ECHOES OF AFRICAN INFLUENCES IN J.R.R. TOLKIEN'S *THE LORD OF THE RINGS*

By

JULIE THERESA PRIDMORE

Submitted in accordance with the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in

ENGLISH

at the

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA

SUPERVISORS: Professor E. Donaldson

CO-SUPERVISOR: Professor D.C. Byrne

FEBRUARY 2025

DECLARATION

Julie Theresa Pridmore

Student number: 55763413

Degree: Doctor of Philosophy in English

I declare that “Echoes of African Influences on J.R.R. Tolkien’s *The Lord of The Rings*” is my own work.

All the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

I declare that I have submitted the dissertation to originality checking software and that it falls within the accepted requirements for originality.

This work has not been submitted before for any other degree at any other institution.



Julie Theresa Pridmore

Dated 03rd February 2025

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This thesis is dedicated to David Levey (1950-2020), who was my original supervisor for the project.

I would like to thank my supervisors, Eileen Donaldson and Deirdre Byrne, for their patience, perseverance, and positive feedback.

I thank all those colleagues in the Department of English Studies who helped me in my research. My Chair of Department, Thulile Shandu, gave her unwavering support. The Tolkien/South Africa Seminar, which we launched in 2022, has provided an intimate and stimulating framework for my studies. The departmental War and Writing seminar series has been both helpful and encouraging. I would like to thank everyone who participated in these seminars and especially Claudia Fratini and Maggie Steyn who helped with the organisation and encouraged me to present my work.

I acknowledge my husband, Brian Womack, as my main emotional support, technical assistant and as a long-suffering partner along the road.

Julie Pridmore

February 2025

SUMMARY

In this thesis I extrapolate the African influences on J.R.R. Tolkien's (1892-1973) main literary project *The Lord of the Rings* written between 1939 and 1950. I take as a starting point Tolkien's adolescent reading of the 'imperial gothic' material of the late nineteenth century, specifically the works of Rider Haggard *King Solomon's Mines* (1885) and *She: A Tale of Adventure* (1887) which Tolkien acknowledged as being influential.

I also examine that part of his school and initial university education in the classics, which provided Tolkien with some of his literary ideas about African tropes. Certainly, his study of Old English contributed to his knowledge of medieval writing on Africa with regard to elephants and the 'Ethiopian' peoples.

I also draw attention to the fact that, during the Second World War, Tolkien's correspondence with his son Christopher, who was stationed in South Africa training as a pilot, elucidated the progress of *The Lord of the Rings* and articulated ideas about race and the geography of South Africa. The issue of 'race' needs a more nuanced approach in the context of Tolkien's letters and thus forms a chapter of the thesis. The ideas on African landscapes and geography formed a discourse of travel writing during Tolkien's lifetime and this forms the penultimate chapter of the thesis.

KEYWORDS

Tolkien, *The Lord of the Rings*, Africa travel writing, race, adventure fiction, imperial gothic, history, historiography

NOTES ON STRUCTURE

There are many writers that influenced J.R.R. Tolkien and others that were contemporary with his lifetime. In the interests of clarity I have used footnotes to indicate the details on these authors' lives. This, I hope, will provide context without disrupting the flow of the thesis.

VOCABULARY AND STYLE

Words that are specific to Tolkien, or that are not English, are in *italics*, namely *siegelweara*, *oliphaunts* and so on.

Names of Peoples have capital letters thus Hobbits, Dwarves, Elves, Orcs, Men and the divisions of Men, namely Númenóreans, Gondorians, Rohirrim, Dunlendings.

NOTES ON SOURCES

In this thesis I have used J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* (2005) and H. Carpenter's *The Letters of J.R.R. Tolkien* (1981) as my pre-emptive primary sources. My argument hinges on a close reading of Tolkien's work in articulation with his letters. In Chapter 5 I have also used K. Fonstead's *Atlas of Middle-earth* (1994) as a basis for the extension of Tolkien's own maps which were drawn by Christopher Tolkien and are included in *The Lord of the Rings*. W.G. Hammond's and C. Scull's *The Lord of the Rings: a Reader's Companion* (2014) remain unmatched sources for research on Tolkien's main fiction. The volumes of *The History of Middle-earth* edited by Christopher, from 1988 to 1996, were also invaluable in tracing the progress of Tolkien's writing. These are listed as Secondary Sources.

In the text I have usually identified the volumes of Christopher Tolkien's *History of Middle-earth* by title, for instance, *The Treason of Isengard*. For this reason, it has not been necessary to use the somewhat clumsy device in the bibliography of 2002a and so on as most of the editions I used were published in 2002, except for *The Return of the Shadow* (1994) and *The Peoples of Middle-earth* (1996). The context should indicate which volumes are being consulted at any given point in the text.

Andreas Mohn's books on Middle-earth were originally published by 'Codex Regius' but available on Kindle. They are now available through Kindle/Amazon and the publisher seems to be Create Space in Scotts Valley, California. I hope I have referenced this accurately.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Declaration ii
Acknowledgements iii
Summary/abstract iv
Keywords v
Notes on structure vi
Notes on sources vii
Chapter 1: Introduction 1
Chapter 2: African Literary Influences 30
Chapter 3: Tolkien, World War II and South Africa 63
Chapter 4: Race, Difference, and *Apartheid* 87
Chapter 5: Travel Writing and The Lord of the Rings 130
Chapter 6: Conclusion and Legacy 172
Bibliography 179

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

My thesis will, I hope, add to the extraordinary body of work which has been written on J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*, first published in 1954 and 1955. In 1966 in a seminal telephonic interview with Tolkien for one of the first fantasy magazines, *Niekas,* journalist and Tolkien reader Resnick[1] said that he was aware of 'at least two men presently working on doctoral theses' and that he had himself 'read a master's thesis on *The Lord of the Rings'* (Resnick 1967: 38). And, in the year before he died, Tolkien wrote to 'Mr Wrigley'[2] and said that 'I fear you may be right that the search for the sources of *The Lord of the Rings* is going to occupy academics for a generation or two' (Carpenter 1981: 418). At the time, Tolkien could have had no conception of the enormous amount of post-graduate work that would be produced on his book. In writing this thesis I aim to contribute to this rich field of scholarship in honour of one of the world's most influential fantasy writers.

Like many researchers, I encountered J.R.R. Tolkien first as an adolescent reader and was immediately and completely enchanted with *The Lord of the Rings*[3] but, like other adolescent readers, including Lyons, was unable to grasp the full depths underlying the narrative (2004: 27). Like him I re-read the book compulsively, and, as an adolescent, read the whole narrative of *The Lord of the Rings* and worked through the appendices with the help of Tyler's recently published *The Tolkien Companion* (1976). As I was only an undergraduate at this time, I had not yet learned how to approach either literary or historical criticism. In the late 1970s, the only material I could find on Tolkien was Kocher's *Master of Middle-earth* (1972)[4]

[1] *Niekas* was published from 1963 to 1998 by Ed Meskys (1936-2021), an enthusiastic member of The Tolkien Society. Henry S Resnick (1927-1981) was a popular journalist in the 1960s counter-culture.

[2] I have not been able to identify this person.

[3] I have used the HarperCollins 2005 edition of *The Lord of the Rings* throughout this thesis.

[4] Paul H. Kocher (1907-1998) J.E.A. Tyler (1943-2003) and Randel Helms were enthusiastic and informative authors on Tolkien in the 1970s.

and Helms's *Tolkien's World* (1974). I found these books in the public library and devoured them with adolescent eagerness, along with Wyatt's album of beautiful paintings (1978) but still lacked the academic background to articulate how these texts influenced my engagement with Tolkien's writing, even though Tolkien Studies was emerging as a respectable academic field of research.

Partly, this is because I pursued a career in historical studies, obtaining a doctorate in historiography in which I included fictional representation, the latter necessitating a massive amount of work in literary theory. This grounding then provided me with the perspective I needed to look at Tolkien anew, fortunate timing given that academic studies of his work were starting to expand, beginning with the publication of Tolkien's *Unfinished Tales of Númenór and Middle-earth* (1980), Shippey's *The Road to Middle-earth* (1982) and gathering momentum with Christopher Tolkien's edited twelve-volume *History of Middle-earth* (1986-1996). And, naturally, Tolkien scholarship snowballed after the release of Peter Jackson's film trilogy between 2001 and 2003.

Thus, by the time I started writing on Tolkien as a literary historian; the field of Tolkien Studies had 'grown up', developed and matured. In the interim, I had continued my work on literary history, as well as historiography and historicism, and had moved academic departments from Historical Studies to English Studies, where I began publishing on the literary and historical aspects of Tolkien's work.

In situating J.R.R. Tolkien (1892-1973), a British writer, in an historical context, the most interesting starting point for me, as a South African historian, was his birth in 1892 in what was then the Orange Free State in South Africa. This seemed important because of Tolkien's early memories of South Africa as a 'hot parched country' (Carpenter 1981: 213), which haunted him as well as the vague remembrance of having 'stumbled on a tarantula' (Carpenter 1995: 21), even though he suffered no lasting fear of spiders afterwards. We might offer the conjecture that the spider was most likely of the sub-family *Harpacitrinae*, also known as 'Baboon' spiders, which are a sub-family of the *Theraphonisidae* or Tarantulae (Platnick and Solomon 2014). These are rather large spiders and must

have made a lasting impression, given that Tolkien's biographer Carpenter[5] states 'he wrote more than once of monstrous spiders with venomous bites' (Carpenter 1995: 21). And White, another biographer, states that

> it is easy to imagine that this experience planted the seed for the idea of Shelob … but it's more likely that as this tale seeped into Tolkien family legend, it was always there as a backdrop in the author's mind. (White 2001: 251)

Of *The Lord of the Rings*, Tolkien replied to a letter from Auden in 1955, commenting that 'I knew that the way was guarded by a Spider. And if that has anything to do with my being stung by a tarantula when a small child, people are welcome to the notion' claiming to have remembered 'nothing about it' and not having any dislike of spiders (Carpenter 1981: 217).

Certainly, spiders have a long cultural history of being frightening to humans and the African folklore figure, Anansi, is known as a character who ensnares people (Courlander 1996: 136). Asma, too, has suggested that the human fear of spiders has its origin in primeval Africa from where humanity originated (Asma 2009: 304). For my part, I suggest that Shelob, like some of the other extraordinary beings in *The Lord of the Rings*, may have distinctly African origins.

After returning to England at the age of four in 1896, Tolkien and his family settled into a life that was, to all intents and purposes, an English one. Later in his life he stressed that he was English, not British, and he disliked the concept of 'Great Britain and … the British commonwealth' (Carpenter 1981: 65). And yet, Tolkien's letters from his youngest son Christopher[6] during the Second World War, whilst the latter was in the Union of South Africa and training with the Royal Air Force, evoked memories of the country which Tolkien said he remembered as 'beautiful blends of African and English details' (Carpenter 1981: 85). Tolkien's daughter

[5] Humphrey Carpenter (1946-2005) was a British critic of children's' literature. He published a biography of Tolkien in 1977 and *Tolkien's Letters* in 1981.

[6] Christopher (1924-2020) was Tolkien's youngest son.

Priscilla[7] confirmed this on a visit to South Africa in 1992, stating that her father had spoken of returning to his birthplace. She quoted from Tolkien's letter to Christopher in 1944 in which he expressed a 'longing to see it again', that he associated it with 'space' which he found satisfying and that he 'liked barrenness itself, whenever I have seen it' (Gray 1992: vii).[8] Indeed, during her visit to South Africa for her father's centenary, Priscilla said it was for her 'a particularly moving experience' to visit the country on her father's behalf (Gray 1992: vii).

Curiously, Tolkien had in fact considered returning to South Africa. In 1920, while teaching at Leeds University, he had applied for the De Beers Professorship at the University of Cape Town and, to his surprise, even though he was young and inexperienced, he was offered the position. White considers that Tolkien 'must have thought long and hard about this' as 'South Africa … had become for him almost a legendary past' (White 2001: 104). White adds that Tolkien in later life 'often wondered whether he had made the right decision about this' (2001: 105), having turned the position down. There is therefore no doubting Tolkien's desire to see South Africa again and in his letters he often speaks fondly of the country though he admitted he really only remembered 'blazing sun, drawn curtains and a drooping eucalyptus' from his Christmas times in Bloemfontein (Carpenter 1981: 213). Because his 'earliest memories [were] of a hot country' (Carpenter 1981: 219), Tolkien was always aware of his place in history and the African context of his birth and early years.

Du Plessis-Hay argues that engaging with Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* from a South African perspective can enrich one's primary engagement with the text because it allows the reader to contemplate landscapes other than those a person is habitually presented with in fantasy fiction, asking 'how much more exciting is the triple relationship of the Shire, England and the plains of southern Africa?' (Du Plessis-Hay 2022: 106).

[7] Priscilla (1929-2022) was Tolkien's only daughter and youngest child.

[8] Tolkien's letter to Christopher of 12 August 1944 (Carpenter 1981: 90-91).

Following this, it is my argument that Tolkien drew on both his own memories and other source material to depict places in Middle-earth that resemble Southern Africa. These reflect the space and barrenness that he found so appealing in their contrast to the 'soft rolling contours' of the English countryside (Carpenter 1981: 90). I agree with Du Plessis-Hay's forceful argument about the deep realism of the secondary world and 'the pleasure afforded by the sense of grounded fullness of Tolkien's work' (Du Plessis-Hay 2022: 100). It is my argument that there are distinct themes and landscapes in Tolkien's extraordinary world that echo Africa and might well put the South African reader in a unique position from which to assess *The Lord of the Rings*.

In this thesis, I consider the impact of Tolkien's memories of South Africa, and his later engagement with the country, on his conceptualisation of spaces and landscapes in *The Lord of the Rings*. I also discuss various literary influences that contained ideas about Africa, and South Africa, and the manner in which these may have influenced his writing of *The Lord of the Rings.* Naturally, the literary and historical reading of Tolkien that I undertake here, must first view him in the context in which he wrote; as Flieger points out, 'For all its mythic timelessness, Tolkien's work could only have been written in and for the twentieth century' (1983: 138). Thus Tolkien is an author whose writing reflects the first half of the twentieth century, even while he draws on the literary heritage of the classical and medieval periods, as well as the nineteenth-century literature he read as an adolescent, much of which shaped his views of Africa.

Haggard,[9] one of Tolkien's most influential sources, looks back during his 1914 return trip to South Africa, when he served on the Dominions Royal Commission (Coan 2000: xiii), in a way that is completely different from his earlier imperial adventure rhetorical style. He commented that black people in South Africa were 'acquiring an education' and warned that 'European peoples [might] fail through race suicide and exhaustion' (Coan 2002: 57). This contrasted with the writing in his epic adventure stories, particularly *King Solomon's Mines* (1885) and *She: A*

[9] Rider H. Haggard (1856-1925).

Story of Adventure (1887) in which he is unapologetic about the dominance of the white 'race'. Haggard had moved forward to meet a more modern South Africa and an empire that now worked within a framework of dominions, just as Tolkien, who was nurtured on nineteenth-century stories, wrote his own books in the context of a post-First World War Britain that was firmly in the twentieth century, including her far-flung Imperial Commonwealth countries like South Africa and Australasia. I mention this because Tolkien insisted that he was 'historically minded' and that Middle-earth was the real world with a real history (Carpenter 1981: 239); indeed, in the 1967 interview with Resnick, he says that his created world is not 'another planet' (Resnick 1967: 41). Tolkien abhorred allegory and, as Birns has recently pointed out: 'to prefer history, real or feigned, over allegory is to prefer the tangible to the conceptual, the detail to the postulate, and the thing to the idea' (Birns 2024: 1).

This is what makes Tolkien's secondary world so familiar and so relatable. It is what Wolf, in his substantial work on world-building, calls 'rich verisimilitude' (Wolf 2012: 121). The cultural anthropologist, Geertz, calls this 'thick description' (Thomas 1991: 12), evident in the kind of narrative that contains a wealth of local knowledge for the investigator from a historicist point of view (Hamilton 1996: 154). Indeed, Geertz's ideas on the past, which could also be called 'interpretive narration' of an event, influence one of the key methods in which New Historicism uses agency to show the relationship between history and the text (Lyu 2021: 1077). It is my argument that Tolkien does this so well in *The Lord of the Rings* that readers forget that they are 'in the story' or in another 'time'. Tolkien seems to write as though he is the conduit for a pre-existing story, so that readers are tempted to search for the continuing 'history' of Middle-earth which, because it is so painstakingly constructed, becomes relatable history (Du Plessis-Hay 2022: 99).

From my perspective, New Historicism also provides a framework through which to assess the success of Tolkien's creative power, which Gallagher and Greenblatt describe as the force that shapes a work, both outside and within the boundaries in which it is located (2000: 12). Thus, the success of Tolkien's Middle-earth rests

at least in part on the fact that it has a fully realised ‘mythic prehistory’, in which ‘Tolkien creates in order to destroy, wringing a moving elegy from his imaginary world, even as he engineers its passing’ (Rateliff 2006: 67). From this perspective, the imaginative potency of *The Lord of the Rings* lies in the fact that Tolkien was writing of places long gone, cities and cultures that had passed, often leaving no trace except in the elegiac sadness of *The Red Book of Westmarch* (the fictional title of *The Lord of the Rings)* (Rateliff 2006: 68).

In a letter to Rhona Beare in October 1958, Tolkien demonstrates his firm belief in Middle-earth as a place that existed. He describes the probable fate of the two ‘blue’ Istarí and other events of the Second Age (Carpenter 1981: 280). He lists many details of Númenórean and Middle-earth history and culture, stating that he had ‘constructed an imaginary *time,* but kept [his] feet on [his] own mother-earth for *place*’ (original italics) (Carpenter 1981: 283). This was one of Tolkien’s longest letters and, in it, he covers considerable historical material. It shows that he was still in the process of realising a full-scale history for Middle-earth, a history which he would never complete in its entirety.

The Lord of the Rings is, therefore, a work of unprecedented historical depth, both in structure and in content and through the metafictional *Red Book of Westmarch,* which fosters the idea of a shared authorship and linguistic standardisation. Through alluding to various witnesses to the events, the hobbits make this rich historical narrative realistic to readers (Painter 2015: 92-93). In fact, readers of *The Lord of the Rings* realise very quickly that this text reaches far further into history than *The Hobbit* does.

When I consider Tolkien’s awareness of the world around him in the mid-twentieth century, it is in his letters that I find the most important evidence of his perspectives. Collected, edited and published by Carpenter in 1981, these documents offer some of the most valuable evidence on Tolkien’s thoughts, ideas and responses, not only to his correspondents, but also to the constantly expanding concepts regarding Middle-earth.

It is important here to note what Drout says about Tolkien's published letters; he suggests that they should result in a move 'towards a better Tolkien criticism' (Drout 2004: 12-18). For Drout, the publication of Tolkien's letters by Carpenter in 1981 had 'appeared long enough after the first publication and first criticism of the *Lord of the Rings* so that they appeared to challenge or vindicate certain critical arguments' (Drout 2004: 19). Thus, Drout maintains that Tolkien had never used the phrase 'a mythology for England' and especially not in his renowned and influential letter to Waldman (undated but probably written in 1951), in which he discusses dedicating his legendarium to 'England', a country which he felt 'had no stories of its own' (Carpenter 1981: 144). As Drout points out, the phrase 'a mythology for England' had in fact been taken from Carpenter's *J.R.R. Tolkien: A Biography* which was published in 1977, before this collection was published in 1981 (Drout 2004: 17). After *The Lord of the Rings* was published, in 1956 Tolkien wrote to a 'Mr Thompson' stating that he had had 'the arrogance … to restore to the English an epic tradition and present them with a mythology of their own' (Carpenter 1981: 120-231).

This is important because it is not necessary to poach Tolkien's considerable correspondence to invent what he may or may not have stated. Tolkien's ideas shine through the published letters, revealing his thoughts on more than sixty years of the twentieth century's tumultuous history, beginning in 1914 and ending in the last year of his life in 1973. The published letters have, without doubt, added rich layers to the decades of Tolkien scholarship since their publication in 1981. At one level Tolkien indulged in playful effects on words, which were, after all his main interest. As Shippey notes, he maintained he did not 'remember' the origins of the word 'hobbit' in 1938, though he suggested in a letter to *The Observer* that it could have African or 'fairy-tale' origins, neither of which turned out to be entirely true (Shippey 2002: 75). Tolkien was diligent in his replies to correspondents and his responses to queries about his invented world show that he was able to expand his thoughts on Middle-earth's history and geography as he 'discovered' more information. As he wrote to Nunn, he considered himself the inscriber of Middle-earth's history: 'in the matter of the Third Age I regard myself as a "recorder" only' (Carpenter 1981: 289). Tolkien was aware of his own self-

appointed role as the creator of an unprecedented historical and geographical secondary world, but also self-critical, saying, for instance, that he 'fully recognized and trembled at' his own 'arrogance' (Carpenter 1981: 230). He was also aware of the fact that his work would never be completed and in a letter to Hugh Brogan in 1954 he said 'If you want my opinion, a part of the "fascination" [of *The Lord of the Rings*] consists in the vistas of yet more legend and history, to which this work does not contain a full clue' (Carpenter 1981: 185). He also wrote a letter in reply to a Mr Hastings in 1954, hinting that it 'would take a book' [i.e. the still unpublished *Silmarillion*] to provide 'any kind of real answer to your more profound queries … [of] the First, and Second Ages' (Carpenter 1981: 188). Tolkien was aware of his own desire to include more information, which 'seems to have grown out of hand' (Carpenter 1981: 189), but he acknowledged his readers' thirst for further details of the history of Middle-earth. Tolkien's letter to 'Mr Hastings' is a crucial one as it runs to eight pages but is marked 'not sent', next to which Tolkien wrote: 'It seemed to be taking myself too importantly' (Carpenter 1981: 196). This is an important comment, as it indicates that Tolkien had become aware of his role as the inventor or creator of a secondary world to the extent that he felt his tone had become didactic. In this letter Tolkien said that a writer should be bound by 'humility and an awareness of peril' in avoiding being presumptuous (Carpenter 1981: 194). Although this is a draft letter, it is extremely interesting for showing readers and later researchers how Tolkien had, even before the whole of *The Lord of the Rings* was published, realised his responsibilities to his readers and was becoming increasingly aware of his role in 'subcreation' (Carpenter 1981: 195). Shippey also points out that, as time passed, Tolkien became increasingly aware of the extraordinary literary depth of the work of the *Silmarillion*, which covers the First and Second Ages of Middle-earth's history and thus he was reluctant to complete the work (Shippey 2002: 259). Tolkien's letters to his respondents showed this as well as he realised more and more the complicated history and geography he had created and how the task of completion was seemingly endless (Carpenter 1981: 196). The persona that emerges in Tolkien's letters is inevitably mediated through what he wanted his readers to know of his created world and of its author. Consequently, the images the letters presented may not always have

been entirely accurate, for instance the way in which he used philology was later enriched as his project grew (Shippey 2002: 74-5).

Tolkien's private letters are invaluable documents with regards to understanding Tolkien's historical context; as Mathijsen says, such 'letters are indispensable tools for investigating and understanding the past' (Mathijsen 2012: 10). Tolkien lived through most of the twentieth century, one of the most violent in modern recorded history, including two World Wars and the aftermath of those conflicts. Tolkien's letters to Christopher in the years of the Second World War are particularly important, reflecting much of the process of writing *The Lord of the Rings* as well as the deep feelings Tolkien had for his son, as do his letters to his second son, Michael.[10]

It is through Tolkien's letters to Christopher that I was able to interrogate some of his ideas on Africa, because he was writing that part of *The Lord of the Rings* in which he describes Harad and its peoples, a region he associated with Africa (Carpenter 1981: 79). He referred to the way in which 'the treatment of colour nearly always horrifies anyone going out from Britain' (Carpenter 1981: 73) and states that he had 'a curious sense of reminiscence about any stories of Africa, which always moved [him] deeply' (Carpenter 1981: 82). He also noted that, although South Africa 'was [his] native land', this did not 'seem to recommend it to [Christopher]' (Carpenter 1981: 86). Tolkien's descriptions of South Africa's 'dryness, dustiness, and smell of the satan-licked land' (Carpenter 1981: 90) are crucial for my consideration of his creation of the southern and eastern deserts of Middle-earth.

Significantly, Tolkien continued to be interested in South Africa even after *The Lord of the Rings* was published. In his Valedictory Speech in 1959 he commented that 'Merton College owed a great deal to the "Antipodes" and lands under the Southern Cross: I was born in one; though I do not claim to be the most learned of

[10] Michael (1920-1984) was Tolkien's second son.

those who have come hither from the far end of the Dark Continent' (Tolkien 2006: 238).

While this is an unfortunate choice of words, the 'Dark Continent' leaping off the page at every twenty-first-century historian, it is essential to view this phrase in its context: Trevor-Roper, an entirely respectable historian at the time, stated in 1965 that Africa, apart from 'the history of Europe in Africa … is largely darkness … . And darkness is not a subject for history' (1989: 9).[11] Trevor-Roper is responding here to the growing postcolonial, historical debate on Africa at the time but, as Van Wyk Smith points out, his comments are also part of 'a genealogy of European perceptions of Africa and Africans' (2007: 5). Tolkien was, thus, using a phrase in common use at the time and would probably not have intended it in a negative way, knowing, as he did, that Europeans had had knowledge of Africa since the time of antiquity. Certainly, he would have been aware of various medieval ideas on Ethiopia though his study of Anglo-Saxon, as well as the Middle English writings of the English traveller Mandeville,[12] which, although imbued with 'romance', were not entirely negative descriptions of Ethiopia (Van Wyk Smith 2007: 51). Any discussion of Tolkien's views on Africa must take into account both his historical moment and the breadth of his knowledge, and so I prefer not to judge Tolkien too harshly for using the phrase 'Dark Continent'. This imaginative idea has proved to be resistant to change, so that images of Africa have remained negative, even late into the twentieth century.

In the context of the second half of the twentieth century, and as primary historical documents show, Tolkien's letters also demonstrate that he was cognisant of the development of academic work in his own field of philology, such as that of Auerbach, whose fundamental work on mimesis was published in 1946 (Carpenter 1981: 241).[13] At the same time Tolkien read Eddison's twentieth century fantasy

[11] Hugh Trevor-Roper (1914-2003) later lost integrity when in 1983 he declared the forged 'Hitler Diaries' authentic.

[12] John Mandeville was an English knight who travelled to the Middle East, Ethiopia, and Asia between 1322 and 1356, although his authorship of *The Travels of Sir John Mandeville* is disputed.

[13] Erich Auerbach (1892-1957) published *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature* in 1946.

works with great enjoyment, including *The Worm Ouroboros* (Eddison 1922; Carpenter 1981: 258) and Wyke-Smith's *The Marvellous Land of Snergs*[14] (1927), which, he said, was probably an unconscious source book for his creation of the hobbits (Carpenter 1981: 215). Tolkien was 'historically minded' enough to be fully aware of the developing modern fantasy context, in which he wrote *The Lord of the Rings*. This context included Lord Dunsany (1878-1957), whose popular book, *The King of Elfland's Daughter* (1924), remains one of the most influential 'modern' fantasies. Tolkien is thus positioned squarely in the middle of a group of twentieth-century fantasy writers, whose work straddles the modern period between the 1920s and the 1950s. In terms of literary influences, Tolkien also acknowledged the work of modern South African poet Roy Campbell,[15] who spent a short time in Oxford in 1944, recognising him as the author of 'Flaming Terrapin' and 'Flowering Rifle' (Carpenter 1981: 95). Campbell was briefly an 'Inkling' whilst recovering from war service in East Africa (Alexander 1982: 203).

My study thus focuses on the influence of the historical moment at which Tolkien was writing his magnum opus, *The Lord of the Rings*: the literary developments of the time, his political milieu, and his own personal struggles with the events of the twentieth century. The first of these that I will investigate is the influence of the African adventure stories that Tolkien devoured as a young reader, which encouraged in him a leaning towards the 'imperial gothic' and a deep appreciation for the atmosphere of the uncanny.

The most important writer who influenced Tolkien's representation of Africa is H. Rider Haggard. However, having identified Haggard as one of Tolkien's major influences, it is necessary to contextualise Haggard himself within the literary genre of what Brantlinger calls the 'imperial gothic'. Brantlinger explains this first in his seminal and thought-provoking work on British imperialism, *Rule of Darkness*, commenting that this was a phenomenon which 'combines the seemingly scientific, progressive, often Darwinian ideology of imperialism with an antithetical

[14] E.J. Eddison (1882-1945) and Edward Wyke-Smith (1871-1935) were Tolkien's contemporaries as 'modern' fantasy writers.

[15] Roy Campbell (1901-1957) was a friend of C.S. Lewis.

interest in the occult' (1988: 127). Some decades later, he updates the concept in a short chapter, in which he further explores the romantic, uncanny and supernatural elements of the sub-genre of the Victorian gothic (Brantlinger 2012: 203).

Haggard's work, especially his African adventure novels, *King Solomon's Mines* and *She: An African Adventure*, lie at the centre of 'imperial gothic' fiction in different ways: *She* contains images of monstrous sexuality and *King Solomon's Mines* is a plucky adventure story, which sought to outdo Ballantyne's *The Coral Island* (Brantlinger 2012: 204-205). As Warwick argues, 'Gothic studies and imperial histories are in some ways parallel narratives, evoking tyrannical figures, vast foreign spaces, and psychological terrors' (Warwick 2007: 9). One of the most important aspects of the 'imperial gothic' is, therefore, the elusive yet pervasive sense of the 'uncanny': a psychological condition which, Butler argues, 'applied to lived and living contexts of the colonial past and its haunting of the present' (2014: 35).

Butler suggests that Freud's 'interpretation of the uncanny and its manifestation in dark doubles [could] be applied to the relationship between the coloniser and the colonised' (Butler 2014: 36). Butler thus moves beyond Brantlinger's original definition of the 'imperial gothic' with this definition of the uncanny in imperial or colonial tropes. She refers to the uncanny as an association with the 'primitive self' which has a discourse of the unfamiliar, of degeneration, inferiority, and threat (Butler 2014: 36). One can certainly argue that this dark trope in Haggard's work may have influenced Tolkien's earliest literary ideas on Africa.

In her argument, Butler uses Freud's definition of the 'uncanny', which he had identified in his famous 1919 essay, "Das Unheimlich" on the ghostly or unfamiliar.[16] However, the concept has earlier origins and was explored by the German writer, Schelling, in his *Philosophy of Mythology* (1823) (Royle 2003: 5). Jentsch uses the 'uncanny' or *unheimlich* to describe ghost stories in his *On the*

[16] Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) published *Das Unheimliche* after he had begun his main psychological work.

Psychology of the Uncanny (1906) and describes the psychological experience of an event that is unsettling or unfamiliar. Jentsch drew on E.T.A. Hoffman's stories as examples of the uncanny, especially 'The Sandman' (1817)[17] (Parsons 2021: 22).

Generally, the uncanny or unfamiliar draws on feelings of isolation and solitude, but, as Royle points out: 'it is not what Freud (or anyone else) thinks. It has to do with a sense of ourselves' (2006: 6). It is a subjective concept and is determined by how we perceive anything that is different from our own identity or environment. Tolkien uses the word 'uncanny' 170 times in *The Lord of the Rings*[18] to describe matters that are unusual, frightening or strange, as in when Barliman Butterbur says that the Black Riders had been around and 'all the dogs were yammering and the geese screaming. Uncanny I call it' (Tolkien 2005: 168). 'Uncanny' is not an old word in the English language and appeared first in the 1590s, being derived from the Scots word for mischief, malice or unearthly and appearing in the *Oxford English Dictionary* (Harper 2000).[19] It was also included in the *English Dialect Dictionary* composed by Tolkien's mentor and teacher, Joseph Wright (Manfred 2021).[20] Tolkien worked on the *Oxford English Dictionary* in 1919 and 'had particular reason to be aware of the ease with which words could be formed with *un-*' (Gilliver 2006: 205). Freud's definition as the *unheimliche* is, says Sandner, best described as 'an aesthetic and emotional response relevant to the function of […] monsters', particularly the kind of monsters one encounters in fantasies such as the Old English poem *Beowulf* (Sandner 1999: 164). Uncanny or *unheimliche* is thus more a word that describes a particular state of being. In fact, Sandner writes that Niles suspects Tolkien of using *Beowulf* to experience the 'uncanny return of an irrevocably lost, idealized past' (1999: 173) and Tolkien himself states in his 1936 essay that 'It is just because the main foes in *Beowulf* are inhuman that the

[17] E.T.A. Hoffman (1776-1822), F.W.J. Schelling (1775-1854) and Ernest Jentsch (1867-1919) were all part of the German Romantic Movement.

[18] *Lord of the Rings project Keywords Frequency*.

[19] One of the earliest translations of 'uncanny' is by the Scottish lawyer James Dalrymple (1619-1695).

[20] Joseph Wright (1855-1930) published the *English Dialect Dictionary* between 1898 and 1905.

story is larger and more significant than this imaginary poem of a great king's fall' (Tolkien 2006: 33).

The inhuman monsters, Grendel and the dragon – the uncanny and the unknown in the poem – make *Beowulf* extraordinary for Tolkien, so that the uncanny is the 'outer darkness and its hostile offspring', which 'lie ever in wait for the torches to fail and the voices to cease' (Tolkien 2006: 33). This use of the term 'uncanny' is appropriate here because it demonstrates the extent to which Tolkien's scholarship was infused with the tropes of imaginative story creation, which he revered so highly. It is probable that Tolkien would also have been aware of Hoffmann's 'The Sandman' and it is possible that he knew about Goethe's critical essay, 'The Fairy Tale' (1795), which was a critique of the worst aspects of the enlightenment and absolutism in the fairy tale (Zipes 2007: 19).

In his famous essay, 'On Fairy-Stories' (1939), Tolkien shows that he is fully aware of the nuances of the fairy-tale and the way this idea had changed since the early nineteenth-century, particularly with the work of authors like Lang (Flieger and Anderson 2008: 33-34). After all, he notes that he was born close to the time when Lang's *The Green Fairy Book* was published in 1892[21] and says that he was influenced by Lang's series as a child (Flieger and Anderson 2008: 54). Flieger also points out that Tolkien is aware of the pitfalls presented by comparative mythology as proposed by the German philologist, Müller, as well as the 'Aryanist' Dasent (Flieger 2017: 26-28). Because of this, Tolkien was able to analyse Macdonald's[22] *The Golden Key* as fairy-tale and point out that *Lilith* was more in the nature of a 'romance'.

Tolkien was clear that his studies in philology had 'wakened' his 'real taste for fairy-stories' (Flieger and Anderson 2008: 41) and yet, at the same time, the stories also held an irrepressible vitality. Tolkien agrees with Macdonald that fairy-stories are not limited to an audience of children, but are written 'for the childlike'

[21] Andrew Lang (1844-1912) was a Scottish writer and critic, but is best known for his twelve volume 'colour' series of Fairy Tales, beginning with *The Red Fairy Book* in 1889.

[22] George MacDonald (1824-1905) is best known for his children's books, *The Princess and the Goblin* (1866), *The Princess and Curdie* (1870) and *The Back of the North Wind* (1871).

and that fairy-tales are not allegories (Flieger and Anderson 2008: 55). So, Tolkien's essay is seminal, not only as a contribution to ideas on fantasy but also in expressing his own ideas on writing fantasy and the process of sub-creation (Flieger and Anderson 2008: 60-61). By 1939, Tolkien was familiar with how fairy-stories were constructed and their meaning in contemporary contexts, and he had started writing twentieth-century fantasy himself with the publication of *The Hobbit, or There and Back Again* (1937).

The Hobbits are Tolkien's central characters in *The Lord of the Rings.* They are also his observers, and it is through their views as the main travellers that the readers of *The Lord of the Rings* narrative see other peoples and beings.
What is important about Hobbits is that

> the hobbit character could be expressed in any national literature; their humanness, such as it is, reflects mankind in general rather than Englishman in particular. (Rogers 1975: 71)

The Hobbits are represented as home-loving and comfort-loving. This makes them the perfect receptors for experiencing the *unheimlich* or uncanny throughout the story.

Fuller approaches this from a postcolonial perspective, arguing that because Tolkien was writing *The Lord of the Rings* in the context of the late British Empire, as faith in the concept of Empire was waning, the text offers ambivalence about some matters. Using Freud's conceptualisation of the uncanny and the postcolonial frameworks of Said's *Orientalism* (1993) and Bhabha's *The Location of Culture* (1994), Fuller provides a fascinating overview of the ways in which the Hobbits experience the uncanny or *unheimlich* in what she calls 'in between' spaces, including the Mines of Moria, Dunharrow and the occupied Shire. In these uncanny contexts, which can be neither fully colonised nor effectively decolonised, there are possibilities for new kinds of synthesis and critical awareness (Fuller 2013: 62).

Fuller defines three beings as uncanny: Tom Bombadil, Treebeard, and Shelob. Each of these beings is on the margins of Middle-earth and, in the Hobbits'

encounters with them, they are on the edges of the geographical space and represent otherness (Fuller 2013: 21). Each encounter leads to unresolved possibilities, but illustrates the uncanny, the presence of the very ancient and the different in Middle-earth, through the perceptions and reactions of the Hobbits. Fuller argues that these instances open possibilities for postcolonial critical awareness and literacy (Fuller 2013: 62). This is a compelling argument. Nevertheless, I opine that Tolkien was more a post-war writer than a postcolonial writer, even though he disliked the concept of the British Empire (Carpenter 1981: 89). Like other mid-twentieth-century fantasies, *The Lord of the Rings* is a book that operates both within and beyond the disintegrating British imperial sphere (Castle 2001: 130). It is both imperial and post-imperial in its context.

There has been a strong argument for considering Tolkien within the context of the Gothic writing of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. Groom places Tolkien there, arguing for a place and time that was ‘dark, uncertain, confused, terrible and sublime to the last degree’ (Groom 2012: 4). This is a marvellous and compelling way of looking at Tolkien. Ferdynous also reaches back to the early nineteenth-century literary Gothic, but she crystallises her argument by pointing out that what Tolkien is doing, above all, is writing what, in Middle English, is called “fantasye”, which she defines as ‘strange and bizarre notions that had no basis in everyday experience’ (2017: 34). I would argue that both fantasy and the literary Gothic are relevant to Tolkien. Gray also agrees with this, placing Tolkien within a framework which includes George MacDonald and E.T.A. Hoffman as writers of fantasy, not just fairy-tales. He adds Pullman to show that he is contextualising a wider field of twentieth-century fantasy writing (Gray 2008).

In his 1893 essay on the imagination, MacDonald writes that a fairy-tale was more than a story for children because it is a created world with strict laws, and cited Fouque’s 1815 work, *Undine*, as an example (MacDonald 1998: 1). Tolkien agrees with this and takes up the argument for secondary creation and includes fantasy as an integral part of what the fairy-story should mean to contemporary readers who, like MacDonald’s, are by no means ‘children’ in their understanding of meanings (Tolkien 2006:129). Tolkien is also aware of the fact that MacDonald’s

chosen author, Fouque (1777-1843), was a contemporary of Hoffman and his work *Undine* (1811) is not only a deep fantasy but also has a strong thread of the uncanny, even though it is classified as an early German romance. Tolkien stresses that fairy-stories should not only be fantasy, but that 'the magical part of a fairy-story' should be 'made a vehicle of mystery' (Tolkien 2006: 125). He feels that MacDonald has achieved this in *The Golden Key* (1867), but partly failed in *Lilith* (1895) which is a romance (Tolkien 2006: 126).

It is possible to link Tolkien to both the Gothic, in its widest sense, as well as the uncanny in its original context, as explored by Hoffman and taken up by Freud. What Tolkien stresses, like MacDonald, is that fantasy should create a fully realised world, an 'Other-world', because 'Fantasy, the making or glimpsing of Other-worlds, was the desire and heart of Faerie' (Tolkien 2006: 133). Faerie is something which Tolkien encountered as a child and an adolescent, but was inspired by and 'wakened by philology on the threshold of manhood and quickened to full life by war' (Tolkien 2006: 135). This indicates clearly that Tolkien's construction of Middle-earth, the basis for his fantasy world, is influenced both by what he calls faerie and his study of languages, and by the fact that it was written in the context of modernity in the period following the First World War. Of this, Byrne comments that

> in providing an experience analogous to fiction itself, the otherworld account holds up a mirror to the narrative world and introduces an extra perspective from which to view reality … [it reflects] Tolkien's formulation where the reader's own world and the world of the fictional text are envisioned as "primary" "and "secondary". (2010: 27)

Tolkien's readers can enter his secondary world and return, enriched, to the primary world having added a new set of perspectives to their perception of the primary or 'real' world.

In writing *The Lord of the Rings*, Tolkien therefore completes a modern fantasy which presents a fully realised secondary otherworld. And yet, Lobdell insists that 'Tolkienian Fantasy' is entrenched firmly in the late Victorian and Edwardian

literary period, which includes the imperial adventures (many of which have African themes), but also in the world of Grahame's *Golden Age* (1895) and MacDonald's *Golden Key* (Lobdell 2005: 119). In this thesis, I will by no means ignore this argument; in fact, I will address this period in a significant way and agree with Lobdell that Victorian and Edwardian adventure stories were crucial influences on Tolkien. After all, as Harris notes:

> after the First World War, the Victorian and Edwardian fairy fantasies become all but useless and they gradually become impossible to find consolation for the depredations of modernity in dreaming of fairyland. Yet, through the myth-making of Tolkien's Middle-earth…he helped to envision modern war in an archetypical fashion that reinvigorated the fantasy genre. (2008: 196)

Tolkien's 'myth-making' is, thus, the result of a number of influences in his life, not least of which is the fact that he was writing in a modern world. There were, however, significant literary tropes and ideas that he inherited from the past. Tolkien originally intended to study Classics at Oxford, but changed his degree and graduated with first-class honours in English in 1915, before participating in the First World War (Carpenter 1981: 12). Tolkien had first learned Anglo-Saxon whilst still at school (Carpenter 1981:213) and it was in studying this language[23] that he first discovered the people he called the *'sigelhearwan*' or the Ethiopians, though he did not write on this matter until 1932, when he had settled into his academic career in Oxford.

As the 'Ethiopians' are an important part of Tolkien's writing, it is necessary for me to provide a context here. The Ethiopians were depicted in the Biblical Old Testament in a derivative way in the Book of Jeremiah (Jeremiah 13: 23). Representation in the New Testament was more positive (Acts 8: 26-40), but as Van Wyk Smith shows, Ethiopian peoples were part of the spread of North African Christianity. They embodied 'the entire discourse of difference' then present in

[23] Tolkien himself uses the terms 'Old English' and 'Anglo-Saxon' at different times in his letters and commentaries. His biographers and the scholars writing on his life and writing do the same. I have used the terms interchangeably according to context.

Christian religious-allegorical representation (Van Wyk Smith 2007: 381). Ethiopians had an unfortunate descriptive origin in Western European discourse, appearing in tales on 'marvellous races' in the Middle East and North Africa, and often being described as 'monstrous' (Weinstock 2020: 14). This is significant because, as Cohen points out in his seminal essay on 'Monster Culture', race is one of 'the most powerful … catalyst[s] to the creation of monsters as [are] culture, gender and sexuality. Africa thus became the West's significant Other, the sign of its ontological difference simply being skin colour' (Cohen 2020: 43). The Ethiopians fell into this negative category and appeared in *The Wonders of the East* and the *Liber Monstrorum*: two medieval texts which were part of Anglo-Saxon literary culture (Arnold 2018: 91). Tolkien's analysis was far more nuanced. He investigated several manuscripts in which the *sigelhearwan* appeared; and in his 1932 article, he notes that 'they appear in Old English in a most unpleasant light', showing that he was aware of the negative depiction of the Ethiopians, but thought that they were worth a visit (Tolkien 1932: 183). Tolkien was aware of the extremely subjective way in which people had written of Ethiopia, 'for the learned placed dragons and marvellous gems in Ethiopia, and credited the people with strange habits, and strange foods, not to mention contiguity with the Anthropophagi' (1932: 192). Tolkien, however, did not see these people as monsters, even though they were presented as extraordinarily exotic.

I argue, that Tolkien used writing in Old English documents on elephants which influenced his own poetry on *oliphaunts* and the material in Book IV on the *oliphaunt.* Obviously Tolkien would have encountered classical literature on elephants in war in antiquity, but there are also influential manuscripts describing elephants in Anglo-Saxon.

Spiders are also present in Anglo-Saxon literature and have a cultural history as monsters in English writing, as well as in remedy collections compiled by Anglo-Saxon healers for the treatment of spider-bites. As Cavill notes, this literature is a combination of written material including Biblical, Anglo-Saxon and other manuscripts including Theobald's *Physiologus* (2018: 39-41). Tolkien would have been familiar with this last document and especially the early Middle English

version of the text, which was in the form of a poem (Cavill 2018: 49), the bulk of which focused on the spider as a frightening monster. I suggest that Tolkien knew the Middle English *Physiologus* as well as other Middle English *Beastiaries*, and that some of his ideas for exotic monsters could have been drawn from these sources.

It is also my argument that the Second World War, as an historical event, had a profound, if not cataclysmic, effect on Tolkien, both on a personal and literary level. By 1944, Tolkien had come to a halt with the *Lord of the Rings* and struggled to bring his writing up to date while attending to his own duties as an Air Raid Warden (White 2001: 165). Both his sons, Christopher and Michael, were away from home and he felt the grief of being a parent separated from his children keenly. As his biographer, White, points out, to 'Tolkien it must have seemed the effort of focusing on *The Lord of the Rings* was interminable' (2001: 179).

For this thesis, I have concentrated on the chapters Tolkien worked on whilst corresponding with Christopher in South Africa, particularly those set in Gondor and Mordor, and the way in which Africa was relevant to these in terms of influencing the landscape, geography, and issues of 'race'. Certainly, Tolkien found Christopher's responses to the chapters sent out to South Africa heartening and was consequentially able to push ahead with the writing of Book IV of *The Lord of the Rings*.

The finished book is thus very much a product of the mid-twentieth century, like White's *The Once and Future King* (1958).[24] This context, comments Shippey in 1996, was what makes these fantasies 'post-war' (1996: 85). Defining mid-twentieth century fantasy fiction is difficult, because it was, in one sense, a 'new, modern'' genre,though, as I have already pointed out, Tolkien was aware of his historical context in the post-First World War space along with Dunsany and Eddison.

[24] T.H. White (1906-1964).

In his 1959 retirement speech, Tolkien returned to a reflection on the South African context when he made a now famous statement that he had 'the hatred of *apartheid* in his bones' (2006: 238). He was also referring to the separation of language and literature, a lifelong battle within his own academic subject at Oxford University (Tolkien 2006: 231-232). Tolkien, I argue, had an historical awareness of scientific racism and its utility in the construction of *apartheid*, as described by Dubow in his specific work on South Africa, where the word was first used officially in 1936 (1995: 250).

This has also been confirmed by Fimi, who argues that Tolkien was aware of the strong presence of scientific racism and eugenicist theories on 'race' in his own lifetime (2009: 136-137). Tolkien, being sensitive to the use of every word, objected strongly to the use of the term 'Nordic' by Charlotte and Denis Plimme,r who interviewed him for the *Daily Telegraph* in 1967, and pointed out that it 'is associated with racialist theories' (Carpenter 1981: 375). Tolkien was conscious of every nuance in language that related to difference, especially in the context of the 1930s and 1940s, during which Nazi Germany appropriated so many terms for its political and social rhetoric. By the time he made his retirement speech in 1959, Tolkien would, therefore, have realised exactly what the discourse of *apartheid* meant for South Africa and for the world in the twentieth century.

As Chance argues, critics have seized upon Tolkien's comment on *apartheid* to prove that, while acutely aware of difference, he was not prejudiced or 'racist' (Chance 2016:220). Chance shows the ways in which Tolkien writes about difference in his various works, linking *apartheid* specifically with *The Lord of the Rings* in the period between 1925 and 1943 (Chance 2016: 220 ff.). The nuances of 'race' in Tolkien's longest book require a great deal of untangling and there has been a substantial volume of material written about Tolkien's approach to 'race', in which, as Stuart has shown in his recent work, the debate has focused on several issues, not least of which is the topic of difference and others (Stuart 2022).

In this thesis, I follow Tolkien's Hobbit-focused narratives that deal with issues of race in *The Lord of the Rings*. This, in turn, can generate problems of bias and

subjectivity. However, as the Hobbits are mostly cast in the role of narrators, it is perhaps appropriate to see 'others' through their (and Tolkien's) descriptions. These take both negative and positive forms, as the Hobbits recorded their experiences later in *The Red Book of Westmarch* from the perspective of explorers and travellers, on a par with participants in the War of the Ring. However, there are sections of *The Lord of the Rings* where the Hobbits do not have agency and are themselves the 'other' beings described by Orcs or Men, as in the chapters on the Uruk-hai and in Ithilien and Gondor. Thus, in analysing the various voices on 'others' in the text, I find alternative perspectives on difference and on 'race'.

Finally, I discuss the influence of the tradition of travel writing on Tolkien. The discourse of travel writing, which can be defined as an encounter between the self, the explorer and the 'other' (Thompson 2011: 10) grew from the depictions of monsters that Tolkien had encountered in his reading on the Middle Ages. Through his knowledge of Mandeville's writings, he knew about the ways in which Europeans wrote about the Middle East and East, including Ethiopia, in ways which were different and alien (Sobecki 2002: 330). European travels to Ethiopia/Abyssinia and North Eastern Africa continued after the Middle Ages and the region remained one of exotic appeal, crystallised by the expeditions of the Scottish adventurer, Bruce, in the eighteenth century;[25] Bruce, also known as 'the Pale Abyssinian', played a crucial role in the way in which British explorers in Africa were depicted, because he had travelled 'into the unknown' (Bredin 2001: 71-75). Bruce presents his experiences in a wonderful and positive way, as Van Wyk Smith writes: "having encountered an extraordinary world of elegance and ferocity' which he tried to interpret and present to his incredulous readers as a blend of Old Testament warrior culture and medieval courtly romance (Van Wyk Smith 441).

This idea of 'discovering' places and recording cartography, cultures and languages, increased in popularity during what Thompson calls the 'long

[25] James Bruce (1730-1794) became known for exploring East Africa and is credited to be the first British traveller and second European to 'discover' the source of the Blue Nile in 1770.

eighteenth century' (1660-1837) of travel writing. This period also focused more and more on the African continent as the last place that was 'unknown' to white travellers (Bredin 2001: 45).

During this time a specific context of travel writing developed in South Africa (Pratt 2012: 57-60). Travellers and explorers found the 'interior' of the Cape Colony fascinating and, using the growing disciplines of science and geography, made expeditions to discover strange and unknown peoples and places. Driver argues that this process was accelerated by the British Royal Geographic Society from the 1830s, which sponsored expeditions and encouraged exploration (Driver 2001: 27-28). The African interior became the focus for missionaries and traders as well as explorers and travellers imbued with the idea that they had a 'civilising' mission, but, and perhaps even more importantly, a duty to record what they found in their travelogues.

By the mid-nineteenth century, African travel writing, which had developed as a result of exploration, became an extraordinarily popular genre. Accounts centred on the idea of 'empty lands' and uncharted territories were particularly enticing (Young 2006: 2), motivating explorers to claim these regions for the growing British Empire.

