thorondor, who built his eyries in the inaccessible peaks of the Encircling Mountains when Middle-earth was young" [15, p. 1241].

So, it can be concluded that Tolkien created a great many of outstanding characters: main and minor ones but not less significant. The multitude of characters-helpers is astonishing and one article is not enough to study them all. The diversity of types and functions they perform enriches the canvas of the narration of Tolkien's epics. Some characters the writer invents using his own imagination and creating some others he applies to world mythological heritage and epic traditions though sometimes he reconsiders the functions or purpose of his helpers. There are a great many of human-like and animistic creatures whose presence in Tolkien's prose and archaic descendance makes them a remarkable phenomenon not only of British but also of world literature of the XXth century.

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