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**An Ecocritical Perspective on Medieval Myth and Fantasy in
J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings***

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the requirement for Master degree in English language: Civilization and Literature

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Dedication

I dedicate the present thesis:

To my precious parents, to my sisters and brothers, and to my friends and colleagues

Acknowledgments

This research has become a reality with the kind support and help of many individuals to whom I would like to extend my sincere thanks.

Foremost, I would like to express my gratitude to Allah.

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Abstract

Industry and Technology are considered vital, but also fatal to nature and human's life, hence, ecological awareness has appeared during the second half of the twentieth century, calling for a reconsideration of the fact that humans have only one planet that they should protect because its destruction leads, ultimately, to their own annihilation.

Therefore, the present research, namely, "An Ecocritical Perspective on Medieval Myth and Fantasy in J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*", seeks to find an answer to the question on how a modern issue such as environmentalism is represented through an imaginary medieval myth and fantasy work. Indeed, it examines the causes and effects that industry makes on the environment and the effects of the environmental pollution on the people. This research has adopted, basically, the ecocritical and ecopsychological approaches. The investigation has concluded that Tolkien uses myth and imagination as a process of defamiliarization to present the authentic and the rational that could help recover the eco-centric view of the world. Moreover, it has been found that a damaged environment is likely to cause physical and psychological alteration in human beings. This research suggests that Fantasy and children's literature genre could have pedagogical implications on the teaching of post-War II English literature at university level.

Key Words

Ecocriticism, Ecopsychology, Environment, Fantasy, Imagination, Medieval, J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Lord of the Rings*, Myth.

Abstract in Arabic

تعتبر التكنولوجيا الحديثة عنصرا فعالا ولكن يشكل تهديدا حتميا للحياة الطبيعية و البشرية. لذلك شهد النصف الثاني من القرن العشرين ظهور وعي بيئي يدعو لإعادة النظر في حقيقة أن البشر لا يملكون سوى أرض واحدة حيث يتوجب عليهم حمايتها لأن تدميرها يؤدي الى حتمية تدمير أنفسهم . استنادا على هذه الظاهرة يهدف هذا العمل تحت عنوان "منظور النقد البيئي على ميثولوجيا العصور الوسطى في رواية سيد الخواتم لجي. أر. تولكين" لدراسة كيفية تجسيد هته القضية المعاصرة عن طريق استخدام الخيال و الميثولوجيا. كما تسعى الى دراسة الأسباب و النتائج التي تسببها التكنولوجيا للبيئة ,بالإضافة إلى تأثير البيئة الملوثة على البشر. تبنت هته الدراسة منظور النقد البيئي و النقد البيئي السايكولوجي. هذه الدراسة استنتجت أن تولكين يستعمل الميثولوجيا و الخيال ليشرح ماهو منطقي و واقعي و الذي قد يساعد بدوره في استعادة النظرة الكونية المتمركزة حول البيئة. كما تم استنتاج أن البيئة المتضررة تؤدي لتأثيرات جسدية و نفسية على الأشخاص. هته الدراسة تقترح أن أدب الخيال و أدب الأطفال يمكن أن يكون لهما تأثيرات على تدريس أدب ما بعد الحرب العالمية الثانية على المستوى الجامعي.

الكلمات المفتاح

النقد البيئي, النقد البيئي السايكولوجي, البيئة, أدب الخيال, الخيال, العصور الوسطى, جي. أر. تولكين, سيد الخواتم, الميثولوجيا

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General Introduction

The Lord of the Rings is an epic and fantasy novel written by the British Fantasist J.R.R. Tolkien in three volumes *The Fellowship of the Ring* (1954), *The Two Towers* (1955), and *The Return of the King* (1956). Although the twentieth century is known for the large literary revolt against traditional literature, in inventing new forms, styles, and contexts for writing literature, Tolkien preferred to take the opposing extreme, that of the old and traditional. In addition, unexpectedly, Tolkien's *The Hobbits*, and *The Lord of the Rings* gained a very large popularity; he was hailed as the father of modern fantasy, and the author of the century. His best seller *The Lord of the Rings* has sold more than 140 million copies; this exhibits its wide influence on modern readers.

This legend takes the reader into the enchantment of the medieval time, while reflecting upon the modern concerns with which one could identify, especially that the twentieth century, actually, witnessed unprecedented catastrophes, such as the two world wars, Imperialism, and the endangered nature under the fast growing industrialisation to name few, are among the prominent ones. *The Lord of the Rings* is, arguably, a complex and massive work, encompassing its own elaborated, chronology, geography, cosmology, nomenclature, and multiple languages.