The interest in Africa grew dramatically during the Victorian period, alongside the ideas of African exploration,n which Tolkien said he had read from the age of four (Carpenter 1981: 30). My argument is that African travel writing was foundational to some of the fiction Tolkien read as an adolescent and may well have influenced Tolkien's own ideas about imaginary geography and cartography. Certainly, Bushell views Tolkien as someone who was highly original in the genre of fantasy cartography, given that 'no other author [used] maps on the scale and level, in private and public, that he [did]' (Bushell 2020: 232). Tolkien's contribution to fantasy was therefore multi-dimensional because he was intent on creating a fully realised secondary world: he 'made language, then maps and then the story to fit it' (Bushell 2020: 234).

Because Tolkien's landscapes in Middle-earth reflect a variety of terrains, settlements, peoples and cultures, Groom argues that Tolkien is 'the ultimate

creative literary cartographer' (Groom 2021: 115) and he points out that 'Travel through Middle-earth is … a succession of scenes that juxtapose diverse Englands' (Groom 2022: 112). Shippey also states that Tolkien had, in his early writing on the Barrow-downs in 1934, taken 'the English landscape, perhaps the safest in the world, and [made] it haunted'. Tolkien was able to do this because burial mounds were a familiar feature of the English landscape (Shippey 1999: 61). In fact, the first place the Hobbits encounter on their journey outside the Shire in *The Lord of the Rings* is the Old Forest, which is pervaded by an atmosphere of what Dunn calls the 'ecological uncanny'; here Dunn follows Smith's and Hughes's ideas on the 'Eco gothic' in examining Gothic tropes and ecological literary ideas (Dunn 2024: 83). Clearly, Tolkien could take the forest of the European fairy-tale and make it darker, more uncanny and, in placing the haunted barrow-downs on its borders, create an immediate sense of the depth of the history of Eriador right at the beginning of the Hobbits' journey.

Tolkien did not deny that his favourite landscape was 'the soft rolling contours of a rich champain', but he also insisted that 'the thing that stirs me most and comes nearest to heart's satisfaction to me is space' (Carpenter 1981: 91). Because of this, my argument is that the 'English' parts of Middle-earth are contrasted with harsher terrain, especially those places which resembled Africa and were desolate and very hot (as he described Harad) (Resnick 1967: 41). Certainly, Tolkien's writing displays a love for all the spaces of Middle-earth and he, with Christopher's help, constructed painstakingly accurate maps of all the regions. Of this, Bushell concludes:

> Topography and geography for the cartographic writer – taken to its extreme in Tolkien – is never "background", rather it initiates the whole, of which it later becomes a part. (Bushell 2020: 233)

Tolkien's maps should be treated as part of the text. As Armitt notes, the landscape and topography are so immense that even the characters seem diminished in scale (2020: 88).

Early nineteenth-century maps of Africa had areas which were labelled as ‘unknown’ or depicted as ‘empty’ and, in the same way, Middle-earth had Harad and Rhûn, which were, in contrast to other places, less inhabited and at the edge of the known world. Africa, because it was inhabited by peoples (at least, according to Europeans) still at the level of savagery, continued to be a place of ‘darkness’ and was often depicted as such (Driver 2001: 151). Driver explains, though, that this negative portrayal was often linked to the persistence of slavery in East Africa, highlighted by the widespread ideas about the crusading work of explorer and missionary Livingstone[26] (2001: 68-70).

Interestingly, the lesser-known regions of Middle-earth are also places where human (as opposed to Orc) slavery still existed, such as in Mordor, where Tolkien informs his readers that Frodo and Sam know nothing of the ‘dark sad waters of Lake Núrnen’ where there were ‘great slave-worked fields’ (Tolkien 2005: 923). Given Livingstone’s extraordinary anti-slavery stance and his fame as an explorer in Africa, as well as Stanley’s[27] prolific writing on this issue (Driver 2008: 121), it is essential to mention this. These are enslaved Men, not Orcs, who are automatons, and thus slaves, expressing these views.

Travel and exploration are certainly two of the dominant themes or motifs in *The Lord of the Rings*. Tolkien tells his readers in the chapter ‘The Council of Elrond’ that Aragorn is one of the greatest travellers of his time, having travelled ‘into the far countries of Rhûn and Harad where the stars are strange’ (2005: 248). This is important because it refers readers to the Southern Hemisphere of the Earth, where the constellations, such as the Southern Cross, are different from those in the northern world. It is also in this chapter that Boromir first introduces ‘the Easterlings and cruel Haradrim’ (Tolkien 2005: 245) into the narrative.

Tolkien’s Southern and Eastern regions, and the people there, are therefore often depicted much like places in Africa, which had been unknown to Europeans.

[26] David Livingstone (1813-1873) remains a controversial and enigmatic figure.

[27] Henry Morton Stanley (1841-1904) was an African explorer and journalist. He is credited with the definitive discovery of the sources of the White and Blue Nile.

Tolkien does not provide maps of Harad or South Harad or of Rhûn, because they are both unknown to him, but also to the main characters, as well as those who narrate events (the Hobbits in particular). For Tolkien, the cartography in which 'English' environments were contrasted with harsher places is part of the discourse of the story of *The Lord of the Rings*, as the protagonists encounter different places and the narrative unfolds.

Like others, Shippey points out that *The Lord of the Rings* is a 'cartographic' as well as a 'linguistic' project (2002: 125), that the story is revealed through the languages and the geography of Tolkien's sub-created Middle-earth. The divisions between peoples that make some 'evil', both historically and at the time of the narrative, are thus demarcated in the extraordinarily detailed maps: a subject which, Ekman suggests, needs more research (2013: 196). This is most obvious in the differences between the peoples of the balmier climates and the hot deserts of the south and east, the places which Tolkien associated with Africa.

Tolkien's long story, however, is no mere travelogue, as it has temporal echoes that evoke the unanswered questions of a 'vanquished past' (Groom 2021: 118). It is this deep historical texture of the way Tolkien probed the possibilities of Middle-earth's story that made his writing a unique narrative of undiscovered lands. Eighteenth- and nineteenth-century travel writing on Africa has similar echoes as explorers 'discover' ancient places and cultures and the people that still live there in contemporary time. As the Europeans who write about these places are the 'first' to describe the 'unexplored' regions, it is their view of these worlds that dominates future perceptions. In *The Lord of the Rings* Tolkien records the experience of encountering strange places and 'unknown' peoples and beings through the Hobbits. Because of my focus in this thesis, however, I will concentrate on discussing those places in the text which most resemble Africa and which Tolkien himself identified as 'South' and 'very hot'.

The Red Book of Westmarch is, however, more than a travelogue. Apart from being a classical fantasy example of what Clute and Stapleford call a 'book within

a book' being the personal record of Bilbo and Frodo (Clute and Stapleford 1997: 139), It is also a subjective historical

> account concerned with the social forces that constitute a historical period and the causal factors – be they actions, characters or events – that precipitate a change in the social fabric. (Tomko 2011: 211)

Given that I am approaching *The Lord of the Rings* from a historiographical standpoint, I will also be concerned with these elements of *The Lord of the Rings*. Internally, the text demonstrates the changes in the Hobbits and other characters as they move through the changing history of Middle-earth. Externally, I examine the process by which Tolkien wrote the book with his memories and influences of African tropes within the context of the mid twentieth-century.

This thesis is divided up into three main chapters dealing with major themes in Tolkien's life and writing. In Chapter 2 I examine the 'African Literary Influences' on Tolkien's childhood and adolescent reading including the works of late Victorian writers in the African adventure genre such as Rider Haggard, his main influence and the pervasive nature of Haggard's texts, *King Solomon's Mines* (1885) and *She: An African Adventure* (1887). In this chapter I consider the detailed scholarship on the influence of adventure fiction on Tolkien's main work *The Lord of the Rings*.

In Chapter 3 I analyse the context of the Second World War and its effects on Tolkien as he wrote most of *The Lord of the Rings* during this time. Of particular focus here is his correspondence with his youngest son Christopher who was stationed in South Africa. Christopher's letters evoked memories of the Orange Free State and of African landscapes which in turn influenced Tolkien's writing on the South and East of Middle-earth. In this chapter I also examine the stresses of writing in war time including the absence of family members and Tolkien's own responses to war.

In Chapter 4 I examine Tolkien's use of the concept of 'difference' and 'race' in *The Lord of the Rings* including his rejection of the idea of 'apartheid' and 'Nordicism' as perpetuated by eugenicists and by Nazi Germany in the twentieth

century. The debate on Tolkien and ‘racism’ is a considerable one in academic circles and in this chapter I investigate some of the more recent discussions on the topics of supremacy in Tolkien’s Middle-earth including the prejudices against Orcs and the way in which these peoples and other ‘minorities’ are described in *The Lord of the Rings*. Central to this section is the way in which Tolkien’s spokespeople, the Hobbits, see themselves and ‘others’.

In the fifth chapter I examine the concepts of ‘travel writing’ including the origins of European medieval writing on distant lands as evoked by John Mandeville and the way places ‘on the edge of the world’ were evoked in medieval literature well known to Tolkien. I examine what Shippey calls Tolkien’s ‘cartographic project’ and, using his Hobbit observers, investigate how landscape is depicted in *The Lord of the Rings* especially those places in the South and East which are evocative of Africa.

In chapter 6, by way of conclusion, I attempt to reach a synthesis of the above themes and of the main debates on the issues discussed. Tolkien made particular use of themes with African origins in *The Lord of the Rings* and used these in his panoramic geography and history of Middle-earth in the text.

CHAPTER 2: AFRICAN LITERARY INFLUENCES

In response to Auden's review of *The Return of the King* in June 1955, Tolkien wrote that his fantasy had been inspired by what he defined as the appeal of the 'North-western air'. This quality was both 'home' and 'something discovered' for him as he had been born in South Africa. He stated that: 'those deeply implanted impressions, underlying memories that are still pictorially available for inspection, of first childhood are for me those of a hot parched country' (Carpenter 1981: 213). Tolkien acknowledged that what moved him most about the English landscape, which resembled 'the soft rolling contours of a rich champain', was 'space'. He commented that 'I would be willing to barter barrenness for the rich countryside indeed, I think I like barrenness itself, whenever I have seen it' (Carpenter 1981: 213). This is an interesting observation, given his possibly formative experience of the barrenness of Africa.

In this chapter I will endeavour to trace the literary influences on Tolkien's legendarium pertaining to the geographical spaces in *The Lord of the Rings* which most resemble the African landscape, both as Tolkien visualised it from memory and, perhaps more pertinently, as he knew it from his reading of fiction set in Africa. The echoes of this African landscape directed Tolkien to a realisation that the countryside of Britain during Anglo-Saxon and earlier times was wild, untamed, sparsely populated and 'barren'. These influences enabled Tolkien to construct the world geography of Middle-earth that existed in contrast to the hobbits' Shire, which represented the cultivated English landscape he knew so well. I also intend to examine other African themes that occur in Tolkien's early reading on Africa as these pertain to *The Lord of the Rings* and offer a brief consideration of the ways in which Tolkien scholars have examined these important tropes especially since the 1980s.

One obvious investigative starting point for a study of Tolkien's childhood reading is the late Victorian and Edwardian adventure story. Ordway, in examining Tolkien

as a product of ‘modern literature’, rather than only of medieval mythology, points out that ‘Tolkien came of age during the heyday of the adventure novelists’ whom she views as the classics of ‘modern fiction’ (2021: 99). Hence the study of writers such as Haggard and Buchan,[28] while they were dismissed by literary critics as ‘juvenile’ or ‘adolescent’, is important to this study which investigates the origins of Tolkien’s ideas on Africa.

One of the problems in examining Tolkien’s writing was that many of his early critics considered his work boyish or fantastical rather than ‘literary’ (Muir 1955, Wilson 1956, Stimpson 1969). It took many decades for the ‘bookish’ to reconcile themselves with what Ordway calls ‘the more discerning taste of the boyish’, in other words, those who enjoyed fantasy (2021: 99). It is only since the 1980s that scholars like Flieger (1983, 1997) and Shippey (1982, 1999) have investigated Tolkien under the rubric of fantasy as a serious genre.

Academic critics of Tolkien have, despite this, continued to be ruthless in their descriptions of his work as popular rather than literary. In 1983 for instance, McLeish put forward an analysis of *The Lord of the Rings* as a simple late Victorian adventure-type story in the same genre as that written by Haggard or Kipling, in other words, ‘a simple tale (with) the absence of sex’ (1983: 126). McLeish looks for the origins of this in ‘what other tales might Tolkien himself, or his children have experienced? What were people likely to have been reading in the 1900s? On what familiar ground, was the edifice of his life’s work laid down?’ (1983: 127). McLeish identifies H.G. Wells as a popular late nineteenth-century writer, probably read by Tolkien, who may have influenced him, as well as Grahame’s *The Wind in the Willows* (1908), which Tolkien read when he was sixteen and which McLeish considers quite clearly as a children’s story (1983: 128). McLeish seems to believe that Tolkien’s early reading was mostly in the type of the ‘ripping yarn’ and focuses therefore on Tolkien’s incorporation of tropes from the adventure story genre into his own writing.

[28] John Buchan (1885-1940) was a near-contemporary of Tolkien and is best known for *Prester John* (1910) and *The Thirty-Nine Steps* (1914).

Ordway's analysis, forty years later, is far more complex and comprehensive. Ordway gives a detailed assessment of Tolkien's boyhood reading, noting Tolkien's interest in such texts as Hayens's *Scouting for Buller* (1902)[29] and pointing out that 'racism and imperialism are obvious' in such texts (2021: 102). Ordway notes that these themes were overt in most boys' adventure stories at the beginning of the twentieth century (2021: 105-106) and makes the argument that 'an awareness of Tolkien's boyhood reading can help us understand his later treatment of this sensitive topic' (2021: 106), stressing that 'influence can operate through negative as well as positive means' (2021: 107). Tolkien would certainly have read of the harsh treatment of indigenous peoples in these adventure stories, which made him sensitive to the idea of difference. More obviously, as a young boy who had lost his father, Tolkien would have been able to identify with the stories of youngsters who were left as orphans in a colonial setting and had to find their own way in the world. These ideas run throughout *The Lord of the Rings*.

Having said this, it is possible to use different approaches to examining Tolkien's reading during the Edwardian and Georgian period of his adolescence, and in the context of the aggressive British imperialism leading up to the First World War. We know that Tolkien donated a copy of *Scouting for Buller* to King Edward's School library in Birmingham when he left in 1911, and it does seem that he was aware of the subjective nature of the genre of adventure fiction. Havens's titles were very like Henty's, particularly the Buller titles *With Buller in Natal* or *A Born Leader* (1901) (Butts 2008: 152). Henty describes his story as one of 'boy heroism' revolving around the Natalian English theme of an informal company, the 'Maritzburg Scouts' (Henty 1901: v). In these, Henty describes the Boers as cowards who do not have 'the heart to venture even once to face the British in the open' at the Siege of Ladysmith (Henty 1901: vi). Henty's other South African War novels expressed similarly negative anti-Boer statements (Pridmore 2002:88) but Ordway argues that Tolkien was able to read *Scouting for Buller* and identify with

[29] Herbert Haynes (1861-1944) was a children's author who focussed on 'boys' adventure stories. He was a literary contemporary of G.A. Henty (1832-1902) and F.S. Brereton (1872-1957), who also published works on the South African War.

the plot about an orphan boy, rather than imbibing the negative ideas about South Africa, empire and race (Ordway 2021: 104).

This is a difficult issue upon which to make such a definitive statement, as reading is a subjective experience in childhood and adolescence but, given that we have Tolkien's later comments on empire to back up Ordway's observation, I am prepared to give her the benefit of the doubt on this issue. In addition to Doyle's and Wilson's more serious accounts of the war in South Africa,[30] Hayens was one of three authors who wrote 'adventure' stories about the South African War; the others were Brereton's *With Rifle and Bayonet: a Story of the Boer War* (1900) and Henty's *With Roberts to Pretoria: A Tale of the South African War* (1902). It is possible that Tolkien read these books as well.

Kipling[31] was more ambivalent about the righteousness of the South African War as a 'white man's war'; in his short story 'A Burgher of the Free State' (1900) he demonstrated that there were some reasons to doubt the clarity of the ongoing British imperial mission in South Africa. As a result of this, critics at home began to question Kipling's 'loyalty' to the imperial cause (Free 2016: 314-315). Kipling sympathised with the experiences of ordinary British soldiers, as he had in India, as well as feeling empathy for the Boers. In fact, Le Fanu notes that the South African War was a turning point for imperial writers like Doyle, Kipling, and Mary Kingsley[32] in that it shaped and changed their ideas in ways that were both unexpected and unforeseen as well as long-lasting and permanent (Le Fanu 2020).

Tolkien's youth was framed by the years following the South African War. He had an extended adolescence at King Edward's School and did not leave until 1911 when he was nineteen, and thus older than many other boys. Garth, in his

[30] Arthur Conan Doyle (1859-1930) spent time in South Africa and published *The Great Boer War* in 1901 and Herbert Wrigley Wilson (1866-1940) was a journalist who published *With the Flag to Pretoria: A History of the Boer War 1899-1900* in 1900.

[31] Rudyard Kipling (1865-1936) had returned from India to live in England in 1896 but was in South Africa during the South African War.

[32] Mary Kingsley (1862-1900) was a writer and traveller who was in South Africa during the South African War.

outstanding account of Tolkien's young adulthood, points to the attitudes of the time that he saw as providing part of the context for Tolkien's adolescence. He writes that,

> in the books that most boys read that most boys read, war was sport continued by other means. Honour and glory cast an over-arching glamour over both, as if real combat could be an heroic and essentially decent affair. (Garth 2003: 20-21)

Quigley, too, describes the still positive glow of the kind of heroism portrayed in the events of the South African War in Vachell's[33] school story *The Hill: A Romance of Friendship*, (1905) in which the headmaster describes the almost delightful death-in-action of a youth as 'clean' (Quigley 1982: 198). Garth notes that the positive attitude towards war continued up until 1914. During this time, as Quigley and others point out, the 'school story' was a popular genre in which no one acknowledged 'that the war was killing off, not just [the public schools'] young products, but the world they were made for' (Quigley 1982: 200).

I mention the school story because Tolkien was aware of this genre which, along with the adventure story, shaped his youth (Garth 2003: 78). It was the school story that particularly associated sport with war in the closed environment of the public school, even after the devastating losses of the First World War (Richards 1988: 13). War and death in battle had acquired such romantic glamour, suggests Reader, that imperial wars of the late nineteenth century generated feelings of emotional patriotism 'which as feeling rose against Germany could readily be turned in that direction also' (1988: 56).

Haggard, having expressed doubts about the imperial project during the South African War, predicted in 1902 that England was entering a period of decline from which it might never recover and that 'Rural England', the title of his depressing monograph, was vanishing fast (1902). In his study of the Edwardian period, Hattersley, however, notes that the decline of rural life in England had begun in the middle of the previous century, while English agriculture, far from being on the

[33] Horace Annersley Vachell (1861-1955).

verge of collapse, did well in the Edwardian decade (2004: 70). This disappearance of rural England, which Tolkien describes as happening in his childhood, was in fact the final part of a historical process which had been in progression for over seventy years, not, as Haggard thought, one which had accelerated in the years up to the South African War (Hattersley 2004: 71). The English landscape that Tolkien took as a model for the Shire in *The Lord of the Rings* was thus already an historical anomaly in the Britain of the twentieth century in which Tolkien grew up.

In the context of that same early twentieth century Britain, the South African War raised worrying questions about Britain's international standing (Hynes 1991: 12). The humiliations suffered by the British forces in South Africa had damaged the national idea of superiority and had encouraged the idea that the British 'race' was possibly suffering from some kind of 'degeneration', that there was 'a decline in the ability of British minds and bodies' which 'was undermining their capacity to address … external threats' (Prior 2013: 4). There is, however, no evidence that Tolkien agreed with these ideas, prevalent though they were at the time. Tolkien's ideas about 'race' were far more nuanced and, as Garth points out, Tolkien was aware that 'in 1914 [he] was being asked to fight soldiers whose home was the land of his own paternal ancestors' (2003: 41).

Many English people had the idea that as 'Anglo-Saxons' they were related to the German-speaking or 'Teutonic' peoples of Europe, but there is no evidence that Tolkien subscribed to this rigid idea of Teutonism. Later in his life Tolkien explained that his surname was a German one, originating in Saxony (Carpenter 1981: 218); he thus did not have a blind hatred of Germans or Germany such that his 'nationalism' was unique (Garth 2003: 51). He did, however, abhor 'Nordicism', which was, by the 1930s, becoming appropriated as a racist term by the Nazis. As such it was being challenged by several intellectuals of Tolkien's generation (Dubow 1995: 126).

At the time Tolkien entered the First World War in 1915, he had been studying Old English since he first discovered the language at the age of sixteen at King

Edward's School. Tolkien later remembered his delight in learning this language because of its link to 'modern historical philology' and for the 'first time the study of a language out of mere love' (Carpenter 1981: 213). In addition to many other young men of his generation (who had with similar public-school backgrounds and were educated in Classical languages), Tolkien therefore knew about and would have been influenced by Anglo-Saxon ideas on war and battle.

However, he 'was not eager to embrace the frightening new reality of war' (Garth 2003: 40). From his readings of Old English, Tolkien knew of *ofermod*, which spoke of overwhelming pride and glory for glory's sake in young warriors and thus, arguably, also encouraged the idea dying in battle (Garth 2003: 71). Although the young men described by Nichols in his 1920 novel *Prelude* (1920) and Raymond, in his *Tell England: A Study in a Generation (*1922),[34] learned quickly that the First World War was a horrendous experience, Tolkien had, from his readings of Old English, an even deeper sense of what battle meant and he was keenly aware of the sorrow, the blind sick horror, tears, and death (Dickerson 2003: 31-33) of battle.

Because he was familiar with *ofermod* from the Old English poem *The Battle of Maldon,* Tolkien knew that blind heroism had led to the lamentable advent of medieval chivalry. He viewed this chivalry as a quality which could drive men beyond bleak heroic necessity to excess, inevitable death, and despair (Chance 2005: 176). He was thus as much a social critic of the First World War as a participant in the conflict and developed his own ideas of heroism in the face of this darkness (Blumberg 2002: 66). Having studied the language and literature of the Anglo-Saxons, Tolkien must have had an extraordinarily nuanced and historical empathy for the situation in which he found himself with his fellow soldiers in the First World War.

There is no doubting the enormous impact the Great War had on England and on European culture in general. Ekstein demonstrates this very well in his aptly

[34] Beverly Nichols' (1898-1983) and Ernest Raymond's (1888-1974) First World War novels are viewed by Quigley as being the final traditional school stories in the original nineteenth and early twentieth-century genre.

subtitled book *The Rites of Spring,* in which he describes the onset of modernity (2012: 10-16). In a similar vein Garth unpacks Tolkien's early Middle-earth engagements with what later became *The Silmarillion* during his time as an officer in the First World War but points out that the new movement of 'modernism' did not really impact him (2003: 288). This was because the origin of Tolkien's engagement with *faerie* began before the First World War. Mortimer, however, examines the war as a modern event which influenced Tolkien as an imaginative individual (2005: 113-115).

There is no reason to suggest that Tolkien was anything other than a 'modern' writer who found himself, like the other writers of his time, influenced by the modern conditions of a dark world following the aftermath of his experiences in the war (Nicolay 2014). Tolkien did most of his writing in the middle years of the twentieth century and he is thus a modern writer, even if his work is fantasy, a genre not generally associated with 'modernism'. Thus, it is perhaps most apt to follow Vaninnskaya, for whom Tolkien is

> A Man of His Time who drew on both the fantasy traditions of Haggard, Chesterton and Morris as well as the twentieth-century rural nostalgia of the Edwardian and inter-war years and the patriotic writing of the First World. War. (Vaninnskaya 2006: 34)

It is thus clearly possible to see Tolkien as modern but not a 'modernist' in the context of the twentieth century literary movement that hovers between 1890 and 1950 (Gay 2007: 195-6); certainly, *The Lord of the Rings* does not fit any of the parameters of the 'modernist' novel (Trotter 2011: 70-71).

At the same time, though, Tolkien's experiences in the First World War did reflect what Bradbury and McFarlane define as the sounding parameters of modernism: a sense of fragmentation, discontinuity, alienation, isolation, and a sense of existential crisis (1991: 19-33). It is possible to find all these factors in *The Lord of the Rings,* just as it is possible to find them in White's *Sword in the Stone* or Peake's *Gormenghast* trilogy,[35] works which are also not usually considered

[35] Mervyn Peake (1911-1968) published the *Gormenghast* trilogy between 1946 and 1959.

'modernist'. As Childs points out, modernism is viewed regularly as either a time-bound or genre-bound art form but it is important to remember that most of the literature written within the parameters of the wider modernist time frame of the 1850s to the 1950s was not modernist (2008: 19).

Perhaps Tolkien can be seen as a modernist in that he wrote fantasy as a rejection of realism. Curry calls this rejection of the real 'enchantment', which is the opposite of modernity (2012: 129). On the other hand, Tolkien was most certainly not a modernist in that he did not adopt the stream of consciousness style prose of the traditional modernists Joyce (1882-1941) or Woolf (1882-1942) nor, as Attebery points out, the irony associated with the modern. As Attebery writes, 'Tolkien's fantasies are non-ironic' (1992: 39).

It is important to note that Tolkien did not invent twentieth-century fantasy in a vacuum. British writers, such as Eddison, whom Tolkien met, and whose works Tolkien said he had 'read long after they were published' (Carpenter 1981: 220), and Dunsany both published fantasy in Tolkien's lifetime. In the United States, Burroughs, who started his publishing career with *A Princess of Mars* (1912) and the short-lived Howard who started the 'Conan' stories in 1932[36] were writing escapist, if not fantasy, works during Tolkien's lifetime, as was the prolific horror and suspense author Lovecraft who wrote what could be called twentieth-century horror fantasy.[37] Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* thus developed from and within the context of this time of prolific modern fantasy literature.

Tolkien wrote and published *The Lord of the Rings* in the 1950s when 'modernity', it seemed, had exhausted its ironic potential (Attebery 1992: 39). The massive book was part of a new twentieth-century genre, the epic, or what Cornwell calls 'high' or literary fantasy: a genre shared by Tolkien's contemporaries White, Peake, and Lewis (Cornwell 1990: 146). In his definitive work on fantasy in 1975, Manlove suggested that what set these authors' works apart was their having secondary worlds or alternative realms (1975: 169). For Swinfen writing in the

[36] Edgar Rice Burroughs (1875-1950) and R. H. Howard (1906-1936).

[37] H.P. Lovecraft (1890-1937).

1980s, however, ‘the essential ingredient of all modern fantasy is the marvellous which is anything outside the normal space-time continuum of the everyday world’ (1984: 5). Tolkien, however, would not have agreed with this definition; for him, Middle-earth was a real place separated from this world only by time. This is what makes *The Lord of the Rings* unique: Tolkien gives it an historical identity relative to the real world that he experienced.

The other thing that makes Tolkien, Lewis, and White outstanding in twentieth century fantasy is their use of ‘medievalism’. Alexander, in his comprehensive work on ‘medievalism’ in modern England, argues that there is a strong thread of medieval tropes in the writing of the modernist poets like Pound and Eliot (2007: 235). Alexander then focuses on the First World War as the break in English literary consciousness. He identifies the chivalric Christian tropes of Jones’s *In Parenthesis*, finally published in 1937, as evocative of ‘both Calvary and a waste land’ (Alexander 2007: 238). Alexander points out that this work has not always been well received by critics, like Fussell who insisted in his seminal publication *The Great War and Modern Memory* (1975) that the First World War ‘was absolutely unprecedented, uniquely senseless, and an experience without the possibility of redeeming sense’ (2007: 242).

For Alexander, both Lewis and Tolkien are twentieth-century Christian writers who were ‘fundamentally opposed to the main currents of modern British life’ (2007, 249). Tolkien did write to one of his correspondents, Deborah Webster, that he was ‘in fact a *Hobbit’* (Tolkien’s italics) and that he liked ‘gardens, trees and unmechanised farmlands’ (Carpenter 1981: 288). He was also, however, well aware of the world around him and apart from a dislike of aeroplanes, which, he acknowledged, was not realistic (Carpenter 1981: 105), he lived a normal twentieth-century existence, though by 1958 he admitted that ‘I do not travel much’ and ‘detest French cooking’ (Carpenter 1981: 289). This might be the description of any ‘normal’ English person of his age, Tolkien being sixty-six years old at the time.

Clearly, the historical context of Tolkien's substantial fantasy is a complex one. On a more simplistic level Lobdell considered Tolkien's The *Lord of the Rings* as

> An adventure story in the Edwardian mode which he describes as having (an) aristocratic view, black and white morality, lack of interest in character development, a "there and back again" plot […] keeping the past alive in the present (and) malignity in nature. (2004: 22)

Lobdell sees Tolkien, whose work draws strongly on Haggard, as being a more successful 'Edwardian' than writers such as Wodehouse,[38] who was also associated with the period (Lobdell 2004: 12). To this end, Lobdell suggests that we investigate what Tolkien read during the first ten years of the twentieth century (2004: 21).

It is interesting to note that Tolkien himself thought the process of source hunting quite pointless and told Burroughs's biographer, Lupoff, that 'source hunting is a great entertainment, but I do not myself think it particularly useful'. He specifically pointed out that, although he had read many of Burroughs's earlier novels, he later conceived a dislike of the Tarzan character (West 1970: 34) and said that Burroughs's stories were not responsible for his creation of the giant spider Shelob in *The Lord of the Rings* (West 1970: 34). In this vein, Nagel has argued that giant spiders in Tolkien's work have a linguistic and folkloric history that is far more complex (2008: 84-86) and Bergen points out that, even with the hindsight of all Tolkien's texts, including *The Silmarillion*, it is not always necessary to explain fully creatures that are simply evil in nature and unknown in origin (2017: 110).

Having said this, African literary sources like Haggard's stories were of crucial influence in Tolkien's earliest reading. Lobdell argues that most of the characters in the late Victorian stories were 'stock Englishmen' who at the end of their adventures 'returned to England and their workaday lives, if they survived at all' (2004: 6,17). Tolkien, like Kipling, though at a much younger age, came to England from a birthplace in the Empire — South Africa — so that 'The arid land around Bloemfontein and the green of England was one of his first memories'.

[38] P. G. Wodehouse (1881-1975) was one of the most widely-read humourists and novelists of the twentieth century. Another popular Edwardian writer was E.W. Hornung (1866-1921), who wrote most of his 'Raffles' books between 1898 and 1915.

Thus ‘He was […] in England, loving England, but not of it’ (Lobdell 2004: 110). In this, Tolkien was like the writers he read as an adolescent.

For Lobdell, the late Victorian and Edwardian adventure story,

> even if we call it a particular kind of secondary epic with its originator being Rider Haggard, is one of high adventure, great peril and the possibility of success in something other than worldly goods. (2004: 108)

The nineteenth-century popular adventure story is, for Lobdell, a genre which presented a ‘world creating’ mode and included the work of Stevenson, Doyle, Crockett,[39] and Buchan, all of whom could be seen as ‘calquing’ the idea of a created world onto Tolkien (2005: 144). Tolkien had read Stevenson as a child but remembered later that he had not found *Treasure Island* very inspiring, ‘it left me cool,’ he later commented (Resnick 1967: 41).

McLeish, an earlier critic, argued in 1983 that a ‘far more insidious and far more sinister, influence’ came from the children’s’ literature of Tolkien’s boyhood via the school stories of writers like Reed and the adventure stories of Henty, Marryat, Westerman and even Johns.[40] These writers, for McLeish, represented a literary tradition steeped in imperial and racial superiority (1983: 130). McLeish comments that the adult literature, which grew out of this in the 1910s and 1920s, through writers such as Wallace,

> is dangerous because it takes all ethical or moral problems for granted, as part of a desirable status quo which the villains constantly challenge, and the heroes constantly reaffirm. Without exception, it hymns the British imperial certainties of Tolkien’s youth, a time when no one – except foreigners like Freud or Marx – got in the way of things. (McLeish 1983: 130)

[39] Robert Louis Stevenson (1850-1894), and S. R. Crockett (1859-1914) were popular Victorian authors for children and young readers.

[40] Talbot Baines Reed (1858-1893) was known for his school stories. Frederick Marryat (1792-1848), Percy Westerman (1876-1959) and W. E. Johns (1893-1968) wrote popular ‘adventure’ stories.

McLeish's essay was one of the first to link Tolkien's childhood reading to the genre of imperial adventure literature, what Brantlinger later calls the 'imperial gothic' (2012: 202). This is significant as it provides a starting point for later analyses of the rich matrix of childhood and adolescent reading against which Tolkien read and later wrote *The Lord of The Rings* and which Lobdell investigates so carefully.

The adventure story has had an arguably long and pervasive influence on the English and later British psyche, starting with Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* in 1719 and moving through the advent of a separate canon of 'children's literature' during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Often closely entwined with the ideology of imperialism, the adventure story became highly jingoistic in nature and often focused on popular soldier heroes such as Gordon and Hole,[41] the latter being viewed as the person who had single-handedly 'invented' Rhodesia (MacDonald 1994; Dawson 1995). By the end of the nineteenth century, during the time of Tolkien's childhood, adventure stories had permeated popular culture through the increasing publications of mass culture including comics aimed directly at juvenile readers.

The adolescent adventure story can be defined as having 'the use of a narrative structure which depends upon the recurrence of formulaic elements' (Butts 1992: 74). As Butts argues, though, 'from the 1930s some writers had found it impossible to produce stories with quite the same formulaic confidence as their Victorian predecessors' (1992: 78). To all intents and purposes, the best and most classic African adventure stories are thus those of the Victorian and Edwardian period. There can be no doubting the imperial masculine-focused mission contained in adventure fiction of this period. Mallett writes those writers such as Haggard, Lang, and Doyle 'sought to effect the virtual equation of literature, [with] a timeless masculinity, and the English national character' (2015: 154). None of the authors would have pretended otherwise: these were considered positive attributes at the time. Phillips points out that while the label of 'imperialist literature' is an accurate

[41] George Gordon (1833-1885) was popular throughout the mid- to late-19th century. Hugh Marshall Hole (1865-1941) gained fame as an administrator of Southern Rhodesia.

one for adventure fiction, these texts also contained geographies of empire which were many and varied, depicting far-flung countries as exotic and challenging for young explorers (1997: 68). Young readers were presented with a cartography of lands to be explored and the stories were ‘handbooks’ to adventure as much as they were fictions of adventure.

Apart from the enticing map in Stevenson’s *Treasure Island*, the most exciting map in late Victorian adventure fiction was that in Haggard’s African story *King Solomon’s Mines* and Tolkien’s interest in maps was probably piqued by this fascinating cartography of seemingly impassable desert, uncrossable mountains, and a hidden country beyond. Of this, children’s literature scholar, Grenby, who has recently examined the similarity between the finished books by Stevenson and Tolkien and writes that

> Like Tolkien, Stevenson deploys contextual detail to give his story a hinterland and to generate verisimilitude. Just as maps of Middle-earth were included in the endpapers of *The Hobbit*, for instance, Stevenson gave precise instructions to an illustrator for a map of the islands in *Kidnapped.* (Grenby 2011: 277)

In his biography of Stevenson, Tolkien’s near-contemporary, Ransome (1887-1967), also stressed the tremendous influence of Stevenson’s *Treasure Island* map on other children’s authors, including his own books (Findlay 2011: 36). Ransome was an undoubted admirer of Tolkien’s work and wrote to him after the publication of *The Hobbit*, calling himself ‘a humble hobbit fancier’ (Carpenter 1980: 435).

This serves to demonstrate the expansive context of quality children’s literature, a genre in which Tolkien was writing by the 1930s. Children who had been introduced to Ransome in the early 1930s had enjoyed the maps of his ‘Swallows and Amazons’ books and found further enrichment in their reading of the map in *The Hobbit*. What was later called fantasy cartography had thus made an outstanding beginning in the children’s’ writing of this time, with both Ransome and Tolkien drawing on nineteenth-century writers like Stevenson and Haggard, who had drawn fantastic maps of their own.

Haggard's 'imperial gothic' writing had a profound influence on Tolkien. Scholars writing on imperial juvenile literature have stressed the centrality of Haggard's *King Solomon's Mines* (1885) as 'the most popular, the most successful' of the time: this was no stretch, given that the text influenced even imperial literature produced in Australia in the same period (Dixon 1995: 62-63). We also know that, in addition to Haggard, Tolkien had read at least one juvenile story set in Australia: MacDonald's *The Lost Explorers: A Story of the Trackless Desert*. Of this, Phillips argues that there was 'space for boyish men and manly boys' in the Australian interior, themes reflected in Australian adventure fiction of the early twentieth century (1997: 68-69). The Australian interior as an unmapped desert had been a topic of Australian travel writing since earliest colonial times (Johnstone 2019: 274) and mid-Victorian Australian travellers had depicted the Australian desert as a space of adventure and 'sacred mystery' and themselves as heroic explorers (Haynes 2019: 326): themes that were taken up by the writers of boys' adventure fiction.

On leaving school, we know that Tolkien donated a copy of MacDonald's book to his school library (Garth 2003: 77-78). Dixon has examined this text in some detail as an imperial adventure tale for boys, similar to those of Haggard. Katz argues that Haggard's explorers want to escape from the industrial world and Dixon extrapolates that a similar frustration is felt by the characters in MacDonald's story. The fact that Tolkien owned this young adolescent book is of importance to his later legendarium because, while Australia is not Africa, a consciousness of it does appear in the great Southern desert of the interior of Middle-earth. Certainly, similar tropes to those of the Australian adventure fiction were present in South African travel writing, in which the landscape of the interior was mysterious and often depicted as a desert (Driver 2002: 18-19). The fact that both Australia and Africa became tropes of Southern imperial travel writing is what is important here. There is also Tolkien's reference to the 'Antipodes' in his retirement speech as he referred to people 'born under the Southern Cross' to include Australia, South Africa and New Zealand (2006: 238).

And yet, the focus on Haggard as Tolkien's main influence has been unrelenting. Ordway has written on this, noting that Haggard influenced Tolkien in both boyhood and adulthood. She notes that he enjoyed *She: An African Adventure* as an adolescent but enjoyed *King Solomon's Mines* as a young man and retained his appreciation for this story into adulthood (Ordway 2021: 141). Certainly, many earlier literary scholars on Tolkien focused on finding sources in Haggard's novels for Tolkien's plot elements and, as Ordway says, 'Haggard's settings, characters, and literary devices provide the most intriguing connections' (2021: 138).

The roots of academic probing into Tolkien's interest in Haggard can be traced back to March 1966 when an American journalist, Henry Resnick, held a telephone interview with Tolkien for the fantasy and science fiction fanzine, *Niekas*, which was founded by Tolkien enthusiast, Meskys, in 1962. Meskys had decided to devote the magazine to Tolkien and to include at least one Tolkien-themed article in each issue. Resnick asked Tolkien some important questions, including the foundational one about which authors had influenced him the most in his childhood. Tolkien was, however, quite dismissive of the influence of his early reading, professing a dislike for Lang, but making the point that 'I suppose as a boy [Haggard's] *She* interested me as much as anything like the Greek shard of Amynates, which was the machine by which everything got moving' (1967: 40). By 'everything' he must have meant his active imagination which led to *The Lord of the Rings*, the main subject of the interview.

There can thus be no doubt as to the importance of Haggard in influencing Tolkien's imagination. I would like to foreground one other point in Resnick's interview. Resnick asked Tolkien if he had heard of Masters and Doctoral graduate work on *The Lord of the Rings*, to which Tolkien replied that he thought 'most of them rather vain efforts' because 'they try to go into sources' (1967: 38). I mentioned this earlier, but it is important to remember, again, that Tolkien did not think source-hunting a particularly useful exercise. And yet, in his letters, for instance those to Waldman in 1951, he did describe some of his influences, insisting that he was not 'learned' in the matters of myth and fairy-story but that he was searching for 'the fair elusive beauty that some call Celtic', and dismissing the

Arthurian legends as unsuitable for a wholly English-based mythology (Carpenter 1981: 144).

Tolkien thus remained extremely reticent about the origins of his material for the mythology and history of Middle-earth, telling Mitchinson in 1954 that the Quendi or High Elves 'are in fact in these histories very little akin to the Elves and Fairies of Europe' (Carpenter 1981: 176). In his considerable correspondence Tolkien also returned insistently to his point that he had invented languages first and then written his stories for the languages and not the languages for the stories. At the same time, he insisted repeatedly that he had not written any kind of allegory. In 1955, responding to Auden's positive review of *The Return of the King*, which stated that 'he was 'historically minded (Carpenter 1981: 239), 'Mine' he said 'is not an imaginary world, but an imaginary historical moment on "Middle-earth" – which is our habitation' (Carpenter 1981: 244).

Tolkien tells us that the origins of his ideas for both *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* were to be found in what he called the 'leaf mould' of his imagination, a tantalizing idea which has given rise to all kinds of speculation as to the sources of Tolkien's fictional material. Indeed, towards the end of his life Tolkien wrote in a letter to Tayar in which he mentions that 'one's mind is, of course, stored with a 'leaf-mould' of memories [submerged], of names, and these rise up to the surface at times' (Carpenter 1981: 409). It is important to remember that these statements were only made available to scholars and readers in 1981 when Carpenter published Tolkien's *Letters*. In the meantime, the idea of Tolkien being influenced by Haggard was a published concept, thanks to Resnick's interview; and it began permeating the growing academic discourse on Tolkien.

In 1981 Rateliff published an article on 'She and Tolkien' in *Mythlore* which had become a platform for sound academic debate on Tolkien's work.[42] Drawing on

[42] *Mythlore: A Journal of J.R.R. Tolkien, C.S. Lewis, Charles Williams and Mythopoeic Literature* (hereafter *Mythlor*e) was founded by Tolkien scholar Glen Goodknight (1941-2010) in 1969.

Carter's book on Tolkien subtitled *A Look Behind The Lord of the Rings* (1969),[43] Rateliff took up the argument that the only modern book that had that had influenced Tolkien was Haggard's *She* (1887) and Rateliff noted that, over time,

> various Tolkien critics have put forward one work after another as one of Tolkien's sources, only to have Tolkien steadfastly deny any post-medieval source. (Rateliff 1981: 6)

Following up on the idea that the Resnick interview was the only instance in which Tolkien made an 'admission of influence' and the fact that he had come across no other article on Tolkien and Haggard, Rateliff went on to fill the gap by examining the entire *She* saga: *She* (1887), *Ayesha: the Return of She* (1905), *She and Allan* (1921), and *Wisdom's Daughter* (1923). Rateliff aimed to investigate the parallels between the series 'and Tolkien's Middle-Earth works to see if Haggard really did influence Tolkien and, if so, in what ways' (1981: 6). Rateliff made the obvious link between *Ayesha*, *Wisdom's Daughter*, She-Who-Must-Be-Obeyed and Galadriel in terms of beauty, wisdom, and immortality, pride and a desire for rule, thus setting the scene for future academic comparisons between Ayesha and Galadriel (Workman 2014: 84). Rateliff also found other 'possible borrowings' from Haggard's *She* and *She and Allan* in Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*, including the magic amulet which is given to Allan Quartermain and which he cannot throw away, in the same way that Frodo is unable to throw away the One Ring (1981: 7). Finally, at the end of his article, Rateliff identifies parallels between images in *She* and *Wisdom's Daughter* with Tolkien's writing in *The Silmarillion*, concluding somewhat obviously that 'Tolkien adapted everything he took from his sources until it became part of his own story' (Rateliff 1981: 8).

Rateliff points out in his endnotes that he had found comments on Haggard's influence on Tolkien in Carpenter's biography of Tolkien, which had been published in 1977, as well as in an unpublished letter to Beare in 1958, in which he described some of his depictions of the Númenóreans as 'Egyptian' (Rateliff 1981: 9). The *Letters* contain this letter (1981: 281). Rateliff had put together the

[43] Lin Carter (1930-1988). was one of Tolkien's earliest academic critics. His 1969 publication also served as an introduction to the kinds of books that the new Ballantyne Books intended to publish in the 1970s (Smith 1997: 94).

scattered material on Tolkien and Haggard without recourse to the neatly indexed *Letters* upon which many scholars have relied since its publication. His short piece in *Mythlore*, a relatively unknown specialist journal at the time, marked the beginning of more serious research on Tolkien's modern sources.

In the 1980s, Tolkien was starting to be recognised as a modern writer and was beginning to attain widening recognition in academic circles with the editing and publication of Tolkien's work by Christopher Tolkien, beginning with *Unfinished Tales of Númenór and Middle-earth* (1980) and Shippey's seminal work *The Road to Middle-earth* (1982). Lobdell,[44] a long-standing Tolkien scholar, then followed up the argument that Haggard had been one of Tolkien's main influences. Stating that 'we will not be far wrong if we assign to Haggard a chief place among Tolkien's literary forbears' (Lobdell 2004: 6), Lobdell went on to stress that the romantic themes in Haggard's novels, particularly the African novels such as *King Solomon's Mines* and *She*, appealed to the readers in Tolkien's generation (2004: 8). Lobdell compared the passages in *Ayesha* in which Haggard described the death of Ayesha to the passage in Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* where he describes the death of Saruman (2004: 5), pointing out similarities.

Lobdell, like Rateliff before him, noted that Tolkien himself had told Resnick that *She* had influenced him as a boy and argued that Haggard was one of the most important writers that Tolkien had echoed (2004: 3). Lobdell also argues that the caves in *King Solomon's Mines* influenced both Tolkien's Mines of Moria and his Orodruin or Mount Doom (2004: 5).

In the same year that Lobdell published this discussion in *The World of The Rings* (2004), Hix, a postgraduate student, compiled a short but in-depth honours thesis, in which she examined what she considers to be the two most important Haggard works to influence Tolkien – *King Solomon's Mines* and *She* – considering themes and settings that occur in adventure stories such as caves, death, power, and their destructive nature. For Hix, the similarities between Tolkien's *The Lord of the*

[44] Jared Lobdell (1937-2019) was a leading Tolkien scholar. His earliest work was as editor of the collection of essays in *The Tolkien Compass* in 1975.

Rings and Haggard's adventure stories are clear. Hix takes Henry Resnick's 'Interview with Tolkien' as a starting point, arguing that this is an important source in that Tolkien admits that he was influenced by Haggard (2004: 4). Hix rated Rateliff's 1981 '*She* and Tolkien', which focused on Galadriel's physical characteristics and the similarities between the two female characters and their long-life spans, as the most important article in this respect (2004: 5). Hix admits that the main difference between her own work and Rateliffe's is in general depth.

Although Hix draws on earlier work, which stresses the similarities between Gollum and Gagool in *King Solomon's Mines*, these mostly focused on *The Hobbit*. The strength of her thesis is in her investigation of Gollum and Gagool at the level of *The Lord of the Rings*. This section forms two chapters, 4 and 5, of her thesis, in which she investigates 'Consumption of the Inner Spirit: Seeing Tolkien's Gollum through Haggard's Gagool' (Hix 2004: 31-40) and "Delving Deep": A Fascination with Death and Caves as Plots and Settings in *She*, *King Solomon's Mines* and *The Lord of the Rings'* (Hix 2004: 41-46). In her fourth chapter, Hix asks fascinating, though not extraordinarily original, questions about Gollum and Gagool and points out the obvious similarities between them as being long-lived advisors to main characters. Hix points out that 'Gagool and Gollum have each created their own space in their respective stories as striking characters with similar physical natures, flaws, and fates' (2004: 32). Hix then quotes a description of Gagool in which 'the whole countenance might have been taken for that of a sun-dried corpse' (2004: 33), which I find eerily similar to a description of Gollum in *The Lord of the Rings*:

> a tiny figure sprawling on the ground: there lay perhaps the famished skeleton of some skeleton of some child of Men, its ragged garment still clinging to it, its long arms and legs almost bone-white and bone-thin. (Tolkien 2005: 644)

This is very similar to the passage about Gagool from *King Solomon's Mines* and the alien context is also emphasised by Tolkien's description of this place outside the Black Gate which is desolate and 'near to the borders of the land of fear [Mordor]' (2005: 644).

Frodo feels completely cut off from the world he knows and the quest that he undertook ‘in the far-off Spring of another year, so remote now that it was like a chapter in a story of the world’s youth’ (Tolkien 2005: 644). Frodo, Sam and Gollum ‘For some time … had been cut off from the world, as if in an invisible island’ (Tolkien 2005: 645). Within a few paragraphs they encounter the men from the South, the Southrons, and Sam then asks Gollum if there are ‘any *oliphaunts*?’ (Tolkien 2005: 646). This description of Gollum as a skeleton, reminiscent of Gagool, therefore serves to set the scene for the appearance of African tropes in this part of *The Lord of the Rings*. The travellers are isolated and in a desolate landscape, far from familiar places, in the same way that the explorers in *King Solomon’s Mines* are cut off from the world they know.

In the *Tolkien Encyclopaedia* (Drout 2007), Nelson also identifies several Haggard texts as influential, including the central *King Solomon’s Mines* (1885) and *She* (1887), pointing to the importance of the map in *The Hobbit* and the resonance of the ‘Ignosis’s or hidden peoples’ primitive figurative language which echoes King Alfred’s Anglo-Saxon (Nelson 2007: 368-369). Nelson also discusses a passage in *Ayesha: The Return of She* (1905), in which there is a description of a landscape that is very like Tolkien’s Mordor (Nelson 2007: 369).

For Nelson ‘academic critics read Haggard as a relic of imperialism […] but Tolkien was evidently spontaneously moved by mythopoeic and straightforward adventure romance as found in the older writer’s books’ (2007: 370). As Ordway has argued, it is possible that Tolkien was influenced by the descriptions of landscape rather than the ideas of racial prejudice and imperial conquest in juvenile literature. The evidence from Tolkien’s letters certainly suggests that he was never an advocate of imperialism and deplored both the Roman and British models of empire (Carpenter 1981: 89). Thus, while Tolkien was influenced by the romantic adventure themes in Haggard’s writing, his earliest ‘mythopoeic’ influences were those of his childhood encounter with mythologies, fairy-story and ‘above all for heroic legend on the brink of fairy-tale and history’ (Carpenter 1981:

144). This does not mean, however, that his readings of Haggard and similar adventure fiction did not enrich those ‘mythopoeic’ ideas.

The historiography of *The Lord of the Rings* is never stagnant and, in 2011, thirty years after Rateliff’s original article in *Mythlore,* Fisher published a collection of essays on Tolkien and source criticism. By this time, Tolkien scholarship had grown dramatically and the idea of source hunting had gained considerable respectability in academic circles, so much so that Shippey, a prominent Tolkien scholar, argued for the value of source criticism in his introduction to the collection. Shippey notes that such a task is valuable specifically in re-examining the works of Haggard ‘which Tolkien had certainly read and very probably remembered’ (2011: 12). Rateliff, too, wrote an essay for the collection in which he revisited *She* and Tolkien, and quoted once again from the Resnick interview as a key point (2011: 146).

In his contribution, Rateliff points out that the first two chapters of *The Lord of the Rings* parallel the opening of Haggard’s *She* in that, in each, there is an ancient artefact, millennia old, which is passed down to a new heir. When the time comes and the ancient writing on each is properly deciphered, it reveals a dangerous legacy that causes the heroes ‘to set out on a difficult journey east and south to resolve a crisis left unfinished millennia before’ (Rateliff 2011: 146). After elaborating on his earlier discussion on the similarities between the immortal characters of Ayesha and Galadriel, Rateliff sets out to explore the consistent parallels between *The Lord of the Rings* and the other books in Haggard’s series, including echoes of marsh fire, the march of the dead, and the description of *She*’s sudden ageing and death, which resembles Saruman’s death and decay (Rateliff 2011: 154). Rateliff’s 2011 essay is infinitely more satisfactory than the 1981 article for several reasons: Rateliff was, by this time, clearly a Tolkien scholar of considerable confidence, but Tolkien Studies itself was also an established research field.

What is also significant, in terms of my overarching discussion, is that Hooker contributed an essay to Fisher’s collection on the influence of Buchan on Tolkien.

This is noteworthy because Hooker had published a short linguistic contribution in his highly original monograph, entitled *A Tolkienian Mathomium* (2006), in which he pointed out that this word might have come out of what Tolkien had called the 'leaf mould' of his mind from a reading of Buchan's 1910 novel, *Prester John* (Hooker 2006: 235). Buchan, another novelist who was almost a contemporary of Tolkien was unlike other adventure writers, such as Haggard and Kipling, in that he did not change his ideas on imperialism after the South African War. He was an ardent imperialist during his trip to South Africa as Lord Milner's secretary from 1901 to 1903 and his ideas on the British imperial mission became entrenched after his work in South Africa: ideas that he imported into his most famous imperial romance*, Prester John*.

Kestner points out that this novel 'is one of the finest novels in the English adventure tradition [but] one of the most disturbing in terms of race and imperialism' (Kestner 2010: 125). Stiebel, too, has noted that Buchan's 'imperialism and racism [was] far more categoric than Haggard's earlier visions of noble savagery superimposed onto the Zulus. Buchan, like Crawford (the hero of the novel) is a firm believer in 'the white man's duty' (Stiebel 2001: 109). Buchan seems to fit into the stereotype of what colonial rulers and administrators called the 'white man's world' in an African setting. Gorman, on the other hand, argues that Buchan's sense of imperial responsibility was not as aggressive as is often portrayed. In fact, Gorman argues that Buchan did not have a 'creed of conquest', but rather that ideas of 'moral benevolence: imperialism should take the form of a creed' (Gorman 2006: 85).

One of the most serious criticisms of Buchan is that he was a 'Victorian' with late nineteenth and early twentieth-century ideas and attitudes including those on race, empire, and gender. The historian Himmelfarb notes, for instance that Buchan was 'as remote as can be from the modern intellectual in his tastes and judgements' (1968: 235). Given this, Tolkien would seem to have been more representative of the modern twentieth-century world in his views than Buchan was, though it is

important to remember that because Tolkien did not express any conceptual feelings about the Empire, their feelings about South Africa were quite different.

In analysing the 'white man's world' of the African British Empire, Schwarz notes that Buchan 'loved South Africa to the end of his life…but it was also a psychic projection imbued with loss, longing and disappointment' (Schwarz 2011: 247). Africa was never the perfect place that he wanted it to be and *Prester John* is a combination of descriptions of beautiful, lush, exotic landscapes interrupted by occasions of racist unease. He retained, however, an immovable commitment to empire (Schwarz 2011: 248). In contrast to this, Tolkien rejected the Empire as well as the Commonwealth, preferring a more defined and limited English identity.

One must therefore ask whether it is possible to find anything in common between Tolkien and Buchan. In his 1939 lecture 'On Fairy-Stories', Tolkien explored the depths of the imagination and the importance of a secondary world. In *The Novel and the Fairy-Tale* (1931), Buchan acknowledged the crucial importance of romance in his writing, but at the same time echoed his debt to the Victorian novelists (1931:4). In comparing these texts, it is possible to find shared elements of what Waddell has called 'anti-modernism' (2012: 67), although both writers were writing in a world that was steadily more reflective of modernity, especially during the 1930s. Waddell and MacDonald have found arguments that depict Buchan as 'modern' as well as 'anti modern' (Waddell and MacDonald 2015). Looking for sources in Buchan, Hooker also makes a spirited argument for the ways in which Tolkien may have been able to identify with Richard Hannay, Buchan's fictional hero (Hooker 2011: 162-3) and yet, as Hooker notes, there is more in the Buchan literary canon that would have satisfied Tolkien's appetite for heroic legend on the brink of fairy-tale and history (Carpenter 1981: 144). Hooker identifies three of Buchan's novels as fitting this category: *Midwinter* (1923), *The Blanket of the Dark* (1932), and *Huntingtower* (1922). It is, however, extremely difficult to establish whether Tolkien was indeed reading these 'modern' novels by the time he returned to his academic work in the 1920s.

It is, in fact, difficult to state in any unequivocal way which of Haggard's or Buchan's works influenced Tolkien directly or even how much of this fiction became part of the 'leaf-mould' of his imagination. As various scholars have shown, the fiction of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century was a rich matrix of material against which Tolkien's childhood and adolescent reading took place. Anderson has an ambitious project in this literary context and in his carefully titled *Tales before Tolkien: The Roots of Modern Fantasy* (2003), points out that

> Fantasy literature […] did not begin with Tolkien, though he developed it in a manner such that there exists almost a dividing line between fantasy written before Tolkien and fantasy written afterward. (Anderson 2003: 1)

Anderson includes both Haggard and Buchan in his book as well as a whole cluster of works by Lang, Morris, Dunsany, and Arthur Machen which could be seen as having an influence on Tolkien. The Haggard novel that Anderson cites is *Black Heart and White Heart: A Zulu Idyll* first published in the *African Review* in 1896 and then included in Haggard's *Black Heart and White Heart and Other Stories* (1900). Anderson says that Lancelyn Green, who was a friend of Tolkien and Lewis in the 1940s, was pleased to be able to lend Tolkien at least 'one Haggard novel he had never read' (2003: 133-4). I am not sure whether Anderson refers to this story as the 'Haggard novel' in question.

Black Heart and White Heart is a story about events in Zululand immediately prior to and during the British defeat at Isandlwana in January 1879 and has similar themes to the battle described in *King Solomon's Mines*. Neither the white nor black people in the story are particularly heroic. The 'black' and 'white' hearts, Nahoon and Haddon, remain enemies, though having learnt a certain degree of respect for each other (Anderson 2003: 180). Haggard's book is based on 'real' history and is his only description of the Battle of Isandlwana, though he does mention this event in *King Solomon's Mines*. He writes that the British were hopelessly outnumbered and the Zulu army rushed forward 'with a sound like the humming of a billion bees' (Anderson 2003: 177), a familiar trope in fictional and historical writing on the Zulu (Brantlinger 2009: 43). Similar tropes on the hopeless

last stand of British troops in the Sudan in 1885 fed into the popular imagination at the time that Haggard was writing. These stories were the obvious backdrop of the adventure stories against which imperialism played out at the end of the nineteenth century (Giddings 1991: 189).

Anderson also includes Buchan's story 'The Far Islands' (1899) and referred to Carpenter's biography, in which he wrote that Tolkien 'liked the stories of John Buchan' and stated that 'Buchan's stories have some striking Tolkienian resonances' (2003: 195). 'The Far Islands' is a poignant tale of a young man who was haunted by visions of the north-west seacoast of Scotland but dies in battle in what the reader can only presume is the South African War: Colin Raden dies reaching for 'the old desire of his heart - youth, rapture, immortality' (Anderson 2003: 212). These stories may not have influenced Tolkien at all, but they are significant in that they are part of turn of the nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century context in which he read. I feel that Anderson's project is a successful one in showing the richness of the imaginative literature which existed 'almost [in] a dividing line' between Tolkien and his predecessors (Anderson 2003:1).

When Tolkien returned to academic life after the First World War, he took up the study of Old English and the Classics that he had dropped from his undergraduate years, during which they had become considerably less important to him; Tolkien wrote many years later that his history schoolmaster had made Greek and Roman history very boring (Carpenter 1981: 343). His fantasy world, its history, and its languages were therefore based on Celtic, Norse, and Anglo-Saxon mythology and linguistics (Carpenter 1981: 144). Until recently most scholars have focused on Tolkien's Northern influences, such as Old English literature and language when interrogating the influence of his academic work on his writing. Artamonova for instance says that Tolkien was 'writing for an Anglo-Saxon audience in the twentieth century' (Artamonova 2010: 75-6) and Burns provides an in-depth study of both Celtic and Norse influences in Tolkien's work (2005).

In examining the influences of classical antiquity on Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*, I turn first to Murnaghan's and Roberts's study of children's fiction. They have argued that the strong tradition of British fantasy for children culminated in the mid twentieth century works of Tolkien and Lewis. They point out that, while Lewis's *Narnia* chronicles (1950-1956) allowed elements from the primary world's varied imaginings to enter Lewis's invented world (so that 'ancient Greek fauns, dryads, and centaurs' appeared in his works), Tolkien's secondary world was 'so separate from our own that it excluded even previously known elements of fantasy', including classical mythology (Murnaghan and Roberts 2018: 123-5). Nevertheless, the authors do acknowledge work by scholars who show Tolkien's debt to Virgil. While this might be a more recent area of research, I agree that there is no doubting the influence of the classical world on Tolkien's ideas.

Two recent publications stress the influence of the classics on Tolkien: Arduini and Canzonicri (2019) and Hamish Williams (2021). The latter volume includes chapters that discuss the concepts of the East and South (Burton 2021) and on Gondor and Rohan as representations of the Mediterranean and Germanic worlds (Harrisson 2021). Writing in 1980 of the Victorian love affair with Ancient Greece, Jenkyns notes Tolkien's interest in the Mediterranean as 'the Hobbits travel South [and East] to Ithilien […] and suddenly seem to have entered a new world' (1980: 49). For Tolkien even the contrast between antique glory and present decay is there (Jenkyns 1980: 49). Hammond and Scull have pointed out that Tolkien's idea of Ithilien as a Mediterranean landscape might well be drawn from classical authors he had read as he had had no physical experience of the geography (Hammond and 2005: 463).

While Tolkien describes the Mediterranean-like landscape of North Ithilien, he introduces an elephant into the narrative, a war animal of classical antiquity. The *oliphaunt* or *Mumak* that crashes into the pages of *The Lord of the Rings* can quite clearly be compared to the ancient battle elephants Tolkien would have read about in the ancient histories of Hannibal of Carthage and Pyrrhus of Epirus. Hooker also suggests that *oliphant* was a literary memory from Tolkien's early reading of Buchan's *Prester John*, though he qualified this by pointing out that 'the literary

baggage of each word and name in a language is built up out of all the usages of a word that a reader has ever been exposed to' (Hooker 2006: 234). Tolkien, however, had a proper linguistic description of his *oliphaunt* as he did for all the words in his nomenclature (Tolkien 2002: 464).

Academic Tolkien critic, Otty, assures us that these creatures are not monsters but 'good animals' (Otty 1983: 164). At the same time, they are part of the 'Evil' because they are associated with Southerness and Easterness (Otty 1983: 162). The *oliphaunt* that Sam encounters in Ithilien is satisfyingly massive and meets the description given in the poem recited earlier in the text:

> 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 (Tolkien 2005: 646)

Sam finds the *Mumak* of Harad a far greater beast than the one in the poem, 'a mammoth or mastodon in all but name' (Hammond and Scull 2014: 215).

Drawing on previous research, Christie presents a fascinating etymological study of the Old English description of elephants given by Aelfric of Eynsham in his deuterocanonical book of J. Maccabees in the 10th century. Aelfric's Anglo-Saxon proclamation was based more on St Isidore and St Ambrose than on Pliny (Christie 2014: 466). Like other Anglo-Saxons, Aelfric had to describe an elephant without ever having seen the animal. This account was of immense importance to the Old English language and it certainly informs Tolkien's work. Just so, the Shire poem that Sam recites describes an '*oliphaunt'* to people who have probably not seen such a beast, much as Aelfric's use of language is 'an attempt to circumvent the credulity of his […] audience' (Christie 2014: 466). Aelfric's description of a war elephant reads: 'on each elephant a war-house was built, and in each war-house were thirty men fighting with skill, and advancing with eagerness […]. An elephant is an immense animal greater than a house' (Christie 2014: 469). This is echoed in *The Lord of the Rings* where Tolkien tells us that

> To his astonishment and terror and lasting delight, Sam saw a vast shape crash out of the trees and come careering down the slope. Big as a house, much bigger than a house (…) ruins of what seemed a very war-tower lay upon his heaving back (…) and high upon his neck still desperately clung a tiny figure – the body of a mighty warrior. (2005: 661)

The idea of monsters at the edge of the map, particularly in a partly mythical Ethiopia was central to literary and linguistic iconography in medieval Europe. Ethiopia was situated in Africa, but its position up until the seventeenth century was extraordinarily vague to Europeans as was any knowledge of its inhabitants (Van Wyk Smith 2009: 381).

Two important texts from this time are the *Liber Monstrorum* written in seventh or eighth century and the tenth century *Marvels of the East*. Both manuscripts portrayed monsters and marvellous creatures beyond the borders of the western world (McFadden 2005a: 474). A tradition of not only monstrous creatures, but 'monstrous races' developed during the Middle Ages, so that in western culture 'there is an established history of articulating narratives of self and other' (Wright 2020: 174). The monstrous peoples were depicted as inhabiting 'those distant parts of the globe, where extremes of climate and geography were believed to produce extreme bodies' (Wright 2020: 179).

Apart from the mysterious 'Ethiopia', Mittman notes that 'on the world maps, the races of Southern Africa tend to merge into a single conglomeration of monstrosity' (2006: 45). Naturally, the medieval cartography showing monstrous people in the East and the South was a literary heritage that would have been well known to Tolkien as an Old English scholar. Anglo-Saxons, like the Hobbits of the Shire in Middle-earth, were the population who were farthest from the regions of the South and East. In 1932 and 1934, Tolkien published two articles in the newly established journal, *Medium Aevum*, in which he examined the Old English conception of *Siegelweara,* or Ethiopians in Anglo-Saxon texts. Significantly, his conclusion was that these people were from a hot place and probably dark but certainly not 'devils' (McFadden: 2005b: 157).

This seems to inform Sam's first encounter with a Swerting or Southron, terms that Tolkien seems to use interchangeably, whom Gollum had described as 'fierce', with 'black eyes, and long black hair, and gold rings in their ears', and as 'not nice; very cruel wicked Men they look' (Tolkien 2005: 646). This meeting turns out to be quite different from what Sam had he expected and he 'was glad he could not see the dead face' of this person (Tolkien 2005: 661). Instead of coming face to face with a fierce Southron, Sam finds himself moved by compassion for the dead: 'He wondered what the man's name was and where he came from, and if he was really evil of heart' (Tolkien 2005: 661). This is a well-known passage in *The Lord of the Rings* often used to illustrate the fact that Tolkien did not demonize the 'other' (Sinex 2010: 189; Risden 2015: 132; Flieger 2017: 83-85). Instead, it illustrates Tolkien's message that 'You can't fight the Enemy with his own Ring without turning into an Enemy', a point he made while writing *The Lord of the Rings* during the Second World War (Carpenter 1981: 94).

Tolkien was distinctly aware of the historical associations between 'Ethiopians', darkness and immorality (Sinex 2010: 179). The word Swertings, which Tolkien used was a derivative of the Old English, *sweart,* meaning swarthy, black or dark. Tolkien was aware that such terms had been used pejoratively for Ethiopians who were associated with monsters (Sinex 2010: 180). Medieval texts contained equally negative associations with the word 'Saracen', which Sinex has examined as a negative term for the Southrons or Haradrim in Tolkien's text and she calls them 'monsterized Saracens' (Sinex 2010: 175) in the way that they appear.

The term 'Saracen' appears in the Middle English Romance texts and in the twelfth century French romance, *La Chanson de Roland*, in which these people are depicted negatively and as binary opposites of white Europeans (Sinex 2010: 182). This might be disturbing to Tolkien readers who do not find the Southerners evil by default, but Sinex points out that Tolkien was acutely aware of the negative visual vocabulary of medieval writers. Sinex goes on to emphasise that Tolkien's Haradrim and Southrons are not given gross physical distortions but remain human (2010: 189) as seen by Sam's reaction. Risden, too, argues that the 'South

of Tolkien's Middle-earth' is not necessarily 'other' but is part of the fabric in Middle-earth's creation (Risden 2015: 131). Tolkien insisted that the peoples from the South and the East were to be pitied rather than feared, enslaved as many of them were by Sauron (2005: 923).

The remaining 'other' men are Tolkien's 'Wild Men'. 'Wild' is a subjective term in Tolkien's Middle-earth. At many points in *The Lord of the Rings* characters become 'wild' or we are told that people are 'wild'. Aragorn being a case in point when he chooses to camp outside the city of Minas Tirith being 'unused to cities and houses of stone' (Tolkien 2005: 861). During the chapter 'The Passage of the Marshes', Sam notices that the three travellers have to stoop 'often using their hands' like primitive beings: 'Three precious little Gollums in a row we shall be, if this goes on much longer' thought Sam (Tolkien 2005: 628).

Indeed, Flieger notes that Tolkien, in dealing with 'wild men',

> puts a modern spin on many of his characters, reconfiguring the contexts and situations in which they play a part while at the same time keeping faith with the medieval types from which they derive. (Flieger 2003: 95)

It is entirely possible to provide a sympathetic view of Tolkien's 'barbarians' or Men of Darkness as Mohn does in his text *Middle-earth from the view of the barbarians* (2013: loc 552). This is in keeping with contemporary studies on the late classical world. Gillett argues that the problem of conceptualising 'barbarians' lies at the centre of the late antique landscape and particularly in historical depictions of the *Geata* (or Goths) (2009: 392) while Liebeschutz sees this as part of an ongoing deconstruction of the idea of a core structure of the *Germani* as a whole (2011: 88-9).

Tolkien's and Mohn's enlightened view of late antiquity thus went beyond the concept of the 'barbarian' which is important when examining the world of Middle-earth from the vantage point of 'Wild Men' or 'Men of Darkness'. Tolkien, I believe, was open to more fluid ideas of the period of history in which the *Geata* (or Goths) were moving about in Europe, given his detailed knowledge of the Gothic

language and culture. ‘Men of Darkness’ did not necessarily mean ‘barbarians’ but were people who had occupied land in a difficult and unrecorded time before historical manuscripts or archives were kept. Similarly, even some of the later human occupants of Middle-earth, such as the Rohirrim, did not keep records and it is only in Gondor that scrolls and parchments were retained to tell the written history of passing years (Tolkien 2005: 670).

Interestingly, as one considers the hierarchy of Men in Middle-earth, one finds more links back to Haggard’s writing. Faramir explains that the ‘Highest’ Men are those that hark back to the Númenóreans, presumably including their descendants in Gondor. The ‘Middle’ Men are those of the ‘Twilight’, such as the Rohirrim, and the others are the ‘Men of Darkness’ which includes the Haradrim, Southrons, and the Wild Men, as well as the Dunlendings (Tolkien 2005: 678). Fimi argues that Middle-earth thus has a hierarchy of men and the Wild Men are ‘primitive’ when compared to the other human peoples (Fimi 2009: 150). Similarly, Haggard was obsessed with the possibility of an ancient, superior, and hidden ‘race’ of men somewhere in the African interior – a common theme in his novels, most famously appearing as the Kukuana in *King Solomon’s Mines* (1986: 88).

Of course, Haggard was bound by nineteenth-century terminology and referred to separate ethnicities as separate races. Tolkien did not; all his men were the same race. Haggard’s ‘races’ rarely intermarry without major disasters taking place. Tolkien’s humans do intermarry and, as Straubhaar describes, a level of multi-culturalism develops, a situation which she compares to Late Antiquity (the capital letters are Straubhaar’s) at least in terms of onomastics (2004: 212). However, I would argue that it is difficult to appropriate such contemporary terms as multi-culturalism to Tolkien, as he would have had an entirely different conceptualisation of this idea.

Taking up Shippey’s argument about the differences and unions between the houses of Elves (2002: 282-284), Fimi points out that unions between Elves and Men were not always successful in Tolkien’s world (2009: 152-154). Fimi quotes Tolkien’s letter to Hastings in 1954, where he admits he faces difficulties over

these unions because, scientifically and biologically, Men and Elves would have to be ‘the same race’ otherwise they ‘could not breed and produce fertile offspring’ (Carpenter 1981: 189). For Fimi this is an instance of Tolkien showing himself aware of the eugenics and anthropology of race that had so permeated western thought up to the 1930s (2009: 153), an anthropology which had permeated the works of writers like Haggard (Brantlinger 2011: 150-154). It was also a set of ideas that Tolkien rejected firmly. The academic work on Tolkien and Haggard has provided a context for new ways of looking at Tolkien’s African influences and I hope, in this thesis to initiate research in this context.

Given this consideration of the work produced by Tolkien scholars over the years, it is thus clear that the historical and literary context of Tolkien’s earliest and adolescent reading, and later his education, was one of great depth. It was pervaded by the strong themes of adventure fiction with an imperial base, as well the rapidly developing genre of modern fantasy in the period after the First World War. It was in this context that Tolkien published *The Hobbit* in 1937 and began to explore ideas about the beings, history, and geography of Middle-earth in the Third Age, as he started writing *The Lord of the Rings* in the late 1930s. It is also significant that it was in the context of the Second World War in the 1940s, when Christopher was posted to South Africa, that Tolkien returned to his book and to the memories of his childhood.

CHAPTER 3: TOLKIEN, WORLD WAR II AND SOUTH AFRICA

Tolkien published *The Hobbit: or There and Back Again* in 1937 and, by the time he was working on its 'sequel', *The Lord of the Rings*, the European world was once more moving towards war. Tolkien did most of his writing between the period of the 1920s and the 1950s and was thus an author influenced by both world wars.[45] Croft considers that Tolkien was directly affected by the Second World War in three ways. Firstly, as a civilian, he participated in Britain's home front (Croft 2004: 176) and experienced the war as a parent as both Michael and Christopher were in the Armed Forces (Croft 2014: 466). Secondly, he lived through both the First and Second World Wars but did not glorify war either personally or in his writing (Croft 2014: 49). Finally, Croft notes that Tolkien deplored the waste of war but understood the need to fight (Croft 2004: 177-178). In 1944 he wrote that 'If anguish were visible, almost the whole of this benighted planet would be enveloped in a dark vapour' (Carpenter 1981: 76). He put this idea of a 'grey hazy world' directly into *The Lord of the* Rings (Tolkien 2005: 734) and it is significant that a large section of *The Lord of the Rings* was written during the time of the Second World War.

Tolkien's experiences of war certainly influenced the way in which he wrote about both landscapes and battle, as in for instance the chapters 'The Passage of the Marshes', 'The 'Battle of the Pelennor Fields' and 'The Black Gate Opens'. As Tolkien corresponded with Christopher, his ideas on South Africa were reawakened and he wrote the chapters in Book IV with these in mind. I argue that there are two kinds of shadow or darkness present in Tolkien's writing: one of the overarching sadness of war and the other, an exotic difference that speaks to African-type landscapes and peoples. These conceptual frameworks crystallised during the years of the Second World War.

[45] *The Fellowship of The Ring* was published in 1954 and *The Two Towers* and *The Return of the King i*n 1955.

Tolkien felt the separation from his younger sons keenly. In June 1941 he wrote to his second son Michael, who was an Officer Cadet at the Royal Military College in Sandhurst,

> One War is enough for any man. I hope you will be spared a second…I suffered once what you are going through … To carry on with the old pre-war job – it is just poison. If only I could do something active! But there it is: I am "permanently reserved", and as such I have my hands too full even to be a Home Guard. (Carpenter 1981: 54-55)

In the summer of 1943 Christopher, then aged eighteen, was called up into the Royal Air Force and went to train at a camp in Manchester. In response, Tolkien wrote: 'We are born in a dark age out of due time (for us) …Have at the Orcs, with winged words, *hildenaeddren* [war-adders], biting darts' (Carpenter 1981: 64).

As a young man, along with many of his generation, Tolkien had been disillusioned by his experiences of conflict in the First World War. Using Tolkien's 1953 text *The Homecoming of Beorhtnoth* as a centre point for an examination of Tolkien's experiences and writing, Bunting points backwards to the First World War and notes that Tolkien's generation

> felt that the virtue of the classical tradition which they had been taught, seduced them with lies, deceived them and many others into a meaningless death. (2017: 31)

Although he praised what he termed the 'heroic northern spirit' in his 1936 essay 'The Monsters and the Critics', Tolkien began working on the *Homecoming* and his attendant essay on *ofermod* or overconfident misplaced chivalry (Grybrauskas 2023: 27-30) in the 1930s in which he found this 'heroic spirit' to be 'never quite pure…It is of gold and an alloy' (Bunting 2017: 32). For Bunting, the later text of the *Homecoming* is thus both a deconstruction of chivalry and also a way of understanding what Tolkien was trying to say in *The Lord of the Rings* (2017: 31). We could question, as Zaleski has done, whether the First or Second World War was most important as an influence on Tolkien's (and the other "Inklings')' writing

(2016: 272). Bunting's insight is, however, invaluable in looking both forwards and backwards to both conflicts, each of which influenced Tolkien in significant ways.

In examining the historical events of the Second World War, Tolkien later admitted to his publisher Stanley Unwin in 1947 that *The Lord of the Rings* 'is written in my life-blood, such as that is' (Carpenter 1981: 122). He had therefore survived not only the Second World War but also *The Lord of the Rings* and its resolution, which took over a thousand pages of writing.

Chism describes the stressful impact of the writing process on Tolkien, who was aware that Middle-earth had taken up his most productive academic years (2003: 9). It is true that Tolkien had spent a lot of his time on *The Lord of the Rings* but he had continued with his influential academic work, such as the essays in *Medium Aevum* in 1932, his *Beowulf: the Monsters and the Critics* in 1936, the *On Fairy-Stories* lecture in 1939 as well as his work on Chaucer and the essays in *The Homecoming of Beorhtnoth*. Chism also argues that 'Tolkien explicitly and persistently links the creation of fantastic and mythological worlds to the temptations of power, and never more so than during the war' (2003: 64). She goes on to argue that Tolkien carved a new and down-to-earth version of the northern legends behind *The Ring of the Nibelungs* and the Valkyrie legends which the Nazis had appropriated as 'art'. Tolkien's story was centred on the extreme danger of power rather than the glory of power (Chism 2003: 66). At the end of his life, Tolkien attempted to define his own work and declared that he had had 'no interest at all in the history or present situation of the English "novel"' and that his work was '*not* a novel, but an "heroic romance"; a much older and quite different variety of literature' (Carpenter 1981: 414). Tolkien himself, along with Peake and other twentieth-century fantasy writers were not aware of the fact that they had in fact, created a new form, modern fantasy, which was to lead to the generation of a prolific volume of literature in the decades after the war.

Tolkien returned to his writing on *The Lord of the Rings* in early 1944, at a time when he was stressed and worried by war matters, his writing so 'buried by the complexity of the tale and the barrage of detail so that he could no longer see

things clearly' (White 2001, 180). In early April 1944 Tolkien wrote to Christopher, by this time in South Africa, saying that 'I have begun to nibble at Hobbit[46] again (Carpenter 1981: 69). Christopher later remembered how his father had written to him and

> told me of his turning again to the adventures of Sam and Frodo; and 45 years later one can feel it, reading these pages in which he struggled (in increasingly impossible handwriting) to discover just how Sam and Frodo did in the end get out of the twisted hills into the horrible lands below. (Tolkien 2002: 96)

Christopher was stationed in South Africa from January 1944 (Carpenter 1981: 67) and it is relevant here to explain that the country in which he lived and trained as a Royal Air Force officer in the 1940s was a different place from the Orange River Colony his father had left as a child in 1896. The Union of South Africa was, from 1926, a dominion territory of the expanding British Empire and as such had a specific role to play in the Second World War (Jeffrey 1999: 300).

South Africa's role in the Second World War has been underplayed by historians given that, as Nasson explains, to commemorate

> South African involvement in a second British imperial war looked as anachronistic as it was indigestible in the coming-of-age of Afrikaner nationalism after 1945… Equally, following the dissolution of that apartheid nationalist order in the mid-1990s, the Second World War has been fated still to remain the past of another country. (2013: 23)

In recent years the historiography has changed and there has been a growing body of historical material on South Africa and the Second World War, which makes it more possible to work towards understanding the context of Christopher Tolkien's time spent in South Africa in 1944. The South Africa in which Christopher came to train with the Royal Air Force was a divided country. The declaration of war on Germany 'had far-reaching repercussions in South Africa, shattering the consensus between the old National and South African parties which had combined as the governing United Party in 1933' (Lambert 2008: 60). Imperial

[46] Tolkien called *The Lord of the Rings* 'Hobbit', 'New Hobbit' or 'Ring'.

historian Jeffrey has pointed out that the Second World War was the 'last real exercise of British imperialism in South Africa', noting that 'South African neutrality would have had a calamitous strategic effect on the war effort' (1999: 309). For white, English-speaking South Africans, 'Britain's declaration (of war) called into question their allegiance should they fight alongside Britain and the Commonwealth or accept that South Africa had no reason to become involved in a British war' (Lambert 2008: 60).

A total of 135 000 white and 70 000 non-white South Africans served in the Allied forces but the divisions between white and black South Africans remained, especially in the treatment of black South African soldiers recruited as part of the imperial war effort. Like soldiers from other parts of the British African Empire, they were kept segregated from white men (Brown 2015). Christopher would therefore have experienced a society which was segregated harshly and which privileged whiteness. As Dubow notes, *apartheid* was growing as a concept in the 1940s prior to its full implementation by the National Party in 1948 and the development of scientific racism was gaining ground in South Africa during this time (Dubow 1995: 246).

It is difficult to assess the extent to which Christopher and Tolkien were influenced by these concepts of whiteness in South Africa. Fimi insists that Tolkien was aware of and opposed to, the eugenicists' ideas on 'race' (2009: 152), but there is no evidence that Christopher met any non-white South Africans[47] given that his time in the country, like that of other servicemen, did not allow for many situations in which he might meet black people. Neither does Tolkien mention having served with any black colonial soldiers in the First World War, although many South African 'Native Labour' troops were present in France (Bourke 1996: 147).

It would be over deterministic, however, to state that both Tolkien and Christopher experienced war only as a 'white man's war' as Tolkien does deplore the 'treatment of colour', and he stresses that this is 'not only in South Africa' (Carpenter 1981: 73). As I mentioned in Chapter 2 he never indulged in an outright

[47] 'Non-White' South Africans includes Black, Indian, 'Coloured' and Khoisan peoples.

hatred of the Germans. In fact, in 1941, he pointed out to Michael quite unironically that their virtues of obedience, patriotism and industry were much ‘greater than ours’ and that, through no fault of their own, they were ‘now led by a man inspired by a mad, whirlwind, devil: a typhoon, a passion: that makes the poor old Kaiser look like an old woman knitting’ (Carpenter 1981: 55).

We do know that Tolkien associated evil, not with black people but with ‘human stupidity’ and, in May 1944, wrote to Christopher saying that ‘we are attempting to conquer Sauron with the Ring … But the penalty is, as you know, to breed new Saurons, and slowly turn Men and Elves into Orcs’. He ended by saying ‘Well, there you are: a hobbit amongst the Uruk-hai. Keep up your hobbitry in heart’ (Carpenter 1981: 78). This demonstrates that Tolkien associates evil with unrestrained power which can be misused by anyone, just as anyone can be ‘turned’ into an Orc. Interestingly, he also says that ‘we started with a great many Orcs on our side’ (Carpenter 1981: 78). The ‘Uruk-hai’ were, for Tolkien, like the Ring of Power, associated with the forces of the unlimited machinery of war which it was so easy to deploy but which so quickly become uncontrollable once unleashed.

Non-white South Africans made a substantial contribution to the war with 13 000 serving in the armed forces, but the policy that black combatants should not be armed, and the feeling that they should not serve a country that treated them as a servile underclass, had made recruitment slow (Killingray 2010: 71-72). Segregation during the First World War, together with little reward for their services, undermined any incentive to enrol in the South African forces a second time. Bourke, writing on how class differences did not allow for true comradeship in the trenches of the First World War, points out that:

> Fighting men were also divided by race. The South African Native Labor Corps had nothing in common with most of the men in the British Royal Army Corps: the colour of their skins, their language, their customs, and their clothes made identification of “them” versus “us” greater than a division between the Allies and the Axis. (1996: 147-8)

Indeed, racial discrimination was ‘invoked again and again by many Africans as a reason for not enlisting’ (Killingray 2010: 73) and the discrimination and segregation policies of South African society were evident in the Native Military Corps wherever they served. Killingray notes that ‘racial policies were sometimes softened, but also made more obvious to NMC men, when they served overseas alongside British colonial battalions where the lines of racial discrimination were less strongly drawn’ (2010: 74). It was clear that South African attitudes were at odds, even within an Empire based on the separation of races. Thus, the Second World War remained a ‘white man’s war’ to most black South Africans (Grundlingh 2015: 80) who also did not share in the post-war independence movements in other African states such as that of Ghana in 1957.

As a dominion territory, South Africa also became an important ‘home front’ for the British Empire during the war. The South African Air Force, established on 1 February 1920, hosted the Joint Air Training Scheme, which was set up at the end of 1940 to train Royal Air Force pilots at the rate of fifty a month during the Second World War (Nasson 2013: 119). 33 000 airmen came to train in South Africa, the largest number in any Commonwealth country after Canada and, as Smith points out, this added to the home front’s concerns about the large numbers of allied servicemen and the possibilities of inter-racial relationship across ‘racial’ lines in South Africa. There was a feeling that British servicemen might be tempted to have relationships with non-white local people and, as Smith says, ‘Social interaction across racial lines was discouraged while stopping short of an outright ban’ (2017: 95). These ideas, which dovetailed with South African ideas and customs on strict social segregation, also contained conceptual shadows of *apartheid* which had been circulating since the 1930s.

The Royal Air Force, in conjunction with the South African Air Force, set up bases for training Air Force personnel in Baragwanath, Randfontein, Wonderboom, Benoni, Potchefstroom, Kroonstad, Kimberley, Nigel, Standerton, Pietersburg, Bloemspruit East London (Collondale) (Woodbrook) Port Elizabeth, Grahamstown, Oudtshoorn, Queenstown, George, Tempe (Bloemfontein), Cape Town (Youngsfield), Zwartkop Germiston, and Quaggaspoort (Wessels 2000: 2-3).

Elementary Flying Training Schools gave recruits fifty hours of basic aviation instruction on simple trainers like the Tiger Moth. Pilots who showed promise went on to Service Flying Training Schools, which provided advanced pilot training including fighter and multi- engine aircraft and these were later renamed Air Schools (Becker 1991: 34). Christopher Tolkien completed his elementary flying course at Kroonstad and another flying course at No. 25 Air School in Standerton. He was then commissioned into the Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve on 27 January 1945 as a pilot officer still on ‘probation’ which meant he could not yet participate in bombing raids. Eventually he was transferred to the Royal Navy Volunteer Reserve on 28 June 1945.

In South Africa, Christopher trained in No. 7 Air School in Kroonstad in the province of the Orange Free State: the region where his father had been born in Bloemfontein half a century before. From what we can glean from his father’s reaction to his letters, it was a dismal place in 1944. Tolkien called it ‘the real product of our culture, as it now lives and is’ a gloomy and uninspiring place (Carpenter 1981: 91). It was (and is) the third largest city in the Free State and lies on the railway junction from Cape Town to Johannesburg. During the South African War from March to May 1900, it was the capital of the Orange Free State and was the site of a British concentration camp (commemorated in the Bloemspruit Monument). It was described as one of the most distressing of the camps in the entire system (Van Heyningen 2013: 33).

The troops who stayed there on the way to Bloemfontein brought typhoid and, by March 1901, conditions were completely overcrowded with over 2 500 inmates in the Kroonstad camp and an additional camp set up for over 1 000 black refugees. The camps were badly affected by infectious disease and lack of resources despite desperate appeals by its administrators; the death rate was extremely high. The legacy of the unfortunately named South African War ‘concentration camps ‘were not only a shadow on the imperial and South African landscape’ (Van Heyningen 2013: 323) but also a reminder of the horror and senselessness of the war in which Christopher now found himself. Though many Royal Air Force officers stationed in South Africa did not find their circumstances unpleasant

(Wingrin 2012: 128-132), Tolkien's letters to Christopher suggest that the latter was not particularly enjoying his surroundings. Tolkien urged his son to try and 'achieve inward peace' (Carpenter 1981: 66) and said how he himself had found comfort in the Old English of the *Exeter Book*.

Tolkien missed his son desperately and, in January 1944, said that eight days without letters was 'a very long time'. He said that he would start numbering each letter and each page 'so that if any go awry you will know' (Carpenter 1981: 67). On 3 April Tolkien wrote to Christopher saying that 'I have started to do some (painful) work on the chapter which picks up the adventures of Frodo and Sam again' (Carpenter 1981: 69). Two days later he wrote another letter saying that 'I have seriously embarked on an effort to finish my book' saying that 'I wish I still had my amanuensis and critic [Christopher] near at hand' (Carpenter 1981: 70). Ten days later, on 13 April 1944, Tolkien wrote another letter in which he deplored the fact that 'you do not seem to have done anything very useful since September! I miss you hourly also and am lonely without you'. He said he had read his recent chapter and begun another and promised to have spare copies typed and sent out to Christopher. He ended this letter by saying that he had 'managed to bring Frodo nearly to the gates of Mordor' and that 'I am going to continue "Ring" in every salvable moment' (Carpenter 1981: 71).

On 18 April 1944, a whole batch of letters arrived from South Africa and Tolkien, writing back to Christopher, declared this 'a great event'. Of his son's military experiences, he said that he was 'distressed' but not surprised (Carpenter 1981: 71). After reiterating his horror at Christopher's choice of Air Service he said that 'at least it should not later land you often into the animal horror of the life of active service on the earth - such as trench life as I knew it'. Having taken some comfort in this he went on to say that he had finished the chapter on 'the passage of the Dead Marshes and the approach to the Gates of Mordor' (Carpenter 1981: 72). This is one of Tolkien's longer letters to Christopher and he goes on to say 'I cannot tell you how much I miss you, dear man. I would not mind it, if you were happier or more usefully employed. How stupid everything is! and war multiplies the stupidity by 3 and its power by itself' (Carpenter 1981: 73). It is in this letter

that Tolkien responds to what we must presume is a description of South African conditions by Christopher:

> As for what you say or hint of “local” conditions: I knew of them. I don’t think they have much changed (even for the worse). I used to hear them discussed by my mother; and have ever since taken a special interest in that part of the world. (Carpenter 1981: 73)

The sections of *The Lord of the Rings* which Tolkien wrote whilst Christopher was in South Africa were the parts of ‘The War of the Ring’ which made up Book IV of the text which he worked on from April 1944.

Christopher remembered in *The War of the Ring* how his father struggled to get Sam and Frodo off the edge of the cliff in the Emyn Muil in the chapter ‘The Taming of Sméagol’ (Tolkien 2002: 95-6). These were the parts of the book which were set largely in the East and South of the geography of Middle-earth, the regions which most aligned with hot and dry places and which could most easily be associated with Africa or with the ‘Ethiopia’ of medieval cartography. It would not be incorrect to state that the sections of *The Lord of the Rings* written while engaged in correspondence with Christopher in South Africa were those in which Tolkien depicted peoples and places derived from his memories and knowledge of Africa.

Tolkien wrote the chapter which was initially called ‘The Passage of the Dead Marshes’ (later called ‘The Passage of the Marshes’) during early April 1944 (Carpenter 1981: 73). Although this is not a geographical section inspired by African ideas, it is an important section regarding war in *The Lord of the Rings.* It was also one of the last cold and desolate places that Frodo, Sam, and Gollum, the characters upon whom Tolkien was focusing, had to traverse before reaching warmer southern climes, having escaped from the cliffs of the Emyn Muil.

Writing about the Dead Marshes allowed Tolkien to enlarge on the landscape and history of Middle-earth by recalling the War of the Last Alliance, as well as the conflict between King Ondoher of Gondor and the Haradrim during the Third Age (Tolkien 1999: 211,281). Gollum describes a ’great battle’ with ‘Tall Men with long

swords, and terrible Elves, and Orcses shrieking' (Tolkien 2005: 628). However, the marshes have swallowed up the graves since then. While Sam says that the battle was 'an age and more ago' and that 'the Dead can't really be there!' (Tolkien 2005: 628), this reveals Tolkien's awareness that war leaves an indelible trace on the landscape, something he experienced during the First World War. History operates at two levels here: firstly, Tolkien adds to the considerable history of Middle-earth and secondly, he inserts his own experience of history into *The Lord of the Rings*.

Following his work on Tolkien and the First World War, Garth examines the writing of this chapter against the background of Tolkien's immediate experiences in the Second World War, while, at the same time, tracing Tolkien's memories to his experiences during the Great War. At the beginning of April 1944, before Tolkien made up his mind to get 'down to' his neglected *Lord of the Rings* manuscript, he visited Birmingham 'for an Old Boys' reunion at King Edward's School (Carpenter 1981: 70). Garth sees this as a touchstone for the reawakening of Tolkien's memories and feelings about his own experiences of war on the battlefield of the Somme (2008: 9). For Garth, this event provided Tolkien's description of the Dead Marshes 'with its filthy odours and decomposed bodies embodied the ineffectual and pitiful waste of war as Tolkien knew it' (2008: 9).

Tolkien's description of the Dead Marshes is certainly one of the most powerful accounts of Middle-earth's history. He draws together the battle of the Last Alliance at the end of the Second Age and the later battle between Gondor and the Easterlings which led to the invasion of Ithilien in the Third Age (Tolkien 1996: 201) The hideous 'dead faces in the water' that Sam sees are described by Frodo as 'faces proud and fair, and weeds in their silver hair. But all foul, all rotting, all dead. A fell light is in them' (Tolkien 2005: 627-28). It is one of Tolkien's eeriest landscapes. Giblett offers a nuanced example of source criticism for the Dead Marshes and examines how Tolkien 'certainly buys into and reproduces the doctrine straight out of *Beowulf* that wetlands were the creation of evil after the Fall and that they were not created by God' (Giblett 2015: 7). Giblett goes on to suggest that the Dead Marshes are

> what could be called a circularity of figurality…what I call placism: a recently human-made wasteland, such as Somme mud, is made to figure a native or ancient wetland, such as the marsh that the Dead Marshes once were, and the perjorative associations of the former are applied to the latter (2018: 33).

Tolkien's ability to merge his own experience of history into that of Middle-earth is, in the Dead Marshes descriptions, quite extraordinary. In fact, in December 1960 Tolkien wrote to Professor Foster stating that 'The Dead Marshes and the approaches to the Morannon owe something to Northern France after the Battle of the Somme' (Carpenter 1981: 303).

From July 1944, Tolkien had also come to terms with the fact that Michael was 'a much damaged solider' (Carpenter 1981: 86). Michael had been judged unfit for further service because of 'severe shock to nervous system due to prolonged exposure to enemy action' (Carpenter 1981: 439). This was the 'shell shock' of the First World War, called 'battle fatigue' in the Second World War. Tolkien's writing of 'The Passage of the Marshes' and Tolkien's later memory of it must therefore be viewed in this context.

On 23 April 1944 Tolkien wrote to Christopher stating that he had read the second chapter of Book 4, 'The Passage of the Marshes' to C.S. Lewis and Charles Williams, who acted as his 'audience', and that it had been 'approved'. He was now busy with the third chapter, 'Gates of the Land of Shadow' (Carpenter 1981: 73). This chapter was eventually entitled 'The Black Gate is Closed'. Having left behind the Dead Marshes, Frodo, Sam, and Gollum reach the wasteland of the Morannon outside the gates of Mordor. This place is, in a sense, a modern post-war wasteland. The landscape is diseased: 'the world [is] a wasteland and its inhabitants [are] marked by a sense of existential despair as well as feelings of alienation, dislocation, and loss' (Nicholay 2014: loc 1672).

Tolkien was not the only modern fantasy writer who was influenced by the world wars of the twentieth century. For example, Peake in his second novel, *Gormenghast* (1947), describes the castle as follows:

> Away to the west the roofscape of his heavy home floated, as lightly as though every stone were a petal. Strung across the capstone jaws of its great head a hundred windows, the size of teeth, reflected the dawn. There was less the nature of glass about them than of bone, or of stones which locked them in. In contrast to the torpor of these glazes, punctuating the remote masonry with so cold a catenation, acres of ivy spread themselves like dark water over the roofs and appeared restless … the ivy leaves fluttered was no vitality in these movements, no purpose, any more than the long hair of some corpse, tossing this way and that in a wind, can deny the death of the body it flatters. (2011: 442)

Like Tolkien, Peake's visions were probably influenced by his experiences during the Second World War, which included experiencing the horrors of the liberation of Bergen-Belsen concentration camp in 1945 (Yorke 2000: 151). Peake's ideas of death and irreparable decay tell us that much, as Elber-Aviram argues convincingly (2014: 8). Pocock, who also experienced the aftermath of the Second World War, comments that

> Peake's Gormenghast fantasies dredged from the deepest, darkest chasms of [his] haunted imagination … won him an assured Gothic niche in the literature of his time. (1983: 124)

In comparison with this, Tolkien's ideas of a wasteland seem deeper, and not only because Mordor produces only evil and death. In the writing of the First World War, Hynes notes that there existed 'a world rendered beyond landscape where sunrise and sunset are blasphemous, they are mockeries to man' (1991: 196). This is reflected in Tolkien's description of the area of the Morannon. As Frodo, Sam and Gollum approach Mordor:

> Before them dark in the dawn the great mountains reached up to the roofs of smoke and cloud. Out from their feet were flung huge buttresses and broken hills … Here nothing lived, not even the leprous growths that feed on rottenness. The gasping pools were coated with ash and crawling muds, sickly white and grey, as if the mountains had vomited the filth of their entrails upon the lands about … A land defiled, diseased beyond all healing they stood there, like men on the edge of a sleep where nightmare lurks, holding it off, though they know that they can only come to morning through the shadows. (Tolkien 2005: 831)

There are crucially similar ideas in Peake's and Tolkien's descriptions of a wasteland. Rhone calls this

> the shared element of history and myth … and the twentieth century had much to offer in terms of fantasy authors whose tales display history (in this case the history of war) in epic scale. (2017: loc 506)

The use of the term 'Gothic', which I used in Chapter 2 to describe some of Haggard's imperial literature, is not bound to any specific temporal frame. Peake was without doubt the mid-twentieth century's post-war Gothic representative in fantasy literature. However, as Bronfen has shown, the 'war dead', while having a specific connotation of First World War Gothic horror, are not confined to this context (2015: 16). Bourke argues that disfigurement had always been present in British society but increased phenomenally as a visual reminder to the public of the horrors of the First World War. Dismembered men, representing extreme horror, were literally on display all over Britain in the public sphere (Bourke 1996: 33). And it is important to note that, while Peake's descriptions can be categorised as twentieth-century literary Gothic, Tolkien inherited literary Gothic traditions from Haggard's late nineteenth-century African novels.

Although the landscape outside the Black Gate seemed completely dead and lifeless to the extent that Sam says he 'feels sick' (Tolkien 2005: 632), the gates are well-guarded and 'another dreadful day of fear and toil had come to Mordor' (Tolkien 2005: 637). As Frodo, Sam, and Gollum reach the gate, Frodo 'became aware that there was a great stir and movement on the plain … It seemed as if whole armies were on the march … These were Men of other race, out of the wide Eastlands' (Tolkien 2005: 639). This is one of the few instances that Tolkien describes these men as being of another 'race'. At the Council of Elrond the people from the East and South are described as 'Easterlings and cruel Haradrim' (Tolkien 2005: 245), and when Frodo sees people on Amon Hen they are described as coming from 'out of the East' (Tolkien 2005: 400).

Gollum then tells Frodo and Sam that, to the South 'further still there are more lands, they say, … and the men are fierce and have dark faces' (Tolkien 2005: 641). Gollum describes these men in some detail, saying that there are:

> More men going to Mordor…We have not seen Men like these before…They are fierce. They have black eyes, and long black hair, and gold rings in their ears …And some have red paint on their cheeks, and red cloaks…and they have round shields, yellow and black with spikes. Not nice; very cruel wicked Men they look. Almost as bad as the Orcs. (Tolkien 2005: 646)

It is difficult to know whose voice is speaking here. We know of Gollum's age-old hatred of Men and other races. For Gollum, everyone is different from himself, 'other' from himself and therefore, in his limited vocabulary, is 'not nice'. He is used to hiding, even from the sun from which he is alienated and which is evil to him, warning the Hobbits that they are 'not wise to be glad of the Yellow Face [the Sun] because it shows you up' (Tolkien 2005: 621).

At the same time this seems a reasonably accurate picture of the Swertings as Tolkien called these people in the first drafts of *The Lord of the Rings* (Tolkien 2002: 127). Sinex uses the term 'monsterized Saracens' possibly derived from Tolkien's readings on Ethiopians or the 'Saracens' of Crusader Medieval Europe, though, as she points out, Tolkien was aware of negative language implications (Sinex 2010: 182). Hammond and Scull note that these are also the 'Haradrim', known by the Hobbits 'to be the dark-skinned people of the Sunlands, people from the little-known countries of the far South' (Hammond and Scull 2014: 461).

What is interesting to the reader here is that this is the first time that the Hobbits, Frodo and Sam, have encountered any detailed information on these peoples and they are immediately characterised as people who are enemies of the West because they are joining the forces of Mordor. They are 'dark' because they come from the hot lands of the South, being more 'Mediterranean' than the men of the northern parts of Middle-earth, as well as wearing red and gold, in contrast with the dark clothes of the Dúnedain rangers, the green cloaks of the Rohirrim or the sombre black and silver of the Men of Gondor. They are also 'dark' because they

are allies of Sauron, although it is Gollum who calls them Swertings rather than Southrons (Tolkien 2002: 127).

It is Sam who makes the connection with *oliphaunts,* giant prehistoric elephants which are also from the South (Tolkien 2002: 137) and he recites the poem about the *oliphaunt* which he describes as a 'nonsense' rhyme out of the Shire. Sam says he has 'heard tales of the big folk away in the Sunlands. Swertings we call 'them in our tales; and they ride on *oliphaunts '*(Tolkien 2005: 647). Gollum is so alienated from the natural world that he again shows his horror of anything different from himself by stating that he 'has not heard of' *oliphaunts*, 'does not want to see them' and 'does not want them to be' and he reiterates his hatred of the sun and urges the Hobbits to hide 'until the Yellow Face goes away' (Tolkien 2005: 647).

On 30 April 1944, Tolkien wrote to Christopher explaining that he was now working on the chapter which eventually became 'Of Herbs and Stewed Rabbit' and that Frodo and Sam were 'in Ithilien' (Carpenter 1981: 76). In this letter Tolkien said that he felt 'appalled at the thought of the sum total of human misery all over the world at the present moment: the millions parted, fretting, wasting in unprofitable days – quite apart from torture, pain, death, bereavement, injustice' (Tolkien 2005: 76). I believe Tolkien reveals these feelings directly in the scene in which Sam encounters the giant Mumak or *oliphaunt,* because he shows compassion to a fellow being who is far from home rather than the antagonism one might show to an enemy soldier:

> He wondered what the man's name was and where he came from; and if he was evil of heart, or what lies and threats and led him on the long march from his home; and if he would not rather have stayed there in peace. (Tolkien 2005: 661)

For Tolkien, compassion and hope were his constant companions during war time and he held onto the idea that the war would pass and that Christopher would return home (Carpenter 1981: 77).