Indeed, Tolkien believed that through raising a sphere of old mythologies and literary images one could achieve the eternal truth. He invented lands and creatures from medieval mythologies and Nordic sagas. Therefore, he brings a harmonious pre-modern past pursued by dramatic fight against the mechanical evil presented by the supremacy of Mordor. *The Lord of the Rings*, in one of many sides, represents a literary struggle against a growing mechanical society that is conveyed in terms of a world with fairy-like creatures, that, actually, present human qualities in spiritual contact with the landscape

and its powers. Actually, the importance of the natural environment and the way they shape some of the characters is the theme that this research has adapted to study.

Evidently, the consequences of the rising industry and the increasing human greed that could be fulfilled mainly through an industrialised society has raised an ecological awareness that influenced many disciplines such as politics, philosophy, art, psychology, and other fields. Accompanying the emergence of the Green Movement that condemns the systematic destruction of the natural world by humans, J.R.R. Tolkien addresses this issue in his Fantasy novel. As Tolkien's Fantasy writing contributed to the rising interest of academic studies and concerns in this genre, simultaneously, he contributed in the rising of the Green movement reviving the importance of the relationship between the human and the natural world warning against the consequences that could result from it. It is worth noting that Tolkien wrote *The Lord of the Rings* before that environmentalism movement has been introduced.

In the light of what has been discussed, the present research strives to fathom the controversy over the way that Tolkien addresses the ecological crisis that is mainly a consequence of modern industrialised life through an imaginal, mythical, and medieval setting. The overwhelming question to be asked is as follows: To what extent does Tolkien succeed in foregrounding the importance of nature through the use of imagination? The answer to this question would be achieved through throwing light on three key issues. The first one explores the way nature centres on spirituality, mythology, and language. The second key point rotates around the impact of industrialisation on nature and characters in *The Lord of the Rings*. While the Third one ponders on Tolkien's use of Fantasy as it contributes in addressing the theme of the preservation of nature.

The Lord of the Rings is primarily about a heroic quest that recounts the spiritual and psychological development of the main character Frodo; however, this development is

primarily linked to the interaction with the landscape and the personified figures of nature. Therefore, Tolkien highlights the importance of nature through making it the centre of his mythology and spirituality. Furthermore, the author illustrates the impact of industry on nature and on the characters through presenting the industrial areas as corrupt and evil because of the separation between the two, i.e. nature and characters, while the non-industrial areas are good because of the interconnectedness between the two. Tolkien seeks to achieve the aforementioned points using fantasy and imagination as an effective way to raise the reader's awareness of the modern crisis of the natural world.

A considerable number of literary and critical works are written about Tolkien's depiction of the natural world in *The Lord of the Rings*. Among which one may cite a Master dissertation entitled *Fantastic Ecosemiosis: an analysis of Fantasy as nature-text in The Lord of the Rings* by Michael .L. Sacknoff. This academic research delves on the author's use of literary devices and techniques such as metaphors, symbols, and other elements, to show how they contribute to the portrayal of the natural environment. Another work to mention is a book entitled *Ents, Elves, and Eriador: The Environmental Vision of J.R.R. Tolkien* by Matthew Dickerson and Jonathan Evans. This book studies the representation of nature in his literary works including *The Lord of the Ring*; in addition, it is a book that tackled directly the environmental theme in Tolkien's literary works. Chris Brawley has written an article around this subject entitled *The Fading of the World: Tolkien's Ecology and Loss in the Lord of the Ring*; he studies the characterization of the representative characters of nature. The missing point that is observed within these works is that they do not take into consideration the role of Fantasy, specifically, the element of imagination as a threshold to the reception of the significance of the novel's setting and characters in conveying the ecological awareness. Especially that it is an essential element

to cross the bridge between the medieval and the modern, in addition to the lack of analyzing the psychological impact of landscape on the main characters.

This investigation aims at emphasizing Tolkien's profound belief in the importance of the connections that the British must reactivate with nature. The focus seeks to find out the author's depiction of the damage caused in the relationship between the British and their natural world by the advance of industry.

As far as *The Lord of the Rings* is concerned, the research has adopted the ecocritical approach. Data in this research are mainly collected from printed books and electronic sources. The research method is, basically, descriptive and analytical in the sense that the present work will describe, examine, and analyze relevant data to reach the accurate understanding of the Fantasy novel. The passages are selected throughout the novel, basically, where references to myth religion and personified natural characters appear.