Tolkien wrote to Christopher briefly on 4 May 1944 and then, in a longer letter on 6 May 1944, shared his disquiet about the war effort, stating that it was ‘An ultimately evil job. For we are attempting to conquer Sauron with the Ring’ (Carpenter 1981: 78). He urged Christopher to write him a letter, stating that he had started his early work on what later became *The Silmarillion* which he called ‘Morgoth and the History of the Gnomes’ in grim war conditions (Carpenter 1981: 78). Then he wrote that a

new character has come on the scene (I am sure I did not invent him, I did not even want him, though I like him, but there he came walking into the woods of Ithilien): Faramir, the brother of Boromir. (Carpenter 1981: 79)

In this letter Tolkien remarks that Faramir is ‘holding up the “catastrophe” by a lot of stuff about the history of Gondor and Rohan (with some very sound reflections no doubt on martial glory and true glory)’ (Carpenter 1981: 79).

On 29 November 1944, Tolkien wrote to Christopher saying that he had completed the end of Book 4 of ‘The Ring’ (Carpenter 1981: 103). This marked the end of the section which eventually became *The Two Towers.* He then sketched out the rest of the story, including Book 5 (Carpenter 1981: 104). Tolkien wrote to Christopher in late December 1944, hoping that Book 4 would distract his son from ‘the noise of the Air Crew Room’ but that he was still working on the new chapters (Carpenter 1981: 107). According to Christopher, his father made several attempts to start Book 5 (Tolkien 2002: 230-231). The penultimate battle of the War of the Ring, which formed Chapter 6 of Book 5, entitled ‘The Battle of the Pelennor Fields’ was then written in full following Tolkien’s ideas in his letter to Christopher on 29 November 1944 (Carpenter 1981: 104).

There are two ways in which the siege and the battle which followed may be understood as having echoes from antiquity. The enemy forces are from the south, like the Carthaginians who were from Africa. They, like Hannibal, included representatives from different peoples including the Haradrim (Southrons) and Easterlings, as well as Orcs. They also had *oliphaunts* in the same way as Hannibal had elephants, which he used effectively in battle against the Romans at

Trebia in 218 BCE (Charles and Rhodan 2007: 372). Tolkien would have been fully conversant with the accounts of the classical writers Livy and Polybius who described this important battle and the role of elephants in ancient warfare (Kistler 2006: 122). He may even have been familiar with the account given by the Roman playwright Plautus who later referred to Hannibal's elephant, Surus, wearing 'full battle-dress with a red saddle-cloth and a red shield painted on its tower'.

This elephant was of Asian, not North African, origin and was about three metres high (Kistler 2006: 123). This description fits the elephant encountered by Frodo and Sam in Ithilien (Tolkien 2005: 661). In the chapter 'The Battle of the Pelennor Fields', the *Mumak* are described in the battle as coming with 'the footmen of Harad with horsemen before them advance 'and behind them rose the huge backs of the *mumakil* with war-towers upon them' (Tolkien 2005: 843). Importantly, later when the war in Gondor is over, and Sam 'learned that at the siege of Gondor there had been a great 'number of these beasts but that they were all destroyed, he thought it a sad loss' (Tolkien 2005: 957).

The Battle of the Pelennor fields is some of Tolkien's finest writing, containing as it does epic echoes of antiquity, Anglo-Saxon, and later medieval warfare. It echoes antiquity in that this is what was called a 'Pyrrhic victory', like that experienced by the Greek king Pyrrhus of Epirus[48] against the Romans at the Battle of Asculum in 279 BCE, a victory which ultimately brought him no gains. Like the enemies of Gondor, he had used war elephants to charge at the point where the Roman lines were thought most likely to break (Charles and Rhodan 2007: 369) and, although he had won this tremendous battle, it marked the onset of Roman conquest in Greece. Like Carthage, the North African kingdom, which Tolkien mentioned in his letter to Christopher on 31 July 1944, such places were doomed to being part of the Roman Empire which he would 'have hated' (Carpenter 1981: 89).

In the next chapter, 'The Last Debate', Tolkien has Gandalf tell the other members of the group that 'We cannot achieve victory by arms, but by arms we can give the

[48] Pyrrhus of Epirus (319-272 BCE) was a Greek king and statesman.

Ring-bearer his only chance' (2005: 880). Tolkien had by this time realised that the fighting in his story was spiritual, what he had Galadriel call a fight in the 'long defeat' (Tolkien 2005: 357). He was also beginning to realise the enormous depth and extensive history of *The Lord of the Rings* when he wrote that another final cataclysmic battle would be required to defeat Sauron: 'Other evils there are that may come; for Sauron is himself but a servant or emissary' (Tolkien 2005: 879). Tolkien wrote to Christopher on 30 January 1945 acknowledging that the story had affected him very deeply. It was one 'that moves me supremely and I find small difficulty in evoking the heart-racking sense of the vanished past' by which he meant the whole scale of the story and the sadness of the ages that were only hinted at in the narrative of *The Lord of the Rings* (Carpenter 1981: 110). He said 'the other (feeling was) the more "ordinary" emotion, triumph, pathos, tragedy of the characters' (Tolkien 2005: 110).

Tolkien's view of world events remained cynical and pessimistic during this time. He had just heard the news that the Russians were '60 miles from Berlin' and that 'the appalling destruction and misery of this war mounts hourly: destruction of what should be (indeed is) the commonwealth of Europe, and the world' (Carpenter 1981: 111). Nevertheless, he retained some optimism, gleaned predominantly from Christopher's experiences in South Africa. He stated that 'I read eagerly all details of your life, and the things you see and do – and suffer'. Later he says: 'you'll remember … the storms and the dry veld and the smells of camp, when you return to this other land' (Carpenter 1981: 110).

He thus looked forward eagerly to his son's' homecoming, even though he knew that Christopher would have been changed by his experience of war, telling his son 'your obstinate memory of this "home" of yours in an idyllic hour (when often there is an illusion of the stay of time and decay and a sense of gentle peace) [is] derived from Eden', a state which, as he pointed out, 'We shall never recover' (Carpenter 1981: 110). Tolkien adds the last line from the poem 'The Old

Vicarage, Grantchester' written by the First World War poet, Brooke,[49] in 1912: 'Sounds the Church clock at ten to three? / And is there honey still for tea?' (Carpenter 1981: 110). Tolkien knew that Brooke had died in 1915 and the world that he represented had, in a sense, died on the Somme in 1916 (Carpenter 1981: 10).

If there was no going back to what many perceived as the Edenic state of England prior to the First World War, certainly the country changed irrevocably during the Second World War, perhaps even more so than during the First, 'leaving everyone poorer, many bereaved or maimed and missions dead, and only one thing triumphant: the Machines' (Carpenter 1981: 111). While there was some hope for African countries who were looking forward to independence from the British Empire, South Africa, on the verge of official *apartheid*, was in a particularly dismal state in 1945. Of the South Africans of all 'colours' who served in the Second World War, 12 080 were dead. As the United Nations met to defend human rights for the first time, the National Party worked towards winning the 1948 election and establishing *apartheid* in all aspects of life through the establishment of a complex and unprecedented legal and social system (Simpson 2021: 128-129).

Christopher returned finally to England in May 1945 and Tolkien lamented his 'loathing' of the Royal Air Force and stressed that 'it is the aeroplane of war that is the real villain'. Tolkien also asserted that 'I know nothing about British or American imperialism in the Far East that does not fill me with regret or disgust'. Indeed, as the war ended, he felt that

> I am afraid I am not even supported by a glimmer of patriotism in this remaining war. I would not subscribe a penny to it, let alone a son, were I a free man. (Carpenter 1981: 115)

Tolkien was not alone when he said that he felt that the war would ultimately benefit the United States and the Soviet Union (Carpenter 1981: 115). Even

[49] Rupert Brooke (1887-1915) wrote war sonnets that were more idealistic and which remained more popular than the grounded war poetry of Wilfrid Owen (1893-1918) and Siegfried Sassoon (1886-1967). Only Sassoon survived the First World War (See Stevenson 2004: 577-578).

though Britain had never been invaded by land or sea, people felt that they had been used during and after the Second World War by the United States in its quest for increasing world power (Colls 2002: 185).

This strange sense of defeat, even after 'victory' is reflected in the penultimate chapter of the book, chapter 8 of Book 6. In 'The Scouring of the Shire' the Hobbits encounter war in their own territory, finding that the Shire has become 'worse than Mordor' in their absence. (Tolkien 2005: 1018). Tolkien was adamant that his great story was in no way allegorical; but when he wrote in January 1945 that 'There seem no bowels of mercy or compassion, no imagination, left in this dark diabolic hour' (Carpenter 1981: 110), this is very similar to the feelings of the Hobbits on their return to the occupied Shire. The hobbits' homecoming after their experience of war is traumatic. Frodo is a psychologically damaged and 'shell-shocked' individual who will never recover from his ordeals (Livingston 2006: 79-80). The other three Hobbits have 'grown' mentally, just as Tolkien hoped that Christopher had grown through his experiences, in so far as anyone could emerge mentally more mature from serving in the Air Force to which Tolkien referred as 'Moloch' (Carpenter 1981: 105).

Merry and Pippin have grown literally and are now able to fight battles on their own and set things to rights, as Gandalf observes (Tolkien 2005: 996). Sam has also changed, developing an inner strength that enables him to shake off the fixed role of his class, becoming a warrior instead of 'merely a gardener' (Chance 2006: 154). In a letter to Christopher on 24 December 1944, Tolkien tells Christopher that Williams[50] has been reading *The Lord of the Rings* and has found at the *centre* (Tolkien's italics) 'freedom, peace, ordinary life and good liking. Yet he agrees that these very things require the existence of a great world outside the Shire' (Carpenter 1981: 105). This is an extraordinary statement. It indicates that Tolkien is well aware that the green, rural landscape of the Shire, the older traditional England that he had always loved, could not exist without the presence of the rest of the 'great world' outside, including America, and Asia as well as Africa, Australia and New Zealand.

[50] Charles Williams (1886-1945) was a writer and critic. He was a member of Tolkien's and Lewis's 'Inklings' circle. He died on 31 May 1945.

Just as the Shire exists because, at the end of *The Lord of the Rings,* it is protected by the reunited kingdoms of Arnor and Gondor, so too is England protected after the Second World War by being part of Western Europe and presumably other places in the North Atlantic and global community. Perhaps, for Tolkien it was in only in the tension of contrast that the Shire, which is an 'English' landscape, can exist alongside barren or desert places like the south and east of Middle-earth.

Waito sees 'The Scouring of the Shire' as crucial to the narrative of *The Lord of the Rings.* For him, the main conflict of the novel is not to destroy the Ring but to save the Shire (Waito 2010: 156). He comments that the two 'quests' are macrocosmic and microcosmic:

> The Ring Quest is macrocosmic as it affects and is affected by events concerning all Middle-earth, but microcosmic with respect to the narrative since it exists within the larger text of the Shire Quest. Likewise the Shire Quest is microcosmic in its exclusively local effects, but macrocosmic in relation to the entire narrative of the novel'. (Waito 2010: 157)

After the Hobbits re-take their Shire, the intruder, Sharkey, is revealed to be the now vagabond ex-wizard, Saruman, and is killed by his own servant Wormtongue. His body then disintegrates in terms which echo Haggard's *She.* The reader is told that: 'it shrank, and the shrivelled face became rags of skin upon a hideous skull' (Tolkien 2005: 1020). In this, we once again see that Tolkien was influenced very strongly by Haggard's images.

Tolkien might be best seen as a post-World War II writer, 'one of a group of English writers whose subjects were war and evil; who drew their subjects from their own life-experience, little affected or assisted by the views of official culture' (Shippey 1996: 92). Indeed, for many scholars who have written on the British reading experience during this period, Tolkien is quintessentially a writer of the 1950s. This was a period of nostalgia for young readers (Watkins 2000: 170) and the 'imperial' adventure tradition authors, such as Haggard and Henty, were still

being enjoyed in the post-war decade while ‘a new tradition of youthful reading had yet to establish itself’ (McKenzie 2001: 30).

In conclusion, in including African-inspired landscapes and peoples as a contrast to his lovingly constructed green ‘English’ hobbits’ Shire – in ‘beautiful blends of African and English details’ (Carpenter 1981: 85) - Tolkien had provided a fantasy cartography that was extraordinary in its depth as well as incredibly deep in its history. This encouraged him to remember the spaces and places of his African birth. Then Christopher’s time in South Africa, too, reawakened Tolkien’s memories of Africa as well as crystallising ideas that he had read about in his adolescence and young adulthood. This awakened in him that ‘curious sense of reminiscence about any stories of Africa’, which ‘always [moved him] deeply’ (Carpenter 1981: 82). The writing of *The Lord of the Rings* during the war years which I have examined in this chapter also demonstrates that Tolkien was aware of the constant tensions between a Shire in need of protection, one that could not be revisited in the same way, and his own English context which was forever changed by the war and its aftermath as he adjusted to the stress of writing during this time. His initial idea of a ‘New Hobbit’ grew in circumstances over which he had no control but it was those very circumstances - Christopher’s posting to South Africa - which influenced the progression of the story into lands he had only read about or of which he retained very distant memories. Tolkien’s enlarging of the original story of *The Hobbit* into an epic which reached back into the earliest history of Middle-earth became clearer as he progressed through the geographical exploration of the south and south-east of his imaginary cartography. As he did so his ideas of Africa became more crystallised and echoes of his earliest reading from writers like Haggard inspired further depths to his story. Tolkien’s correspondence with Christopher during the Second World War also shows how he began to grasp, gradually at first, the enormous historical and geographical fantasy world that he had created in Middle-earth as the narrative took shape and the ’seamless web of story’ became evident to him and he realised more fully the meaning of the layers of the peoples and landscapes of the ‘vanished past’ which on which he was building his extraordinary secondary world (Carpenter 1981: 110).

CHAPTER 4: RACE, DIFFERENCE, AND *APARTHEID*

Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings,* published in 1954 and 1955, entered a world in which racism and segregation had birthed *apartheid* in South Africa. However, the most perverted 'scientific' racism of the 1950s was that of the International Association for the Advancement of Ethnology and Eugenics established in 1959, which used 'scientific' arguments against those for civil rights and reinvented ideas of 'racial hygiene'. This was part of an international white supremacist movement to keep African Americans separate and powerless in the southern United States, as well as the indigenous black peoples of South Africa and Zimbabwe (Sussman 2014: 222).

Tolkien was aware of this prejudice and had castigated the attitude of the English who 'pride themselves, or used to, on "sportsmanship" while selecting the Germans as having no right, whatever they have done in declaring the Poles and Jews exterminable vermin, subhuman' (Carpenter 1981: 93). Tolkien was aware of the evils of *apartheid* and saw this kind of segregation as the most vicious and unacceptable kind of racism, describing it in his retirement speech, four years after the publication of *The Return of the King*, as a concept that 'was a hatred in his bones' (2006: 238).

It was against this context of the suspicion and fear of difference in languages and peoples that Tolkien wrote *The Lord of the Rings.* In this way, he was able to explore the diabolical hatred between peoples that existed in the twentieth century, and which had led to unfathomable anguish and levels of human misery which he likened to 'a dense dark vapour' (Carpenter 1981: 76). Against this historical background, he constructed the antagonism of the races in Middle-earth and came to a realisation that the Orcs, some of Tolkien's oldest (Fimi 2009: 206) and arguably some of the most negatively depicted creatures in *The Lord of the Rings,* shared the qualities of ordinary mortals in that they grew thirsty and hungry. After all, when Sam, near the end of the Ring quest, asks Frodo 'Don't orcs eat, and

don't they drink? Or do they just live on foul air and poison?' Frodo replies that 'The Shadow that bred them can only mock, it cannot make … they have to live like other living creatures' (Tolkien 2005: 914).

Following the publication of the three volumes which made up *The Lord of the Rings*, Tolkien found himself responding to readers who wanted to know how the 'different' and evil peoples in Middle-earth, especially the Orcs, had come into being. He then also explained the differences between Men, Elves and Dwarves and their conflicts during the Second Age, a history he was still constructing (Carpenter 1981: 150-153). Obviously, these were all different 'races'. In fact, the earliest criticism of Tolkien's trilogy was over the matter of prejudice and why the Orcs were so 'awful' (Wilson 1956).

Tolkien never denied that the Orcs, arguably the most irredeemably wicked peoples in his story, were his most negatively depicted beings (Carpenter 1981: 375). In 1958 Tolkien wrote a vivid description of Orcs in a letter to Ackerman:

> the Orcs are definitely stated to be corruptions of the "human" form seen in Elves and Men. They are (or were) squat, broad-nosed, sallow-skinned, with wide mouths and slant eyes; in fact degraded and repulsive versions of the (to Europeans) least lovely Mongol types. (Carpenter 1981: 274)

The important phrase here is 'to Europeans'. In this statement, Tolkien is well aware of the prejudices felt by Europeans towards Asians. However, many critics have found 'evidence' of racism in this statement. It is true that Tolkien was using colonial language to describe the Orcs and he was not free from twentieth-century prejudices in the depiction of 'Orientals'. To a large extent his Orcs are the colonial 'other' and are depicted as brutish and savage, just as black and Oriental people were viewed in colonial discourse, but I argue that his view is complex and that he was conscious of prejudice.

At an early stage in the Third Age, the wizard Saruman was able to 'cross breed' Orcs and Men (Tolkien 2005: 473) suggesting that Orcs and Men had genetic commonalities in the same way that Elves and Men could intermarry. Orcs,

though, could only breed with a lesser race of humans, not those of Númenórean descent, but men at the lower levels of the human hierarchy, and he suggests that 'crossing Orcs with goblin-men' is a truly horrible enterprise, worthy only of a eugenic breeding programme in the interests of making war (Tolkien 2002: 420). In contrast to this, unions between the highest category of Men and Elves, though few and usually tragic, are not necessarily evil. Tolkien was thus aware of the difficulties that would be inherent in a world with different races. In fact, Kocher, one of Tolkien's earlier academic critics, wrote in 1972 that

> In intelligence in our world man is without rival in and general culture. On Tolkien's Middle-earth he is only one of half a dozen highly developed species, each with its own genius, which are at least his equals and, in some respects, perhaps his superiors. (Kocher 2002: 121)

If Hobbits are perhaps the most liminal of Tolkien's invented races, they are also the most isolated at the beginning of *The Lord of the Rings.* It is only through meeting other individuals representing racial diversity and encountering other cultures that they can emerge from what has been depicted as the 'carnivalesque grotesque' (Pokriveakova 2010: 83).

Tolkien explains in his later work that the Hobbits have to be returned to a state of heroism where they can regain their 'memory of the high and perilous' (1999: 428). In 1963 Tolkien wrote that it was only 'exceptional hobbits ... those who had a grace or gift: a vision of beauty, and a reverence for things nobler than themselves' (Carpenter 1981: 329) that were worth meeting. Differences then, are evident even in the smallest and most rural of societies in Middle-earth and it is only by venturing outside the Shire that the Hobbits can grow in insight and equip themselves to re-take their country after the Ring Quest is over. They have to purge the Shire of its intolerance, having moved beyond their provincialism in the course of their journeys, though, as Bridgwater stresses, Sam takes the 'domestic' settled life of the Shire along on his journeys 'into wild places' (2010: 23). Tolkien says later that Sam is redeemed by 'his education by Bilbo and his fascination with things Elvish', otherwise his 'rustic self-satisfaction' would have become unbearable (Carpenter 1981: 329). Tolkien here is expressing a degree of middle-

class prejudice towards Sam. Later readers have denied classism, arguing that a 'liberal' upbringing prevented this prejudice, but have also experienced an unease with the way Sam speaks. Lyons says:

> Sam made my flesh crawl … It was that you could pretty much guarantee that anything he contributed by way of dialogue would either have a bilious folksy sententiousness or else be clearly meant to be endearingly foolish, the ramblings of a wise idiot. (2004: 30)

The most recent writing on Tolkien and 'race' is that by Stuart in his book *Tolkien, Race and Racism* (2022). Stuart provides an extraordinarily detailed description of the arguments for and against Tolkien's identity as a fantasy writer, pointing out that 'by far and away the most violent skirmishes over the implications of Tolkien's creativity have been fought over the "label" of racism' (2022: 22). Pointing out that Tolkien may have in fact have been a racialist 'in that he conceived his world … in racial terms … he was no racist' (Stuart 2022: 27).

Certainly, Stuart exonerates Tolkien from charges of fascism and the imperial white supremacy of his own time and from contemporary nationalist quasi-Nazis who have appropriated Tolkien's texts for their political agenda (2022: 113). This is an extremely complex assessment of Tolkien. Middle-earth was constructed in the most definite of 'racial terms'. Tolkien was certainly familiar with the term 'racialist' and realised that the term Nordic was 'associated … with racialist theories' (Carpenter 1981: 375). As far as 'imperial white supremacy' is concerned, Tolkien was definitely not an imperialist and disliked the concept of 'Great Britain' and the Commonwealth (Carpenter 1981: 65) Tolkien can also be cleared of any accusations of historical fascism: he put his German publishers in 1938 firmly in their place, saying he was not of 'Aryan' ancestry (explaining that this referred to Hindu and Persian languages) and then stated 'if I am to understand that you are enquiring if I am of *Jewish* origin,[51] I can only reply that I regret that I have no ancestors of that gifted people' (Carpenter 1981: 37). As far as contemporary white supremacists are concerned, there will always be groups who appropriate Tolkien's work for their own political purposes.

[51] Tolkien's italics

What we are left with here is the unsavoury and stubborn idea of whiteness or white supremacy. It is difficult to separate Tolkien from this concept as it pervaded Western culture during his lifetime; and whatever kind of racism was present is evident in *The Lord of the Rings*, given that the alterity between 'white' peoples and 'black' or non-white Orcs is a pervasive theme. Tolkien may have hated the eugenicist's belief in what came to be called Social Darwinism, but he could not escape the fact that this set of ideas was prominent in his childhood and adolescence, nor that it focused on the pervasive idea of 'a triumphant confidence in the superiority of the Anglo-Saxon race' (Dubow 1995: 121). Tolkien may have viewed Anglo-Saxon as a language and a culture rather than a 'race', but in his lifetime the definition was associated intimately with whiteness and the white domination of other peoples.

Stuart comments also on what he calls the 'emergent sub-discipline' of Whiteness Studies, wherein Tolkien's story or 'at least as the tale manifests in [Peter] Jackson's vision of it' can be said to privilege whiteness (Stuart 2022: 95). Stuart acknowledges Vogt-Williams's work on the 'cultured other', such as the 'wild men' or original indigenous peoples of Middle-earth, who live in the marginal space of the Drúadan Forest (Vogt-Williams 2017: 311), which I will discuss later in this chapter.

Tolkien is not normally associated with colonization, but this does not mean there was no colonizing project evident in the history of Middle-earth or in the pages of *The Lord of the Rings*; and we should be aware, states Lopez, that the postcolonial 'Whiteness' project represents a critique of his culture's (the West's) domination of others (2005: 7). In the context of Middle-earth this would mean re-examining Rohan's conquest of Dunland, for example, and Gondor's conquest of Lebennin. The conquest of other cultures is a pervasive theme in the over-arching structure of Tolkien's narrative in Sauron's quest for world or global domination. Colonization is a subjective issue in *The Lord of the Rings:* Sauron's gathering an army in order to launch a conquest of all Middle-earth is evil (Tolkien 2005: 646), but the Rohirrim's occupation of Dunland is seen as positive because the Dunlendings are inferior and, during the War of the Ring, ally with the 'creatures of Isengard, these half-orcs and goblin-men that the foul craft of Saruman has bred'.

In fact, the reader is told that the 'wild men of the hills' cannot even speak intelligibly, though they once spoke 'an ancient speech of men' (Tolkien 2005: 536-537). Tolkien does explain, though, that these people have a well-founded 'grievance that the lords of Gondor gave the Mark to Eorl the Young and made alliance with him' (Tolkien 2005: 537). Tolkien shows here that these communities have a well-founded hatred for the Rohirrim, who took their land and displaced them.

Tolkien also does not deny the fact that the Hobbits colonised the Shire though he stresses that this part of Eriador had been uninhabited: 'the Hobbits took the land for their own … . The land was rich and kindly, and though it had long been deserted when they entered it, it had been well tilled' (Tolkien 2005: 5). Marco and Blanco, the Hobbit ancestors who colonise the Shire do not displace native peoples, like the Anglo-Saxon leaders Hengist and Horsa (Honegger 2011: 110), and Tolkien acknowledges that there are three different kinds of hobbits: Harfoots, Fallowhides, and Stoors (Tolkien 2005: 3). As Chance argues, divisions are also revealed within the Shire between the Brandybucks and 'others', which fosters the potential for conflict (2001: 34). The Hobbits may therefore have occupied uninhabited land; but this does not mean they were always entirely without rancour towards their own neighbours. There are divisions between those who are interested in travelling and meeting other races, such as Dwarves and Elves, and those who are insular and do not engage in multicultural encounters. This reflected the English society that Tolkien knew, in which there were people who preferred not to explore a wider world beyond their own small communities. The better-travelled Bilbo and Frodo were marked by 'special ability', suggests Chance (2001: 27), which is why Bilbo is chosen for the quest of Erebor, for instance, because he had been in touch with Elves (Tolkien 1999: 418).

At the beginning of *The Lord of the Rings* Tolkien tells his readers that

> to the amazement of sensible folk [Frodo] was sometimes seen far from home walking in the hills and woods under the starlight [and] Merry and Pippin suspected that he visited the Elves as Bilbo had done. (2005: 42-43)

This makes both Bilbo and Frodo strange or 'queer' to other Hobbits, which they are already by reason of their wealth and family name. Chance argues that the Hobbits are inward-looking and protected, being isolated in their Shire (2001: 34). The members of the Fellowship are, however different and they stand out from other Hobbits just as Bilbo had done (Chance 2016: 279). At the beginning of *The Lord of the Rings*, Tolkien describes the situation as one in which the Shire's borders are no longer as secure as they once were, so that Hobbits are forced to become more aware of the outside world: 'There were rumours of strange things happening in the world outside' (2005: 43). This is important because, as Knepp argues, Bilbo's participation in the Quest of Erebor did not succeed in fostering real multiculturalism between Dwarves and Hobbits. At best, perhaps, the Hobbits and the Dwarves 'respect and enjoy each other's company' (Knepp 2012: 54). For Knepp, Bilbo is not really a 'cosmopolitan' (2012: 55). Bilbo respects the Dwarves' culture, but this does not mean he likes it: throughout *The Hobbit* he is depicted as longing for home and his own comfortable life. Nevertheless, it could be argued that his adventures did encourage some contact between Dwarves and Hobbits as Bilbo leaves Bag End with three unnamed Dwarves who knew him well enough to help him pack and label his luggage (Tolkien 2005: 35).

At the beginning of *The Lord of the Rings,* Frodo has begun to talk to Dwarves as well as Elves. Since Bilbo's quest, Dwarves have been 'the hobbits' chief source of news from distant parts', but Tolkien now tells his readers that Frodo began to meet 'strange Dwarves of far countries, seeking refuge in the West' (2005: 43). In his later work, *Unfinished Tales*, Tolkien explains the presence of Dwarves in the region of the Shire and the prejudices which Dwarves held against Hobbits, whom Thorin at least views as 'simpletons', 'villagers (who) drink out of clay, and … cannot tell a gem from a bead of glass' (Tolkien 1999: 432). To this, Gandalf responds, pointing out that Hobbits are cultured people:

> These villagers have lived in the Shire some fourteen hundred years, and they have learned many things in the time. They have had dealings with the Elves, and with the Dwarves, a thousand years before Smaug came to Erebor. None of them are wealthy as your forefathers reckoned it, but you will find some of their dwellings have fairer things in them than you can boast here. (Tolkien 1999: 432)

The implication here is that the Hobbits have had settled lives in the Shire, whilst Thorin's Dwarves have lived a wandering life since their exile from Erebor following Smaug's attack in 2770 of the Third Age. Thorin's relatives live mostly in the Blue Mountains at the time of this conversation, but they have no fixed home of their own. This division between travellers and those who are settled is an interesting one that Tolkien debated throughout *The Lord of the Rings,* as I will show in Chapter 5.

Prior to the Hobbits leaving the Shire, Merry confesses to Frodo that he has read part of Bilbo's 'book', which later becomes *The Red Book of Westmarch* (Tolkien 2005: 105). Tolkien often presents himself as recording the story, hence the repeated references to Bilbo's unfinished 'book' (Flieger 2008: 130). As Tomko points out, after Bilbo's adventures, it can also be seen as a subjective document, a quest romance for Hobbits who witness change at the end of the Third Age of Middle-earth (2011: 211). Frodo, and possibly Merry, have met Elves before but readers can assume that the four Hobbits at the beginning of their journey had only Bilbo's description of Goblins[52] from the part of *The Red Book of Westmarch* (which readers know as Tolkien's *The Hobbit*) to inform them as to what a Goblin might look like. In *The Hobbit* Tolkien (or Bilbo) describes goblins in subjective and prejudiced language as 'ugly' and 'cruel' with the great Goblin having 'a huge head' (Anderson 2003: 108-109). This is obviously very negative, if not racist, in its description of Goblins.

These Hobbits then, have never encountered an Orc or Goblin, although they have heard about them and read about Bilbo's adventures. Having escaped from the Old Forest and the Barrow-downs, they reach the Prancing Pony Inn in Bree and almost immediately recognize the famous 'squint-eyed Southerner' as

[52] Tolkien used 'Goblins' in *The Hobbit* and 'Orcs' and Goblins' in *The Lord of the Rings*. He took the word 'orc' from 'orcus', meaning 'demon' in *Beowulf*, but he translated this as 'goblin' in his translation of the poem in the 1930s before he wrote *The Hobbit* (2014: 16) Christopher traced 'orcs' back to Tolkien's earliest writing in *The Book of Lost Tales*. I accept that Goblins and Orcs in *The Lord of the Rings* are the same kinds of creatures, except when described specifically as the Uruk-hai.

someone sinister. The Southerner is noted simply because he was ‘a squint-eyed ill-favoured fellow’ (Tolkien 2005: 155). No other physical characteristics are attributed to this stranger, but he does associate with other ‘bad’ characters, such as Bill Ferny. Here, he is once more called the ‘squint-eyed Southerner’ (Tolkien 2005: 160) and is then later described as ‘a swarthy sneering fellow’ who, along with other Southerners does not ‘mean well’ (Tolkien 2005: 165).

Certainly, by the time the Hobbits leave Bree, accompanied by Aragorn, Frodo identifies the Southerner as someone with ‘a sallow face with sly, slanting eyes’ and thinks that ‘He looks more than half like a goblin’ (Tolkien 2005: 180-81). This is the first encounter between the Hobbits and someone who they think is part Goblin. He is, perhaps more significantly, the first person the Hobbits meet who is from the South of Middle-earth. He is ‘squint-eyed’ *and* a ‘Southerner’. As Tolkien explains in ‘The Hunt for the Ring’, this individual had travelled from the South through Dunland where he encountered the Black Riders (1999: 334). Dunland is a region to the South of Eriador and, as Hammond and Scull point out, can be associated with the English word ‘dun’, meaning dull brown (2014: 15). Tolkien describes the Men in Dunland, the Dunlendings, as being ‘a secret folk, unfriendly’ and used this name ‘because they were swarthy and dark-haired’ (Tolkien 2005: 1130). This half-Orc, or half-Goblin, is thus presented as undoubtedly evil and is like the half-Orcs that Merry and Pippin later encounter at Isengard. They are ‘horrible: man-high, but with goblin-faces, sallow, leering, squint-eyed’ who remind Merry ‘at once of that Southerner at Bree’ (Tolkien 2005: 565). To this, Aragorn replies ‘I thought of him too. It seems plain now that that Southerner was a spy of Saruman. It is difficult to know when (these people) are in league and when they are cheating one another’ (Tolkien 2005: 566). Even the natures of such ‘people’ are untrustworthy, it seems.

As the Hobbits travel, they meet people that are of different races and realise that Middle-earth is a far more complex place than they imagined. In Rivendell Frodo reveals his ignorance to Gandalf, saying:

> I didn’t know that any of the Big People were like [Aragorn]. I thought, well, that they were just big, and rather stupid; kind and

> stupid like Butterbur, or stupid and wicked like Bill Ferny. But then we don't know much about Men in the Shire. (Tolkien 2005: 221)

At Rivendell, the Hobbits are for the first time in the minority and are looked at by other races. Boromir 'gazed at Frodo and Bilbo with sudden wonder' (Tolkien 2005: 240). In 'The Council of Elrond' Tolkien thus reminds his readers that Hobbits are on the edges of a history that stretches back millennia, and that they have not played a very big role in this. Bilbo's tale is listened to 'with amazement' (Tolkien 2005: 249) and Elrond says Hobbits are not so 'alone and singular as I had thought' but blames his ignorance on the fact that he had not travelled for a long time on the western roads (Tolkien 2005: 265). Gollum too, is quite clearly someone entirely new to the people in the Council meeting, and he is seen as 'Small, but great in mischief' (Tolkien 2005: 255).

When Bilbo offers to 'finish' the affair, 'Boromir looked in surprise at Bilbo, but the laughter died on his lips when he saw that all the others regarded the old hobbit with grave respect' (Tolkien 2005: 269). 'The Council of Elrond' thus marks the beginning of a new way of viewing Tolkien's Hobbits. They now join a much wider Middle-earth and are for the first time seen by other peoples, including Wizards, Dwarves, Elves, and Men, as important members of what becomes the Quest of the Ring. Tolkien uses this chapter to inform his readers of the history of Middle-earth, but also to show the Hobbits that they are a small but important part of that history, along with the representatives of other cultures and peoples.

By the time the Fellowship of the Ring is formed, the Hobbits have grasped that they are part of a serious quest, which includes representatives of the 'Free' races of Middle-earth. Orcs and the Men corrupted by Saruman and Sauron are presumably not 'free' but enslaved. As their journey proceeds, they have to prove themselves worthy to the other individuals in the group. And, by the time the fellowship reaches Lothlórien, another settled Elvish realm, the Hobbits have proven themselves to the other races in the group, especially the Men, often proving tougher than they look (Tolkien 2005: 327). The Hobbits' earlier narrow views of Men also become more positive as they become increasingly aware of Boromir's strength and courage and Aragorn's leadership qualities. Tolkien also

uses the Fellowship's adventures to demonstrate the friendship between Gimli and Legolas, which is unprecedented given the ancient rivalry between Dwarves and Elves. This cannot, however, be discussed in terms of contemporary 'multiculturalism', given that the group comes together purely through the exigency of circumstances. The friendship between Gimli and Legolas and between the other companions cannot be read as showing that Tolkien was not racist; rather, this is a story of strong friendships forged in dire circumstances.

After the Fellowship is scattered, Merry and Pippin are taken prisoner by the Orcs and for the first time they are entirely on their own and Pippin wonders who will recognise them as Hobbits. Pippin has a telling thought in this chapter; he wonders 'how will they [the men of Rohan] know that we are not Orcs?' (Tolkien 2005: 453). This realization that he is alone, with no other peoples to help him or to recognize him, encourages him to use his ingenuity to escape.

Even Treebeard thinks that Merry and Pippin are 'little Orcs' because they do not feature in his list of living creatures. He does, however, acknowledge that 'they may have made new lists' (Tolkien 2005: 464). Certainly Hobbits are only 'known' in Middle-earth as recently as the Third Age and these passages, while ensuring that Hobbits are put into the narrative of events, also serve to show Merry and Pippin, as well as the readers of *The Lord of the Rings*, that Hobbits, however much Tolkien loved their species, were latecomers as a race in Middle-earth (Tolkien 1996: 66).

As the Orcs and Treebeard dominate chapters 3 and 4 of Book 3 of his narrative, with Hobbits playing important but seemingly minor roles, Tolkien was foregrounding instead the attitudes of the different kinds of Orcs, the Rohirrim, and Treebeard, all of whom are unfamiliar with Hobbits. Vogt-Williams takes up an anthropological argument when she argues that Treebeard represents the racialized cultural other of the marginal green space who is encountered by the privileged 'white' Hobbits (2017: 331). This is a sound argument at one level, though one might note that it is the Elves who have, like the travelling Linnean-trained Europeans of the eighteenth and nineteenth century, made a taxonomic

‘list’ of living beings. The Elves, like the European explorers are the first beings in Middle-earth and this suggests a privilege, and a dominance about their position in comparison to other races; they are, after all, as Treebeard says, ‘Eldest of all’ of the ‘free peoples’ and taught the Ents language by making ‘all the old words’ (Tolkien 2005: 464-5).

Frodo and Sam are also separated from the rest of the original Fellowship and, having crossed the Dead Marshes with Gollum, travel through Ithilien where they meet Men. Like Treebeard, Faramir has never seen Hobbits before, much less a creature like Gollum. They are ‘not Elves’ by reason of not being ‘wondrous fair to look upon’ and neither are they Orcs (Tolkien 2005: 657). Frodo and Sam try to convince Faramir that they are ‘travellers’ and to explain who the third member of their party is who has, like the squint-eyed Southerner, ‘an ill-favoured look’ (Tolkien 2005: 637). Frodo describes Gollum as ‘a wretched gangrel creature’.

Frodo and Sam have no means of proving to Faramir who they are and that they mean no harm in his territory. Because nobody knows what they are, they have to describe their own land and, eventually, their dangerous errand. This demonstrates how vulnerable the Hobbits are in the presence of a company of strong Men: after all, Frodo ‘had hardly saved the Ring from the proud grasp of Boromir, and how he would fare now among so many men, warlike and strong, he did not know’ (Tolkien 2005: 665).

It is in this context that Faramir explains some of the history of Men in Middle-earth, pointing out that the races of Men are declining in what is almost a fall from grace: the line of kings in Gondor has ended. This is also Tolkien’s way of showing his readers the history behind the people of Gondor and how these Men fit into the story. Faramir adds that if

> the Rohirrim are grown in some ways more like to us, enhanced in arts and gentleness, we too have become more like to them, and can scarce claim any longer the title High. (Tolkien 2005: 679)

However, in the end Faramir proves himself to the humble Sam as a Man of the highest ‘quality’ (Tolkien 2005: 682) and it is important that Sam judges Faramir as an individual, separate from his hereditary position.

Faramir is undoubtedly one of Tolkien’s most interesting Men and although he speaks in a formal manner and behaves in a way that seems traditionally chivalrous, he is also the link between the Hobbits and the more ‘elevated’ world of Gondor which they had, up to this time, only encountered through their friendship with Boromir, a far more martial character than his brother.

This is not to say that Faramir is not aware of his place in Gondorian society: as Burns notes, ‘Tolkien has a keen awareness of the “scheme of things” and there is always someone of the same order or social class to fill a vacated spot’ (2006: 148). Tolkien sees the Gondorians, the descendants of the Númenóreans, as the superior race of Men. Faramir is now the heir to the Stewardship of Gondor until the ‘true’ Númenórean — Aragorn — can claim back the kingship. At first, Tolkien may not have known who Faramir was, when ‘he came walking into the woods of Ithilien’ (Tolkien 1981: 79) but his hierarchy of Men was unchanging and immutable, and Faramir becomes essentially the right Man in the right place, representing the coming Dominion of Men under Aragorn’s reign (Tolkien 1981: 104).

The Gondorians are clearly Men who feel superior in their culture, and Faramir tells Frodo that he and his men even ‘look towards Númenór that was’ before eating, making Frodo feel ‘strangely rustic and untutored’ (Tolkien 2005: 676). Faramir refers to Gollum as an ‘it’ or a possible ‘black squirrel of Mirkwood’ (Tolkien 2005: 675, 684), but allows him to go with Frodo in the end, despite the fact that Gollum’s trespassing should have cost him his life. Faramir fights against Southrons and Haradrim, whom he sees as the enemy, as ‘wild Easterlings or the cruel Haradrim’ but they are very obviously human enemies, not Orcs (Tolkien 2005: 678). Faramir does not enjoy war, but he sees the necessity for it, and is committed to defending the good of Minas Tirith, the Númenórean city of his

heritage: ‘I would have her loved for her memory, her ancestry, her beauty, and her present wisdom’ (Tolkien 2005: 672).

Faramir is one of the Men in Tolkien’s substantial narrative who has a keen awareness of history and lore and he shares it willingly with the Hobbits. Tolkien says, initially, that Faramir is ‘holding up the “catastrophe” by a lot of stuff about the history of Gondor’ (1981: 79), but this turns out to be essential for readers to in order for them to see how Faramir fits into the narrative and to realise how Gondor’s history is part of Frodo’s quest. Faramir explains, for instance, how Minas Morgul fell to the Nazgûl in times past and how it ‘passed into evil’ (Tolkien 2005: 692).

In the final analysis, however, it cannot be said that Frodo’s and Sam’s encounter with Faramir and his Men is entirely positive. Faramir does understand Frodo’s quest and admires the Hobbit’s courage, saying ‘you have pity and honour from me … You are a new people and a new world to me’ (Tolkien 2005: 681). Unfortunately, though, Faramir cannot offer any good advice except to tell Frodo not to take the path he has chosen, which leads to Cirith Ungol. Neither can he provide any proper intelligence about Frodo’s journey. He cannot stop Frodo following Gollum, the only guide available, and while he does warn Frodo that he senses Gollum ‘has done murder before now’ (Tolkien 2005: 693), this is information which Frodo already knows from Gandalf (Tolkien 2005: 58).

Faramir is kind and generous and provides supplies, gives such information as he has and, perhaps most importantly, blessing and goodwill, but is aware of his limitations in a country at war and realises that Frodo faces a ‘hard doom and a hopeless errand’ (Tolkien 2005: 693). Tolkien wrote this part of *The Lord of the Rings* during the darkest times of the Second World War. He therefore ends the chapter ‘The Forbidden Pool’ with Faramir saying to the Hobbits ‘If ever beyond hope you return … and we re-tell our tales, sitting by a wall in the sun’ (Tolkien 2005: 693): an evocative if not optimistic final comment. Tolkien repeated this statement in his letter to Christopher in May 1944, looking towards the time of their reunion (Carpenter 1981: 80). Faramir is aware of how, at this part of the narrative,

‘A waiting silence broods above the Nameless Land [Mordor]. But the time draws swiftly to some great conclusion. Storm is coming’ (Tolkien 2005: 694). It is telling, then, that Tolkien wrote this chapter some weeks before the Allied Invasion of Normandy in June 1944, conveying the atmosphere of impending cataclysmic events accurately here.

Merry’s and Pippin’s experience of Men contrasts with that of Sam and Frodo rather starkly. Merry’s longing to sit and talk to King Théoden of Rohan about the art of pipe-smoking in the Shire is cut short by the war. Merry must travel to Minas Tirith in secret with Éowyn, who is disguised because she cannot accompany men into battle. During the journey Merry feels isolated and lonely, separated from Pippin, and little more than ‘a tree-root’ or ‘a bag’. As a hidden person, however, he is able to view the Woses or Wild Men of Drúadan Forest, who are ‘short-legged and ‘fat armed, thick and stumpy’ and remind Merry of ‘the Púkel-men of Dunharrow’, (which their ancestors had possibly carved in the First Age) in other words of people that are primeval (Tolkien 2005: 831). These are not another race but are the ultimate ‘wild’ or indigenous Men of Middle-earth, overlooked by other societies because they have not developed as other communities of Men have. They are considered dangerous because they stay in hiding, being ‘woodcrafty beyond compare and using poisoned arrows’ (Tolkien 2005: 831).

In a way, they are similar to the Dunlendings in that their lands and existence have been under threat from other humans in Rohan and Gondor and by Orcs (Tolkien 2005: 831). Their chief, Ghân-buri-Ghân, speaks to Théoden in language that is ‘deep and guttural yet to Merry’s surprise he spoke the Common Speech, though in a halting fashion, and uncouth words were mingled with it’ (Tolkien 2005: 832). Here the reader is reminded of Gamling’s comment about the wild hillmen who can speak in the Dunlendings’ language, making them recognizably human. Tolkien notes that ‘probably few if any of the Wild Men … used the Common Speech at all, and he [Ghân] had only a limited vocabulary of words’ (Tolkien 1996: 316). Ghân offers Théoden help in the dark situation in which they both find themselves, stressing that his people want no rich reward, but that ‘if you live after the Darkness, then leave Wild Men alone in the woods and do not hunt them like

beasts anymore' (Tolkien 2005: 833). Clearly these Men wish to be left in their territory to live a traditional life without interference from other Men. Like the remaining indigenous peoples in the world, in Africa, Australia, and the Americas, their survival depends on being 'alone in the woods', something of which Tolkien was aware.

Vogt-Williams sees this encounter as similar to the meeting between the Hobbits and Treebeard, in which a person of 'privileged whiteness', Merry, observes an indigenous people almost in the manner of the anthropologist (2017: 311). At the end of *The Lord of the Rings*, as an act of restitution, Aragorn proclaims Drúadan Forest to be the lands of the Wild Men and commands that other 'men' should not enter there (Tolkien 2005: 976). Following Vogt-Williams's anthropological stance, Stuart argues that this could be seen as condescending, much like the giving of Reserved Land to Native American People (Stuart 2022). The Wild Men do not appear at this moment, nor do they respond to the proclamations, but remain silent and hidden except for 'a sound as of drums beating in the hills' (Tolkien 2005: 976).

The Drúedain or Woses therefore seem to meet the criteria of primitive or indigenous peoples, having been hunted and harassed by other Men in Tolkien's Middle-earth, but eventually gaining a measure of respect as the original occupants of the Drúadan Forest. Tolkien defined the word Woses as being a modernised form of a word used by the Rohirrim for 'old men of the woods', the original being *wasa* (1975: 175). Shippey points out that 'Woses' derives from the *woodwos* in Tolkien's translation of Line 721 of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* (Shippey 2002: 74). Flieger, however, argues that the Wild Men are representative of the Medieval 'Green Man' or 'Wild Man' and that this was a medieval and modern psychological state which pertained to both Gollum and Frodo by the end of *The Lord of the Rings* in that both characters become 'wild' in their relationship with the environment and in their communication with others. Gollum cannot relate to other people and is schizophrenic; Frodo becomes isolated even from his own companions, suffering a form of trauma (Flieger 2003: 103). While this may be a fair assessment of these characters, I am not sure if comparing them to the indigenous Wild Men is entirely accurate. Both characters do become 'wild' in their

relationships with other people, but this is due rather to the specific psychological contexts in Tolkien's narrative. Larrington provides a more general overview of the figure of the 'Green Man' and compares him to both the wild men of the woods, as encountered by Sir Gawain, and the giants in the landscape as embodied by Tolkien's Ents (2015: 204).

Pippin's experiences among Men in Book 5 are somewhat different from those of the other Hobbits as he travels in the company of Gondorian Men rather than the Men of the Mark. Nevertheless, when he arrives in the vicinity of Minas Tirith the people there also wonder what he is: '"Man?" said Ingold dubiously, and the others laughed … . "But what is a Hobbit?" … "A Halfling," answered Gandalf' (Tolkien 2005: 749). The people in the city have heard of Halflings in the verses in Boromir's and Faramir's 'dream about a Halfling' but they have never seen one.

Pippin soon realizes that the city is in decay (Tolkien 2005: 752-753), and, though he takes an oath of loyalty to Denethor (Tolkien 2005: 756) and sets out to prove himself in a city of Men, 'he feels increasingly out of place and like 'a pawn … on the wrong chessboard' (Tolkien 2005: 767). Like Frodo, he is uneducated in the history of Gondor and has to learn this, and much about its present state, from Beregond (Tolkien 2005: 766). After the Battle of the Pelennor Fields, Pippin says: 'We Tooks and Brandybucks, we can't live long on the heights' and Merry points out that they have both experienced things that are 'deeper and higher' (Tolkien 2005: 870) than any other Hobbits in history. These are perhaps the matters 'high and perilous' that Gandalf wants the Hobbits to 'remember' (Tolkien 1999: 128).

Both Merry and Pippin, therefore, are educated during their time with Men. Pippin realises that Men are flawed, especially after his experiences with Denethor. Although Minas Tirith is a great city of Men, it is symbolic of Gondor's decay. Pippin knows this and that he needs to save Faramir to be steward to Aragorn in the new Age. Similarly, Merry's friendship with Théoden and the death of the king in battle requires that he matures psychologically: as Aragorn points out, while Merry's service to Théoden 'was brief [it] should be a memory glad and honourable' (Tolkien 2005: 869).

By interacting with other races, the Hobbits all grow in character, which in turn enables them to fight the final battles in their own Shire against the Men and the half-Orcs who are Saruman's agents: at the end of their travels they meet ‘large ill-favoured [ruffians] … they were squint-eyed and sallow faced … “Like many I saw at Isengard,” muttered Merry’ (Tolkien 2005: 1004).

At the end of Tolkien’s narrative and after fighting off the invaders, the Shire Hobbits are ‘given’ their territory by edict of Aragorn, now King Elessar, as ‘a Free Land under the protection of the Northern Sceptre’; Men are not allowed to enter it (Tolkien 2005: 1071). Stuart suggests that this means the Hobbits are still to be isolated, given that ‘hobbits can travel but the Shire cannot be “invaded”’ (2022: 92). In other words, they are safe from what in contemporary terms are illegal immigrants. This suggests that they have retreated once more into an insular life, the one that they enjoyed before Frodo’s quest. The reader, however, knows this is not so; they have experienced Isengard and Mount Doom and, as Chance argues, moved beyond their own class boundaries into alternative nobilities and ‘enlightened’ communities (2006: 165).

Waito has argued that Merry, Pippin, and Sam have ‘saved’ the Shire in the chapter ‘The Scouring of the Shire’ in a ‘Shire Quest’ which is just as important as Frodo’s Ring Quest (2010). Burns has argued for the Hobbits’ spiritual and mental ‘growth’, though he points out that Frodo, like many returning First World War veterans, was not recognized for his heroism and suffered from ongoing trauma, an issue elaborated upon by Garth (2012: 85). As Brown notes, Frodo remains incomplete and isolated (2006: 170). However, the point here is whether the four Hobbits succeeded in transgressing their insularity and isolation. In having encountered other peoples, they should have become cosmopolitan to some degree. Young argues that it is the ‘theories of cosmopolitanism’ which *The Lord of the Rings* provides which ‘may be read as a vision of a modern racially and culturally diverse world’ (2010: 362); but Chance points out that it is only Sam who rises in society as a result of his adventures ‘from barely literate gardener, he progresses, first to comrade and companion of the Ring-bearer’, but as mayor of

the Shire, though this position is by acclaim rather than by inheritance. It is only Sam's daughters who are able later to 'transcend Sam's own bourgeois position as mayor' (Chance 2006: 162).

The other Hobbits return to their old positions in an existing upper middle class or aristocracy: 'Pippin and Merry begin high and end high' (Burns 2006: 145). So is it possible to agree with Naslund that, while Frodo is isolated (Brown 2007: 165) as, in fact, the whole community is, Merry, Pippin and Sam [grow] out of their Shire-like confined lives' (Naslund 2015: 51-54)? Merry and Pippin especially had encountered so many different peoples and cultures, and experienced so much ideological growth, that they were 'capable of implementing that growth. This was evident in their defence of the Shire and in educating other hobbits to be able to accept class differences and embrace a broader worldview' (Naslund 2015: 56).

Naslund does add the provision that 'changes in small-mindedness are things that take time and the reader is given little information on the long term effects that occur to the Shire' (2015: 59). He suggests however, that the original *Red Book of Westmarch,* suitably expanded to include the text of *The Lord of the Rings,* provides a framework for a 'wider and more global perspective for the Shire Hobbits' (2015: 61) and we must presume, as libraries expanded at Great Smials and Brandy Hall, that the Hobbits' love of learning had widened beyond just the subject of genealogy (Tolkien 2005: 2). As readers of *The Lord of the Rings* we can hope that this learning, beginning with *The Red Book of Westmarch,* results in a greater acceptance of those who are different from Hobbits.

When Pippin describes Saruman's army at Isengard, he says that in addition to the wild men 'there were some others that were horrible: man-high but with goblin-faces, sallow, leering, squint eyed [which] reminded [him] at once of that Southerner at Bree' (Tolkien 2005: 566). Some of the most despised people in Tolkien's narrative are these people. Treebeard remarks to Merry and Pippin that Saruman's cross-breeding of 'Orcs with goblin-men is a 'black evil' and he wonders what Saruman has done: 'Are they Men he has ruined, or has he blended the races of Orcs and Men?' (Tolkien 2005: 473). This is one of the strangest

comments in Tolkien's narrative. Did Tolkien mean that Saruman has crossed Orcs with men that are half Goblin or half Orc? Or are the goblin-men, as Treebeard suggests, 'Men he has ruined' whom he then 'blends' with Orcs? This is never explained clearly. Treebeard is making two suppositions here. Firstly, Orcs can mate with men to produce a hybrid half-Goblin or half-human. This would seem to proveF that Orcs are biologically compatible with Men. This is a highly unlikely claim and so for Treebeard it is not only 'unnatural' ' for Men and Orcs to cross-breed, it is evil. Tolkien remained uneasy with this concept though he maintained the idea that Elves and Men were compatible because they were both 'human' (Carpenter 1981: 236). Fimi points out that for Tolkien, Elves remained spiritually superior to Men and their inter-marriage was restricted (Fimi 2009: 142). It was not an issue that occurred naturally or often in Tolkien's long legendarium.

The concept of 'miscegenation' lay at the very core of racist and eugenicist rhetoric during Tolkien's lifetime. So abhorrent was the idea of different 'races' mixing that even liberal proponents of anti-segregation in South Africa could not, in the 1930s, bring themselves to accept it. In an extraordinary co-incidence of onomastics, the American senator Theodore Bilbo[53] was one of the most ardent white supremacists in the United States in the twentieth century. He wrote a vicious polemic tract against 'miscegenation' after the Second World War in which he called for all African-Americans to be completely and harshly segregated and, if possible, deported from the United States (Bilbo 1946). In South Africa the evil of racial 'mixing' was written into segregationist and *apartheid* legal systems. Tolkien would have been aware of this.

Tolkien emphasises that Saruman's project is evil because it is one of social and genetic engineering. In Tolkien's notes, later published as *Morgoth's Ring,* readers are told that this is exactly what Saruman was doing: 'most of the Orc-broods … in the Third Age were a result of violent cross breeding between Orcs and humans' (2002: 420). The men Saruman used for this were from Dunland and were considered 'barbarians' by their neighbours in Rohan. The reader knows that the

[53] Theodore Bilbo (1877-1947) was an American Senator from 1935 to 1947. He was a vehement racist, member of the Ku Klux Klan and white supremacist.

Dunlendings and ‘wild men’ had already been displaced and that the Dunland frontier with Rohan was becoming more unstable. Some of these men are the ‘Southerners that the Hobbits meet in Bree searching for new places to live after having experienced ‘trouble away in the South’ (Tolkien 2005: 155). In his ‘alternate’ history of Middle-earth, Mohn notes that these herdsmen had been

> victimised by the alien horse-breeders [the Rohirrim] to the point where they were simply being eliminated. Thus Saruman found the ground well-prepared when he started to seek recruits to and victims for his man-orc breeding programme… [the] Dunlendings [were] ensnared by his cunning diplomacy. (Mohn 2013: loc 5743)

The Dunlendings are thus victims of colonization and are treated like savages or barbarians. Tolkien is aware of the low status and bad treatment of his Dunlendings. He notes that after the War of the Ring the Dunlendings were barely reconciled with the people of Rohan and, following the path of the returning Hobbits, says that the ‘Dunlendings fled and hid themselves, for they were afraid of Elvish folk’ (Tolkien 2005: 982).

Tolkien did not shy away from dealing with the fact that peoples in Middle-earth had been displaced by dominant groups, usually those with fairer skin, as was the case with the Rohirrim and the Dunlendings, or by those who considered themselves superior, such as the Gondorians, over their fiefs. As the Hobbits journey south, in fact, they discover that there are more and more displaced communities who are always darker-skinned than the people they are fighting against. What is noteworthy here is that Tolkien makes it clear specifically that Orcs and humans are different peoples, whereas humans with different coloured skins are not.

This is important because, throughout the long history of Middle-earth, Men of various skin colours have inter-married. Similarly, even the few unions between Elves and Men are not seen as evil, as opposed to the eugenic cross-breeding of Orcs and Men, which Tolkien does characterise as evil. Straubhaar, however, argues that Tolkien encourages intermarriage by writing positively about unions between men from the North and those from the South, and in particular those

between Rohan and Gondor. Straubhaar has two important starting-points: the classical background to Tolkien (particularly a text on marriages between Romans and ‘barbarians’ in the late Roman empire); and Faramir’s discussion with Frodo on ‘the Gondorian view of human taxonomy’ (2004: 102). Straubhaar considers that Faramir’s description of the hierarchy of High (Númenórean), Middle (Twilight Men, such as the Rohirrim) and Wild Men (Men of Darkness) is treated by Tolkien with a degree of irony and that the author really considers that ‘created beings display fallibility’ (2004: 102).

Tolkien is aware of this. None of his peoples, like his individual characters, are without flaws. Straubhaar writes, somewhat ironically, that the peoples of Rohan had sufficient ‘good qualities’ for Faramir to have a marriage with Éowyn and ‘thus we see a mixed partnership, soon to become a mixed marriage, constructed as a desirable match and a happy ending’ (Straubhaar 2004: 103). This may be read as an example of multi-culturalism but, as Stuart notes, it is not read as hybridity: i.e., it does not result in a new national identity comprised of people from Gondor and Rohan (2022: 32). The Men of Gondor, who are superior, remain dominant. Straubhaar also discusses the earlier union between the Northern ’barbarian’ princess Vidumavi and the Gondorian prince Valacar as a positive one (2004: 103). Straubhaar then investigates the linguistic and onomastic meanings of the Gothic-sounding names which Tolkien uses for these characters, which echo something of the late Roman imperial context (2004: 109), given that the late empire was a time when the Goths were in Europe. Harrison takes this up and argues for Tolkien’s viewing Rohan as the ancient Germanic north and Gondor as the ancient Mediterranean south in a relationship of ‘consolation’ in his narrative (Harrison 2021: 330).

Clearly, it is therefore possible to use a variety of racial and cultural stereotypes to explain Tolkien’s division of Men in Middle-earth. And it is only natural for these different groups of Men to intermingle as they travel and trade with each other. These relationships, however, are not between different races but between different communities of Men and, as Fimi notes, the division of ‘High’, ‘Middle’ and ‘Dark’ is not a racial one (2009: 158). Fimi argues that this division which is

obviously categorical and hierarchical with ‘Dark’ being the lowest level and a racial category is like Ripley’s *The Races of Europe: A Sociological Study* (1899).[54] Ripley divides Europeans into three ‘races’, and ideas like Ripley’s were both common and pervasive during Tolkien’s lifetime, during which people used pseudo-scientific arguments to prove eugenicist-type theories of superiority amongst the whitest people.

In Tolkien’s Middle-earth, the Elves were the superior race but, after them, Men also existed in a hierarchical and divided social order. Men of ‘Darkness’ were inferior and positioned at the bottom of the race of Men. Men of the higher groups, the High and Middle categories, could inter-marry, whilst those at the bottom were used by Saruman in a programme of cross-breeding with Orcs. It is this that Treebeard sees as evil, just as miscegenation between white Europeans and black indigenous African and African American people was seen as evil by white supremacists in the historical context of Tolkien’s lifetime.

Tolkien’s Orcs who are called *uruks* in the Black Speech are ‘foul people’. ‘Orc’, he explains, is a word used by the Rohirrim. In Men’s languages, the most negative of peoples are associated with blackness though, as Tolkien points out, *uruks* was used to describe the ‘great soldier-Orcs’ from Isengard and Mordor (Tolkien 2005: 1131). Tolkien’s Orcs are the subject of ongoing debate, as objects of blatant prejudice and racism. In 1968 Ellman coined the phrase: ‘The Only Good Orc is a Dead Orc’, because he says that the Orcs are at the mercy of Tolkien’s text, in which they are depicted as being slaughtered in a program of racial extermination or ethnic cleansing, verging on a ‘holocaust’ (2022: 129). In 2004 Rearick used the phrase as a subtitle for an article and re-examined the racism against Orcs in Tolkien’s writing, pointing out that Orcs are always ‘exterminated’ after a battle (2004: 862). Stuart, too, wondered whether Orcs do ‘indeed accord with all we know of the ‘nature and behaviour of corrupted humans, at their horrific worst’ (2022: 142) and asked how Tolkien, who valued human life in battle can ‘fantasize racist mass murder and genocidal ethnic cleansing?’ (2022: 143).

[54] William Ripley (1867-1941) was an American writer and sociologist.

Mills, in an extraordinarily polemical text entitled ‘The Wretched of Middle-earth’, follows Fanon[55] in demonstrating how Orcs, like black Africans, are depicted as literally ‘sub-human humanoids’ in *The Lord of the* Rings, which he views as a version of ‘one of the most malignant ideologies of the past millennium, the racist ‘“Aryan Myth”’ (Mills 2022: 6,3). At the end of *The Lord of the Rings*, the Orcs become mindless automatons, the ‘Zombies’ of contemporary culture, after the defeat of Sauron and mill around ‘witless and purposeless’ as they are destroyed (Tolkien 2005: 949). It is important to point out, however, that Tolkien moderates this by noting that Orcs do in fact have independent wills and agency and it is only those under the control of Morgoth and later Sauron who behave in this way (Tolkien 2002: 421).

It is also possible to show that the Orcs in *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* are less dehumanized than those in the earlier stories who are under the control of Melkor (Tolkien 1985: 240). Tally argues that Tolkien ‘could not resist the urge to flesh out and “humanize” these inhuman creatures’ (2010: 17). Reid, too, takes the redemption of the Orcs a step further and shows how it was possible to ‘write back’ about Orcs in an ‘Alternative Universe’ in a way that is both postcolonial and non-racist (2020: 3). She suggests that the end of the Third Age is one that might be a positive one for Orcs, being post-imperial, in other words, post-Númenór and post-Gondor (Reid 2020: 12). The significance of this is that, clearly, several approaches to Orcs are possible when examining them as a race in *The Lord of the Rings.*

Tolkien was writing *The Lord of the Rings* in a British world that was on the verge of changing from one of Empire and Commonwealth to one that was postcolonial. He was aware, however, of how ‘Ariel [had treated] Caliban’ (Carpenter 1981: 77) and that human nature had not changed much: ‘A small knowledge of history depresses one with the sense of the everlasting mass and weight of human iniquity’ (Carpenter 1981: 80). He said that the ‘destruction of Germany … is one

[55] Franz Fanon (1925-1961) was an Algerian psychiatrist and philosopher. *The Wretched of the Earth* was published in 1961.

of the most appalling world-catastrophes' (Carpenter 1981: 111) and deplored both British and American imperialism in the Far East, which filled him with 'regret and disgust', and he foresaw an 'Americo-Russian War' (Carpenter 1981: 115). I think this global context informed Tolkien's treatment, not only of Orcs, but of all the peoples in *The Lord of the Rings.* No informed writer could live through the Second World War and not be aware of the terrible events and the foreshadowing of a realignment of world powers accompanied by weapons of increasingly destructive potential. Tolkien's own writing is informed by a sense of 'long defeat' on a personal spiritual level, but it is also informed by the circumstances in which he found himself, on the brink of a cataclysm not yet experienced by the world. This made his treatment of all the peoples in *The Lord of the Rings* more humane, including the Orcs, in what he called in January 1945, 'this dark diabolic hour' (Carpenter 1981: 111).

Tolkien's most focused chapter on Orcs is 'The Uruk-hai' and it is told partially as the narrative of what happens to Merry and Pippin. It is also important as it is here that Tolkien shows his readers how Orcs view Men in a way that is not possible elsewhere in the book. Because the Hobbits are captives, the Orcs dominate the narrative here. They come from 'different tribes' and so speak the 'Common Speech' when they are gathered in force, which is why the Hobbits can understand them. When the Orcs speak this language they make it 'almost as hideous as [their] own language' (Tolkien 2005: 445).

The Isengarders, under Uglúk, 'a large black Orc' (Tolkien 2005: 447), are dominant and are the elite soldiers who serve Saruman. These are not the half-Orcs or half-goblins that Pippin later describes, but Treebeard is convinced that Saruman has 'been doing something dangerous' to these Orcs to make them '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' (Tolkien 2005: 473). The Orcs from Mordor, on a mission to kidnap the Hobbits for Sauron, are under the command of Grishnákh, who is smaller but 'very broad and with long arms'. A third group, the Orcs from Moria, are 'smaller goblins' (Tolkien 2005: 447) and are unable to run in sunlight. A smaller Orc, 'Snaga', which is a term that

refers to a slave (Tolkien 2005: 1131), is also present as a scout and Uglúk speaks derisively to him (Tolkien 2005: 451). Uglúk establishes his leadership and the narrative is dominated by his voice from this point on. He is one of the few Orcs in Tolkien's legendarium who has a character and this chapter shows his agency as an individual. For the first time readers hear an Orc describing Men. He refers to 'the cursed horse breeders' (Tolkien 2005: 448) and asks the Mordor Orcs if they want to 'wait for the whiteskins to join the picnic?' (Tolkien 2005: 449). Later he says 'if you're afraid of the whiteskins, run!', 'the cursed horse-boys have got wind of us … the whiteskins are coming' (Tolkien 2005: 451) and 'the whiteskins will catch you and eat you' (Tolkien 2005: 452). These comments reflect his derision for the Rohirrim, as well as illustrating his awareness of his military situation and that 'there are more than enough of these filthy horse-boys to mop up our lot' and 'these whiteskins have better night-eyes than most Men' (Tolkien 2005: 454). The use of the word 'whiteskins' is important here: it is at one level a version of the Native American derisive label, 'pale faces', used to describe white invaders, often in response to the negative term 'redskins'. It is a racial taunt here and Uglúk uses it to show his disgust for the lighter-skinned Rohirrim Men. He also uses the term 'horse-boys' to show his awareness of the Men's speed and ability to outpace the Orcs as well as their having 'better night-eyes than most Men' and horses that 'can see the night-breeze' (Tolkien 2005: 454). As Tolkien says, he has to 'humour unwilling followers' (2005: 448) and keep the Orcs moving, including those from Moria who could not run well in sunlight, eventually telling them to 'Run! There's the forest' (Tolkien 2005: 451). At the beginning of the chapter Uglúk does not hesitate to behead two of his opponents to regain order (Tolkien 2005: 447).

Uglúk is also aware of Grishnákh, Sauron's agent, and his diabolical schemes to take the Hobbits for himself. He has no time for Grishnákh's supposed mission and points out that 'the Uruk-hai of Isengard can do the dirty work, as usual' (Tolkien 2005: 452): 'I don't trust you little swine. You've no guts outside your own sties' (Tolkien 2005: 446). Uglúk appears unafraid here of Grishnákh's threats of the Nazgûl and the Great Eye (Tolkien 2005: 452). Uglúk's Orcs, the Isengarders, are 'a grim dark band, four score at least of large swart, slant-eyed Orcs with great

bows and short broad-bladed swords' (Tolkien 2005: 451) and they jeer at the Northern Orcs who cannot bear sunlight: 'Maggots! You're cooked. The Whiteskins will catch you and eat you' (Tolkien 2005: 252). This chapter, which ends with the death of Grishnákh, the escape of Merry and Pippin and the final defeat and death of Uglúk on the battlefield, shows how he protects the Hobbits as his prisoners, while dealing with the opposition of Grishnákh as well as controlling rebellious troops. In the end, he keeps his Orc soldiers together and 'drove forward resolutely' (Tolkien 2005: 459) even though his mission has failed.

The Orcs are still the worst creatures in the story, with no redeeming features. Pippin remembers his time with the Uruk-hai as an experience of whips, filth, and stench (Tolkien 2005: 503) and he recalls Grishnákh from Mordor as having an evil voice and 'a great head and hideous face' (Tolkien 2005: 455). The Orcs have 'yellow fangs', filthy jowls and hairy ears with 'thick legs going up and down, unresting as if they were made of wire and horn' (Tolkien 2005: 452). The quarrelling and fighting between the three groups of Orcs in this chapter is mirrored in the later chapter 'The Tower of Cirith Ungol', where Shagrat and Gorbag fight over Frodo's belongings. Shagrat's face is 'smeared with blood; slaver dripped from its protruding fangs; the mouth snarled like an animal' (Tolkien 2005: 906). There is once again a smaller Orc called 'Snaga' who thinks that Sam is a *tark* or Man from Gondor who has managed to get into the tower past the Watchers (Tolkien 2005: 906, 1131).

In 'The Land of Shadow', Frodo and Sam overhear two Orcs who are, 'as usual quarrelling, and being different breeds, they used the Common Speech after their fashion'. The Orcs argue about Sam's rescue of Frodo from the Tower of Cirith Ungol, in which he is described among other characters as 'a great Elf in bright armour' and discuss their encounter with Gollum, who is described as a 'gobbler with flapping hands' (Tolkien 2005: 925). The small tracker Orc then kills the larger one before running off (Tolkien 2005: 926). Sam thinks that the Orcs quarrelling would be helpful but Frodo says that 'that *is* the spirit of Mordor' and 'Orcs have always behaved like that … when they are on their own … . They hate us far more, altogether and all the time' (Tolkien 2005: 926). The Orcs are thus

altogether evil and altogether treacherous. Frodo and Sam encounter Orc soldiers being driven along ‘panting, holding their heads down … being driven unwilling to their Dark Lord’s wars’ (Tolkien 2005: 930). As they are unable to escape and cannot reveal who they are, Frodo and Sam are forced to move along with these Orcs and ‘it was a torment, and soon became a nightmare … . The stench of the sweating orcs … was stifling’ (Tolkien 2005: 931).

In the chapters, especially in ‘The Uruk-hai’, Tolkien has Orcs using Common Speech. He uses less lofty language than the English used by other characters in the story thus far. Tolkien uses rhetorical ‘low style’ for the Orcs to suggest a debased vocabulary which he intersperses with words from the Orcs’ language (Tolkien 2005: 445). Thus their speech is artificial in the same way that the speech of ‘high style’ is artificial as used by characters like Elrond and Aragorn. The Hobbits speak Common Speech, ordinary English, with the exception perhaps of Sam, whom Tolkien describes as ‘rustic’ (Carpenter 1981: 329). These are not languages but matters of accent and dialect, both of which concepts Tolkien had studied under Wright, one of the experts of his time (Carpenter 1992: 63). Flieger, in examining this section in terms of the kind of language these Orcs use, says that this makes them more alien than they already are (2017: 205). Lower class, uneducated English, when put in the mouths of already stereotypical monsters, becomes surprising for the reader, but it is also jarring because it is so ‘colloquially modern’ (Flieger 2017: 206-207).

This is because *The Lord of the Rings* first uses a standard but relaxed English diction, with more formal and archaic or heroic English inserted as the text progresses (Flieger 2017: 208). Readers expect the Orcs to speak in their own ‘Black Speech’, so the use of English working-class speech, which is ‘barrack-room’, is something of an estrangement (Flieger 2017: 209). Flieger’s argument is not entirely convincing here. This speech is not ‘barrack-room’ in the traditional sense, the way Kipling defined it as the language of working-class British soldiers (1977: 160-61). It is what Tolkien called ‘received’ English. In November 1956 Tolkien replied to a letter from Tiller on the BBC radio production of *The Lord of the Rings*, pointing out that, in the text, he had not deliberately depicted the Orcs

as dropping ‘aitches’ and that ‘it would probably be better to avoid certain, actual or conventional, features of modern “vulgar” English in representing Orcs’ but that ‘You will, I suppose, have to use such means to make Orcs sound nasty’ (2005: 254).

Flieger concludes that this speech can be refreshing and that the Orcs might thus ‘offer a perhaps welcome break from a superabundance of medievalism’ (2017: 215). Flieger does not distinguish between ordinary middle- or upper-middle class English and what she calls ‘medievalism’ here. The Orcs’ language is different from that used in other parts of the action of the book so far and it does move the action along quickly; it also explains what is happening from the point of view of the Orcs whom readers have not yet experienced. I do not find, personally, that *The Lord of the Rings* has too much ‘medievalism’, but I do find this chapter ‘refreshing’ in that I learn more about the Orcs from their own perspective. In a letter to Christopher in April 1944, Tolkien said that he had tried to explain to an American that his English middle-class ‘Oxford Accent’ was not ‘feudal or aristocratic’, so it is not entirely clear whether Tolkien would have agreed with what Flieger calls ‘medieval’ here. As Tolkien explains, his accent was ‘a natural one learned in the nursery – and was a very middle-class bourgeois invention’ (Carpenter 1981: 69). There is a distinct difference between the language used for everyday conversation by the Hobbits and their companions, which was Tolkien’s colloquial ‘King’s English’ of the mid-twentieth century; and the heroic language, which was more ‘medieval’ than that used for some of his narration in *The Lord of the Rings*. After Uglúk’s forces are defeated, Tolkien returns to formal language to describe the last stand when ‘Uglúk was overtaken and brought to bay … [and] slain at last by Éomer, the Third Marshal of the Mark, who dismounted and fought him sword to sword’ (Tolkien 2005: 459). There is no doubt as to which is being portrayed as the superior race here, Éomer being a knight of Rohan who follows the rules of chivalry in dismounting to fight an enemy who is on foot. The Rohirrim then bury their fallen dead and sing ‘their praises’ but ‘made a great fire and scattered the ashes of their enemies’ (Tolkien 2005: 460). Tolkien’s language remains formal and epic in style as he describes the final actions of the Rohirrim:

> when they had laid their fallen comrades in a mound and had sung their praises, the Riders made a great fire and scattered the ashes of their enemies. So ended the raid, and no news of it came ever back either to Mordor or to Isengard; but the smoke of the burning rose high to heaven and was seen by many watchful eyes (Tolkien 2005: 459-460).

As I discussed in Chapter 3, the idea of an Anglo-Saxon 'race' was prominent during the nineteenth and twentieth century. It also became intrinsically linked to the idea of whiteness in fantasy literature and Young comments that the influence of philological Anglo-Saxonism on Tolkien is clearly visible in his description of the Riders of Rohan, but she points out that

> Tolkien's medievalism was coloured by that of earlier philologists who conceived of them [Anglo-Saxons] in racial terms, marked out from the rest of humanity by their physical, cultural and linguistic character. (2016: 22)

Tolkien is thus aware of the uses of racial terms in describing the cultures of the North. He was especially against the use of 'Nordic', viewing it as 'racialist' (Carpenter 1981: 375) and it is probable that he was aware of the prejudiced and specifically nationalist way in which Nordicism was used in his own lifetime to describe racially defined concepts such as the ideas encapsulated in Chamberlain's *The Foundations of the Nineteenth Century* (1899).[56]

In keeping with his strongly-held belief that language and literature could not be separated, Tolkien's conceptualization of cultures in *The Lord of the Rings* is always based on both language and identity through his knowledge of literature. The most prominent example of such a culture is that of the Rohirrim as 'Anglo-Saxons' which Honegger sees as 'not surprising', considering Tolkien's rich background in language and culture of the Old English heritage (Honegger 2011: 121). In fact, it is primarily amongst the peoples of Rohan that we find instances of Tolkien's knowledge of Old English poetry from *Beowulf* and *The Wanderer* (Kundu 2014: 6-7) as well as themes of courage in battle. Blumberg argues that the Rohirrim reflected the literary legacy of the Anglo-Saxons, of a dark and

[56] Houston S. Chamberlain (1855-1927) was a German writer whose ideas were appropriated by the Nazis.

fatalistic world view which did not “fear darkness” because, even in defeat what mattered was *mod* – inward goodness or courage which was important and would gleam out more strongly in times of being overwhelmed and defeated’ (Blumberg 2002: 66). It is impossible to separate this from ideas of Northern whiteness and the conceptualisation of Anglo-Saxonism that were so prevalent in Tolkien’s own historical context. English historical identity was, in the nineteenth and in the first half of the twentieth century, saturated with the idea of what Higham calls ‘historical insular Germanism’ which centred on white Anglo-Saxonism. This only changed, gradually, in the years after the Second World War (Higham 2002: 22-23). Tolkien did not subscribe to the extreme imperialistic form of this in that he rejected the Greater Britain ideology of the expanding empire. He also disliked the concept of Teutonism, pointing out that ‘I am not a German, though my surname is German’ (Tolkien 2006: 170). Teutonism lost favour during and after the First World War, but Anglo-Saxonism resurfaced and was used to defend the idea of European identity (Boyce 2011: 10-11). It is impossible to separate Anglo-Saxonism from whiteness even if it is not linked specifically to British imperialism in Africa.

The community of Rohan are ‘Middle’ peoples and fitted into the Middle-earth hierarchy of Men between the Númenóreans and the ‘Men of Darkness’ (Tolkien 2005: 679). Aragorn describes the Rohirrim as being semi-literate, ‘proud and wilful…true hearted, generous in thought’ (Tolkien 2005: 431). Although their alliance had been with Gondor, they [belonged] by ‘kinship…rather with the Bardings of Dale, and with the Beornings of the Wood’ (Tolkien 2005: 431). Burton provides an analysis in which he sees the Rohirrim as crypto-Anglo-Saxons and the Dunlendings as Crypto-Celts. However, ‘like their real-world counterparts, [these groupings are] seldom pure and never simple’. This alternative British history also includes Crypto-Romans who are represented by Faramir’s ‘High Men’ or Númenóreans (Burton 2020: 179). While the Rohirrim are Anglo-Saxon and ‘more specifically Mercians’, it is ‘in the West of the Mark’ just as in the West of Britain that the Dunlendings (or Welsh) are situated. The Dunlendings now speak a language that is unknown to the Rohirrim and are ‘swarthy and dark haired’ like the Welsh (Burton 2020: 188). In Tolkien’s text, the Dunlendings are described as being the only Men who retained their own language and having their name due to

being dark (Tolkien 2005: 1130). This aligns them with ‘Men of Darkness’ both literally and racially. At the Battle of Helm’s Deep, Tolkien says that the Dunlendings have hundreds of years of grievances against the Men of the Mark, just as the Welsh do against their neighbours the English (Burton 2020: 188). The Dunlendings, like the Welsh live in the borderlands or on the frontier and also retained their own indigenous language, being the only Men in Middle-earth to do so (Tolkien 2005: 1130).

During the Battle of Helm’s Deep, Éomer groups the Dunlendings with the Wild Men or hillmen and Orcs, saying that their voices are ‘only the scream of birds and the bellowing of beasts’. But Gamling stresses that ‘there are some that cry *in the Dunland tongue’* (my italics). Being able to speak a recognizable human language thus distinguishes the Dunlendings from the Orcs. In Tolkien’s draft notes in *The War of the Ring*, Gamling says ‘I know that tongue. It is ancient, and once was spoken in many valleys of the Mark. But now it is used in deadly hate’ (Tolkien 2002: 21). Tolkien is explaining how the Dunlendings feel, that they had been badly treated and now ‘shout rejoicing in our doom. ‘“The King, the king!” they cry. We will take their king!’. Gamling adds ‘It is this old hatred that Saruman has inflamed’ (Tolkien 2002: 21).

In the text of *The Lord of the Rings* Gamling says that the hatred of the Dunlendings is long and bitter:

They hate us, … Death to the Strawheads! [They call] Death to the robbers of the North! ... Not in half a thousand years have they forgotten their grievance that the lords of Gondor gave the Mark to Eorl the Young and made alliance with him’. (Tolkien 2005: 537)

These grievances are based on genuine historical circumstances – the theft of the Dunlendings’ territory by the Rohirrim. Gamling, and Tolkien, understand what happens when people are driven off their traditional lands. In calling the Rohirrim ‘Strawheads’, because they have blonde hair, like Uglúk calling them whiteskins to indicate their fair skins, the Dunlendings show that enemies are made from unresolved historical hurts and given derogatory and race-based names by their rivals. Tolkien explains that ‘Strawheads’ or *Forgoil* is the only word used in the Dunlending language in *The Lord of the Rings* (2005: 1130), so it is rich with meaning. As Tolkien uses language in a nuanced and meaningful way, the use of

phrases like ‘robbers of the North’ is indicative of a whole discourse of struggle between Rohan and their neighbours, a conflict that has lasted ‘half a thousand years’ (Tolkien 2005: 537). The Dunlendings had been displaced from their land hundreds of years before when Men from Gondor, descended from the High or Númenórean people, granted Rohan to the ‘Twilight’ people, the Rohirrim. In this hierarchy it is the Dunlendings or Men of Darkness who find themselves at the bottom of the structure, in colour as well as by status.

The Dunlendings are distinguished from Orcs in the battle, who are described as springing up ‘like apes in the dark forests of the South’ (Tolkien 2005: 535). This is a curious phrase and not one that is explained easily.[57] Tolkien’s “South”, Far Harad in *The Lord Rings,* appears to be a place of desert rather than forests and yet Middle-earth cartographer, Fonstead, suggests that there were areas in the south that were forested in earlier ages (1994: 184). The association with Africa is important here, linking the Orcs with primate animals and further dehumanizing them, an idea prominent in Burroughs’s writing, which we know Tolkien read. As the word apes is only used once, it seems to have been used more in a descriptive sense and it is the only reference to ‘apes’ in the ‘south’ in the whole Tolkien legendarium, used anecdotally in the North. Interestingly, it is the Orcs who use the word ‘ape’ as an insult and this makes ‘ape’ pejorative in their own discourse. Grishnákh snarls at Uglúk: ‘One day you’ll wish that you had not said that. Ape!’ (Tolkien 2005: 452). Uglúk snarls back, referring to Grishnákh’s people as ‘the maggots and the apes of Lugbúrz’ (Tolkien 2005: 454).

During the Battle of Helm’s Deep, the Orcs and wild men swarm up the wall and Gamling says that ‘these creatures of Isengard, these half-orcs and goblin-men that the foul craft of Saruman has bred, they will not quail at the sun’ (Tolkien 2005: 536).This is a similar comment to Treebeard who told the Hobbits that Saruman was cross-breeding Orcs and goblin-men (Tolkien 2005: 473). Gamling’s statement is just as confusing as Treebeard’s with its use of both Orcs and goblins. Pippin describes the hillmen as ‘ordinary men, rather tall and dark haired, grim but not particularly evil-looking’ (Tolkien 2005: 566). After the battle, the Wild Men or hillmen surrendered and ‘were afraid and cried for mercy’ and Tolkien tells

[57] The phrase is not included in the volume *The War of the Ring*, edited by Christopher Tolkien, which includes the description of the Battle of Helm’s Deep.

us that the Men of the Mark ‘set them to work’ and ‘The Men of Dunland were amazed; for Saruman had told them that the men of Rohan were cruel and burned their captives alive’ (Tolkien 2005: 545).

As befits a division of peoples, the Dunlendings are buried in a separate mound from the dead Rohirrim and the Orcs are left in a heap presumably to be later burned like those defeated at the end of the chapter on ‘The Uruk-hai’ (Tolkien 2005: 460). These Orcs are later removed mysteriously by Treebeard’s Huorns (Tolkien 2005: 546). Legolas describes them almost sympathetically in defeat, as ‘the miserable Orcs’ (Tolkien 2005: 546) and their fate is unknown. When Gimli says that the Ents have a ‘hatred of all that go on two legs’, Legolas replies that ‘It is the Orcs that they hate’ (Tolkien 2005: 547). The Orcs in this context are, though ‘miserable’, fated to be unredeemed. There is a clear division of races here with the ‘fairer’ the Men of Rohan, separated from the Dunlendings who are ‘Men of Darkness’ like the hillmen and buried in a different mound while the Orcs, a lower category still, are left to be devoured, presumably, by the Huorns. Yet the Rohirrim are the ‘Men of Twilight’, so they are not the dominant Men in Middle-earth.

In *The Lord of the Rings,* Men who are viewed as superior to Orcs are usually buried, like Anglo-Saxons, in mounds though they do not always rest peacefully like the Rohirrim (Tolkien 2005: 507). Barrows are sites which are ‘consistently haunted’ by undead spirits like the Barrow-downs and Dwimorberg of the Oathbreakers (Amendt-Raduege 2008: 147). In *The Lord of the Rings*, Orcs, being an inferior race, are usually burned. To burn his son alive and to attempt suicide, as Denethor attempts to do is, thus, in Tolkien’s narrative, evil, and ‘heathen’ (Tolkien 2005: 825). In *King Solomon’s Mines* Haggard’s hero, Quartermain, writes that the Kukuanas, like the Zulu, employed Medicine Men to despatch the badly wounded in a merciful way but that he had once seen ‘a force of Swazis burying their hopelessly wounded alive’ (Haggard 1967: 161). Tolkien also acknowledges that it is all too easy for those who have fought in battle and are badly wounded to be overlooked as dead. He uses medieval European ways to describe this. During the Battle of the Pelennor Fields, Imrahil, Prince of Dol Amroth. meets men from Rohan carrying Éowyn, whom they presume to be dead, and he exclaims:

> “Are there no leeches among you? She is hurt to the death, but I deem that she yet lives.” And he held the bright-burnished vambrace that Alwas upon his arm before her cold lips, and behold! A little mist was laid on it hardly to be seen. (Tolkien 205: 845)

Similarly, after Pippin finds Merry, Merry asks in a dazed way ‘Are you going to bury me?’ (Tolkien 2005: 859). Tolkien was aware of how easy it was to overlook the badly injured in battle and, during his Victorian childhood, the Zulu method of dispatching the lethally wounded during the Anglo-Zulu War as a merciful death became known to the British, so the contrasts here are interesting. As *The Lord of the Rings* is an epic romance, Tolkien’s heroes, Faramir, together with Éowyn and Merry, are rescued and taken to the Houses of Healing (Tolkien 2005: 860). The dead Rohirrim are buried in the Mounds of Mundburg on the battlefield, like Anglo-Saxons. Tolkien provides a long list in epic form, naming the dead heroes individually (Tolkien 2005: 849). In contrast are the Southrons who ‘were bold men and grim, and fierce in despair; and the Easterlings were strong and war-hardened and asked for no quarter’. After the battle, ‘All were slain save those who fled to die, or to drown in the red foam of the River’ (Tolkien 2005: 848). The division here is stark: the racially superior heroes have burial mounds and verses but the inferior enemy, the Southrons and Easterlings, die in large numbers and in despair. The description of ‘roaring water/foam dyed with blood’ (Tolkien 2005: 849) can also be interpreted as an echo of the Battle of Ullais in 633 in the Persian Empire in which the river was said to ‘run red’ with the blood of thousands of Persian Sasanian and Arabian casualties (Crawford 2013: 105). A more recent example of a ‘Battle of Blood River’ was the much smaller South African one in 183,8 when over 25 000 Zulu were defeated by 464 ‘Voortrekkers’ and fled into the Ncome River which ran red with their blood (Giliomee and Mbenga 2007: 146). It is possible that Tolkien had knowledge of both battles.

There can be no doubt that Éomer considers himself to be superior to the Dunlendings and one of the rightful occupiers of the Mark. There is a rightness and a whiteness about the victors of Helm’s Deep, which is in keeping with Tolkien’s ideas about the Northern medieval context (Bowles 2003: 208). In the medieval French poem, *La Chanson de Roland* (*The Song of Roland*), there are

statements about being ‘in the right’ in Charlemagne’s Frankish defence of Spain against the Saracens (Burgess 1990: 61). There are also descriptions about Roland wielding his sword Durnedal and Oliver wielding Harteclere and striking mighty blows together (Burgess 1990: 74). This is like Éomer and Aragorn drawing their swords together: ‘“Guthwine!” cried Éomer … “Andúril!” cried Aragorn’ (Tolkien 2005: 533). In the *Song of Roland* there is ‘A tempest with thunder and strong winds/Rain and hail in great quantity. Lightning strikes again and again’ (Burgess 1990: 74). At Helm’s Deep, ‘The thunder was rumbling in the distance … [but] The lightning flickered still, far off among the mountains’ (Tolkien 2005: 534).

In the *Song of Roland*, ‘the pagans take flight before Roland’, when he blows his horn (Burgess 1990: 89) and in *The Lord of the Rings* after the Battle of Helm’s Deep:

> sudden and terrible, from the tower above, the sound of the great horn of Helm rang out [and] all that heard that sound trembled. Many of the Orcs cast themselves on their faces and covered their ears. (Tolkien 2005: 540)

The Franks in the *Song of Roland* are anxious that ‘No shameful song must be sung about them’ (Burgess 1990: 76) or that ‘no man of worth can sing a shameful song’ (Burgess 1990: 77). At Helm’s Deep, Aragorn asks Éomer: ‘“Is it not said that no foe has ever taken the Hornburg, if men defended it?” “So the minstrels say,” said Éomer’ (Tolkien 2005: 537). Later, King Théoden says that he hopes to ‘make such an end as will be worth a song – if any be left to sing of us hereafter’ (Tolkien 2005: 539).

At first glance this is a European tradition, the making of ‘songs’ after battle which can be traced back to old French and to Anglo-Saxon poetry. However, in *King Solomon’s Mines* after the battle, the Ignosi ‘broke out into a chant, or rather a paean of victory, so beautiful and yet so utterly savage, that I despair of being able to give an adequate idea of it’ (Haggard 1967: 165). This poem takes up two pages in the book and is undoubtedly an African praise poem (Haggard 1967: 166-7). Opland suggests that such verse is similar in form to heroic Anglo-Saxon poetry (1980: 22). This is relevant here, although the narrator of *King Solomon’s*

Mines also points out that it reminds him of 'the language as beautiful and sonorous as the old Greek' (Haggard 1967: 165). The point is that all oral traditions are pertinent here in Tolkien's conception of the culture of Rohan and in their using 'song' to commemorate their epic battles. Aragorn says that the Rohirrim read few books but sing 'many songs' so it is accurate to state that their traditions are still largely oral (Tolkien 2005: 430).

There are also some images that can be read as echoing Haggard's *King Solomon's Mines.* In this text, Haggard describes how suddenly,

> with a bound and a roar, they sprang forward with uplifted spears, and the two regiments met in deadly strife. Next second the roll of the meeting shields came to our ears like the sound of thunder, and the whole plain seemed to be alive with flashes of light. (1967: 154)

At Helm's Deep, 'the Orcs screamed, waving spear and sword … the lightning flashed and blazoned upon every helm and shield' (Tolkien 2005: 533). The Orcs are denied any poetry or any action that might be deemed heroic, just as, throughout *The Lord of the Rings*, they are denied human burial and their bodies are usually burnt. In Haggard's text both sides are human and this gives the engagement a kind of epic flavour for Quartermain. In *King Solomon's Mines*, the figure of Sir Henry's 'deep voice [rang] out above the din, and [we] caught a glimpse of his circling battle-axe as he waved it high' (Haggard 1967:155) and later 'I saw Sir Henry, apparently unharmed' (Haggard 1967:156). The quasi-Zulu warriors who stand 'still as a rock against which the furious waves of spearmen broke again and again' (Haggard 1967:155) may not have anything to do with the Orcs and hillmen who cast themselves against the Deeping Wall (Tolkien 2005: 535), but it is an interesting link with Tolkien's adolescent reading. The battle in *King Solomon's Mines* is one of classical imperial adventure fiction and the idea of enemy 'hordes' attacking righteous defenders was a common motif in late Victorian 'imperial adventure fiction in which the intrepid white explorers outfight the teeming but inferior natives' (Mills 2022: 27).

After the penultimate large-scale battle of *The Lord of the Rings*, the Battle of the Pelennor Fields, the enemy is driven before the Gondorian knights and 'all were slain save those who fled to die or to drown', so that only a rumour of the 'terror

and wrath of Gondor' reached the enemy's homes (Tolkien 2005: 848). In the Battle of the Morannon, Tolkien uses all his creative ability in describing the final confrontation between the Captains of the West and the 'host of Mordor'. Armies of Easterling and Southron Men appear and 'down from the hills … poured Orcs innumerable' (Tolkien 2005: 891). Hill-trolls are described as enormous monsters wielding 'heavy hammers' (Tolkien 2005: 892). Tolkien uses the word 'hosts of Mordor' to illustrate the scale of this battle and describes them as an 'onslaught' (Tolkien 2005: 948). This is no ordinary battle and Tolkien's language is appropriately epic as the Captains of the West 'cried aloud, for their hearts were filled with a new hope in the midst of darkness' as the eagles appear (Tolkien 2005: 948). As Sauron is destroyed by Frodo completing his Ring Quest, 'enemies were flying and the power of Mordor was scattering like dust in the wind' (Tolkien 2005: 949). Sauron's creatures then disintegrate:

> As when death smites the swollen brooding thing that inhabits their crawling hill and holds them all in sway, ants will wander witless and purposeless and then feebly die, so the creatures of Sauron, orc or troll or beast spell-enslaved, ran hither and thither mindless; and some slew themselves, or cast themselves in pits, or fled wailing back to hide in holes and dark lightless places far from hope. (Tolkien 2005: 949)

At the same time Tolkien tells his readers that the Men of Rhûn and Harad, 'those that were deepest and longest in evil servitude, hating the West', continued to fight. This is an important distinction. It is Men who mostly flee or surrender and it is these Men, the Southrons and Easterlings, who later give themselves up to the new King, Aragorn, for judgement.

Tolkien wrote to Christopher in 1944, stating that 'the Dominion of Men begins and Aragorn … labours to preserve some memory of old among the welter of men that Sauron has poured into the West' (Carpenter 1981: 104). In January 1945 Tolkien wrote again to Christopher and said that there was news of 'endless … refugees … pouring West' as the Russians advanced across Europe. He wondered how the 'commonwealth of Europe' and the world could survive such destruction (Carpenter 1981: 111). Displaced people were one of the worst traumatised in the

Second World War, such that the degree of dislocation has been viewed as similar to the great upheavals of the Middle Ages. Historian Gilbert comments that:

> Millions of citizens in a dozen European nations looked at rubble of their cities and the ruins of their homes and tried to imagine how and when – if ever – this vast destruction could be repaired. (1999: 686)

In Tolkien's Middle-earth the same displacement takes place and his reconstruction of the societies of Men in Middle-earth is an attempt to do what it seemed his own world could not and make restitution to those who had suffered. Aragorn's kingship is that of a benign post imperial world. Sauron's empire has been defeated and it is the superior Men that inherit the government, the Gondorians who are the descendants of Númenór.

The darker-skinned peoples remain to be judged. Tolkien states that 'embassies came from many lands and peoples, from the East and the South' to hear Aragorn's judgement and he 'pardoned the Easterlings … and sent them away free, and he made peace with the people of Harad'. The enslaved people in Mordor 'he released and gave them the lands about Lake Núrnen to be their own' (Tolkien 2005: 968). Tolkien makes a telling statement in his response to Auden's review of *The Return of the King* in 1955: Frodo's quest, he maintains, is 'humane', rather than political. It has as its outcome the freedom of

> the half republic half aristocracy of the Shire [and] the liberation from an evil tyranny of all the "humane" – including those, such as "easterlings" and Harardrim, that were still the servants of the tyranny. (Carpenter 1981: 241)

The indigenous people of Middle-earth, the 'People of Darkness' at the bottom of the racial hierarchy of Men, the Drúadain, are given their territory, but feel safer if they remain hidden (Tolkien 2005: 976) and the Dunland frontier is peaceful, although the Dunlendings remain wary of strangers and 'fled and hid themselves' (Tolkien 2005: 982).

For Tolkien's immortals, the Elves, as well as for the extraordinarily long-lived Ents, the world has changed irretrievably. Miller explains that readers of the final

chapters of *The Lord of the Rings,* following the climax of the quest, 'take a lingering farewell of Middle-earth and its many enchantments' (2003: 184). The hierarches of Men survive but the Elves 'diminish', as Galadriel predicts (Tolkien 2005: 366) and the Ents are unable to reproduce without Entwives, so there are no Entings and 'too many Men' (Tolkien 2005: 981). As Gandalf says to Treebeard: 'in this [New] age it may well prove that the kingdoms of Men shall outlast you' (Tolkien 2005: 979). Although the Men remain a hierarchy, with the superior descendants of Númenór ruling in Gondor, it is Men overall who now inherit Middle-earth in the Fourth Age.

Tolkien's treatment of the Orcs cannot really be considered postcolonial or post-imperial in its depiction of the treatment of darker-skinned people after the War of the Ring. Many readers and scholars have speculated about the final fate of Sauron's automated armies. On one level, the Orcs and creatures of Sauron are given a Carthaginian end in that they are totally destroyed as an inferior ethnic group within a more powerful empire (Stuart 2022: 135) and Tolkien reaches no conclusion about the possible redemption of the Orcs. Perhaps this reveals that the idea of darkness and shadows remained an enigmatic idea in the back of his mind, even though he insisted that his story was not allegorical. 'To ask if the Orcs "are" communists is to me as sensible as asking if Communists are Orcs,' he wrote to Schiro in November 1957 (Carpenter 1981: 262). Orcs remained below the bottom level of Men in the racial hierarchy of Middle-earth. At the end of *The Lord of the Rings*, Treebeard still describes them as 'vermin' and 'foul creatures' (Tolkien 2005: 979).

In February 1958 Tolkien wrote to Christopher, by then lecturing at Oxford, on his son's talk on the subjective nature of 'heroes' and 'barbarians' in northern legend (Carpenter 1981: 264). Tolkien remained committed to the Anglo-Saxons, but, as he stressed, this was philological and not in any way ethnic. Tolkien was welded to ideas of a specific identity with what he called the 'traditions of the North Sea' and its 'culture heroes', which he links directly to his superior Númenóreans and their descent from the Elves (Carpenter 1981: 347). In October 1966 Tolkien wrote to his grandson, Michael George Tolkien, referring directly to 'people of our N.W.

race' and their ability to acquire knowledge (Carpenter 1981: 370). Lavezzo takes these ideas, together with Tolkien's dissuasion of Hall,[58] as an expression of 'whiteness'.

Theorist Stuart Hall, who was part Jamaican by birth, wished to study Langland's Middle English poem, *Piers Plowman*, using the lens of contemporary literary criticism, at Oxford, but Tolkien said that this was not the point of studying Middle English (Lavezzo 2021: 31). There can be no doubt as to the white identity of Medieval Studies in Tolkien's time at Oxford. Hall, who went on to become a formative scholar in Cultural Studies, was clearly ahead of the medievalists who worked in the then quite narrow framework of philology in his thinking. In a sense it was Hall's legacy that led the field of medieval studies, among many other disciplines, towards new horizons in the second half of the twentieth century.

The re-examination of history in the context of historicism and the renewed engagement with 'texts' all emanated from the work done by Hall and writers like Geertz (Spiegal 1997: 185). I am not however, entirely convinced that Tolkien rejected Hall because he was of African descent or because Tolkien had 'deeply felt racist formations' and was uneasy with the immigrants who were, by the 1950s, beginning to live in Oxford (Lavezzo 2021: 31). By postcolonial standards, Tolkien can be seen as a racist, but it is too easy to judge his unease with a new form of literary criticism as outright racism, just because Hall was from the West Indies. Tolkien, like other medieval language specialists, might be guilty of wanting to preserve 'white' languages and literature, but in this context he is no more racist than other academics who teach the traditional canon of 'English' literature, which was written almost exclusively by white men.

In his final story 'The New Shadow', which he originally conceived in the 1950s, Tolkien continued to mention Orcs; and yet, it was Men who were then the source of evil. Of this, he wrote later (in a letter to Colin Bailey in May 1964) that his later story was 'sinister and depressing'. He comments that

[58] Stuart Hall (1934-2014) was a leading scholar in cultural theory and cultural studies.

> Since we are dealing with *Men* (Tolkien's italics) it is inevitable that we should be concerned with the most regrettable feature of their nature: their quick satiety with good. (Carpenter 1981: 344)

Even without an opposing race of Orcs, there was thus, for Tolkien, always a threat of darkness, and of conflict and division between peoples.

In June 1972 Tolkien wrote to Carter, commenting that 'a restlessness would appear' about a century after the death of Aragorn 'owing to the … inevitable boredom of Men with the good' (Carpenter 1981: 419). 'The New Shadow' is an incomplete narrative and it is significant precisely because, while it focuses on Orcs, they are no longer the representatives of evil. In the tale, Saelon remembers Borlas calling his stealing fruit 'Orcs' work' and this 'turned [his] mind to them … I did not forget the Orcs' (Tolkien 1996: 412). These ideas about Orcs and being accused of behaving like Orcs appear to have turned Saelon, in discontent, against Gondor to support someone who is named Herumor (Tolkien 1996: 414). Saelon says to Borlas: 'Not all are content since [Aragorn] died, and fewer now are afraid' (Tolkien 1996: 414). As the story is unfinished it is impossible to tell whether an actual rebellion or challenge may have taken place. What is interesting is the use of the name Herumor. Herumor was a corrupt Númenórean of the Second Age who came from Harad. This may suggest that perhaps Tolkien wished to tell more tales about the Harad region as he never chose names lightly. There are also other unresolved issues in 'The New Shadow'. In the letter to Carter, Tolkien expresses regret that he still does not know what happened to the Entwives and in his last story he laments that 'to the trees, all Men are Orcs' (Tolkien 1996: 413). 'The New Shadow' is a fascinating coda to *The Lord of the Rings*, but it shows that, even when Men contend only with their own race, they fall into dark ways, and that they still use the prejudicial term 'Orcs' to describe that evil.

In the end, Tolkien does not decide if the Orcs are, as an entire race, 'irredeemably wicked or not'. He wrote to Auden in May 1965, stating that such a conceptual framework was really beyond his own theological knowledge (Carpenter 1981: 355). He also reiterates Frodo's words that 'The Shadow [did not

give] life to the orcs, it only ruined them and twisted them' (Tolkien 2005: 914), however the Orcish part of Middle-earth remained the evil part in all his peoples: the part that is dark and twisted.

CHAPTER 5: TRAVEL WRITING AND THE LORD OF THE RINGS

In the previous chapter I identified the many peoples of Middle-earth as encountered by the four Hobbits: Frodo, Sam, Merry, and Pippin. Throughout the books, all four are exposed to both individuals and communities that are different from the Shire-folk and that can be seen as alien to them. Some, like Orcs, came from the darkest part of Tolkien's imagination, whilst others, such as the Southrons and Haradrim, had more specifically African origins, gleaned, as I argued in Chapter 2, from medieval ideas about Ethiopia and Tolkien's own writing on the *Siegelwara*, though possibly also influenced by his adolescent reading on nineteenth-century Africa. Underlying these literary origins were Tolkien's own memories of Africa as an alien, hostile, and barren landscape which influenced some of the kinds of places he wrote about in *The Lord of the Rings.* In this chapter I will focus on landscapes and places rather than peoples as representative of difference from the viewpoint of the four Hobbits in Tolkien's text.

Tolkien insisted that 'the North' was not necessarily 'a sacred direction for him' (Carpenter 1981: 376), but it is evident that he loved some landscapes, such as the Shire, more than others. It is also important to state that Middle-earth cannot be divided simply into the Hobbits' habitat (which is like England) and all the other places. Tolkien said that 'there is no special reference to England in the Shire' (Carpenter 1981: 235). Tolkien depicts a wealth of landscapes and places, some darker than others, but all are unique and stem from his imagination. Tolkien's ideas of Southern places are limited. While the North is not 'sacred' and does not 'exhaust my affections' he admits that *The Lord of the Rings* ends with 'the re-establishment of an effective Holy Roman Empire, with its seat in Rome' (Carpenter 1981: 376). The south and east of Middle-earth which he considered to be Africa were beyond the realm of the re-established 'empire'.