The work is divided into three chapters. The first one is the theoretical part that is applied to the context of the novel through examination and analysis. It encompasses an explanation of the notion of Fantasy as a work of imagination that gives the inner consistency of reality. Then, it introduces the ecocritical theory adopting the views of the ecocritic and the philosopher David Abram, the ecopsychologist James Hillman, and some other contributors in the field, followed by a short biography of the author. The second chapter explores nature as a foreground in Tolkien's novel and as central of its mythology and spirituality, besides the role of imagination within it. The last part in this chapter studies the relationship between language and the environment. The third chapter investigates the impact of industrialization on nature and its effects on a number of characters, analyzing the personified characters who give voice to nature.

To conclude, landscape in Tolkien's writing is never marginalized, rather, it is provided an environmental ethic. By extension, Tolkien's *the Lord of the Rings* was written before the emergence of nature criticism, however, the way Tolkien treats the issue of nature seems to correspond deeply to this approach.

Chapter One: Theoretical Framework and Literary Context

1.1. Introduction

The following theoretical study includes the discussion of fantasy, ecocriticism, ecopsychology, and a short biography of the author. The first element is acquired to illustrate how fantasy, as an aspect of exaggerated imagination in a literary text, serves and works to present the very essence of reality rather than an escape from it. The second element, namely ecocriticism, is the predominant approach that is selected to study the novel. It is known mainly as the study of the relationship between the natural world and human beings in the light of modern technologies as depicted in literary texts. In fact, ecocriticism does not have one specific method. Therefore, one finds many critics and theorists; however, each has a different perspective. Consequently, the adopted perspectives are chosen according to their relevance and applicability to the work to be analysed. It will be defined first by the prominent thinkers in the field, and then it is narrowed to focus on the ecopsychological perspective. The difference between the two is that ecocriticism focuses mainly on the landscape and on how it is affected by the human destructive technologies, while ecopsychology focuses on the human interaction, influence, and sentience towards nature. Finally, a short biography is required in order to trace the author's own experience with nature and his personal attitude towards the progressive technological societies.

1.2. Fantasy

Many critics in the field of Fantasy seek to defend and clarify its appropriate meaning as a literary genre in order to eliminate the misconceptions that surround it. It is claimed to be associated only within children's literature as Peter Hunt points that the

major misconceptions that surround this genre are being childish, Formulaic, and escapist. Therefore, Lucy Cuthew explains that Fantasy is a work of imagination and it requires both the reader and the writer to imagine what is possible to happen, in the sense that the reader has a major contribution to the text that is added through the contribution of their imagination. The main point to clarify is the concept of escapism in Fantasy, adopting the view of Peter Hunt who explains Fantasy as liberation from the every day and the ordinary daily life; in other words, this departure from reality examines contemporary concerns, using allegories or other features of the worldly identifications and applicabilities. It also delves in the ambiguity of human existence (Cuthew 30-33). Fantasy, as one may conclude, is used among people and in the everyday language to refer to the irrational and illusive images or stories that someone may create in his/her mind for believing what this person wants to believe rather than confronting reality. However, when it comes to the literary context, the imaginary and created beings stand symbolically or allegorically to reflect existing truths in the real world.

Many critics have adopted Tolkien's description of fantasy and defence of fairies in his essay "On Fairy Stories" against the aforementioned misconceptions. In this essay, Tolkien discusses literary belief and develops the theory of sub-creation. Tolkien points out that, through art, the writer becomes a sub-creator. A further explanation is that the writer creates a secondary world accessible to the mind where what is told is true because it correlates with the laws of that world and it frees the reader from the domination of observed facts; therefore, the reader tends more to suspend his willing of disbelief. In other words, Fantasy gives an inner consistency of reality through mental images and induces secondary belief in the secondary world. Tolkien introduces three main characteristics of fantasy that are recovery, consolation and not paradoxically escapism. First, Recovery is meant to liberate people from the tiredness of the usual, i.e. a kind of defamiliarization; it

also means the realization of the need to abandon old associations. Moreover, escape does not mean desertion, but it means an escape from the ugliness of modernity (Drout 481). In this respect, Tolkien, as a writer of fantasy, felt the necessity to offer a clear concept of fantasy so that people could differentiate between fantasy in its everyday use and “fantasy” as a literary genre.

Anna Slack clarifies Tolkien’s view of escape as being closely linked to recovery in which the reader seeks tales to escape from the world and recover the way to see it clearly. To explain more, readers return to the world after reading rather than making a refuge from it (Honneger & Frank 120). In this respect, when people are experiencing certain realities, for instance, a negative phenomenon, they cannot perceive its ugliness or disadvantage because it becomes a habitual reality. However if this fact is introduced in other shape that is unfamiliar to people as making referential associations from the imaginary into the real world, people become aware of that reality after being defamiliarized.