Fonstead's work on her *Atlas of Middle-earth* is unsurpassed in using Tolkien's texts to identify geographical places, enriched by her reading over time of the

various volumes in *The History of Middle-earth* (1994: vii). Strachey's work, based more specifically on *The Lord of the Rings,* is based on that text as well as on *The Hobbit*, *Unfinished Tales,* and *The Pictures of J.R.R. Tolkien*, and serves to enhance the geographical exploration of Middle-earth on paper (Strachey 2002). Ekman writes about how Tolkien's stories are given 'truth' by the additional weight of an immense fantasy cartography, a process he in a sense invented with his extraordinarily thick descriptions of desolate wastelands in addition to other landscapes features (2013: 199). Wolf is equally unstinting in his praise of Tolkien as a world-builder and creator of imaginary forms in which the secondary world maintains the 'inner consistency of reality' (2012: 75). Tolkien's maps, beginning with the one in *The Hobbit*, certainly have a sense of medieval cartography, where the territory is unknown and where 'monsters' lived at the edge of the known world (Mittman 2006: 45-6).

For the medieval European West, such places were often in the East and the South. We now know that these places are the Middle East, Asia, and Africa on today's maps (Fisher 2010: 14). In *The Hobbit*, the 'Edge of the Wild' is east of Rivendell, towards the Misty Mountains where Goblins were likely to live and where the Dwarves and Bilbo eventually encountered the dragon. In *The Lord of the Rings*, much greater stretches of geography were included as the Hobbits and their companions moved south and east into hostile and desolate places, territories like Harad which are so far so far away from Rivendell that the constellations are different (Tolkien 2005: 248).

As I pointed out in Chapter 1, travel writing can be defined as the way in which a writer depicts the relationship between him or herself and others. In Chapter 2, I explained how Tolkien was aware of the early medieval Anglo-Latin catalogue of marvellous creatures, the *Liber Monstrorum*, as well as the Old English text, *Wonders of the East*, as contained in the Nowell Codex from around the year 1000. Shippey points out that it was likely that Tolkien was probably familiar with the fourteenth-century travel writing of Sir John Mandeville (2002: 194). It is certainly true that Mandeville presents a variety of ideas about difference in both peoples and places and Silverberg, whilst he discredits Mandeville as a genuine

traveller, comments that ‘it seems indisputable [that] he was also an uncommonly gifted literary entertainer’ (1972: 148). Mandeville’s text can be seen as a link between the earlier medieval works on monsters and the later, fully-fledged orientalist travel writing (Kinoshita 2019: 50). Mandeville’s writing is entirely from the view of the European or occidental. As Van Wyk Smith notes, ‘Such a landscape readily becomes a text for which ‘correct’ reading is vouchsafed only to the Christian (and mostly non-African) initiate’ (2009: 420).

These medieval texts are one way of exploring travel writing in Tolkien’s Middle-earth where the peoples and places are, from the point of view of the travellers (particularly the Hobbits who are often the main narrators), different, exotic and in contrast to their own land and experiences.

Mills explores Orientalism as a discourse of ideas, emanating, at least in part, from the ways in which the Occidental world represented the eastern or Oriental world (2006: 106). The evolution of these ideas provides one framework for the travel writing in Tolkien’s narrative. Although some scholars, such as Winnegar (2005), Marrero (2012), and Stromnsnes (2021) have used Said’s Orientalism as their main approach to Tolkien’s work, I suggest, by contrast, that this is only one angle from which to examine the way in which the Hobbits encountered other peoples and places.

A second influential theorist is Pratt, whose important work, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*, (2012), first published in 1992, provides a strong South African base for the discussion of European views on Africa and other places ‘unknown’ to colonizing people and how these ideas might have developed over time (Mills 2006: 97). Pratt’s work is, I suggest, particularly relevant to Tolkien studies because she examines the ways in which early European explorers attempted to describe strange environments regarding flora and fauna in a Linnean way (2012: 24-25). This is appropriate specifically because Tolkien’s fantasy is unparalleled in its thick description of vegetation, forests, and types of flora. On one level, Pratt’s work follows on from the work of J.M. Coetzee, whose *White Writing* (1988) seeks to define the ways in which writers in the Cape Colony

depict landscapes and peoples that were alien or different from those that they perceived as comfortably ‘picturesque’ or even ‘sublime’ (Coetzee 1988: 38-40). Writing a decade after Pratt, Driver examines how the writing of Southern African explorers and missionaries became part of the way in which the Royal Geographical Society organized its views of the world into what they considered a scientific discourse on Africa and other regions, comparing this to the very poignant writing by Booth on ‘Darkest England’ in the 1890s (2001: 181). Driver also makes the point that travelling came into its own in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, in the form of travelogues which were written in the safety and comfort of European life, after the travellers had returned from Africa (2001: 22-23). Travel writing then became a commodity, when it was published in book form, particularly in late Victorian Britain (Youngs 1994:143). This is highly pertinent as it was this kind of literature which Tolkien read as an adolescent, as I demonstrated in Chapter 2, and which would thus have influenced his views both of home and of spaces that are alien and different.

In arguing the case for Tolkien’s treatment of the various travellers’ encounters with landscape in *The Lord of the Rings*, Glover identifies three main influences on Tolkien. First, there is the travel writing of the European Middle Ages, such as that of Mandeville and books like Wonders of the East, in which, as I discussed in Chapter 2, Tolkien found some of his ideas on ‘Ethiopians’. Second, there are the books on African explorers, which Tolkien read as an adolescent and, third, there are the books by adventure writers, especially those of Haggard (Glover 2020: 19-20). Tolkien also constructed a substantial travelogue of Middle-earth both within the text of *The Lord of the Rings* and in the metafictional work of *The Red Book of Westmarch* (Glover 2020: 7). Glover makes the point that because most of the travelling in Tolkien’s text was on foot there was an awareness ‘of landscape as something that must be engaged with, rather than simply … backdrop’. As hikers, the characters therefore have a participatory experience in the landscape (2020: 11).

In the first book of the *History of Middle-earth: The Return of the Shadow,* Christopher Tolkien explains how, for a long time, his father did not include the

crucial chapter ‘Ancient History’, which later became ‘The Shadow of the Past’ (Tolkien 1994: 250). Tolkien was following on from the story of *The Hobbit* and exploring the geography of Middle-earth in the Third Age. Shippey argues that for the first ten chapters of the’ Fellowship of the Ring’ Tolkien had ‘no story’ and that he was exploring Eriador as much as the Hobbits were, hence his description of the text as a ‘cartographic plot’ (2002: 107) .This explains the very detailed way in which Middle-earth develops in *The Lord of the* Rings compared to *The Hobbit* (Shippey 2002: 109).

Shippey argues that Tolkien found it extremely difficult to leave the Shire because he was so involved in exploring it fully himself, and so the Hobbits’ first encounters with other places, including the Old Forest and the Barrow-downs, are still part of ‘the little kingdom’ (2002: 123). Even Bree was still part of a Hobbit-world, though the faintly Celtic place names serve as a reminder that ‘the hobbits were immigrants’ (Shippey 2002: 124). Shippey concludes by saying that ‘for the first hundred odd pages the Hobbits seem to be wandering through a very localized landscape’ (2002: 124), a landscape with which Tolkien was familiar.

Honegger writes on this first part of the journey that the ‘detailed descriptions’ which cover the geography from the Shire to Lothlórien, serve to add history and depth to Tolkien’s fiction, ‘rather than to hastily cover as much ground as possible’ (Honegger 2004: 61). Tolkien also writes in detail about the Shire because he must establish it as the Hobbits’ homeland and ‘as the norm by which all the following landscapes and places will be measured’ (Honegger 2004: 64). Like the Hobbits, Tolkien was experiencing his creative process as a ‘gradual opening up of geographical, historical, and symbolical dimensions of Middle-earth’ (Honegger 2004: 66). It is a journey of discovery for Tolkien as much as it is for the Hobbits and for the readers of *The Lord of the Rings* who encounter depths to the landscape which are not present in *The Hobbit.*

Shippey argues that the chapters on the Old Forest and the adventure with the barrow wight are in a sense self-plagiarism because Tolkien had written of these places and beings in his poetry on Tom Bombadil in 1934. Nevertheless, these

encounters are the Hobbits' first adventures situated in alien places outside the Shire and, apart from the chapter 'The Shadow of the Past' which readers of the text will read in the context of Frodo's home, this is the Hobbits' and the reader's first real encounter with Middle-earth's sinister geographical and historical depths. The Old Forest is threatening because it offers a stark contrast to the cultivated and domesticated Shire, but it also has an older history than Sauron's advancing menace (Honegger 2004: 67-68). There are 'secrets hidden under brambles' and 'malice and hate dominate the thoughts of trees' (Perry 2006: 102). The Old Forest represents a malignant force which is in opposition to 'an idyllic rural world [with] tilled earth [which] by its nature can have no trees' (Flieger 2000: 130). The Hobbits of Buckland had already had a conflict with the Old Forest and 'cut down hundreds of trees, and made a great bonfire in the Forest, and burned all the ground in a long strip east of the Hedge' (Tolkien 2005: 110). This is part of a great ecological battle which runs through the History of Middle-earth (Dickerson and Evans 2006: 72-74) and Perry points out that 'Tolkien's natural world is people-centred: it needs people to guide its growth, much like a garden needs a gardener or sheep need a shepherd' (2006: 101).

The Hobbits of Buckland and the four Hobbits who enter the Old Forest are thus used to being at war with this untamed nature because their homes are in well-toiled soil and kempt lands. The Old Forest, like the great forest of ancient Europe is a threat and represents danger just as the dark and the elements are harbingers back to a time when people were afraid of what Stevenson calls 'the shadow beyond the firelight' (2008: 98). These were not the 'old bogey-stories … about goblins and wolves' which Fredegar Bolger had learnt in the nursery; but, as Merry tells the other Hobbits, the Forest is sentient and 'the trees do not like strangers. They watch you' (Tolkien 2005: 110). This encounter is, for some of the Hobbits, an initial experience with 'wild' nature which is evil. As a prequel to their later travels in the isolated and alien landscapes in the south and east it is important as it is the first time that they feel helpless against the forces of a primeval and powerful ecology with which they are not familiar.

In the depths of this primeval Old Forest lives Old Man Willow, a tree being, which, the hobbits are later told by Tom Bombadil, is a part of ancient forest lore which makes them uneasy, if not afraid. It is possible that Tolkien had read Blackwood's[59] story, *The Willows*, published in 1907, which was a gothic horror tale of a human encounter with evil willow trees. Punter, arguing for a concept called the 'ecogothic', points out that Blackwood was 'the only major writer of supernatural fiction to take the supernatural seriously and his work was governed by a very particular interpretation of the relations between "nature" and "spirit"' (2013: 45). In other words, natural beings like trees could become imbued with spirits that are either good or evil. This certainly fits with Tolkien's description of the Great Willow, which is a natural embodiment of malice, although as Flieger argues most carefully, Tolkien's Old Man Willow is a distinct creation of sentient and malevolent nature, gleaned partially from his ideas in 'On Fairy-Stories' (2017: 190-192).

From an ecological standpoint, Campbell argues that, for Tolkien, the landscape is 'actually a living entity' and one of the 'characters' in *The Lord of the Rings*. As such, parts of it can act, remembering a time 'when the Earth was alive' (Campbell 2011: 61). Thus, the Hobbits and other travellers could be attacked both by Nature in its primeval forms, and by Nature being used by evil characters such as Saruman or Sauron. In the Old Forest, the malice and danger are from a time before Sauron, possibly even before Melkor, and so these landscapes have a psychological impact on the people that venture there, evoking a sense of ancient evil and palpable darkness. Parker concurs with this and states that this is the very nature of the dark 'ecogothic' in which Tolkien creates an ambience of terror and horror in the Old Forest, which is similar to Blackwood (Parker 2020: 15-16) The Hobbits are not only physically trapped by the Willow Tree, but are psychologically terrified, as if they have lost their senses.

Throughout *The Lord of the Rings*, Tolkien uses characters as narrators to explain the geography and history of regions yet to be explored and places new to the

[59] Algernon Blackwood (1869-1951) was a prolific writer of tales.

travelling hobbits. Tom Bombadil is one of the first of these narrators and he describes the ‘Great Barrows’ on the Barrow-downs and the history of ‘little kingdoms’, which we can presume to be the history of the superior Men of Arnor, of whom the Númenóreans are descendants, until ‘A shadow came out of dark places far away, and the bones were stirred in the mounds’ (Tolkien 2005: 130). The Hobbits’ encounter with the Barrow-wight is their first direct experience of a place connected with Mordor and the ‘shadow’ of ‘The Shadow of the Past’.

In *Unfinished Tales*, readers are told that the Barrow-wight has been stirred to evil by Sauron’s Ringwraiths in their search for the Ring (Tolkien 1999: 333). The chief Ringwraith is the Witch-king of Angmar who attacked Arnor centuries before and was the last king of Cardolan who was buried in the Barrow in 1409. The fall of Cardolan is a crucial event in the collapse of Arnor which was followed, in 1974, with the final battle with the evil wraiths from Carn Dûm, the same wraiths who are now hunting Frodo. Having been captured by the Barrow-wight, Merry experiences a flashback: ‘The Men of Carn Dûm came on us at the night and we were worsted’ (Tolkien 2005: 143). The Barrows are thus no mere archaeological sites on the Downs: they are repositories of cultural memory (Sabo 2007: 92). Tolkien made such sites ‘culturalized, historicized geography’ (Sabo 2007: 94). This whole episode is important because it links Hobbits with the history of the Men who saw themselves as superior in Middle-earth, the rulers of the North Kingdom, who were defeated by evil and their kingdom destroyed. Ironically, it is the Hobbits and the inferior Men, those of Bree, who survived these upheavals and now live in Eriador long after the Men have gone.

After Bombadil rescues the Hobbits from the Barrow, they envision ‘a vast shadowy plain over which strode shapes of Men, tall and grim with bright swords’ (Tolkien 2005: 146). Clearly they have touched a ‘shadow’ place: a place linked to darkness that is spiritual, not geographical, and also a place linked to the evil events of a much earlier historical Age. Tolkien wrote in a letter to Christopher in January 1945 that one of the most emotional parts of the story was what he called ‘the heart-racking sense of the vanished past’ and ‘it is the untold stores that are most moving’ (Carpenter 1981: 110). The events on the Barrow-downs are

evocative of this as Bombadil shows by grieving for the unknown and unexplained brooch worn by a lady who was 'Fair … who long ago wore this on her shoulder' and the daggers left behind that he chooses for the Hobbits (Tolkien 2005: 145). Bombadil tells the Hobbits that

> Few now remember [the Men of Westernesse] yet some still go wandering, sons of forgotten kings. The hobbits did not understand his words, but as he spoke they had a vision…of a great expanse of years behind them, like a vast shadowy plain over which strode shapes of Men, tall and grim with bright swords, and last came one with a star on his brow. (Tolkien 2005: 146)

This linking of the past with Aragorn, whom the hobbits have not yet met, is typical of Tolkien's literary style, joining the shadows of the past with the dangers of the present. The descendants of Númenór, or the Men of Westernesse, are, apart from the Elves, supposedly the superior race of Men in Middle-earth. Here Tolkien shows his readers and the Hobbits that the history of these superior beings has not been one of unbroken progress, but that they have faded into the landscape. The Hobbits, a liminal race on the borders of history, are left to encounter the long-neglected burial sites of forgotten Men. Yet the Hobbits are not, like early European archaeologists, people who desecrate the graves of previous cultures and steal the relics (Bahn 2012: 9). The mounds have been invaded instead by supernatural forces, which are the darkest of beings. Like the death chamber of kings in *King Solomon's Mines*, the explorers, in this case the Hobbits, do stir up the evil: but that evil is already present.

In the archaeology of Britain, as with the archaeology of Middle-earth, barrows link the past with the present and semi-mythological places like 'Wayland's Smithy' on the Berkshire Downs for instance, have been appropriated by different cultures, including the Celts, Anglo-Saxons and Vikings (Lyons 2004: 169) These different humans were once viewed as specific 'races', just as Tolkien's Men occupy a hierarchy in Middle-earth. Amendt-Raduege argues that the 'entire function of creating a barrow in Middle-earth is to link the past with the present, and the living with the dead and the supernatural' (2008: 148). She examines the other 'barrows' in *The Lord of the Rings,* such as the ones in Rohan, which are peaceful,

containing the graves of the Rohirrim and the ‘Barrow’ of the Oathbreakers, which contains the spirits of ‘Those who linger, whose lives have been protracted until they have no meaning even to themselves (and are) invariably guilty of some crime or sin’ (Amendt-Raduege 2008: 147).

Like the *draugr*, the Norse spirit of the dead, the wights in the Barrow-downs and the Oathbreakers are those whose unpleasant deeds in life resulted in an unpleasant fate in death (Amendt-Raduege 2008: 148). The Hobbits encounter the Barrow-wights in a site of psychological horror in the same way as they meet the sentient willow tree. These are some of the most descriptive passages in the book for the first time reader of *The Lord of the Ring*s because they are the Hobbits’ earliest adventures; they are alone and the reader does not have later images to build up other images of horror. The menace of the lurking Ringwraiths, who are at most uncanny at first, does not yet become fully real in this early part of the story. The Barrow-downs are the first instance of a deeper human history outside the Shire and this adds to the dread of a landscape that is much more haunted than the Hobbits can imagine. It is also the Hobbits’ first real encounter with the history of the Ringwraiths, whom Tolkien describes later in *The Lord of the Rings*, when describing the wholly evil character of the Mouth of Sauron, who is identified as ‘a renegade, who came of the race of those that are named Black Númenóreans; for they established their dwellings in Middle-earth during the years of Sauron’s domination, and they worshipped him' (Tolkien 2005: 888). This indicates that these Men are not the superior race they are supposed to be. The Númenóreans are susceptible to corruption and are innately flawed, even as the highest human culture. Tolkien sees the mythical Atlantis and Númenór as being equally deserving of the fate of a great deluge. The ‘Black Númenóreans’, or Ringwraiths of the Second Age, are a demonstration of how far Men can fall when tempted by Sauron. They are black because they are altogether evil, but this places them beyond the bottom of the hierarchy, below the Men of Darkness.

The undead Men of the Mountain or Oathbreakers are some of Tolkien’s most magnificent ghostly creations. On close examination there are some sections of the chapter, ‘The Passing of the Grey Company’, that can be compared to the

imperial gothic in Tolkien's adolescent reading. In Haggard's *King Solomon's Mines*, Quartermain and his companions enter a place where the dead rest and encounter a massive carved skeleton representing Death. He watched over the dead, 'holding in his skeleton fingers a great white spear … above his head he held the spear, as though in the act to strike … and fixed its hollow eye-places upon us' (Haggard 1967: 184). Within this death chamber are the bodies of Kukuana kings, who slowly petrify for eternity under stalactites. Similarly, Tolkien describes how in the Dark Doorway of the Haunted Mountain, the Grey Company come across the skeleton of Baldor of Rohan. Although he has been there for centuries, since the year 2570 of the Second Age, his skeleton has been preserved:

> He had been clad in mail, and still his harness lay there whole; for the cavern's air was as dry as dust, and his hauberk was gilded … . He had fallen near the far wall of the cave …: 'before him stood a stony door closed fast: his finger-bones were still clawing at the cracks. (Tolkien 2005: 787)

Both authors describe feelings of terror: Haggard's Quartermain confesses that

> this sight quite upset me, … I do honestly believe that in another five minutes I should have been outside the stalactite cave, and [nothing] would have induced me to enter it again. (Haggard 1967: 184)

In Tolkien's 'Paths of the Dead', Gimli the Dwarf is similarly unnerved and is 'pursued by a groping horror that seemed always just about to seize him and a rumour came after him like the shadow-sound of many feet' (Tolkien 2005: 787-788).

Haggard's mines and Tolkien's haunted mountain are similarly ancient. Solomon's mines are guarded by images, the 'Silent Ones' which were carved nearly three thousand years ago (Haggard 1967: 180). The 'Silent Ones' are also echoed in Tolkien's 'Silent Watchers' in Cirith Ungol who guard the tower and its environs unceasingly and with timeless malice (Tolkien 2005: 915). Like King Solomon's Mines, 'All might be dead in the Tower of Cirith Ungol, but it was steeped in fear and evil still' (Tolkien 2005: 914). Tolkien's Oathbreakers failed to fulfil their oath to

Isildur at the end of the Second Age, over three thousand years before the events of The Lord of the Rings. (Tolkien 2005: 781). In Haggard's story, the adventurers became trapped in the place of the dead, like Baldor, but eventually scramble their way out, thankful to be alive (Haggard 1967: 205:). Aragorn's Grey Company has a much lordlier procession with 'the Dead … following (as) shapes of Men and of horses, and pale banners like shreds of cloud, and spears like winter-thickets on a misty night' (Tolkien 2005: 788).

Shippey argues that Frodo and his fellow Hobbits had to emerge from five cosy places, including Bree, before they started on their quest proper in 'The Ring Goes South'; but this is not entirely true as far as landscape and places are concerned, and in the journey to Rivendell the environment becomes increasingly hostile as the travellers move eastwards. Tolkien again provides the Hobbits and the reader with glimpses of deep history and archaeology. Cameron examines how the process of people walking, marching or hiking in Middle-earth enables Tolkien to show 'multiple time periods occupying the same physical and social spaces' though these are, to some degree, all kinds of 'Englishness' (Cameron 2017: 45).

The 'English' places which are present in Eriador are soon replaced by more hostile and barren landscapes. In in the long walk from the Shire to Rivendell the Hobbits experience increasingly difficult pathways, even within places that could be described as 'English'. This is mirrored by the kinds of history they encounter, for instance in the haunted Barrow-downs where they first encounter the dark history of Men, and at Weathertop, a barren place where Aragorn recites the *Lay of Lúthien* which reaches back to the history of the First Age (Tolkien 2005: 191-193). Sam shows his surprising knowledge of the verses about the 'Fall of Gil-galad', on events at the end of the Second Age, touching on the shadow theme of Mordor (Tolkien 2005: 185). This is the 'depth' that Tolkien adds so well to *The Lord of the Rings*. It is a literary, historical, and geographical journey for Tolkien as well as for his characters and readers.

Weathertop or Amon Sûl is undoubtedly the most prominent feature of the landscape in this part of the Hobbits' 'journey and serves several purposes in this

part of the narrative. Physically it provides a look-out point for the party as 'Concealment was no longer possible' (Tolkien 2005: 186). Archaeologically, it is part of the past of the Third Age and part of the Hobbits' and Tolkien's further unravelling of the history of Middle-earth:

> I wonder who made this path, and what for,' said Merry, as they walked along one of these avenues (of large boulders and hewn stones), where the stones were unusually large and closely set 'I am not sure that I like it: it has a - well, rather a barrow-wightish look. Is there any barrow on Weathertop? (Tolkien 2005: 185)

This comment is interesting in two ways. It shows that the Hobbits have never travelled this far, but also that they know very little about the history of Eriador. Aragorn explains that Weathertop was a watch tower in the war of the North Kingdom (Tolkien 2005: 185). Tolkien scatters references to historical events throughout his text and uses features in the landscape as places where characters elucidate further. Weathertop is now a ruin of 'a wide ring of ancient stone-work, now crumbling or covered with age-long grass' (Tolkien 2005: 186). This is a barren place, the kind of barren that Tolkien says he likes and provides a contrast to the tilled fields and countryside of the Shire or Breelands. The bleak ruined hilltop is psychologically important for the situation in which the hobbits now find themselves:

> In that lonely place Frodo for the first time fully realized his homelessness and danger. He wished bitterly that his fortune had left him in the quiet and beloved Shire. He stared down at the hateful Road, leading back westward – to his home. (Tolkien 2005: 188)

Weathertop marks the beginning of wilder places and experiences as the Hobbits venture into the unknown and towards the east and eventually the south. It marks a complete contrast with the Shire and, for Frodo it is the final break with home and the familiar as he tries to challenge the Ringwraiths.

Shippey argues that the Ringwraiths' true evil is not evident until much later in the book, that though 'the Riders appear frequently in the "travelogue" section, from Bag End to Rivendell, they show relatively little of the force and meaning which they acquire later on' (2000: 66). However, the chapter 'A Knife in the Dark' is an obvious turning-point, hence the physical importance of a ruin like Weathertop. As

Sabo has pointed out, Tolkien chooses ruins carefully (2007: 94). Weathertop is not just a ruin where the North Kingdom was defended in vain: it is the place where Frodo is unable to withstand the lure of wearing the Ring, where he first sees the shadow-world described in 'The Shadow of the Past' and 'the shapes [of the Ringwraiths] became terribly clear': 'In their white faces burned keen and merciless eyes … upon their grey hairs were helms of silver; in their haggard hands were swords of steel'. The witch-king or chief Ringwraith is evident as 'taller than the others' and wearing 'a crown' (Tolkien 2005: 195). At this point Frodo has entered the wraiths' world, though he does not know the full danger of this until Gandalf explains it to him later. Weathertop is thus not just a place where Arnor failed to defend itself from Angmar in the past: it signifies a turning-point that could have been disastrous for the Hobbits' journey in *The Lord of the Rings*.

Book 2, of *The Fellowship of the Ring*, is an important dividing point in Tolkien's narrative. Rivendell is not just a comfortable stopping place, it is the 'Last Homely House', in other words, one of the last refuges. It is a place of 'stasis' rather than travelling and people are 'welcomed, nourished, and sent forth with both supplies and blessings' (Bridgwater 2010: 25). It is also one of last remaining places protected by Elven rings (Tolkien 2005: 224) and 'The home of Elrond is a place of culture and learning on a level which surpasses the homely yet humble achievements of the Hobbits by far' (Honegger 2004: 69). Gandalf later tells Pippin, when the latter shows a lack of geographical knowledge, that in Eregion: 'There are many maps in Elrond's house, but I suppose you never thought to look at them?' (Tolkien 2005: 283). The Hobbits evidently did not do much reading or studying in Rivendell and, like Frodo, depend on the guidance of Gandalf and Aragorn who 'pondered the storied and figured maps and books of lore that were in the house of Elrond' (Tolkien 2005: 228). The Hobbits are not explorers in the traditional sense and do not carry out the paper research that was so popular with nineteenth-century African explorers before setting out into the 'interior' of the vast continent (Driver 2001: 62-61).

When the Hobbits reach Mordor, Frodo tells Sam that 'In Rivendell before I set out I was shown a map of Mordor that was made before the Enemy came back here;

but I only remember it vaguely'. He admits that he had no 'clear notion' of where to go (Tolkien 2005: 927). Frodo had never thought that he would be separated from the more well-travelled members of the Fellowship of the Ring, so it is likely that he would not have studied such a map as closely as he would have done if he had thought he was going to travel alone. Tolkien depicts Mordor as a desert wasteland, beyond the edges of the 'safe' places on the map and Frodo and Sam spend much of their time 'groping, stumbling, scrambling' and searching for water (Tolkien 2005: 917). They only know that they have to go northward towards Mount Doom and, in the end, they finish their quest by using an Orc-built road and they travel on it for some time in the right direction (Tolkien 2005: 920). The Hobbits' knowledge of Mordor is indeed sparse and Tolkien comments that Frodo and Sam 'wondered how the Lord of this realm maintained and fed his slaves and his armies' in a land that 'seemed ruinous and dead, a desert burned and choked' (Tolkien 2005: 923). When Sam comments that these vast numbers were Men rather than Orcs, Tolkien says that:

> Neither he nor Frodo knew anything of the great slave-worked fields away south in this wide realm, beyond the fumes of the Mountain by the dark sad waters of Lake Núrnen; nor of the great roads that ran away east and south to tributary lands. (Tolkien 2005: 923)

In keeping with Tolkien's usual style of expanding his reader's geographical knowledge in the manner of a travelogue, this statement provides further information about Sauron's realm and how it operates, suggesting a historical depth to the region and contextualizing the tributary lands as being the Far Harad and Rhûn, the homes of the Easterlings and Haradrim. The idea of enslavement is a curious one in that, in terms of Tolkien's lifetime, the Indian Ocean African slave trade had persisted into the 1890s, providing a reason for African exploration and attempts at benign imperialism in East Africa (De Kock 1996: 162). Explorers, adventurers and missionaries like Livingstone[60] (1857) published accounts of their travels and 'discoveries' and these accounts were extremely popular well into the twentieth century.

[60] David Livingstone (1813-1873) remains an ambivalent figure.

Rivendell, like Lothlórien, has a ‘pronounced tendency towards the “otherworldliness” of the elves’ (Honegger 2004: 69) and, like Lothlórien, it was a place reached by crossing an ‘enchanted’ or powerful river, though it did not have the same isolation from the ordinary passing of time. As Gandalf states it has become a ‘fortress [and outside] it is getting dark’ (Tolkien 2005: 226). ‘The Council of Elrond’ is clearly a crucial point in the story, as pivotal as the chapters ‘The Shadow of the Past’ and ‘The Last Debate’, as plans are made and the general framework for the quest and final confrontation with Sauron established (Honegger 2004: 70).

The Council also opens up new geographical and historical depths in Middle-earth for the Hobbits present and for Tolkien’s readers as Elrond explains the history of the Ring from the Second Age and Glóin, Boromir and Legolas fill in the events from Erebor, Gondor, and Mirkwood. Boromir also describes the ‘Easterlings and cruel Haradrim’ who are now allied with Mordor (Tolkien 2005: 245). Boromir is aware that he speaks for and represents the ‘South’ of Middle-earth and this is the first time that these people are mentioned in Tolkien’s narrative. These peoples are controlled by Sauron, but are Men and distinguished from Orcs. The geography of the story is expanded as Boromir describes how Ithilien has been overrun and the last bridge over the River Anduin in the ruined city of Osgiliath has been taken by Sauron’s army (Tolkien 2005: 245). These people and places are quite new to Frodo and Sam, but also to Tolkien’s readers, as is Boromir himself as a ‘man from the south’ and Tolkien’s ideas of the landscape of Middle-earth, especially the south and the east, expanding rapidly at this point in the narrative.

Here in Rivendell, for the first time since the chapter ‘The Shadow of the Past’, it is possible to speak openly about ‘the Shadow of Mordor’ (Tolkien 2005: 252, 262). Gandalf reveals that in Gondor, as in Rivendell, there is written lore which provides knowledge. Denethor permits Gandalf ‘grudgingly’ to ‘search among his hoarded scrolls and books’ in Minas Tirith (Tolkien 2005: 252) even though he maintains that Gandalf ‘will find naught that is not well known to [him] as he is master of the lore of this City’ (Tolkien 2005: 252). Gandalf does find the scroll made by Isildur which describes the taking of the Ring from Sauron and goes further, reciting the

last verse of the Ring poem, but in Black Speech, which is ‘menacing, powerful, harsh as stone’ (Tolkien 2005: 254). By speaking in Black Speech, Gandalf demonstrates that the real evil is the Shadow of Mordor, not Gondor’s traditional geographical enemies, the Haradrim and the Easterlings.

This language is not the same as the harsh speech of the Dunlendings, it is something much darker. There are two layers to Tolkien’s ideas of dark places here; firstly, the largely unknown areas of Harad and Rhûn, whose peoples are perceived as barbarian and hostile; and, secondly, there is the darkness of the Shadow, of Sauron himself. Tolkien’s ideas about Africa were linked to the geography and peoples of Harad and Rhûn, but Sauron and the Shadow emanating from Mordor is an entirely different kind of darkness. When Gandalf speaks, ‘A shadow seemed to pass over the high sun, and the porch for a moment grew dark. All trembled, and the Elves stopped their ears’ (Tolkien 2005: 254). Gandalf offers no apology and points out that if the right decision is not made, Black Speech will ‘soon … be heard in every corner of the West’ (Tolkien 2005: 254). Black Speech is not used much in Tolkien’s narrative and its sound and effect are obvious. It is called ‘black’ to describe its origins: it is connected to Sauron and his controlled Orcs (we presume that the enslaved Men speak their own languages) who are evil because of their association with Sauron and it is ’black’ because it is harsh and almost intelligible to most people. For Tolkien, for any language to be ‘black’ is an extremely negative description and the fact that he uses ‘Common Speech’ for his Orcs so that the Hobbits and his readers can understand what is happening I think shows his own distaste for the Black Speech, even if it was his own invention.

In the following chapter, which starts the journey of the Fellowship of the Ring, ‘scouts [had] been sent out already’ (Tolkien 2005: 272) to look for the remains of the Black Riders but also for news of gathering conflict. Tolkien comments that ‘The Rangers had searched the lands far down the Greyflood, as far as Tharbad, where the old North Road crossed the river by a ruined town’ (Tolkien 2005: 274). Birns argues that these journeys give readers their first real sense that the scope, the scale of Middle-earth is panoramic, with not just a topographical sweep but a sense of the sheer density and plurality of the world into which the Nine Walkers

are about to fully plunge (Birns 2007: 7). The scouts' journey also demonstrates the underlying history of Middle-earth which Tolkien is revealing slowly.

The crucial ruin here is Tharbad, which serves to highlight the emptiness of the region it occupied in Minhiriath, which means between the rivers (Birns 2007: 8). Birns comments that this turned the whole tone of the story from 'a light hearted tale of adventure into a somber legend of loss' (2007: 8). Boromir's long three-month journey and the fact that he loses his horse at the rough crossing at Tharbad (Tolkien 2005: 246), adds to the idea that the world beyond Rivendell is a wild and lonely one for travellers. Tolkien also gives his readers a glimpse of Lothlórien saying that Elrond's sons 'had made a great journey, passing down the Silverlode into a strange country' (Tolkien 2005: 274). This is the first time that Tolkien's readers have heard of this land and it also appears to be outside the knowledge of the Hobbits. Scouts also cross the Anduin down to the Gladden Fields and, through these reported journeys, Tolkien's readers are presented with a growing sense of the enormous distances of Middle-earth and the immense space covered in the narrative.

The Fellowship then heads south, but this is not as far south as the warm or desert lands, and Tolkien uses the next stage of the journey in Eregion to elicit the history and archaeology of this region. Shippey points out that this whole part of Middle-earth was 'new' to Tolkien (2002: 134) and that he was writing into a 'deeper' world (2002: 89). As in Book 1, neither Hobbits nor readers learn much except that Elves once lived in Eregion, but they are strange even to Legolas who heard 'the stones lament them' (Tolkien 2005: 284). Tolkien reveals what he calls the 'vanished past' of the Second Age (Carpenter 1981: 110) very slowly. There are other hints of the past in the stones which 'looked to have been worked by hands, though now they lay tumbled and ruinous in a bleak, barren land' (Tolkien 2005: 286). Tolkien's use of the word barren is extremely important here. Eregion is barren compared to Eriador, and it is extremely bleak in contrast to the Hobbits' Shire. The Hobbits appear hopelessly ignorant of the geography and rely on Gandalf to explain the journey so the reader gains knowledge from his remarks (Tolkien 2005: 283).

Sam is particularly out of his depth and

> all distances in these strange lands seemed so vast that he was quite out of his reckoning, thinking that Redhorn Gate could be Mount Doom and that it would get warmer as they went South. (Tolkien 2005: 285)

Sam's lack of geography is noteworthy because it demonstrates how far the travellers really have to go to get to the warmer southern regions of Middle-earth. Mordor is a lot further than people think it will be and, to the less well-travelled, the distances are extremely deceptive. Sam is unable to understand the full concept of warm places like Harad even when Gollum explains that such a land is 'very hot' and stretches all the way to the sea (Tolkien 2005: 641). In the same way that European explorers could not understand the vastness of African and other landscapes unknown to them, the Hobbits are unable to grasp the distances and landscape of the desert lands in the far south of Middle-earth or how long it will take to get there on foot.

The Fellowship also encounters fierce snowstorms, bringing it home to the Hobbits that they have left the Shire. Even Aragorn, whom Gandalf describes as one of Middle-earth's best-informed travellers (Tolkien 2005: 251), says that it is unusual to have such heavy snow so far south. Tolkien never explains the actual reasons for this harsh weather and Gimli points out that the mountain Caradhras has always been 'cruel', long before Sauron's time. Boromir insists that they carry firewood with them and says that he knows 'something of journeys in high places' (Tolkien 2005: 287). This indicates that although he comes from the south, he was born in a place with mountains. This is how Tolkien adds geographical features to the story.

Later, Boromir says they must make a choice 'between fire and death' (Tolkien 2005: 290). There are three observations to be made here. The first two are literary. In Haggard's *King Solomon's Mines* Quartermain and his party find the preserved body of Da Silvestra, dead for three hundred years (Haggard 1967: 74). They are forced to spend the night in a cave in the mountain where the

temperature plummets until ‘it was something as near death from exposure as I have ever felt’. One of their party freezes to death (Haggard 1967: 72). In 1908 London[61] published a short story entitled ‘To Build a Fire’, in which the main character dies because he knows nothing of walking in an unforgiving and harsh landscape (London 1908). The second is Tolkien’s personal experience in the Swiss Alps where he hiked in 1911, and he describes being trapped by a storm there. Tolkien acknowledges using this experience in *The Hobbit* (Carpenter 1981: 309). In leaving Rivendell Bilbo comments on the dangers of attempting a winter journey but Gandalf points out that the Fellowship’s errand is urgent and they could not wait (Tolkien 2005: 273).

The Elven Road to the Mines of Moria, which the Fellowship decides to take, runs from Hollin or Eregion and ends at the Gates of Moria, an impressive feat of engineering from a previous age: ‘It looked to Frodo like the remains of an ancient road that had once been broad and well planned’ (Tolkien 2005: 286). This recalls the scene in Haggard’s *King Solomon’s Mines*, where the road peters out on the mountainside of the landscape, but is well kept in the hidden land beyond, a land that is still part of a previous era. Solomon’s road had been ‘covered … up and above us it has been obliterated by some volcanic eruption of molten lava’ (Haggard 2016: 2425) whilst the road to Moria has been flooded and choked by the Sirannon, which has been dammed (Tolkien 2005: 301). In Haggard’s novel there are also ‘three towering peaks … . High above us, up into the blue air, soared their twisted snow-wreaths’ (Haggard 1967: 78). In *The Lord of the Rings* Khazad-dûm is crowned by three peaks: the Redhorn, (also called Caradhras), Silvertine and Cloudyhead (Barazinbar, Zirakzigil and Bundushathûr). Solomon’s Great Road ends at the foot of the mountains (Haggard 1967: 78), just like the road from Hollin which stops at Moria’s Gate.

The Fellowship’s long trudge on foot through the Mines of Moria is arguably one of Tolkien’s most magnificent, but darkest, fictional constructions and has given rise to some interesting ideas. Shippey has investigated the Balrogs and argues that

[61]Jack London (1876-1916).

these beings ‘owe a part of their existence, at least, to an editorial problem’ (Shippey 2000: 85). As with so many phenomena, creatures and ruins in *The Lord of the Rings*, the appearance of the Balrog presumes that ‘we ought to have known about it already’ (Shippey 2000: 85), in other words it was part of the depths below the mines, but also behind the story. To continue with the ‘editorial’ issue, Shippey argues that Tolkien encountered the s*iegelhearwa* in an Anglo-Saxon text but thought that ‘Ethiopians’ was not a suitable translation and rather used ‘fire-giant’ instead. Shippey explains: ‘When an Anglo-Saxon of the preliterate Dark Age said s*igelhearwa*, before any Englishman had ever heard of Ethiopia or of the Book of Exodus, Tolkien believed that what he meant rather the sons of Muspell (the Old Norse fire-giant) than of Ham’ (Shippey 2000: 86).

Given my overarching argument, there is room for both Balrogs and Ethiopians in Tolkien’s imagination. As Shippey comments: the most important issues in the chapters ‘A Journey in the Dark’ and ‘The Bridge of Khazad-dûm’ are the ‘strong antiquarianism’ and ‘relative understatement’ (Shippey 2000: 86). Tolkien creates a desire for the travellers and the reader to know more all the time (Shippey 2000: 87). At the same time, the Moria chapters are an intricate ‘part of Tolkien’s repeated pattern of shadow and loss which adds continuously to the depth of the narrative (Shippey 2002: 127). The journey through the mines is one in which light and dark are used to the greatest depth so far in the Tolkien’s narrative. Khazad-dûm is another of the places, like the Barrow-downs that has roots in the First Age so that Tolkien can reveal further the history of Middle-earth (Tolkien 2005: 1070). These chapters also allow Tolkien to extend the history of the Dwarves as a race which he has not developed much in *The Lord of the Rings* at this point.

Haggard’s ideas about exploration and archaeology, the ideas Brantlinger calls ‘imperial gothic’ (2011: 59), as expressed in *King Solomon’s Mines* are certainly evident throughout Tolkien’s descriptions of the Mines of Moria. The mines in both books can be seen as some of the darkest parts of the stories, figuratively and literally. For Haggard and for his hero Quartermain, this is an undiscovered part of Africa and, for the Hobbits, Moria is a hitherto unknown and dark part of Middle-earth. Haggard describes the size of Solomon’s mines as cathedral-like,

‘windowless … but dimly lighted from above, presumably by shafts’ (Haggard 1967: 182). Similarly, Tolkien describes the vast halls of Khazad-dûm (Tolkien 2005: 315) and how Frodo woke to find light coming through ‘a shaft near the roof’ (Tolkien 2005: 318). Both places are immensely ancient and both mines contain dead bodies, though the petrified mummies of dead kings in Haggard’s novel (Haggard 2005: 186) are far more gruesome than Balin’s dignified tomb (Tolkien 2005: 320). In *King Solomon’s Mines*, the explorers become trapped (Haggard 1967: 195) and in *The Lord of the Rings* there is also the danger of being shut in (Tolkien 2005: 323). The disgusting lust for diamonds in Haggard’s novel leads to disaster (Haggard 1967: 198) and Tolkien’s Dwarves’ desire for mithril ‘was their destruction: they delved too greedily and too deep’ (Tolkien 2005: 317).

Another interesting similarity is the water that flows in the depths of the mines; in Haggard ‘it runs like a mill-race’ (Haggard 1967: 204) and in Tolkien’s chapter ‘A Journey in the Dark’, the ‘noise of churning water came up from far below, as if some great mill-wheel was turning in the depths’ (Tolkien 2005: 311). There is also a scene in ‘A Journey in the Dark’ which is reminiscent of Haggard’s second African novel, *She: An African Adventure* (1887), where there are places where people have to jump across gaps:

> there were fissures and chasms in the walls and floor, and every now and then a crack would open right before their feet. The widest was more than seven feet across, and it was long before Pippin could summon enough courage to leap over the dreadful gap. (Tolkien 2005: 311)

In *She*, Holly and Leo are faced with a chasm over which they must jump as the plank they used previously is lost and, even though the distance,

> In itself was not so very great, between eleven and twelve feet…but then, think of the conditions. Two weary, worn-out men, one of them on the wrong side of forty, a rocking-stone to take off from, a trembling point of rock some few feet across to land upon, and a bottomless gulf to be cleared. (Haggard 1991: 302)

This is like the Bridge of Khazad-dûm, which the Fellowship of the Ring must cross to leave the Mines of Moria, though the dwarves’ bridge is obviously an impressive

feat of engineering, being ‘one curving spring of fifty feet’ over a ‘black chasm ‘of unknown depth’ (Tolkien 2005: 329).

As we know from his interview with Resnick, Tolkien’s adolescent reading, particularly Haggard’s style of ‘imperial gothic’, did have an influence on his book, though he did stress, responding to Auden in 1956, that he was not, as some were ‘determined to represent me as a simple-minded adolescent, inspired with, say, a With-the-flag-to-Pretoria spirit’ (Carpenter 1981: 244). This was more a comment on Henty’s style of African juvenile adventure writing than Haggard’s. In 1966 in a letter to his son Michael, Tolkien commented on his still unpublished *Smith of Wootton Major* stating that although the title suggested ‘an early Woodhouse (sic) or story in the Boys’ O[wn] P[aper], it is of course nothing of the kind’ (Carpenter 1981: 370). Tolkien clearly disliked this kind of genre.

Lothlórien, the Fellowship’s next place of refuge, is, like Rivendell, protected by an Elven-ring and by flowing water, but, unlike Rivendell, is positioned more specifically in myth-time. Burns associates this with the faerie properties associated with the Celtic otherworld, especially given the significance of flowing water to the two places (Burns 2005: loc 1140). It is certainly more ‘Elvish’ than other Elvish realms in Middle-earth. Sam makes an interesting assessment of the Elves of Lothlórien, saying that

> these folk aren’t wanderers or homeless … they seem to belong here, more even than Hobbits do in the Shire. Whether they’ve made the land or the land’s made them, it’s hard to say. (Tolkien 2005: 360)

This is interesting because the first Elves that Sam meets are in fact ‘wandering’: part of the ‘Wandering Companies’ of Elves that pass through the Shire and other parts of Eriador each Autumn (Tolkien 2005: 84-85). The Elves of Rivendell are sedentary but for Sam, Lothlórien is more ‘Elvish’ because they are closely related to the natural world just as the Hobbits have a close relationship with the natural world of the Shire.

Kerley defines Lothlórien as a realm where the Elves and the trees are more intricately connected than in other places (Kerley 2015: 27). It may be a context which Curry defines as utter ‘enchantment’ (2014: 68). This is because the Elves, unlike other beings in Middle-earth, are true immortals and this puts them at the top of the hierarchy of peoples. Their original contact with the Blessed Realm has set them aside — not through wealth or conquest like the Men of Númenór – but through their knowledge of eternity. Sadly though, other peoples, apart from Elves, cannot stay long in such a place. Sam says ‘I don’t want to leave [but] I’m beginning to feel that we’ve got to go on’ (Tolkien 2005: 361). The Elves themselves are already beginning to prepare to leave Middle-earth and Frodo sees Galadriel as ‘present and yet remote, a living vision of that which has already been left far behind by the flowing streams of Time’ (Tolkien 2005: 373). The Elves cannot last much longer in a separate time frame as the events of the War of the Ring infringe on their territory and their reality, even the realms of Rivendell and Lothlórien which are protected by Elrond and Galadriel because their Rings are connected intimately to the fate of the One Ring. Even to mention Galadriel’s Ring suggests Aragorn is to speed up time for the Elves (Tolkien 2005: 388).

Lothlórien is not necessarily a place of complete rest and peace, at least not for mortals (Bridgwater 2010: 21). Although seemingly inviolate, the Elves’ land cannot keep out evil forever and even its borders are now under attack (Tolkien 2005: 344, 346). Celeborn tells the Fellowship that whatever they decide to do, ‘none can be sure of peace’ (Tolkien 2005: 367) anymore. They can no longer avoid travelling without using the Great River, Anduin and the situation is extremely dangerous because ‘the bridges of Osgiliath are broken and all the landings are now held by the Enemy’ (Tolkien 2005: 367). This confirms Boromir’s concerns at the Council of Elrond some weeks before and turns the focus on the south again where the Haradrim and Easterling Men under Sauron’s influence are attacking Gondor.

The War of the Ring is escalating and while the Fellowship has been in the seemingly timeless retreat of Lothlórien, events have moved fast in the rest of Middle-earth and especially in the south, where Boromir’s home, Minas Tirith, is

under direct threat. Boromir remains convinced that Men can achieve victory in arms and ‘destroy the armed might of the Dark Lord’ (Tolkien 2005: 369). Boromir’s focus has, quite rightly, always been on his own country: Gondor in the south. He says that his journey ‘into Northerland’ earlier in the narrative was ‘long and wearisome’ but does admit that his tedious journey to the North and his time with the Fellowship have toughened him considerably (Tolkien 2005: 37).

Boromir’s use of the term ‘Northerland’ is important here. Apart from being a word not used much in Tolkien’s legendarium, it also indicates that Boromir is from the South and finds it difficult to comprehend the situation in the North of Middle-earth. Lothlórien is completely alien to him as a perilous place, and he knows nothing of Fangorn, though he is not alone in this. Earlier in the narrative, Boromir describes Khazad-dûm as a dreadful place, saying ‘to enter Moria would be to walk into a trap, hardly better than knocking at the gates of the Dark Tower itself’. Gandalf soon corrects his ignorance and tells Boromir that ‘When you came north, ... you were in the Enemy’s eyes only one stray wanderer from the South’, but that the southern territories (the Gap of Rohan, Isengard, Langstrand, and Lebennin) are no longer a safe route (Tolkien 2005: 296). Tolkien enlarges Boromir’s knowledge of the North while he expands the readers’ and the other travellers’ knowledge of the South of Middle-earth. As Bratman notes, this became increasingly part of Tolkien’s technique in enlarging the geography of his story as the long and tantalizing storyline evolved (Bratman 1997: 954). Though consciously at first, and less sure of himself when he ‘met’ characters in the south like Faramir (Carpenter 1981: 79), Tolkien explored Middle-earth as much as his readers as his narrative developed.

In the chapter ‘The Great River’, Frodo comments: ‘I always imagined that as one journeyed south it got warmer and merrier, until winter was left behind forever’ (Tolkien 2005: 381). Aragorn replies, explaining that ‘we have not journeyed far south yet. We are not above sixty leagues, I guess south of the Southfarthing away in your Shire’ (Tolkien 2005: 81). He then goes on to be more specific about southern places: ‘Far away down in the Bay of Belfalas, to which Anduin runs, it is warm and merry, maybe, or would be but for the Enemy’ (Tolkien 2005: 381).

Aragorn does not go as far as Gollum in describing the Harad desert as the warm South. For Aragorn, southern Gondor is far enough and Harad remains at the edge of his geographical knowledge even though he has travelled there (Tolkien 2005: 248). Aragorn's journeys in Rhûn and Harad were unpleasant and onerous. Being 'warm' on the south coast of Belfalas is quite a different matter from travelling in the hot deserts of Harad. This is perhaps like comparing the Mediterranean's warmth to that of North Africa, which is perceived as too hot.

The 'great fief of Belfalas' is at this time in the story being drawn into the War of the Ring together with the other parts of southern Gondor (Tolkien 2005: 750). By this time too, the Corsairs of Umbar who are from Harad, are moving to take over Lebennin in South Gondor (Tolkien 2005: 765). Aragorn knew south Gondor well as he had served there as a solider, using the name Thorongil earlier in his life. Aragorn, as Thorongil, had counselled the steward Ecthelion II on the danger of the 'rebels in Umbar' and defeated the pirate captain before leaving Gondor for his travels in the North (Tolkien 2005: 1055). Tolkien bases the Corsairs loosely on North African Barbary pirates (Bowers 2019: 170). Tolkien does not explore Aragorn's earlier life here, perhaps because this would distract readers from the main narrative of *The Lord of the Rings*. And yet this is a definitively Tolkienian technique: he introduces places to his readers and the travellers, especially the Hobbits, without explaining the context of these places all at once. As the narrative unfolds, so does the cartography and history of Middle-earth.

As the Fellowship row down the Great River, first-time readers of *The Lord of the Rings* are given some sketchy information about 'Rohan, the land of the Horse-lords' and are puzzled by the 'vast and desolate' Brown Lands which had been 'blasted' by unknown 'pestilence or war or evil deed of the Enemy' that 'even Aragorn could not tell' (Tolkien 2005: 380). Tolkien explains this in a letter to Mitchison in April 1954, in which he describes how, at the end of the Second Age between 3429 and 3441, Sauron destroyed this region in the War of the Last Alliance, killing and scattering the Entwives in the process (Carpenter 1981:

179).[62] Tolkien's narrative is at this time, moving towards the south which is where his most desolate places are situated, and this is a foretaste of what Sauron can do to the landscape.

The brown and withered place is reminiscent of the deserts of the south which are dusty and desolate like the African landscape of Tolkien's childhood. This contrasts with the lush, green fields of the 'north plains of the Riddermark, Rohan the land of the Horse-lords' (Tolkien 2005: 381). Aragorn describes Rohan as 'a rich and pleasant land [with] grass [that] has no rival' (Tolkien 2005: 381). Shippey finds the Riders of Rohan most closely connected with what he calls Tolkien's English 'little kingdom' (2002: 139). The Rohirrim have been compared to the Anglo-Saxons but Tolkien denies the connection in the place name stating 'I cannot understand why the name of a country [Rohan] (stated to be Elvish) should be associated with anything Germanic' (Carpenter 1981: 381). The important point here is that Rohan's landscape is in direct contrast to the Brown Lands and to the increasingly barren landscape of the south as the journey becomes more perilous (Tolkien 2005: 390). Later, Frodo and Sam are forced to negotiate the cold, hostile and rugged Emyn Muil from which they cannot seem to escape (Tolkien 2005: 605). In contrast, Aragorn, Legolas, and Gimli are encouraged by the plains of Rohan where the 'air was softer and warmer' and Legolas is refreshed by 'the green smell' of approaching spring (Tolkien 2005: 424).

The Fellowship's journey by boat also serves to speed up the pace of the narrative and within ten days the tragic events at Parth Galen take place, with the two pairs of Hobbits being separated from the other members of the Fellowship. After escaping from Boromir, Frodo climbs Amon Hen which, like Amon Sûl or Weathertop, is a feature from which he can view the landscape. This time, possibly because he is wearing the Ring, or possibly because events have moved on so quickly, he has a vast vision which encapsulates whole regions including the Misty Mountains, Moria, the borders of Lothlórien and the land of the Beornings

[62] In a sad letter to Douglas Carter, towards the end of his life, Tolkien confessed he was never able to find out what happened to the Entwives but that his story had only covered the beginning of the Fourth Age (Carpenter 1981: 419).

(Tolkien 2005: 400). He also sees Rohan, Isengard, Harad, and the East (Tolkien 2005: 401). In effect, he can view ‘all the power of the Dark Lord [which] was in motion’ (Tolkien 2005: 401). This kaleidoscopic sight serves to show the readers the whole ‘map’ of Middle-earth as Tolkien has conceived of it at this point, as well as the different peoples and their context in this part of the narrative.

As the broken Fellowship then follows different journeys through a variety of places and landscapes, it is useful to document these separately in order to examine these settings. Nevertheless, I will focus as far as possible on the journeys South, meaning those of Frodo and Sam, and later on of Pippin and Gandalf. These are more central to my purposes, given Tolkien’s original ideas of geography that linked the South and East of Middle-earth to the regions of Harad and Rhûn, which are like Africa in that they are hot and arid.
As Frodo and Sam travel south, they encounter various inhospitable landscapes including the rugged Emyn Muil, the Dead Marshes and the Morannon on the outskirts of Mordor. All these landscapes are barren, compared to places like the Shire and Rohan, where the fields are tranquil and rich. This barrenness is also in contrast to the forests of Middle-earth, which, while often inherently evil like the Old Forest, are also otherworldly and ancient like Lothlórien and Fangorn, and protect good beings: the Elves and the Ents. Frodo and Sam accept Gollum as their companion and this gives him a unique, though subjective, role as a narrator of geography and history in this part of *The Lord of the Rings*. In ‘The Passage of the Marshes’, he proves an invaluable guide, but also a lively commentator, and adds to the Hobbits’ knowledge of history, explaining the battle at the end of the Second Age. Again, a bleak landscape evokes a recollection of the dark past, much as the Barrow-downs and the Haunted Mountain of the Oathbreakers do.

When the Hobbits and Gollum reach the Morannon, the landscape is scorched and blasted, like a wasteland, and the reader is told that it is ‘a land beyond all healing’. The Hobbits crawl among mounds of slag and find a foul pit in which to hide but suffer dreadfully from thirst and the ground is ‘evil-smelling’ (Tolkien 2005: 632). Although they are outside the walls and gate of Mordor, the landscape is physically evil and the mountains are physically ‘threatening’ (Tolkien 2005: 636).

The buildings and stones of the Black Gate are ‘lifeless’, ‘dreadful’ and full of ‘maggot holes’ (Tolkien 2005: 636-637). Orcs are a ‘host’ which ‘lurked, ready at a signal to issue forth like black ants going to war’ (Tolkien 2005: 636). But ‘Men of other race’ also gather to Sauron’s summons and Frodo ‘remembers his vision from afar upon Amon Hen, so few days before’ (Tolkien 2005: 639). These were Men ‘of other race, out of the wide Eastlands, gathering to the summons of their Overlord’ (Tolkien 2005: 639).

One of the issues that Tolkien’s writing addresses here is the great distances covered by different members of the Fellowship in this part of the book, in contrast to Books 1 and 2. Frodo and Sam have travelled a long way from Lothlórien by river and yet another long way by foot, walking with Gollum to get to the point where Frodo can see the armies he had glimpsed in the distance, with accentuated sight, only a few days before. And clearly, the landscape changes dramatically; as the Hobbits move closer to the physical and literal shadows of Mordor, so the features of geography feel more evil and became more desolate. Finally, Gollum explains that these Men are from a place further south which is ‘very hot’ (Tolkien 2005: 641) which stretches to the sea in the south.

This section opens up the geography of Middle-earth dramatically as Tolkien, as well as his readers and the Hobbit travellers, have not encountered the places from which these Men originate before. Gollum says, ‘We do not want to see that land’, to which Frodo replies ‘No!’ (Tolkien 2005: 641). The conversation then shifts to ‘Tales out of the South’ in which Gollum relates some of the history of Osgiliath (Tolkien 2005: 641-642). This is an extraordinarily important division here; these are the far lands – Harad is also ‘south’, but it is very far away and very hot. As Tolkien stated to Resnick, this is ‘Africa’. Then there are ‘tales out of the south’ which are the history of Gondor, south of Eriador where the Hobbits and Gollum live. Tolkien visualises Minas Tirith as being in the latitude of Italy in Europe and South Gondor or Pelargir being at the latitude of ancient Troy (Carpenter 1981: 376). Sam refers to ‘big folk down away in the Sunlands’ (Tolkien 2005: 647) who are presumably the Haradrim and Gollum describes them as

fierce with black eyes, long black hair with gold jewellery and red cloaks (Tolkien 2005: 646).

These descriptions fill in the cartography of Middle-earth at this point in the narrative. There is the ’south’ which is Gondor, the south kingdom, a geography which Tolkien has been revealing slowly throughout the Lord of the Rings. Then there is the ‘far’ south, which is Harad or the Sunlands, where fierce Men, the Southrons or Haradrim, live. As Sam concludes it is from this land that the *oliphaunts,* exotic animals, also originate just as in the real world, elephants are in Africa and Asia. Tolkien has enlarged his geography and history of Middle-earth with outstanding narrative technique and this whets the imagination of both the Hobbits and his readers.

Tolkien’s decision to change direction and follow Gollum’s alternative route into Mordor gives him an opportunity to enlarge the geography of Middle-earth, both for his travellers and his readers. Here, Gollum becomes a much less grandiose geographical narrator and Frodo finds out that, by following the road west, he would reach the cross-roads ‘in a circle of dark trees’, with Osgiliath and the Anduin bridges on the right and the road south in the middle (Tolkien 2005: 641). Interestingly and frustratingly, the cross-roads are not marked on Christopher Tolkien’s exquisitely drawn and detailed map of Gondor for this section of *The Lord of the Rings* (Carpenter 1981: 168).

Apart from this map, Tolkien uses Gollum’s descriptions to show his readers what the map looks like at this point and his voice is obviously quite different from the rather stately tones of previous narrators, such as Gandalf and Aragorn. This has a specific effect on both the Hobbits and on Tolkien’s readers. The Hobbits understand Gollum’s words; he speaks in Common Speech and is closer to Hobbits than any other race. Frodo and Sam know virtually nothing of their surroundings and are dependent on Gollum for all the information he can provide. Also, he is not to be trusted at any time. Though he seems to have been partially redeemed by Frodo’s kindness he proves untrustworthy, only telling the Hobbits about the path of Cirith Ungol after he has led them to the Black Gate. They have

no choice, however, but to accept such information as he provides. Before they follow the road south and west, Gollum takes up the voice of the travel narrator and describes the haunted pass of Cirith Ungol with its unknown terrors:

> A little path leading up into the mountains; and then a stair, a narrow stair, Oh yes, very long and narrow. And then … a tunnel, a dark tunnel; and at last a little cleft, and a path high above the main pass. (Tolkien 2005: 643)

Like much of his conversation, Gollum's description is deliberately misleading and he does not mention Shelob's Lair where he hopes to lead the others and Frodo has to disentangle 'some remnants of old truth and sincerity' from Gollum's descriptions of the road ahead (Tolkien 2005: 643).

At this point in their quest, Frodo and Sam are completely without guidance, not knowing that Gandalf has made a reappearance and he 'sought for them in hope and pity', thinking that it unlikely that [Frodo] has ventured into Mordor. The choices for Frodo at this point seemed to be entirely evil as 'both led to terror and death', even if he knew what lay ahead (Tolkien 2005: 644). Of this, Bridgwater comments that 'Frodo has gone beyond all known paths, over all edges, and far from any memory of home' (2010: 26). Frodo feels this very deeply here when he thinks about having taken up the quest in the 'far-off spring of another year, so remote now that it was like a chapter in the story of the world's youth' (Tolkien 2005: 644). Not only is Tolkien employing a technique of metafiction so that Frodo can see himself within the narrative, but he is identifying with Frodo in that he, as the author, is unsure which direction he should take next both in the geography of Middle-earth and in the direction of the book.

The sense of relief with which Frodo and Sam turn away from the Morannon is quite palpable; the reader is told that their 'hearts strangely lightened' (Tolkien 2005: 648). In stark contrast to the semi-desert wasteland of the Morannon, they find themselves breathing air that is 'fresh and fragrant, and it reminds them of the uplands of the Northfarthing far away' (Tolkien 2005: 649). This is the 'cool and clear' atmosphere that Tolkien had written about in his 1951 letter to Waldman

(Carpenter 1981: 144). The road is also reminiscent of the old North Kingdom of Arnor which Tolkien describes in in the first chapters of Book 1: 'the handiwork of Men of old could still be seen in [the road's] straight sure flight and level course' (Tolkien 2005: 649). Tolkien then makes it clear that:

> The long journey from Rivendell had brought them far south of their own land, but not until now in this more sheltered region had the hobbits felt the change of clime. Here spring was already busy about them: Ithilien, the garden of Gondor now desolate kept still a dishevelled dryad loveliness. (Tolkien 2005: 650)

Jenkyns compares this idea to Tolkien drawing on ancient Greece for this region which is reminiscent of the Mediterranean (Jenkyns 1980: 149). Classical antiquity, even in decay and overrun by nature, can be beautiful while desert landscapes are arid and hostile.

The passage which follows is probably one in which Tolkien provides the thickest description in the whole lengthy narrative, including numerous plants, herbs, trees, flowers and scents 'beyond the garden-lore of Sam' (Tolkien 2005: 650). As Shippey notes, through all Tolkien's work 'there runs an obsessive interest in plants and scenery' (Shippey 2002: 150). Here Tolkien is providing a travelogue of all the glory of Ithilien in its overgrown state in which 'the hobbits breathed deep' (Tolkien 2005: 651).

This provides a vivid and lasting contrast to the desolation of the Morannon which they have just left behind them. While Tolkien was writing this part of *The Lord of the Rings*, he wrote to Christopher on the etymology of various English flora and how he had enjoyed making up names like *elanor* and *nifredil*. He encouraged Christopher to invent 'names for the nameless flowers you meet' (Carpenter 1981: 106). In addition to his sincere love of Northern plants, Tolkien remained interested in South African flora and said that he 'greatly enjoyed' a 'Cape flower book'[63] that Amy Ronald sent him in 1969. He said that 'all illustrated botany books have for me a special fascination' (Carpenter 1981: 402).

[63] This was *Wild Flowers of the Cape Peninsula*, first published in 1950, by Mary Maytham Kidd (1914-2001), a South African botanist and writer.

There are many ways in which Gondor can be compared to antiquity, not the least of which is the fact that Faramir identifies with the 'High' Númenóreans and their City, which has 'much ancient lore by long tradition', some of which he had learned to read through Gandalf's tutelage. Records are kept in Minas Tirith on parchments and 'on leaves of silver and of gold' (Tolkien 2005: 670), in a way reminiscent of texts kept in Ancient Rome. Then there is the city itself representing memory, ancientry, beauty, and present wisdom: 'the city of the men of Númenór' (Tolkien 2005: 672). It stands in contrast to all other places that the Hobbits encounter in the story.

Pippin, in particular, finds himself out of place in Minas Tirith:

> Pippin gazed in growing wonder at the great stone city, vaster and more splendid than anything that he had dreamed of. Yet it was in truth failing year by year into decay. (Tolkien 2005: 752)

This is the real issue. Gondor may represent the ancient world; perhaps harking back originally to the Ancient Egyptians (Carpenter 1981: 281); possibly representing either Rome or its 'replacement' Constantinople, but the ancient world it represents is nearly over, just as Ithilien is now overgrown and run wild. The Riders of the Mark may be 'Middle' men, as Faramir says, but they have what Shippey calls 'panache' and a kind of vigour (2002: 145.) Their culture is based on orality or 'song' compared to the Gondorians, who have scrolls and parchments, but that 'song' is fresh and constantly renewed because it serves living memory (Shippey 2002: 142).

Even if he is surrounded by cold halls, which represent Denethor's selfishness and weakness (Shippey 2002: 148), Pippin's guide and companion Beregond can provide a fairly impressive description of their view from the walls of Minas Tirith, including 'the road to the vales of Tumladen and Lossarnarch … and on to Lebennin' (Tolkien 2005: 764). Beregond explains, for the reader as much as for Pippin, about the Corsairs of Umbar, and he elucidates the geography of Lebennin and Belfalas as fiefs which is an obvious medievalism (Tolkien 2005: 765). McFadden offers a negative explanation for Tolkien's Middle-earth, stating that it

was portrayed as ‘endless Middle Ages’ and that its societies have stagnated socially; its Renaissance never arrived (Mc Fadden 2004: loc 1070). This view is over-simplified as Tolkien’s ideas on renewal are spiritual rather than social or economic. Tolkien’s idea of eternal loss in *The Lord of the Rings* suggests an ongoing theme of eventual decay in history, a ‘long defeat’ as he described it in 1956 (Carpenter 1981: 255). This does not mean, however, that there could not be renewal and revival within the historical process.

Libran-Moreno explains Tolkien’s use of antiquity in *The Lord of the Rings*, in which she focuses on the relationship between the ‘barbarian’ Goths, Langobards and Constantinople during late antiquity and compares these to the peoples of Middle-earth and Gondor (2011: 84). Gondor, even in decline, is the last remaining part of Númenór and so by contrast, sees itself as a superior society compared to Rohan and as civilized compared to the barbarian Haradrim and Easterlings. This is much the same way that Byzantium or Constantinople saw itself as a ‘Second Rome’ compared to the ‘barbarians’ which included not only the Goths but also the Arabian and North African worlds. She also takes an onomastic approach to the ‘appearance of historical Gothic, Greek, Langobardic, and Frankish origin, together with the general comparison of Gondor’s history with that of Byzantium’ (Constantinople) (Libran-Moreno 2011: 85). There could be a strong argument for the establishment of Aragorn’s kingdom in the Fourth Age reflecting the establishment of the Holy Roman Empire. Tolkien himself that admits that the progress of the tale ends in what is ‘far more like the re-establishment of an effective Holy Roman Empire with its seat in Rome’ (Carpenter 1981: 376).

There are historical similarities between Gondor and Ancient Rome or Ancient Byzantium/ Constantinople, particularly given Constantinople’s troubled history from the fourth to the eleventh century (Libran-Moreno 2011: 87). Tolkien acknowledged that he was ‘historically minded’ (Carpenter 1981: 242): however, I think that Tolkien’s comparison between Gondor and the other peoples, such as Gondor and the Mark (which Shippey explores) and between Gondor and the Shire (which Pippin experiences) are more tangible. Tolkien declared quite clearly that he ‘should have hated the Roman Empire in its day’ but that he would have

‘remained a patriotic Roman citizen, while preferring a free Gaul and seeing good in Carthaginians’ (Carpenter 1981: 89). This excludes any suggestion that links Gondor with the late Roman Empire.

Nevertheless, there are many instances of classical ideas in the parts of *The Lord of the Rings* which are about Gondor, including the Battle of the Pelennor Fields, Tolkien’s ideas about elephants (which are both classical and Anglo-Saxon); and in fighting men from the ‘East’ which are from medieval Ethiopia or were ‘Saracens’ (in itself a subjective term [Tolan 2002: 152]). However, Tolkien does not always distinguish between the classical, medieval, and later sources of his ideas. What is clear is that there are always contrasting landscapes and places and different narrators explaining these, usually to a Hobbit or Hobbits, who are the least travelled of the races of Middle-earth.

In January 1945 Tolkien wrote to Christopher that the passages in *The Lord of the Rings* which moved him most profoundly are the two events in the pass of Cirith Ungol: Gollum’s almost-repentance when he finds Frodo sleeping, Sam’s awareness of ‘the seamless web of story’ (Carpenter 1981: 110) .Ten years later, in a letter to Mitchison, Tolkien again mentions Gollum’s ‘failure [just] to repent when interrupted by Sam’ twice, saying that he was ‘most grieved by it’, adding that another emotional moment for him was ‘the sound of the horns of the Rohirrim at cockcrow’ in the dark dawn of the 15th of March (Carpenter 1981: 221). As I have shown, Tolkien does not choose landscape features lightly and the darkness of the passage in the chapter “The Stairs of Cirith Ungol’ reflects these first two emotional episodes well:

> There were all piers and jagged pinnacles of stone on either side, between which were great crevices and fissures blacker than the night, where forgotten winters had gnawed and carved the sunless stone. (Tolkien 2005: 710)

In this unforgiving place, where Frodo cannot think beyond the tunnel in his ‘dark hour of weariness’ (Tolkien 2005: 711), Gollum finds Frodo and Sam asleep and ‘for a fleeting moment’ we are shown ‘an old weary hobbit, shrunken by the years that had carried him far beyond his time … an old starved pitiable thing’ (Tolkien

2005: 714). Gollum is disturbed by Sam who mistrusts his intentions and Gollum returns to being a ‘villain’.

This is obviously an important scene, showing that Gollum is not beyond redemption. In Haggard’s *She: An African Adventure*, the heroes of the story also discover the true form of Ayesha, revealed near death as a ‘hideous little monkey frame, covered with crinkled yellow parchment … as the whole length of her two thousand years took effect upon her’ (Haggard 1991: 295). Holly and Leo, having encountered this horror in the caves, must then find their way out through the frightening ‘womb of the volcano … creeping about in the dense gloom and awful stillness from boulder to boulder’ (Haggard 1991: 301).

The second section here, Sam’s comment on the ‘seamless web of story’, where Sam makes the link between Frodo’s phial from Galadriel and Beren’s quest during the First Age, is Tolkien taking a very deep plunge into Middle-earth’s history. For readers who have not read *The Silmarillion*, this part of the story is difficult to follow. However, there is no doubting the incredible power of Galadriel’s gift:

> No such terror out of heaven had ever burned in Shelob’s face before. The beams of it entered her wounded head and scored it with unbearable pain, and the dreadful infection of light spread from eye to eye. (Tolkien 2005: 730)

Without the phial of Silmaril light, this episode would be another description of a hero fighting a giant creature in spider-form, as has appeared in many stories, including the late Victorian ‘science fiction’ stories of H.G. Wells and the imperial African adventure stories of Bertram Mitford (McKechnie 2012: 510-511). By adding Sam’s comments on the eternal narrative of *A History of Middle-earth* and using the light of Eärendil to defeat Shelob, this section becomes an integral part of the extraordinarily deep history which Tolkien, his characters and his readers are in the process of discovering. It is this epic nature of *The Lord of the Rings* that lifts Tolkien’s modern narrative above earlier adventure stories containing heroes and giant monsters and spiders to the level of epic romance.

Frodo and Sam's final journey on foot, across the plains of Mordor, is through the very worst landscape in Middle-earth. Effectively it is an ash-filled desert, but it is also a 'land of shadow' where the shadows are as real as the geography. The Hobbits know virtually nothing about this place, as I have already mentioned, but they also do not even have any knowledge of the vegetation, which turns out, as one might expect, to be composed of the most vicious briars and thorns (Tolkien 2005: 917). Tolkien's language is outstandingly vivid in describing desolate barrenness:

> Mordor was a dying land, but it was not yet dead. And here things still grew, harsh, twisted, bitter, struggling for life. In the glens of the Morgai on the other side of the valley low scrubby trees lurked and clung, coarse grey grass-tussocks fought with the stones, and withered mosses crawled on them; and everywhere great writhing, tangled brambles sprawled. (Tolkien 2005: 921)

This is Tolkien at his most descriptive: but he is also explaining the landscape to himself. The fact that Tolkien takes the time from Frodo's desperately urgent errand to explain this shows how he was tantalized by the landscape of Middle-earth, which he was inventing constantly. Places and peoples are given a continuous supply of 'thick description'. As the two Hobbits stagger and eventually crawl along, Tolkien returns to Christopher's detailed map of Gondor, which includes a map of Mordor, as do his readers, even within the most distressing and urgent part of the story. At the same time, Tolkien's treatment of landscape takes the story further and further into the world of his imagination (Risden 2015:130). Tolkien explains place names as he goes along and states

> That had [Frodo and Sam] known, they could have reached it quicker, for it was a track that left the main Morgul-road at the western bridge-end and went down by a long stair cut in the rock to the valley's bottom. It was used by patrols or by messengers going from swiftly to lesser posts and strongholds north-away between Cirith Ungol and the narrows of Isenmouthe, the iron jaws of Carach Angren. (Tolkien 2005: 920)

Frodo and Sam are mistaken for Orcs and captured at one point though they remain in disguise, and this serves to rush them along towards Isenmouthe at a pace which they would never have been able to sustain by themselves. This

forced march enables Tolkien to reveal even more of the cartography of Mordor (Tolkien 2005: 931).

The Hobbits' final desperate terrible journey across Gorgoroth and up Mount Doom is across a land which 'became more evil': both physically in terms of the ugly, starved dreadful landscape, and spiritually, because of a 'dreadful menace' (Tolkien 2005: 935). Burger argues that the idyllic Shire 'was unrealistic and, in order to exist, even textually, even as a fantasy, there had to be some sort of price to be paid for the maintenance of the idyll' (2001: 100). Thus, as he moves towards the climax of his terrible journey, Frodo loses touch with his memories of the landscape of the Shire, hardly realizing that the price for traversing the poisoned earth of Mordor is the green and pastoral landscape of the Shire. He tells Sam that 'I tried to remember the Brandywine and Woody End … . But I can't see them now' (Tolkien 2005: 918) and later he cannot even visualize the pleasant atmosphere of Ithilien. In extreme physical and spiritual barrenness

> I know that such things happened, but I cannot see them … no feel of water, no sound of wind, no memory of tree or grass or flower, no image of moon or star are left to me. (Tolkien 2005: 937-938)

This is what Frodo sacrifices at this point: he cannot escape the landscape of Mordor because this harsh landscape is now his only consciousness. He is unable to be aware of any other kind of landscape, any other form of nature except the dust and desolation of his surroundings. His dehydration and starvation are very real, but these conditions are also spiritual because he cannot remember any other condition. The shadow of Mordor has become part of his waking consciousness.

Frodo's quest, suggests Bridgwater, is fated to succeed; but not without suffering and with only an elusive, transitory sense of success (Bridgwater 2010: 27). Frodo finds that the Ring Quest destroys all experiences of joy because he has to go beyond 'all known paths' (Bridgwater 2010: 26). It is therefore not just the healing landscape of Cormallen, which is in North Ithilien that Frodo returns to at the end of the book, but also to the ability to experience that landscape. Sam's experience

at Cormallen, of sunshine and trees, and laughter, is deeper, and described in more detail because Frodo is asleep (Tolkien 2005: 951) and also because Frodo can never again see grass and sunlight in the same way. Even Ithilien, with its balmy and gracious surroundings, can have no full effect upon Frodo's consciousness because his psyche is now stained by the dark and utterly barren landscape through which he has travelled, both physically and spiritually.

At the end of Tolkien's narrative, even those who are relatively unhurt by the War of the Ring are unable to revisit the same landscapes in the same way. As Treebeard laments to Galadriel, the very physical essence of the 'world is changing I feel it in the water, I feel it in the earth, and I smell it in the air. I do not think we shall meet again' (Tolkien 2005: 981). This is more than the damage that Saruman has done to a previously forested landscape. The Orcs have been punished, but Men will never again live in total harmony with the natural world and, without Entings, the forests that grow will not be alive in the way they were before (Tolkien 2005: 981). It is the ability of Men to destroy trees, as Tolkien suggests later in 'The New Shadow' that will cause Men and nature to always be at war with each other in the Fourth Age.

As the travellers pass through Dunland, by then peaceful, but with many Dunlendings who 'fled and hid themselves' (Tolkien 2005: 982), there is a scene in which Tolkien demonstrates to his readers and to the Hobbits that the world is indeed changing, but not in a way they could have foreseen as 'they overtook an old man leaning on a staff, and he was clothed in rags of grey … and at his heels went another beggar, slouching and whining' (Tolkien 2005: 983). This turns out to be the outcast Saruman and Gríma Wormtongue, reduced to homelessness. Although he is bereft of his wizardly powers, Saruman turns out in the end to be capable of great mischief, which the Hobbits find out to their cost.

Saruman's final evil deed is taking over the Shire. He had planted agents there, including the unacceptable half-Orcs and goblin-men, and the 'ruffians' or Men who had no right to be inside its boundaries, according to the Hobbits. The landscape of the Shire is spoiled for Hobbits by having people who do not belong

there, who destroy the countryside and encourage Hobbits to be unproductive, besides being ‘dirty and insolent’ (Tolkien 2005: 1017).

The people who take over the Shire are in the process of ruining the landscape and turning it into an environmental wasteland like Saruman’s Isengard with ‘burning and thieving’ (Tolkien 2005: 1011) and ‘smoke and stench’ (Tolkien 2005: 1013). Sam says, ‘This is worse than Mordor … because it is home’ and Frodo replies ‘Yes, this is Mordor …Just one of its works’ (Tolkien 2005: 1018). It is the landscape of the Shire that is under threat here, with trees cut down, industrial filth polluting the river and Hobbits imprisoned and used as slaves. In ‘The Shadow of the Past’, Frodo asks Gandalf what Sauron would do with Hobbit slaves, to which Gandalf replies that ‘hobbits as miserable slaves would please him far more than hobbits happy and free’ (Tolkien 2005: 49). This is the point here; the Hobbits cannot be more than unhappy and unfree then in a Shire where the landscape is destroyed. Like the Elves in Lothlórien, they are connected intricately to the pastoral, the ‘little lanes and hedges and rustling trees and the soft rolling contours of a rich champain’ (Carpenter 1981: 90-91). The Hobbits who rescue the Shire from the Mordor’s final agents in ‘The Scouring of the Shire’ are those who have grown through their experience of lands that are barren and desolate wastelands. Tolkien’s epic only works because the heroes engage with the ‘barrenness’ that he likes, gaining knowledge of the Men from the desert south, Harad, in order to grow enough to rescue their own landscape.

In the penultimate chapter of the book, ‘The Scouring of the Shire’, the Hobbits defeat those who had invaded their territory and reclaim the Shire for themselves. It takes some time for the natural landscape of the Shire to begin healing from the hurts done to it by the occupation of Saruman’s agents. Tolkien’s description of the journey from the Brandywine Bridge to Hobbiton shows how the travelling hobbits see all the sad and terrible acts that have been wrought on the pleasant, idyllic, and peaceful Shire in a reversal of the trip from Book 1. In the final chapter of the book, Sam uses his gift from Galadriel to replace beautiful trees that have been destroyed, including the Party Tree and the reader is told that ‘a beautiful young sapling leaped up: it had silver bark and long leaves and burst into golden flowers’

(Tolkien 2005: 1023). There is a delightful intertextuality here with Tolkien's story, 'Leaf by Niggle', published in 1945, when Niggle finally finds his Tree:

> Before him stood the Tree, his Tree, finished. If you could say that of a Tree that was alive, its leaves opening, its branches growing and bending in the wind … All the leaves he had ever laboured at were there. (Tolkien 2001: 109-110)

Both the Mallorn in the Shire and Niggle's Tree are great gifts. Niggle's completed Tree is representative of Tolkien's finally completed book, at which he had 'niggled' for so long.

Having returned from his travels, Frodo inherits the task of writing up the rest of Bilbo's diary into the book that becomes *The Red Book of Westmarch* (Tolkien 2005: 8, 988). Like African travelogues in the age of colonialism, especially in the nineteenth century, travellers' tales could not be written down while people were still experiencing their adventures (Youngs 1994: 143) and, as Pippin comments, 'Frodo will have to be locked up in a tower in Minas Tirith to write it all down. Otherwise he will forget half of it' (Tolkien 2005: 956).

So much has happened to the separate parts of the original Fellowship that Bilbo is unable to finish his book and Frodo takes his papers back to the Shire, where he eventually hands over the manuscript to Sam, saying: 'the last pages are for you' (Tolkien 2005: 1027). Such a text can never really be completed and in the 'Tale of Years' in Appendix B, Tolkien informs his readers that Sam travels to Minas Tirith in the year 1442 of the Shire Reckoning (during the Fourth Age) where presumably he gathers more material for the book. *The Red Book* is then kept by Sam's daughter Elanor after his departure into the West in 1482, the records being maintained by the Fairbairn family (Tolkien 2005: 1097). Taking such care with the provenance of his created manuscript is part of the way Tolkien uses the role of metafiction in *The Lord of the Rings*. Attebery points out that Tolkien's writing, 'like postmodernist fiction … is always metafictional' (Attebery 1992: 41).

Tolkien uses several devices to comment on the storytelling process, most evidently in this chapter in the form of travelogues, but also in the sense that the characters in *The Lord of the Rings* are constantly aware that they are in a story, a story that is continually being written and re-written. This knowledge is most keenly expressed by Sam when he comments that he and Frodo are 'in the same tale still! It's going on.' (Tolkien 2005: 712). Rosebury argues that it is Middle-earth as a totality that is the 'hero' of *The Lord of the Rings*, so that the constant expansion of its geography and depth of history is central to the story's power (Rosebury 1992: 8, 29). Clearly, such depths move the text beyond the interjections of a travelogue; but it is only once the Hobbits and the author 'returned' that they could view the entirety of the world that had been created.

Tolkien's original idea of having Sam tell tales to his children is shown by the extended material in the Appendices, the *Unfinished Tales* and the twelve-volume *History of Middle-earth*, which Christopher eventually edited. These were effectively travellers' tales, in which Tolkien expands the story beyond what he calls 'the circles of the world' that he creates in the pages of *The Lord of the Rings*. This lends intertextuality to the constantly widening historicism of his work. The north and south of Middle-earth and the ways people see each other, are part of that extended story.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION AND LEGACY

Tolkien was, throughout his life, aware of his own birth and connections to South Africa. In 1938 after his first fantasy book (*The Hobbit*) was published, he wrote a response to *The Observer*, which had published a letter connecting Tolkien's Hobbits to the 'little furry men' seen in Africa by Huxley.[64] Tolkien was more than aware of the mistaken identity of pygmies for 'fairies' and replied to *The Observer* saying that he had been 'born in Africa, and have read several books by African explorers. I have, since about 1896, read even more books of fairy-tales of the genuine kind'. He protested that 'my hobbit did not live in Africa, and was not furry, except about the feet' (Carpenter 1981: 30).

Huxley, though less racist than many of his time, was nevertheless a proud Briton and felt that 'the British are a remarkable race' (1931: 166). In contrast to this, he describes the Kikuyu, a Kenyan 'tribe,' as having 'a queer alien look' […] 'as of a gnome or other creature of slightly different breed from ordinary human beings' (1931: 176). Huxley had originally followed some ideas on 'natural selection' but, by the mid-1930s, he had joined scientific writers like Haddon and Carr-Saunders in an anti-racist stance in countering the rise of fascism.[65] Huxley also rejected the idea of 'Nordicism' with its racist associations (Dubow 1995: 126). Fimi argues convincingly that Tolkien was aware, acutely, of the dangers of 1930s eugenic thinking including the unsavoury ideas about 'miscegenation' (2009: 152). As I have stressed, Tolkien, rejected sternly any definition of 'Nordicism' a term he described as 'racialist' (Carpenter 1981: 375).

The episode about the pygmies, though not related directly to *The Lord of the Rings,* explains a great deal about Tolkien's ideas about Africa and his own identity as a person born in Africa. Tolkien did read books on African exploration,

[64] Julian Huxley (1887-1975).

[65] Alfred Cort Haddon (1855-1940) was a British anthropologist. Alexander Carr-Saunders (1886-1966) was a British sociologist.

as did many of his generation; this was popular literature for Edwardian adolescents. Tolkien knew, though, that a great deal of this material was quasi-fictional and no truer than 'fairy-tales'. Stanley's 'Dwarfs of the dark forest', in which he described pygmies in his *In Darkest Africa* (1890), was a work of this kind. Tolkien would have been aware of the difference between these 'little people' and the numerous little folks generated in the fairy-tales of Victorian and Edwardian writers. The Hobbits are smaller than Men, but they are not part of this tradition and Tolkien abandoned miniature beings around the time that he invented his first Middle-earth legends during the First World War. It was around the time that he also abandoned the concept of 'gnomes' (Fimi 2009: 15). This does not, however, exonerate Stanley, Huxley, or Tolkien for having colonial views on Africa.

The Commission on the treatment of indigenous people in the Congo in 1906 tried to establish terms on which pygmies in Central Africa could be treated. Historically, when Huxley visited East Africa in the 1930s, British and other colonial powers were still extremely narrow-minded and harsh in their treatment of indigenous peoples. Tolkien was born in 1892 and lived most of his life during the first part of the twentieth century; it is therefore impossible to separate him from the world in which he grew up and lived. Colonialism was part of that world. Tolkien did know, however, what fantasy was and what was not: he was adamant that he did not write allegory. In 1956 he wrote that 'The Hobbits are no more an "allegory" than are (say) the pygmies of the African forest' (Carpenter 1981: 233).

Tolkien's connections to Africa are linked to his ideas on South Africa which he remembered as hot and parched. These ideas were enriched by his adolescent reading of African adventure, both by the explorers who produced travelogues, and by adventure writers like Haggard. This provided him with the barren landscapes he so liked and which he contrasts throughout *The Lord of the Rings* with the 'rolling countryside' matrices of various societies, beginning with the Hobbits' Shire. As Tolkien was extraordinarily well-read and proficient in a number of northern ancient languages, it is easy, as Auden did, to associate his world with the 'northern clime', which Tolkien so strongly associated with heroic literature. Tolkien disagreed with this: he said that the North was not his only focus, but that

his deep sounding in the South was specifically southern Europe and Gondor is not further south than ancient Rome or, at the most extreme, Troy. This is what makes his reference to Harad as ‘Africa’ in 1967 tantalising and the Men from that region, who are fierce, black-haired, dark-skinned and accompanied by that exotic beast of African origin the *oliphaunt,* so enticing for his critics. That Tolkien shows empathy for these soldiers and, at the end of the narrative, has Aragorn free their communities, is the work of a modern writer, not a medievalist. The same is true of the darker-skinned Dunlendings and the original indigenous ‘Men of Darkness’: the Drúedain. All these Men are, in the final analysis, human.

On the matter of the Orcs, these creatures remain at the bottom of the hierarchy, below the racial categories of Men. They are barely above the supernatural ‘black’ beings, the Ringwraiths, and the ghosts. As I state in Chapter 4, Men seem to need Orcs in order to prove themselves heroic as the Fourth Age progresses in Tolkien’s coda story, ‘The New Shadow’. Despite contemporary accusations of extreme racism, with the Orcs being viewed as the victims of genocide and extermination, Tolkien does not, in the end, consider the Orcs to be irredeemable. This is because he is a modern writer. His letters during the Second World War show this as he writes to Christopher in South Africa, deploring the extreme hatred being demonstrated as Eastern Europe is overrun by opposing armies and massive numbers of refugees flee towards the west.

Tolkien was adamant that he was committed, not only to the idea of ‘rolling hills and tilled fields’, but that he also loved what he called ‘barrenness’ just as much as ‘rolling hills’ and tilled earth. His descriptions of contrasting landscapes are what make *The Lord of the Rings* one of the greatest of modern fantasies. In the first part of the narrative, as the Hobbits and, later, the Fellowship of the Ring, move gradually South through Middle-earth, the terrain changes from the pastoral to the barren, from the idyllic Shire to the harsher countryside of Eriador and the deserted and bleak lands of Eregion and finally to, the hostile frontier of Dunland. As early as the chapters set in Bree, Tolkien introduces one of the most sinister characters, the ‘squint-eyed southerner’ showing his readers that the lands to the South are in a perilous state and that racial mixing between Men and Orcs is taking place, one of the most abhorrent issues raised in the narrative. In answering the question ‘is this racist?’ then I must conclude that the text is indeed racist. But it is crucial to recognise that it was not ‘miscegenation’ that Tolkien hated, but Saruman’s mass breeding programmes that he considered evil.

Dunland, a frontier of displaced peoples, is a catalyst for war and for exploring the old anger between the Dunlendings and the Rohirrim. As the Fellowship travels South into increasingly dangerous territory, Tolkien demonstrates the deepening conflicts in Middle-earth, many arising from older hatreds between peoples over stolen or occupied lands. Barren places are not necessarily empty lands, but are occupied by those who hold old grievances against more recent occupiers, as is evidenced by the Dunlendings and Wild Men, who fight the Rohirrim or the indigenous Drúedain, who have been affected deeply by the influx of more recent inhabitants into their territory. By using the Hobbits as observers and including the Orcs as spokespeople in chapters such as ‘The Uruk-hai’, Tolkien demonstrates how he includes different perspectives to highlight the effect of conflicts on various peoples.

The main land of Men, Gondor, is a country of contrasts, with well-tilled fields and the pastoral and pleasant, though abandoned, land of North Ithilien. These stand in contrast to the deserted and haunted Osgiliath and Minas Morgul. To the South is Pelargir, which offers another contrast, being occupied by the corsairs, who are of the Haradrim and can be compared to the Barbary pirates of North Africa. Tolkien identifies Harad in his 1967 interview as 'Africa' and 'hot' and a place which is exotic from whence also come *oliphaunts.* Haradrim, or Southrons, Tolkien aligns with his other 'dark' peoples, the Easterlings, who are from Rhûn though in *The Lord of the Rings* readers are only told of this land that the constellations are different.

One of Tolkien's talents is to unravel the geography of Middle-earth slowly as his characters travel to and hear about the different regions. No-one in the story reaches Harad, Far Harad or Rhûn, but readers learn about these peoples through the adventures and travels of the characters. Some of the comments are negative but some are empathetic. All are subjective and contrast with the perspectives of the travellers themselves, as in travel writing and travelogues, which deal with the relationship between selves and others. In the final desolate wasteland of Mordor, the Hobbits, Frodo and Sam, are shown to be ignorant of what lies to the South where fertile lands are worked by human slaves. This provides another geographical contrast beyond the knowledge of the travellers. From my perspective, Tolkien's extraordinary ability in describing contrasting landscapes, the harshest of which echo his African childhood and African reading, is certainly one of the things that make *The Lord of the Rings* a unique modern fantasy.

In 1959 Tolkien declared openly that he loathed *apartheid*. This statement has been used by many writers to demonstrate that he hated the obsession with difference between races and peoples. It is true that he did state that the treatment of people of colour in South Africa was awful. What, therefore, in the final analysis, did Tolkien inherit from his association with South Africa? Gorelik, who situates Tolkien in his birthplace in Bloemfontein, has some suggestions. The first is in language. Tolkien remembered that his 'cradle tongue was English (with a dash of Afrikaans)' (2006: 191). Gorelik points out that Tolkien had an Afrikaans-speaking

nursemaid (2014: 5) and, in 1944, Tolkien commented to Christopher that the latter's letter had been 'opgemaak deur sensor' (Carpenter 1981: 71). Carpenter says this is Dutch for 'opened by the censor' (1981: 483). It is Afrikaans which had been established as an official language distinct from Dutch in South Africa from the 1920s (Simpson 2021: 79).

Tolkien also remembered visiting Cape Town as the 'sea side', a memory he later discussed with his friend and colleague, the linguist Zettersman[66] with whom he worked on the medieval AB dialect (Zettersman 2011: 49). Gorelik tracked down the Bank House where Tolkien was born (2014: 6), which Tolkien mentioned in a letter to Christopher. He also wonders if his father's grave survived (Carpenter 1981: 75). Gorelik found this grave, noting that Tolkien's daughter had visited the site (Gorelik 1981: 7). Gorelik, like Priscilla Tolkien, also notes that Tolkien had wanted to revisit South Africa and that he had not forgotten Bloemfontein. 'Africa' had thus moved him 'very deeply' and Tolkien's readers should not overlook the importance of his earliest years (Gorelik 2014: 9).

Tolkien's penultimate chapter of *The Lord of the Rings* 'The Scouring of the Shire', is not only a setting to rights of the landscape of the Shire, one of the ecological spaces that Tolkien loved best, it is also a 'homecoming' for the main characters of the story. To some extent, this reflected Christopher's return home from South Africa after the Second World War. The end of the war is also echoed in Tolkien's sad and evocative drama *The Homecoming of Beorhtnoth Beohthelm's Son* which he completed in 1953 (2001: 121), the year before *The Fellowship of the Ring* was published. Although set in England, this story has as a setting the bleak landscape of East Anglia, and the action takes place in the dark, which reflects the result of false pride or *ofermod.* This contrasts with the landscapes Tolkien describes at the end of *The Lord of the Rings*, which are in the process of being restored. The Haradrim and Easterlings were pardoned and given their lands as free territories; the Drúedan are given back their traditional lands and the Dunlendings and Wild Men live in a Dunland that is at peace with Rohan. The contrast between the

[66] Arne Zettersman (1934-2015) was a Swedish medieval scholar. He worked with Tolkien in the 1960s.

depressing and sad context of *The Homecoming* and the final chapters of *The Lord of the Rings,* where there is sadness but also joy, is an important one. Tolkien is clear on the difference between a real historical setting and a fantasy one.

Although Tolkien wanted to return to South Africa, he was never able to do so. There is a poignancy in this, and the fact that he continued to love the barren landscapes it represented for him and the way these contrasted with the English countryside so evocatively depicted in the Hobbits' beloved Shire. It is also telling that the Hobbits can only regain that home by passing through the harshest or most barren of places and experiencing adventures there. They must grow Merry and Pippin literally, through experiencing strange places and hostile landscapes. The barrenness of the African landscape was an intimate part of Tolkien's identity, by birth, through memory, through reading and through his correspondence with his youngest son in war time. It is this identity – this crucial aspect of his imagination – that sets *The Lord of the Rings* aside as one of the greatest of modern fantasies and what makes it such a crucial touchstone for the fantasies which follow it.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

PRIMARY SOURCES

Tolkien, J.R.R. 1932. 'Sigelwara Lands'. *Medium Ævum (Society for the Study of Medieval Languages and Literature)* 1, no. 3: 183-196.

Tolkien, J.R.R. 1934.'Sigelwara Lands (Continued)'. *Medium Ævum (Society for the Study of Medieval Languages and Literature)* 3, no. 2: 95-111.

Tolkien, J.R.R. 1987 *The Hobbit: Or There and Back Again.* London: George Allen and Unwin.

—. 1999. *Unfinished Tales of Númenór and Middle-earth*. London: HarperCollins.

2001. *Tree and Leaf: including Mythopoeia and The Homecoming of Beorhtnoth*. Loondon: HarperCollins Publishers.

—. 2005. *The Lord of the Rings*. London: HarperCollins.

—. 2006. *The Monsters and the Critics and Other Essays*. Edited by C. Tolkien. London: HarperCollins Publishers.

SECONDARY SOURCES

Akbari, S.C. 2000. "From Due East to True North: Orientalism and Orientation." In *The Postcolonial Middle Ages*, edited by J.J. Cohen, 19-34. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Alexander, M. 2007 *Medievalism: The Middle Ages in Modern England* London and New Haven: Yale University Press

Alexander, P. 1982. *Roy Campbell: A Critical Biography* Cape Town: David Philip.

Allington, D. 2008. *Discourse and the Reception of Literature: Problematising 'Reader Response'*. Stirling: University of Stirling Press.

Amendt-Raduege, A. 2008. "Barrows, Wights, and Ordinary People: The Unquiet Dead in J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*." In *The Mirror Crack'd: Fear and Horror in J.R.R. Tolkien's Major Works*, edited by L. Forest-Hill, 139-150. Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Anderson, D.A. (ed.) 2003. *The Annotated Hobbit: Revised and Expanded Edition*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company.

Anderson, D.A. (ed.) 2003a. *Tales Before Tolkien: The Roots of Modern Fantasy*. New York and Toronto: The Random House Publishing Group.

Anderson, D.A. and V. Flieger. 2008. *Tolkien On Fairy Stories*. London: HarperCollins Publishers.

Artamonova, M. 2010. “Writing For An Anglo-Saxon Audience in the Twentieth Century: J.R.R. Tolkien’s Old English Chronicles.” In *Anglo-Saxon Culture and the Modern Imagination*, edited by D. Clark and N. Perkins, 71-88. Cambridge: D.S. Brewer.

Attebery, B. 1992. *Strategies of Fantasy*. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press.

Attebery, B. 2022. *Fantasy: How It Works*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bahn, P.G. 2012. *Archaeology: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Baucom, I. 1999. *Out of Place: Englishness, Empire, and the Location of Identity*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Becker, D. 1991. *On Wings of Eagles: South Africa’s Military Aviation History*. Durban: Ramus-Trading Co. Publishers.

Bergen, R.A. 2017. “A Warp of Horror: J.R.R. Tolkien’s Sub Creations of Evil.” *Mythlore* Vol. 36. No. 1, 103-119.

Bilbo, T. 1946. *Take Your Choice: Separation or Mongrelization*. Poplarville: Dream House Publishing Company.

Birns, N. 2007. “The Enigma of Radagast: Revision, Melodrama and Depth.” *Mythlore* Vol. 26 No. 99/100, 13-128.

Birns, N. 2012. “‘You Have Grown Very Much’: The Scouring of the Shire and the Novelistic Aspects of *The Lord of the Rings*.” *Journal of the Fantastic in the Arts* Vol. 23 No. 1 (84) , 82-101.

—. 2024. *The Literary Role of History in the Fiction of J.R.R. Tolkien*. New York and London: Routledge.

Blackwood, A. 2008. *The Willows*. New Delhi: Prabhat Books.

Blanton, C. 2002. *Travel Writing: The Self and the World*. New York: Routledge.

Bloom, H. (ed.). 2008. *Bloom’s Modern Critical Interpretations: The Lord of the Rings*. New York: Infobase Publishing.

Boucher, L., J. Carey, and K. Ellinghaus. 2009. *Re-Orienting Whiteness*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Bowers, J.M. 2019. *Tolkien's Lost Chaucer*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bowles, N. 2003. "'Revenge and Recovery": High Fantasy, Imperialism and the White Male Reader'." In *Images of Masculinity in Fantasy Fiction*, edited by S. Fendler and U. Horstmann, 205-224. Lewiston: The Edwin Mellon Press.

Bowman, M.R. 2010. "Refining the Gold: Tolkien, The Battle of Maldon, and the Northern Theory of Courage." *Tolkien Studies* Vol. 7: 91-115.

Boyce, R. "The Persistence of Anglo-Saxonism in Britain and the Origins of Britain's Appeasement Policy Towards Germany." *Politique, Culture, Societé* Vol. 15: 1-15.

Boyden, P., A.J. Guy, and M. Harding. 2001. *'Ashes and Blood': The British Army in South Africa 1795-1914*. Coventry: The Clifford Press.

Bradbury, M., and F. McFarlane. 1991. *Modernism: 1890-1930*. London: Penguin Books.

Brantlinger, P. 1988. *Rule of Darkness: British Literature and Imperialism 1830-1914*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

—. 2003 . *Dark Vanishings: Discourse on the Extinction of the Primitive Races, 1800-1930*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

—. 2009. *Victorian Literature and Postcolonial Studies*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

—. 2011. *Taming Cannibals: Race and the Victorians*. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2011.

—. 2012. "Imperial Gothic." In *The Victorian Gothic: An Edinburgh Companion*, edited by W. Hughes and A. Smith, 217-233. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Bratman, D.S. 1997. 'Tolkien, John Ronald Reul' in J. Clute and J. Grant (eds). *The Encyclopedia of Fantasy*, 950-955. New York: Orbit Books.

Bredin, M. 2001. *The Pale Abyssinian: A Life of James Bruce, African Explorer and Adventurer*. London: Flamingo.

Bridgewater, S. 2010. "Staying Home and Travelling: Stasis Versus Movement in Tolkien's Mythos." In *Middle-earth and Beyond: Essays on the World of J.R.R. Tolkien*, edited by K. Dubs and J. Kasca, 20-40. Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Brin, D. 2008. *The Lord of the Rings: J.R.R. Tolkien versus the Modern Age*. Ann Arbor: Nimble Books LLC.

Brogan, H. 1997. *Signalling From Mars: The Letters of Arthur Ransome*. London: Jonathan Cape.

Brown, C. 2015. “The Military, Race and Resistance: The Conundrums of Recruiting Black South African Men During the Second World War.” In *Africa and World War II*, edited by C.A. Brown, J. Byfield, T. Parsons and A. Sikainga, 71-88. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Brown, D. 2006. “From Isolation to Community: Frodo’s Incomplete Personal Quest in *The Lord of the Rings*.” *Mythlore* 25 1/2: 163-173.

Buchan, J. 1931. *The Novel and the Fairy Tale*. London: Oxford University Press.

—. 1981. *Prester John*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.

Buchs, P. and T. Honegger. 2004. *News from the Shire and Beyond:Studies on Tolkien*. Zurich and Berne: Walking Tree Publishers.

Bunting, N. 2017. “Tolkien's Homecoming.” *Journal of the Marion E. Wade Center* 34: 31-46.

Burger, P.R. 2001. *The Political Unconscious of the Fantasy Sub-Genre*. Lewiston and Queenstown: Edwin Mellen Press.

Burgess, G. (ed.). 1990. *The Song of Roland*. London: Penguin Books.

Burns, M. 2005. *Perilous Realms: Celtic and Norse in Tolkien’s Middle-earth*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press

Bushell, S. 2020. *Reading and Mapping Fiction Spatialising the Literary Text.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Butts, D. 1992. “The Adventure Story.” In *Stories and Society: Childrens’ Stories in Social Context*, edited by D. Butts. 65-83. Basingstoke: Macmillan.

Butts, D. 2002. “The Birth of the Boys’ Story and the Transition from the Robinsonades to the Adventure Story.” *Revue De Littérature Comparée* Vol. 4 no 304: 445-454.