Eventually, Péter Kristof Makai clarifies that Tolkien called for an etymological understanding of the word “fantasy” and a better understanding of imagination that is the sense and the procedure of shaping mental depiction of matters not actually there. On the other hand, from the perspective of pedagogical psychology, it is understood as “mental apprehension of an object of perception.” Both notions conclude that fantasy and imagination form a kind of mental simulation (Anderson, 2010, 35). This is to say that imagination does not work as a way of separating imaginary and fictional worlds from reality; rather, it is the other way around.

1.3. Ecocriticism

Michael Payne introduces Ecocriticism as a response to the environmental movement that emerged during the 1960's and 1970's, accompanying environmental philosophy and environmental history. Lawrence Buell points that ecocriticism re-centres the plot, characterization, the setting, and the theme around the setting. The academic interest in this new introduced approach is evolving rapidly and extensively. Especially that the ecological concerns have become the focus of various disciplines (Payne 205-10). Ecocriticism is growing rapidly in the academic researches and its theoretical studies are growing extensively, especially during the twenty first century.

Timothy Clark explains that there is a specific feature that marks this newly introduced approach. Ecocriticism does not introduce humans as the only lively creatures in the world; however, its focus lies on the human position in nature. Nature is considered in the western traditions of thought as a crucial and very difficult term, in the sense that it considers the natural, semi-natural, or urban landscape. This introduces an implied and implicit re-engagement with the notion of nature. It raises some concerns such as the human in relation to non-human; it is taken as a refuge or as a source of inspiration, as a place of evolution or redemption. Therefore, this approach reads fiction and environmental writings, foregrounding these cultural notions of the natural environment (5-9). It is worth noting that ecocriticism has shifted from a small self-conscious movement during the 1990's, being closely related to environmental non-fiction, into a plural school with practitioners throughout the world (202). In short, ecocriticism is the study of the relationship between literature and environment. Hence, ecocriticism is a literary and cultural criticism from an environmentalist viewpoint. Texts are evaluated for their environmentally useful and harmful effects. Beliefs and ideologies are assessed for their environmental implications. Ecocriticism challenges the human-centred discourse to be the

sole subject and concern of literature. Thus, the specific concern of ecocriticism lies in what Robinson Jeffers calls “a shifting of emphasis from man to not-man: the rejection of human solipsism and recognition of trans-human magnificence.” Ecocriticism, in fact, gives increased attention to literary representations of nature, shifting critical focus from social relations towards natural relationships, and views the individual as a member of the ecosystemic as well as of human patterns of organization. Thus, an environmental approach to literature reveals the way our culture has treated nature. It also shapes the way the future generations will tend to deal with nature and environment (Rowland 3-4). Remarkably, ecocriticism investigates the way the author presented the presence or the absence of nature in his/her text, whether intentionally, such as D.H. Lawrence, Zola, Hurston, Wendell Berry, and other writers, or unintentionally, such as Thomas Hardy, Charles Dickens, and others; in addition to the way it is approached.

1.4. Ecopsychology

The term ecopsychology is coined by Theodor Roszak, a cultural historian, in order to enlarge the framework of psychology and fuse it with ecology to illustrate the way landscape shapes its inhabitants. Hence, as a threshold to understand the nature of ecopsychology, Andy Fisher quotes, in his book *Radical Ecopsychology*, a Jungian statement that says:

Scientific understanding has grown, so our world has become dehumanized. Man feels himself isolated in the cosmos, because he is no longer involved in nature and has lost his emotional unconscious identity with natural phenomena. These have slowly lost their symbolic implications...no voices now speak to man from stones, plants, and animals, nor does he speak to them believing they can hear. His contact

with nature has gone and with it has gone the profound emotional energy that this symbolic energy supplied. (4)

Thus, ecopsychology, as Andy Fisher argues, is the psychological understanding that we form an integral part of nature. Its first task is to describe the human psyche in a way that makes it internal to the natural world or that makes it a phenomenon of nature, including other creatures and entities than human beings (07). Moreover, ecopsychology, as Fisher defines it, examines the psyche in accordance with its environmental home. Moreover, it delves into the central transfer in one's pattern of identity and relationship that appear when the surrounding web of life includes one's connection as fundamental to human prosperity; in addition to the study of emotional ties that exist between human beings and their natural surroundings. This theory, in fact, brings a considerable amount of its concepts from Jungian Archetypal psychology, and the collective unconscious that is composed of patterns or experiences that have not appeared from personal experience, but are universal to humanity (4). Rowland Susan, in her turn, has written recently a book on ecopsychology in which she explains Jung's influence on this field. She points that Jung sees the human unconscious, which he called archetypes, as part of nature (12). After the revival of animism, Jung reevaluates myth as a basis to knowledge of nature (22). Fisher points that the universality of nature myth is evident in its "ubiquitous" psychological role in responding to human feelings, and he adds Schama's view that at the inherited landscape, myths have two main characteristics: the first is their endurance through centuries, while the second is their power to shape institutions with which we still live (76). In fact, there are three important points that ecocriticism and, simultaneously, ecopsychology stress they are: animism, spirituality, and language.