Butts, D. 2008. “Exploiting a Formula: The Adventure Stories of G.A. Henty (1832-1902).” In *Popular Childrens’ Literature in Britain*, edited by J. Briggs, D. Butts and M. Grenby, 149-164. London and New York: Routledge.

Byfield, J.A., C.A. Brown, T. Parsons, and A.A. Sikainga. 2015. *Africa and World War II*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Byrne, A. 2016. *Otherworlds: Fantasy and History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Campbell, L. 2011. *The Ecological Augury in the Works of J.R.R. Tolkien*. Zurich and Jena: Walking Tree Publishers.

Carpenter, H. 1978. *The Inklings: C.S. Lewis, J.R.R. Tolkien, Charles Williams, and Their Friends*. London: George Allen and Unwin.

—. 1981. *The Letters of J.R.R. Tolkien*. George Allen and Unwin: George Allen and Unwin, 1981.

—. 1995. *J.R.R. Tolkien: A Biography*. London: HarperCollinsPublishers.

Cavell, M. 2018. “Arachnaphobia and Early English Literature.” *New Medieval Literatures* Vol. 18: 1-43.

Challis, D. 2010. “The Ablest Race: the Ancient Greeks in Victorian Racial Theory.” In *Classics and Imperialism in the British Empire*, edited by M. Badley, 94-122. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Chance, J. (ed.) 2003. *Tolkien the Medievalist*. London and New York: Routledge.

—. 2006. “Subversive Fantasies: Tolkien on Class Difference.” In *The Lord of the Rings 1954-2004: Scholarship in Honor of Richard E. Blackwelder*, edited by W.G. Hammond and C. Scull, 153-168. Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 2006.

—. 2016. *Tolkien, Self and Other: “This Queer Creature”*. Kindle edition. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Chance, J. and A.K. Siewers (eds). 2005. *Tolkien's Modern Middle Ages*. Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Chapman, R. 2013. *The Power of Writing: How Home Can be Found After Exile and War* (unpubl. Honours Essay). Grand Valley State University.

Childs , P. 2008. *Modernism*. London and New York: Routledge.

Chism, C. 2003. “Middle-earth, the Middle Ages, and the Aryan Nation: Myth and History in World War II.” In *Tolkien the Medievalist*, edited by J. Chance, 63-92. London and New York: Routledge.

Christie, E.J. 2014. “The Idea of an Elephant: Aelfric of Eynsham, Epistemology and the Absent Animal.” *Neophilologus* Vol. 98, no 3 (July): 465-479.

Clark, G., and D. Timmons. 2000. *J.R.R. Tolkien and His Literary Resonances: Views of Middle-earth*. Westport: Greenwood Press.

Clute, J. and B. Stapleford 1997 ‘Books Within Books’. In J. Clute and J. Grant (eds). *Encyclopedia of Fantasy*. 139-140. New York: Orbit Books.

Coan, S. (ed.). 2000. *Diary of an African Journey: The Return of Rider Haggard*. Pietermaritzburg: University of Natal Press.

Coetzee, J.M. 2007. *White Writing: On the Culture of Letters in South Africa*. Braamfontein: Pentz Publishers.

Colls, R. 2002. *Identity of England*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Constantine, S. and M. Harper. 2014. *Migration and Empire*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Cornwell, G., D. Klopper, and C. MacKenzie. 2012. *The Columbia Guide to South African Literature in English Since 1945*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Courlander, H. 1996. *A Treasury of African Folklore*. New York: Marlowe and Company.

Coutras, L. 2016. *Tolkien's Theology of Beauty, Majesty, Splendor, and Transcendence in Middle-earth*. New York and London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Crawford, P. 2014 *The War of the Three Gods: Romans, Persians and the Rise of Islam*. Barnsley: Pen and Sword Books.

Croft, J B. 2004. *War and the Works of J.R.R. Tolkien*. Westport and London: Praeger.

—. 2014. "War." In *A Companion to J.R.R.Tolkien*, edited by S.D. Lee, 461-472. Malden: Wiley and Sons.

Curry, P. 1999. *Defending Middle-earth: Tolkien, Myth and Modernity*. London: HarperCollins.

2005. "Tolkien and His Critics: A Critique." In *Root and Branch: Approaches towards Understanding Tolkien*, edited by T. Honegger, 75-139. Zurich: Walking Tree Publishers.

—. 2008. "Enchantment in Tolkien and Middle-earth." In *Tolkien's Lord of the Rings: Sources of Inspiration*, edited by S. Caldecott and T. Honegger, 92-118. Zurich and Berne: Walking Tree Publishers.

—. 2011. *Ecological Ethics: An Introduction*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

—. 2014. *Deep Roots in A Time of Frost: Essays on Tolkien*. Zurich and Jena: Walking Tree Publishers.

—. 2014. “The Critical Response to Tolkien's Fiction.” In *A Companion to J.R.R. Tolkien*, edited by S.D. Lee, 369-388. Chichester: Wiley Blackwell.

Curtin, P.D. 1964. *The Image of Africa: British Ideas and Action, 1780 - 1850*. Vol. 1. Madison and London: The University of Wisconsin Press.

Cutler, C.J. 2018. “Turning Back the Tides: the Anglo-Saxon Vice of *Ofermod* in Tolkien's *Fall of Arthur*.” *Mythlore* Vol. 37, no. 1: 63-79.

D'Amore, M. (ed.). 2021. *The Uncanny and the Afterlife of the Gothic*. London: Interdisciplinary Discourses.

Danielson, S. 2020. “Extending Arda: Mapping beyond The Lord of the Rings and Silmarillion.” Journal of Tolkien Research, 11 no. 1 Article 8: 1-23.

Das, N. and T. Youngs. 2019. Eds. *The Cambridge History of Travel Writing*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Davidson, P. 2005. *The Idea of the North*. London: Reaktion Books.

Dawson, G. 1994. *Soldier Heroes: British Adventure, Empire and the Imagining of Masculinities*. London: Routledge,.

De Kock, L. 1996. *Civilising Barbarians: Missionary Narrative and African Textual Response in Nineteenth-Century South Africa*. Johannesburg: Wits University Press.

Deane, B. 2014. *Masculinity and the New Imperialism: Rewriting Manhood in British Popular Literature, 1870-1914*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Dickerson, M., and J. Evans. 2006. *Ents, Elves and Eriador: The Environmental Vision of J.R.R. Tolkien*. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky.

Dixon, R. 1995. *Writing the Colonial Adventure: Race, Gender and Nation in Anglo-Australian Popular Fiction, 1875-1914*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Dollard, E.L. 2008. *J.R.R. Tolkien’s Lord of the Rings and Appropriation*. Liverpool: University of Liverpool Press.

Driver, F. 2001. *Geography Militant: Cultures of Exploration and Empire*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Ltd.

Drout, M.C. 2004. “A Mythology for Anglo-Saxon England.” In *Tolkien and the Invention of Myth: A Reader*, edited by J. Chance. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky.

—. 2006. “Towards a Better Tolkien Criticism.” In *Reading The Lord of the Rings: New Writings on Tolkien’s Classic*, edited by R. Eaglestone, 15-28. London: Bloomsbury Publishing.

—. 2013. “The Ruin and the City.” In *J.R.R. Tolkien: The Forest and the City*, edited by O. Brian, H. Conrad and G. Hynes, 175-192. Chicago: Four Courts Press.

Drout, M., and H.S.Z. Wynne. 2000. “Tom Shippey's 'J.R.R. Tolkien: Author of the Century' and a Look Back at Tolkien.” *Envoi* 9, no. 2: 101 - 167.

Dunai, A. 2019. “Ofermod and Aristocratic Chivalry in J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*.” *Journal of Tolkien Research* 8, no. 1 Article 1: 1 - 20.

Du Plessis-Hay 2022 ‘There and Back Again”: Reading Tolkien’s Fantasy in South Africa’ *English in Africa* vol 49, no. 3 93-110

Duriez, C. 2003. *J.R.R. Tolkien and C.S. Lewis: The Story of their Friendship*. Thrupp Stroud: Sutton Publishing.

Duriez, C., and D. Porter. 2001. *The Inklings handbook: A Comprehensive Guide to the Lives, Thought And Writings of C.S. Lewis, J.R.R. Tolkien, Charles Williams, Owen Barfield and their Friends*. St Louis: Chalice Press.

During, S. 1991. “New Historicism.” *Text and Performance Quarterly* 11, no. 3: 171-189.

Ekman, S. 2013. *Here Be Dragons: Exploring Fantasy Maps and Settings*. Middletown: Wesleyan University Press.

Ekstein, M. 2012. *Rites of Spring: The Great War and the Birth of the Modern Age*. Toronto: Vintage.

Elgin, D D. 1985. *The Comedy of the Fantastic: Ecological Perspectives on the Fantasy Novel*. Westport: Greenwood Press.

Esonwanne, U. 2012. *Orality and the Genres of African Postcolonial Writing*. Vol. 1, chap. 6 in *The Cambridge History of Postcolonial Literature*, edited by A Quayson, 137 - 170. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Fabian, J. 2014. *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes its Object*. New York: Columbia Press, 2014.

Ferdynus, K. 2016. “The Shadow of the Past: The Lord of the Rings and the Gothic Novel’.” *New Horizons in English Studies* 1: 32-42.

Filmer, K, ed. 1992. *Twentieth-Century Fantasists: Essays on Culture, Society and Belief in Twentieth-Century Mythopoeic Literature*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Fimi, D. 2009. *Tolkien, Race and Cultural History: From Fairies to Hobbits*. London and New York: Palgrave Macmillan

Fimi, D. and Higgins. A. eds. 2013. *A Secret Vice: Tolkien on Invented Languages.* London: Harper Collins.

Findlay, K N, ed. 2011. *Arthur Ransome’s Long-lost Study of Robert Louis Stevenson*. Woodbridge: The Boydell Press.

Fisher, J. 2010. “Sourcing Tolkien's "Circles of the World": Speculations on the Heimskringla, the Latin Vulgate Bible, and the Hereford Mappa Mundi.” In *Middle-earth and Beyond: Essays on the World of J.R.R. Tolkien*, edited by K Dubs and J Kascakova, 1-18. Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Flieger, V R. 2004. “Frodo and Aragorn: The Concept of the Hero.” In *Understanding The Lord of the Rings: the Best of Tolkien Criticism*, edited by N Isaacs and R A Zimbardo, 122-145. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Flieger, V. 1983. *Splintered Light Logos and Language in Tolkien's World*. Grand Rapids: William B Eedman's Publishing Company.

—. 2003. “Tolkien’s Wild Men: From Medieval to Modern.” In *Tolkien the Medievalist*, edited by J Chance, 95-105. London and New York: Routledge.

—. 2017. *There Would Always Be A Fairy-Tale: More Essays on Tolkien*. Kent: Kent State University Press, 2017.

Flieger, V, and D A Anderson. 2008. *Tolkien On Fairy Stories*. London and New York: HarperCollins.

Fonstead, K. 2004. *Atlas of J.R.R. Tolkien’s Middle-earth*. London: Grafton.

Forest-Hill, L, and M Horton M. 2014 “The Inspiration for Tolkien’s Ring.” *History Today* 64, no. 1,: 1-5.

Foster, J. 2008. *Washed with Sun: Landscape and the Making of White South Africa*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh University Press.

Free, M. 2016. “Fault Lines of Loyalty: Kipling’s Boer War.” *Victorian Studies* 58, no. 2: 314-323.

Frye, N. 1957. *Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Gallagher, C., and S Greenblatt. 2000 *Practising New Historicism*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press.

Garth, J. 2004. *Tolkien and the Great War - The Threshold of Middle-earth*. London: HarperCollins Publishers.

—.2008. ‘”As Under A Green Sea”: Visions of War in the Dead Marshes’ in S. Wells. Ed. *The Ring Goes Ever On: Proceedings of the 2005 Tolkien Conference*. 9-21. Coventry: The Tolkien Society.

—. 2014. “‘The Road From Adaptation to Invention”: How Tolkien Came to the Brink of Middle-earth in 1914.” *Tolkien Studies* 11 (2014): 1 - 44.

Geertz, C. 1983. *Local Knowledge: Further Essays in Interpretive Anthropology*. New York: Basic Books Inc..

Giblett, R. 2015. “Theology of Wetlands: Tolkien and Beowulf on Marshes and Their Monsters.” *Green Letters: Studies in Ecocriticism* 1 Issue 2: 132-143.

—. 2018 *Environmental Humanities and Theologies: Ecoculture, Literature and the Bible* London and New York: Routledge.

Gikandi, S. 1996. *Maps of Englishness: Writing Identity in the Culture of Colonialism*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Giliomee, H, and B Mbenga. 2007. *New History of South Africa*. Cape Town: Tafelberg Publishers.

Gillett, A. 2009. “The Mirror of Jordanes: Concepts of the Barbarian, Then and Now.” In *A Companion to Late Antiquity*, edited by P Rousseau, 392-408. Malden and Oxford: Wiley Blackwell.

Gilliver et al, P. 2006. *The Ring of Words: Tolkien and the Oxford English Dictionary*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Girouard, M. 1981. *The Return to Camelot: Chivalry and the English Gentleman* London: Yale University Press, 1981.

Glover, W. 2020. “Where many paths and errands meet: Travel Writing in *The Lord of the Rings*.” *Journal of Tolkien Research* 9, no. 2: 1-30.

Glyer, D.P. 2016. *Bandersnatch: C.S. Lewis, J. R. R. Tolkien, and the Creative Collaboration of the Inklings*. Kent: Black Squirrel Books.

Goodrich, M J, M Breann Leake, and M Rambaran-Olm. “The Stakes of the Field.” *Postmedieval: a Journal of Medieval and Cultural Studies* 11, no. 4 (2020): 356-370.

Gorelike, B. 2014. "Africa ... always moves me deeply": Tolkien in Bloemfontein.’ *Mallorn: The Journal of the Tolkien Society* vol 55:1-9.

Gorman, D. 2006. *Imperial Citizenship: Empire and the Question of Belonging*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Gray, R. (ed.) 1992. *A Tribute to J.R.R. Tolkien: 3 January 1892- 2 September 1973 Centenary.* Pretoria: Unisa Press

Gray, W. 2008. *Fantasy, Myth and the Meaning of Truth: Tales of Pullman, Lewis, Tolkien, Macdonald and Hoffman*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Green, M. 1992. “Adventurers Stake Their Claim: the Adventure Tale’s Bid for Status 1876-1914.” In *Decolonizing Tradition: New Views of Twentieth-Century British Literary Canons,* edited by K R Lawrence. Chicago and Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

Griffiths, G. 2012. “Postcolonialism and Travel Writing.” In *The Cambridge History of Postcolonial Literature,* edited by A Quayson, 58-80. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Groom, N. 2012. *The Gothic: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Groom, N. 2022. *Twenty-First-Century Tolkien: What Middle-Earth Means To Us Today.* London: Atlantic Books

Grotta, D 1992. *J.R.R. Tolkien: Architect of Middle-earth.* London: Running Press,

Grybauskas, P. A. 2021. *Sense of Tales Untold: Exploring the Edges of Tolkien’s Literary Canvas*. Kent: The Kent State University Pres, 2021.

Grybauskas, P. 2011 “Dialogic War: From the Battle of Maldon to the War of the Ring.” *Mythlore:* 29, no. 3 , Article 5 37 - 56.

Grybauskas, P, ed. *The Battle of Maldon Together with the Homecoming of Beorhtnoth*. London: HarperCollins Publishers Ltd, 2023.

Haggard, H R. 1902. *Rural England: Being an Account of the Agricultural and Social Researches Carried Out in 1901 and 1902.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Haggard, H.R. 1967. *King Solomon's Mines.* New York: Arrow Publishing.

—. 1991. *She*: *An African Adventure*: Oxford : Oxford University Press.

Hahn, T. 2001. "The Difference the Middle Ages Makes: Color and Race Before the Modern World." *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 31, no. 1: 1-37.

Hall, A T P. 2013. "You Tempt me Grievously to a Mythological Essay": J. R. R. Tolkien's Correspondence with Arthur Ransome." *In Ex Philologia Lux: Essays in Honour of Leena Kahlas-Tarkka*, edited by J Tyrkkö, O Timofeeva and M Salenius, 261 - 280. Helsinki: Société Néophilologique.

Hammond, W G, and C Scull. 2014. *The Lord of the Rings: A Reader's Companion.* London: HarperCollins.

Hannaford, A. 1996. *Race: the History of an Idea in the West.* Washington: Woodrow Wilson Press.

Harris, J M. 2008*. Folklore and the Fantastic in Nineteenth-Century British Fiction*. New York and London: Routledge.

Harrison, J. 2021 ""Escape and Consolation"': Gondor as the Ancient Mediterranean and Rohan as the Germanic World in The Lord of the Rings." In *Tolkien and the Classical World,* edited by H Williams, 329-348. Zurich and Jena: Walking Tree Publishers

Hattersley. 2002 *The Edwardians*. London: Abacus.

Haynes, R. 2019. "Travel Writing and the Desert." In *The Cambridge History of Travel Writing*, edited by N Das and T Youngs, 315 - 329. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Helms, R. 1974. *Tolkien's World*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.

Heng, G. 2018. *The Invention Of Race In the European Middle Ages*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Higham, N J, and M J Ryan (eds). 2010. *The Landscape Archaeology of Anglo-Saxon England*. Woodbridge: The Boydell Press.

Hill, M, ed. 1997. *Whiteness: A Critical Reader*. New York and London: New York University Press

Himmelfarb, G. 1995. *Victorian Minds: A Study of Intellectuals in Crisis and Ideologies in Transition*. London: Rowman and Littlefield.

Hix 2004 M.R. 2004 *Mythologies of Power: H. Rider Haggard's Influence on J.R.R. Tolkien's Lord of the Rings* Oklahoma City: Oklahoma City University Press.

Hobb, R. 2002. "A Bar and a Quest." *In Meditations on Middle-earth,* edited by K Harber. New York: Simon and Schuster.

Hofstetter, C F. ed. 2021. *The Nature of Middle-earth: Later Writings on the Lands, Inhabitants, and Metaphysics of Middle-earth* London: HarperCollins Publishers.

Holmes R and Evans M M eds 2009 *Oxford Guide to Battles: Decisive Conflicts in History* Oxford: Oxford University Press

Honegger, T. 2006. "From Bag End to Lorien: the Creation of a Literary World." In *News from the Shire and Beyond: Studies on Tolkien*, edited by P Buchs and T Honegger, 59-81. Zurich and Berne: Walking Tree Publishers.

—. Honegger, T. 2007 "Riders, Chivalry and Knighthood in Tolkien." *Journal of Tolkien Research* 4, no. 2.

Honegger, T, ed. 2005 *Root and Branch: Approaches to Understanding Tolkien*. Second. Zurich and Berne: Walking Trees Publishers.

Honegger, T. 2011. "The Rohirrim: Anglo-Saxons on Horseback"? An Inquiry into Tolkien's Use of Sources." In *Tolkien and the Study of his Sources: Critical Essays*, edited by J Fisher, 116-132. Jefferson and London: McFarland and Company.

Hooker, M A. 2006. Tolkienian Mathomium: A Collection of Articles About J.R.R. Tolkien and His Legendarium. Cardiff: Llyfrawr.

Hooker, M. 2011. "Reading John Buchan in Search of Tolkien." In *Tolkien and the Study of His Sources*: *Critical Essays,* edited by J Fisher, 162-192. Jefferson: Mc Farland Publishing.

Hostetter, C F. 2004. "Sir Orfeo: A Middle English Version By J.R.R. Tolkien." Tolkien Studies 1, no. 1: 85-123.

Hostetter, C F, ed. 2021. *The Nature of Middle-earth: Late Writings on the Lands, Inhabitants, and Metaphysics of Middle-earth*. London: HarperCollins.

Huxley, J. 1931. *Africa View*. London: Chatto and Windus.

Hynes, S L. 1991. *A War Imagined: The First World War and English Culture* New York: Maxwell Macmillan International.

Isaacs, N.D., and R.A. Zimbardo, 2004. *Understanding The Lord of the Rings The Best of Tolkien Criticism*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company

Jackson, A.I. 2010. “Authoring the Century: J.R.R. Tolkien, the Great War and Modernity.” *English: Journal of the English Association* 59, no. 224 44–69.

Jackson, R. 2009. *Fantasy: The Literature of Subversion*. London and New York: Routledge

James, E. 2012. “Tolkien, Lewis and the Explosion of Genre Fantasy.” In *The Cambridge Companion to Fantasy Literature*, edited by E James and F Mendelssohn, 62-78. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Jeffrey, K. 1999. ‘The Second World War’ in *The Oxford History of the British Empire*, edited by J J Brown and W R Louis: 306-328. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Jenkyns, R. 1980.*The Victorians and Ancient Greece*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Kaminski-Jones, F, and R Kaminski-Jones, 2020. *Celts, Romans, Britons: Classical and Celtic Influence in the Construction of British Identities*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Kestner, J. 2010. *Masculinities in British Adventure Fiction: 1880-1915*. Farnham: Ashgate Publishing.

Killingray, D, and M Plaut. 2010 *Fighting for Britain: African Solders in the Second World War*. Woodbridge and Rochester: James Curry.

Kim, S M, and A S Mittman. 2013. *Inconceivable Beasts: The “Wonders of the East” in the Beowulf Manuscript*. Tempe: Arizona Centre for Medieval and Renaissance Studies.

King, D W. 2020. “When did the Inklings Meet? A Chronological Survey of their Gatherings: 1933-1954.” *Journal of Inklings Studies* 10, no. 2 184–204.

Kinoshita, S. 2019. “Medieval Travel Writing: Beyond the Pilgrimage.” In *The Cambridge History of Travel Writing*, edited by N Das and T Youngs, 48-61. Cambridge : Cambridge University Press.

Kipling, R 1977. *Kipling A Selection* by James Cochrane. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books Ltd, 1977.

Kisor, Y, and C Vaccaro, 2017*. Tolkien and Alterity*. New York and London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Kistler, J M. 2006. *War Elephants*. Westport and London: Praeger.

Knoepflmacher, U C. 1998. “Introduction.” In *George Macdonald The Complete Fairy Tale*s, xvii - xxi. London: Penguin Books.

Kocher, P. 2002. *Master of Middle-earth: The Achievement of J.R.R. Tolkien*. London: Pimlico.

Kumar, K. 2003. *The Making of English National Identity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Kundu, P. 2014. “The Anglo-Saxon War Culture and *The Lord of the Rings*: Legacy and Reappraisal*.” War, Literature and the Arts: an International Journal of the Humanities* 26: 1-16.

Kutzer, D 2000. *Empire’s Children: Empire and Imperialism in Classic British Childrens’ Books.* New York: Garland Publishing.

Lake, M. 2010 “Essentially Teutonic: E A Freeman, Liberal Race Historian.” In *Race, Nation, and Empire: Making Histories 1750 to the Present*, edited by C. Hall and K. McClelland. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Lambert, J. 2008. “‘Their Finest Hour’- English-Speaking South Africans and World War ll*.” South African Historical Journal* 60: 60-84.

Lambert, J. 2010. “The Last Outpost.” In *Settlers and Expatriates: Britons over the Seas*, edited by R Bickers, 677-698. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Larrington, C. 2015. *Land of the Green Man: A Journey through the Supernatural Landscapes of the British Isles*. London: I B Tauris.

Lavezzo, K. 2021 “Whiteness, Medievalism, Immigration: Rethinking Tolkien Through Stuart Hall*.” Postmedieval a Journal of Medieval and Cultural Studies* 12, no. 2 :29-51.

Le Guin, U K. 1975 *From Elfland to Poughkeepsie*. Portland: Pendragon Press.

Lee, S, and E Solopova. 2015. *The Keys of Middle-earth Discovering Medieval Literature Through the Fiction of J.R.R.Tolkien*. Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan.

LeFanu, S. 2020. *Something of Themselves: Kipling, Kingsley, Doyle and the Anglo-Boer War*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Levine, P. 2006. “Sexuality and Empire.” In *At Home with the Empire: Metropolitan Culture and the Imperial World*, edited by C Hall and S O Rose, 122-142. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Librano-Moreno, M. 2011 ““Byzantium, New Rome!” Goths, Langobards, and Byzantium in The Lord of the Rings.” In *Tolkien and The Study of His Sources: Critical Essays*, edited by j Fisher, 84-116. Jefferson: Mc Farland and Company.

Liebeschuetz, W. 2015. *East and West in Late Antiquity: Invasion, Settlement, Ethnogenesis and Conflicts of Religion*. Leiden: Brill.

Little, E. 1984. *The Fantasts; Studies in J.R.R. Tolkien, Lewis Carroll, Mervyn Peake, Nikolay Gogol, and Kenneth Grahame.* Amersham: Avery Publishing Company.

Liu, L. 2019. “The Analysis of J.R.R.Toliken’s Ecological Responsibility Consciousness in "The Lord of the Rings".” *Theory and Practice in* Language Studies 9, no. 10: 1337-1341.

Livingstone, M. 2006. “The Shell-Shocked Hobbit: The First World War and Tolkien's Trauma of the Ring.” *Mythlore*:, 25, no. 1, Article 6: 77-92.

Lobdell, J, ed. 1975 *A Tolkien Compass: Fascinating Studies and Interpretations of J.R.R. Tolkien's Most Popular Epic Fantasies*.. La Salle: Open Court Publishers

—. 2004. *The World of the Rings: Language, Religion, and Adventure in Tolkien*. Chicago and La Salle: Open Court Publishers.

—. 2005. *The Rise of Tolkienian Fantasy*. Chicago and La Salle: Open Court Publishers.

Logan, M K. 1999. *Narrating Africa George Henty and the Fiction of Empire*. New York and London: Garland Publishing.

London, J. 1908. “To Build a Fire.” *The Century Magazine* 76, no. August: 525 - 534.

Lopez, A J, ed. 2005. *Postcolonial Whiteness A Critical Reader on Race and Empire*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Low, G. 1996. *White Skins Black Masks: Representation and Colonialism*. London: Routledge

Lownie, A. 2013. *John Buchan: The Presbyterian Cavalier*. London: Thistle.

Lunn, A. 1914. *The Alps*. London: Williams and Norgate.

Lupoff, R A. 2015. *Master of Adventure: The Worlds of Edgar Rice Burroughs* London: Science Fiction Gateway.

Lyons, M. 2004. *There and Back Again: In* the *Footsteps of J.R.R. Tolkien*. London: Cadogan.

MacDonald, G. 1998 “The Fantastic Imagination.” In *The Complete Fairy Tales*, 1-14. London: Penguin Books.

MacDonald, K. 2014. “Introduction.” In *John Buchan and the Idea of Modernity*, edited by K Macdonald and N Waddell, 1-16. London: Pickering and Chatto.

Macdonald, K. 2015. *Transitions in Middlebrow Writing: 1880-1930*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Macdonald, K, and N Waddell. 2016. *John Buchan and the Idea of Modernity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

MacDonald, R H. 1993. *Sons of the Empire: The Frontier and the Boy Scout Movement, 1890-1918.* Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press.

—.1994. *The Language of Empire: Myths and Metaphors of Popular Imperialism 1880-1914*. Manchester: Manchester University Press

MacDougall, 1982. H A. *Racial myth in English History: Trojans, Teutons, and Anglo-Saxons*. Montreal and Hanover: Harvest House Limited and University Press of New England.

Mallet, P. 2015. “Masculinity, Imperialism and the Novel.” In *The Victorian Novel and Masculinity,* edited by P Mallett, 151-171. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Mandler, P. 2006. *The English National Character: the History of an Idea From Edmund Burke to Tony Blair*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Manlove, C N. 1975. *Modern Fantasy Five Studies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Martin, A E. 2017. “Potentially the Noble Creature? Picturing Heroism in Henry Rider Haggard’s She.” *In Heroes and Heroism in British Fiction Since 1800,* edited by B B Korte and S Lethbridge, 47-66. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Martin, G. 2002. “Introduction.” In *Meditations on Middle-earth*, edited by K Harber. New York: Simon and Schuster.

Mathews, R. 1978. *Lightning from a Clear Sky: Tolkien, the Trilogy and the Silmarilion*. San Bernadino: Borgo Press.

Matless, D 1998. *Landscape and Englishness*. London: Reaktion Books.

Matthews, J. T 2001. *The Quest for the Green Man*. Newton Abbot: Godsfield Press.

Matthews, R. 2002. *Fantasy: The Liberation of Imagination*. London and New York: Routledge.

Mayor, A. 2009. *Greek Fire, Poison Arrows, and Scorpion Bombs: Biological and Chemical Warfare in the* Ancient World. New York and London: Overlook Duckworth.

Mc Carthy, F 1995. *William Morris: A Life for Our Time*. London: Faber and Faber.

Mc Cracken-Flesher, C. 2010. "Travel Writing." In *The Edinburgh Companion to* R L *Stevenson,* edited by P Fielding, 102-117. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Mc Fadden, B. 2005. "Authority and Discourse in the Liber Monstrorum." *Neophilologus* 89, no. 3 .473-493.

McFadden, B. 2005. "Fear of Difference, Fear of Death: The Sigelwara, Tolkien's Swertings and Racial Difference." In *Tolkien's Modern Middle A*ges, edited by J J Chance and K Siewers, 155-170. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan,

McLeish, K. 1983. ""The Rippingest Yarn of All"." In *J.R.R. Tolkien: This Far Land*, edited by R Giddings, 125-136. London: Vision Press.

McGowan, T. 2022. *The Racist Fantasy: Unconscious Roots of Hatred*. New York: Bloomsbury Academic.

McKenzie, J. 1999. "Empire and Metropolitan Cultures." In *The Oxford History of the British Empire: The Nineteenth Century*, edited by A Porter ed., 270-293. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Meihuizen, N. 2007. *Ordering Empire: The Poetry of Camoes, Pringle and Campbell.* Bern: Peter Lang.

Melman, B. 2006. "The Middle East/Arabia: 'the Cradle of Islam." In *The Cambridge Companion to Travel Writing,* edited by P P Hulme and T Youngs, 105-121. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Miller, J. 2003.“Alternative Masculinities and the “Dominion of Men”’ in *The Lord of the Rings.”* In *Images of Masculinity in Fantasy Fiction,* edited by S Fendler and U Horstmann, 183-204. Lewiston: The Edwin Mellen Press.

Mills, C. 2022. “The Wretched of Middle-Earth: an Orkish Manifesto.” *The Southern Journal of Philosophy* 0, no. 0: 1-31.

Mills, S. 2006. *Discourse*. London and New York: Routledge.

Mittman, A.S. 2006 *Maps and Monsters in Medieval England*. London: Routledge

Mittman, A S. 2015. “Are the “Monstrous Races” races?” *Postmedieval: A Journal of Medieval Cultural Studies* 6.: 36-51.

Mohn, A. 2013. *History of Middle-earth as Seen by the Barbarians*. Scotts Valley: Create Space Publishing.

Moorcock, M. 2004. *Wizardry and Wild Romance A Study of Epic Fantasy*. London: Victor Gollancz.

Morillo, S. 2011. “The Entwives: Investigating the Spiritual Core of The Lord of the Rings.” In *The Ring and the Cross: Christianity and the Writings of J.R.R. Tolkien*, edited by P E Kerry, 106-118. . Madison:: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press.

Mortimer, P. 2005. “Tolkien and Modernism.” *Tolkien Studies* 2 (1) (2005): 113-129.

Moseley, C. J. 1997. *J. R. R. Tolkien*. Plymouth: Northcote House Publishers

Nagel, R. 2008. “Shelob and Her Kin: The Evolution of Tolkien’s Spiders.” In *The Mirror Crack’d: Fear and Horror in Tolkien’s Major Works*, edited by L Forest-Hill, 81-92. Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing

Nasson, B. 2012. *South Africa at War: 1939-1945*. Auckland Park: Jacana Publishing.

Nelson, D. 2007. “Literary Influences, Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries.” *In J.R.R. Tolkien Encyclopedia: Scholarship and Critical Assessment*, edited by M Drout, 367-377. London: Routledge.

Nelson, D. 2004. “Possible Echoes of Blackwood and Dunsany in Tolkien's Fantasy.” *Tolkien Studies* 1:177-181.

Newman, J K. 2005. “J.R.R. Tolkien's "The Lord of the Rings": A Classical Perspective.” *Illinois Classical Studies* 30 :229-247.

Nicolay, C F. 2014. *Tolkien Among the Modernists: Literary Responses to the Dark New Days of the Twentieth-Century*. Jefferson and London: Mc Farland Publishing.

Opland, J. 1980.*Anglo-Saxon Oral Poetry.* New Haven and London: Yale University Press.

Opreanu, L. 2011. “The inescapable other - Identity transitions and mutations in the construction of Tolkien's Gollum / Sméagol.” *University of Bucharest Review* 1, no. 151-159.

Ordway, H. 2021. *Tolkien’s Modern Reading*: *Reading Middle-earth Beyond the Middle Ages.* Park Ridge: Word on Fire Publishers.

Orel, H. 1995. *The Historical Novel from Scott to Sabatini Changing Attitudes toward* a *Literary Genre, 1814 to 1920*. New York: St Martin's Press.

Parker, E. 2020 .*The Forest and the EcoGothic: The Deep Dark Woods of the Popular Imagination*. London and New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Parrila, Sofia. 2021. “All Worthy Things: The Personhood of Nature in J.R.R. Tolkien’s Legendarium.” *Mythlore*: vol. 40,no. 1, Article 2: 5-20.

Parsons, D. 2015. *J.R.R. Tolkien, Robert E Howard and the Birth of Modern Fantasy.* Jefferson: McFarland and Company.

Pask, K. 2013. *The Fairy Way of Writing: Shakespeare to Tolkien*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Pennycook, A. 1998. *English and the Discourses of Colonialism*. London: Routledge

Perry, M.W.U. 2006*. Untangling Tolkien A Chronology and Commentary for The Lord of the Rings*. Seattle: Inkling Books American Museum of Natural History.

Pocock, T. 1993. *Rider Haggard and the Lost Empire A Biography*. London: Weidenfield and Nicholson.

.Petty, A. 2003 . *Tolkien in the Land of Heroes*. New York: Cold Spring Harbor Press,

Phillips, R. 1997. *Mapping Men and Empire: A Geography of Adventure.* London and New York: Routledge.

Platnick, N I, and P J Solomon 2014.*. World Spider Catalalogue*. New York:

Pohl, W. 2014. “Goths and Huns.” In *A Companion to Ethnicity in the Ancient Mediterranean*, edited by J Mc Inerney, 554-568. Maldon: John Wiley and Sons.

Poon, A. 2008. *Enacting Englishness in the Victorian Period: Colonialism and the Politics of Performance*. London: Ashgate Publishing.

Porck, T. 2022. “Medieval Animals in Middle-earth J.R.R. Tolkien and the Old English and Middle English Physiologus.” In *Figurations animalières à travers les textes et l’image en Europe*, edited by A van de Haar and A Schulte Nordholt, 266-283. Leiden: Koninklijke Brill NV

Porteous, A. 2002. *The Forest in Folklore and Mythology*. Garden City and New York: Dover Publications.

Porter, C. 1990. “History and Literature: "After the New Historicism".” *New Literary History* 21, no. 2: 253 -272.

Porter, R L. 2005 *Unsung Heroes of the Lord of the Rings: from Page to the Screen*. Westport: Praeger Publishers.

—. 2008. “Enchantment in Tolkien and Middle-earth.” In *Tolkien’s Lord of the Rings: Sources of Inspiration*, edited by S. Caldecott and T. Honegger, 92-118. Zurich and Berne: Walking Tree Publishers.

Povey, J 1977. *Roy Campbell*. Boston: Twayne Publishers.

Pratt, M L. 2007. *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*. Abingdon: Taylor and Francis.

Pridmore, J. 2001 ““The Imperial Sentiment Which Prevails”: Writing To and From Natal c. 1900-1910.” In *Poetics, Linguistics, and History: Discourses of War and Conflict*: PALA Conference Papers 1999, edited by I I Biermann and A Combrink, 86-95. Potchefstroom: University of Potchefstroom Press.

Pridmore, J. 2021. “Andy Duncan’s “Senator Bilbo”: Reflections on J. R.R. Tolkien and Matters of Race.” *Scrutiny2*, 26, no. 1: 60-75.

Prior, C. 2013. *Edwardian England and the Idea of Racial Decline.* Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Proctor, J, and A Smith. 2007. “Gothic and Empire.” In *The Routledge Companion to the Gothic* edited by E Mc Evoy and C Spooner: 95-104. London and New York: Routledge.

Punter, D. 2013. “Algernon Blackwood: Nature and Spirit.” In *Ecogothic*, edited by W Hughes and A Smith, 44-58. Manchester: Manchester University Press,

Purkiss, D. 2003. *At the Bottom of the Garden: A Dark History of Faeries, Hobgoblins and Other Troublesome Things*. New York: New York University Press.

Rateliff, J.D. 1981. *“She* and Tolkien.” *Mythlore:* vol. 8, no. 2 Article 3 Fall/Winter : 6-8.

Rateliff, J D. 2011. “*She* and Tolkien Revisited.” In *Tolkien and the Study of His Sources: Critical Essays,* edited by J Fisher, 145-161. Jefferson: Mc Farland Publishing.

Reader, W J. 1988. *At Duty’s Call A Study in Obsolete Patriotism*. Manchester: Manchester Univedrsity Press.

Rearick, A. 2004. “Why is the Only Good Orc a Dead Orc? The Dark Face of Racism Examined in Tolkien’s World.” *Modern Fiction Studies* 50, no 4: 861-874.

Reid, R A. 2020. “Making or Creating Orcs: How Thorinsmut's Free Orcs AU Writes Back Back to Tolkien.” *Journal of Tolkien Research* 11, no. 2 Article 3: 1-19.

Reinhard, B. 2020.“Tolkien's Lost Knights.” *Mythlore* 39, no. 1: 177-194.

Resnick, R. 1967. “An Interview with Tolkien.” *Niekas* Vol 18: 37-43.

Rhone, Z A. 2017. *The Great Tower of Elfland the Mythopoeic Worldview of J RR Tolkien, CS Lewis, G K Chesterton and George MacDonald*. Kent: Kent State University Press.

Risden, E.L. 2015. *Tolkien’s Intellectual Landscape*. Jefferson: McFarland and Company.

Rose, J. 1996. *States of Fantasy*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Rosebury, B. 1992. *Tolkien: A Critical Assessment*. Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan

—. 2003. *Tolkien: A Cultural Phenomenon* Basingstoke and London: The Macmillan Press,

Rotberg, R I. 1973. *Africa and Its Explorers: Motives*, *Methods, and Impact.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Royle, N. 2003. *The Uncanny*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Ryan, J R. 1997. *Picturing Empire: Photography and the Visualization of the British Empire*. London: Reaktion Books.

Sabo, D. 2007. “Archaeology and the Sense of History in J.R.R. Tolkien's Middle-Earth.” *Mythlore* vol. 26, no. 1, Article 7: 91-112.

Saler, M. 2012 *As If: Modern Enchantment and the Literary Prehistory of Virtual Reality.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Sanders, J. 2005. *Adaption and Appropriation* London and New York. Routledge.

Sandner D. 1999. ‘Tracking Grendel: The Uncanny in *Beowulf’ Extrapolation* Vol 4. No. 2: 162-175.

Schama, S. 2004. *Landscape and Memory*. London: Harper Perennial.

Schwarz, B. 2011. *Men of Empire: the White Man’s World*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Shippey, T.A. 1996 ‘’Tolkien as a Post-War Writer” *Mythlore* Vol. 21, no. 2: 84-93.

1999 J.R. R. Tolkien: *Author of the Century* London: HarperCollins

2002 *The Road to Middle-earth: How J.R.R. Tolkien Created A New Mythology*. London: HarperCollins.

2013. T.A. “Goths and Romans in Tolkien’s Imagination.” In *J.R.R. Tolkien: The Forest and the City,* edited by H. Conrad-Brain and G. Hynes, 19-32. Dublin: Four Courts Press.

Silverberg, R. 1972 *The Realm of Prester John*. London: Phoenix Press.

Simonson, M. 2017. “The Arboreal Foundations of Stewardship in J.R.R. Tolkien's The Silmarillion.” *English Studies in Africa* 60, no. 2: 12 - 22.

Simpson, T. 2021. *History of South Africa: From 1902 to the Present* London and Johannesburg: Penguin Books and Random House Publishers.

Sinex, M. 2010. “”Monsterized Saracens”: Tolkien’s Haradrim, and Other Medieval “Fantasy Products”” *Tolkien Studies* Vol. 7: 175-196.

Skopljanac, L. 2012. “Literature through Recall: Ways of Connecting Literary Studies and Memory Studies.” *Interdisciplinary Literary Studies* 14, number 2: 197-212.

Smith, A. 2003. “Beyond: Death and the Body in H Rider Haggard.” In *Empire and the Gothic: The Politics of Genre,* edited by W Hughes and A Smith, 103-115. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Smith, J P. 2017. “Young Blood” and “the blackout”: Love, Sex and Marriage on the South African Home Front.” In *Home Fronts: Britain and the Empire at War, 1939-1945,* edited by M J Crowley and S T Dawson, 93-110. Woodbridge and Rochester (NY): The Boydell Press.

Snyder, C. 2013. *The Making of Middle-earth: A New Look inside the World of J.R.R. Tolkien*. New York: Sterling.

Sobecki, S. 2002 ‘Mandeville’s Thought of the Limit: The Discourse of Similarity and Difference in The Travels of John Mandeville’ *The Review of English Studies* vol 5, no 211 329-343

Stanton, M N. 2001. *Hobbits, Elves and Wizards: Exploring the Wonders and Worlds of JRR Tolkien’s The Lord of the Rings*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Stenton, F M. 1947. *Anglo-Saxon England* Oxford: Oxford University Press

Stepan, N. 1982. *The Idea of Race in Science: Great Britain 1800 to 1960.* Hamden: Archon Books.

Stevenson D. 2004 *1914-1918: The History of the First World War* London: Allen Lane

Stiebel, L. 1997. “The Return of the Lost City: The Hybrid Legacy of Rider Haggard’s African Romances.” *Alternation* 4 no. 2: 221-237.

Stiebel, L. 2007. “"The Thirst for the Wilderness Was on Me" Africa-as Wilderness in Rider Haggard's African Romances.” *Alternation* 14, no. 2: 9-24.

Stimpson, C. 1969. *J.R.R. Tolkien*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1969.

Stocking Jr, G W. 1987 *Victorian Anthropology*. New York: The Free Press.

Strachey, B. 1998. *Journeys of Frodo An Atlas of J.R.R. Tolkien's The Lord of the Rings*. London: HarperCollins Publishers.

Straubhaar, S B. 2004. “Myth Late Roman History and Multiculturalism in Tolkien’s Middle-Earth.” In *Tolkien and the Invention of Myth*: *A Reader,* edited by J Chance, 101-117. Lexington: University of Kentucky Press.

Street, B. 1975. *The Savage in Literature: Representations of Primitive Society in English Fiction 1858-1920*. London: Routledge.

Strickland, D. 2012. Monstrosity and Race in the Late Middle Ages.” *In The Ashgate Research Companion to Monsters and the Monstrous,* edited by P J Dendle and A S Mittman, 365-386. Farnham: Ashgate Publishing.

Stuart, R. 2022.Tolkien, *Race, and Racism in Middle-earth*. Cham: Palgrave and Macmillan.

Sussman, R W. 2014. *Race: the Troubling Persistence of a Scientific Idea.* Cambridge and London: Havard University Press.

Tally Jr, R T. 2010. “Let Us Now Praise Famous Orcs: Simple Humanity in Tolkien's Inhuman Creatures.” *Mythlore* 29, no. 1/2 : 17-28.

Taylor, N, and S Nolan. 2015 “Performing Fabulous Monsters: Re-Inventing the Gothic Personae in Bizarre Magick.” In *Monstrous Media/Spectral Gothic*: *Imaging Gothic from the Nineteenth Century to the Present*, edited by F Botting and C Spooner , 128-142. Manchester: Manchester Univiversity Press.

Thomas, B. 1991. *The New Historicism and Other Old-Fashioned Topics*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Thompson, C. 2011. *Travel Writing*. London and New York: Routledge.

Thornbury, E. 2008. “Aelfric’s Zoology.” *Neophilologus* 92 (January): 141-153.

Timmons, D. 1998. “J.R.R. Tolkien: the “Monstrous in the Mirror.” *The Journal of the Fantastic in the Arts* vol 35, no. 3:229-246.

Tolkien, C, ed. 1994. J.R.R. Tolkien *The History of Middle-earth Part 6: The Return of the Shadow* London: HarperCollins Publishers.

Tolkien, C, ed. 2002. J.R.R. Tolkien *The History of Middle-earth: Part 7: The Treason of Isengard.* London: HarperCollins Publishers.

Tolkien, C. ed. 2002. *The History of Middle-earth Volume 8: The War of the Ring* London: HarperCollins Publishers.

Tolkien, C, ed. 2002. *The History of Middle-Earth Volume 9: Sauron Defeated*. London: HarperCollins.Publishers.

Tolkien, C, ed. 2002. *The History of Middle-Earth Volume 10: Morgoth's Ring.* London: HarperCollins.Publishers

Tolkien, C, ed: 1996. *The History of Middle-earth vol. 12*: The Peoples of Middle-*earth* Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1996.

Tolkien, C, and P Tolkien. 1992. *The Tolkien Family Album*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Trevor-Roper. 1989. *The Rise of Christian Europe*. London: Thames and Hudson.

Trotter, D. 1999.“The Modernist Novel.” In *The Cambridge Companion to Modernism*, edited by M Levenson, 68-97. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Utz, R. 2017. *Medievalism A Manifesto*. Kalamazoo and Bradford: Arc Humanities Press

Van Heyningen, E. 2013*. The Concentration Camps of the Anglo-Boer War: a Social History.* Auckland Park: Jacana

Van Wyk Smith, M. 2009. *The First Ethiopians: The Image of Africa and Africans in the Early Mediterranean World*. Johannesburg: University of the Witwatersrand Press.

Vance, N. 1985. *The Sinews of the Spirit: The Ideal of Christian Manliness in Victorian Literature and Religious Thought*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Vaninskaya, A. 2014. “Modernity: Tolkien and His Contemporaries.” In Lee S. ed *A Companion to J. R. R. Tolkien*, 350 - 366. New York: John Wiley & Sons,.

Vaninskaya, A 2020. *Fantasies of Time and Death Dunsany, Eddison, Tolkien*. London and New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Vogt-Williams, C. 2017. “Tolkien’s Green Man: The Racialised Cultural Other within and Green Spaces in The Lord of the Rings.” *In Binding Them All*: *Interdisciplinary Perspectives on J.R.R. Tolkien and His Works*, edited by M Kirner-Ludwig, S Koser and S Steitberger: 305-339. Zurich and Jena: Walking Tree Publishers .

Waddall, N. 2009. *Modern John Buchan: A Critical Introduction*.:Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing

Wade, M 1993. *White on Black in South Africa: A Study of English Language Inscriptions of Skin Colour*. London: Macmillan

Waito, D M. 2010. “The Shire Quest: The 'Scouring of the Shire' as the Narrative and Thematic Focus of "The Lord of the Rings".” *Mythlore* 28, no. 3/4 (109/110) :155-177.

Ward, S, ed. 2001. *British culture nd the end of empire.* Manchester: Manchester University Press.

West Jr., J G, ed. 2002. *Celebrating Middle Earth: The Lord of the Rings as a Defense of Western Civilisation*. Seattle: Inkling Books.

West, R. C., ed. 1970. *Tolkien Criticism: An Annotated Checklist*. Kent: Kent State University Press .

White, M. 2001. *Tolkien: A Biography*. London: Penguin Books.

Whittingham, E A. 2007. *The Evolution of Tolkien's Mythology: A Study of the History of Middle-earth*. Jefferson: Mc Farland and Company.

Williams, H., ed. 2021. *Tolkien and the Classical World*. Zurich and Jena: Walking Tree Publishers.

Wingrin, D. 2012. *Tumult in the clouds: stories from the South African Air Force 1920-2010*. Pinetown: 30 Degrees South Publishers

Winnington, G P. 2006. The Voice of the Heart the working of Mervyn Peake's imagination. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press.

Wolf, M J P. 2012. *Building Imaginary Worlds: The Theory and History of Subcreation.* New York and London: Routledge.

Wood, R. C. 2015. "Tolkien and Postmodernism." in *Tolkien among the Moderns*, edited by R C Wood, 247-278. Notr Dame: University of Notre Dame Press

Wright, A. 2020. "Monstrous Strangers at The Edge of the World: The Monstrous Races." In *The Monster Theory Reader*, edited by J A Weinstock, 173-191. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press

Yorke, M. 2000. *My Eyes Mint Gold: Mervyn Peake. A Life*. London: John Murray, 2000.

Young, H. 2010. "Diversity and Difference: Cosmopolitanism and The Lord of the Rings." *Journal of the Fantastic in the Arts* 21, no. 3: 351-365.

—. 2016. *Race and Fantasy Popular Literature: Habits of Whiteness*. London and New York: Routledge.

Young, R. 2008.*The Idea of English Ethnicity.* Malden and Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell

Youngs, T. 1994. *Travellers in Africa British Travelogues, 1850 - 1900*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Zaleski, P, and C Zaleski. 2015. *The Fellowship The Literary Lives of the Inklings: J.R.R. Tolkien, C.S. Lewis, Owen Barfield, Charles Williams.* New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux.

Zetterstern, A. 2006. "The ABC Language Lives." In *The Lord of the Rings 1954-2004*: *Essays in honour of Richard E Blackwelder*, edited by W G Hammond and C Scull. Milwaukee: Marquette University Press

Zettersman, A. 2011. *J.R.R. Tolkien's Double Worlds and Creative Process: Language and Life.* New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Zimmer, H R. 1957. *The King and the Corpse: Tales of the Soul's Conquest of Evil.* Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Zipes, J. 2006. *Fairy Tales and the Art of Subversion - The Classical Genre for Children and the Process of Civilization* New York and London: Routledge.

Zipes, J. 2008. 'Why Fantasy Matters Too Much' *Comparative Literature and Culture* Vol. 10. No. 4: 2-12.

UNPUBLISHED THESES

Beasley, M H. 2019. "A Spatial Text Analysis of J. R. R. Tolkien's Middle-Earth.". University of South Carolina

Brink, E. 2017. 'Othering and Diversity in J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* Trilogy A Positive Presentation of Difference." Karlstadt Universitet.

Cameron, C S. 2017. "There and Back Again; Tolkien's Recovery of Englishness Though Walking.": University of Windsor

Fawcett, C. 2014. "J.R.R. Tolkien and the Morality of Monstrosity: University of Glasgow, 2014.

Liebher, L. 2012. "Reimagining Tolkien: A post-colonial perspective on the *Lord of the Rings*: University of Limerick.

Massey, K L. 2007. The Roots of Middle-Earth: William Morris's Influence upon J.R. R. Tolkien.": University of Tennessee.

Moe, K F. 2016. "Speak, Friend, and Enter" Interracial Friendship in the Works of J. R. R. Tolkien": University of Bergen.

Naslund, S D. 2015. A Close Reading of Provincialism in J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*: St. Cloud State University.

Painter, J L. 2015. "Inventing History: The Rhetoric of History in J. R. R. Tolkien's "*The Lord of the Rings*"." University of Pretoria.

Yalcin, O. 2015. "Racism has no place in Middle-Earth and *The Lord of the Rings*': Karabuk University