The first point to discuss in this approach is animism; Eliade Mercia describes the perspective of animism as a sophisticated and long-lived phenomenology of nature, and

among its characteristics the belief that the entire phenomenal world is alive, i.e. inspirited (Glotfelty 26-7). Fisher introduces this concept using Hillman's well-known notion of reviving the Latin word "anima mundi" that means "the soul of the world". He believes that reality has inner and outer poles; simultaneously, things in the world have their inwardness that makes them meaningful, having their own mystery and depth and the ability to interchange a kind of relation. He continues arguing that "a kind of mass soul defines our epoch," and that a disconnected and motionless appearance prevails because the soul of the world have been violated; therefore; the world became "deanimated" as a result of pressing all the soul into human being (Fisher 10). This explains how the view and interaction of human beings towards the natural world existed in the past; nevertheless, it diminished with the advance of technology, separating people from the living world, into lifeless, mechanical life that led, by its turn, to the loss of spirituality, respect, and understanding of the natural environment.

The philosopher David Abram adds that the perspective that associates animism with the modern West is phenomenology. This latter has been introduced by Edmund Husserl and developed by Maurice Merleau-Ponty. Through the affirmation of perceived things as animate, that human's continual reciprocity with the environment emerges (Rowland 17). Abram explains Husserl and Ponty's concepts in that the continual reciprocity between body and its surrounding entities are a kind of mute dialogue that one carries on with things, and ongoing conversation that unfurls far below the verbal awareness. Consequently, the perception of the world comes through one's awareness of the world as it is experienced, and this experiencing self is pure consciousness (52). Phenomenology, most importantly, starts with a phenomenon, which is the reality occurring in a lived experience. It provides the description of the world in the same way as it is truly experienced. Evidently, its aim is to re-vive a primitive and direct attachment to

the world. The phenomenology's "demand for awareness" and experiential centre, turned it out as remedy to cure the flaw of modern thinking. In other words, phenomenologists reveal the world as a web of relations and sees that humans' existence is not enclosed inside them; rather, it is spread throughout this network of worldly interactions. Indeed, Ponty referred to perception as "mutual balance" that is a kind of dialogue between body and world, that is to say, the sensible world entice the body, and this latter responds to and examines the sensible (Fisher 11-12). Moreover, he explains that human beings can have access to the natural world through a "vital relation"; however, the human divorce from nature, fatally, means a continual cutting of this vital relation. Therefore, one should encounter this through reviving this embodiment (Fisher 58-59). In his book the *Spell of the Sensuous*, David Abram discusses Ponty's argument of viewing the human experience and interaction with the world as an incarnate one. He explains that this bodily sentience is a common characteristic that the entire living creatures share; in addition to that, he states that between beings exists a certain basic of shared comprehension (49). According to what has been explained, the preservation and respect of nature requires, first, an interaction with nature, then a sense of kinship arises after the experience that is undergone between human and nature. It is worth noting that though Ponty emphasizes a direct contact with nature to achieve an animistic view of it, in the light of what has been discussed about myth and imagination, one may conclude that even if there is no direct contact between the human and the natural world the role of myths and imagination is significant in making, at least an imaginal contact replacing the physical one. This will be explained in the coming elements.

Fisher points to David Noble's comments on the way this latter views technology. Noble sees the development of technology as political rather than natural; it is a systematic planning and continual fight that people choose to do. In other words, it is a social choice.

Resisting technology indicates the resistance of its future dimension through endeavouring what interest people in this very recent time. The resistance of technology indicates a stand against turning human's life into a mere instrument to some ends. However, such concept raises the accusation that these anti-technological acts and struggles are no more than vain and unreasonable means to escape into the past. Noble clarifies that what is meant by this resistance is not the aforementioned misconception; rather, this counter practice "entails widening the clock backward, tracing direct line in reverse, when what it really involves is breaking...so as to liberate the life force and find creative ways to respond to the present" (Fisher 178). Anti-materialists do not intend to convince people return to primitive life-style, but to preserve and treat nature as an object that has a life of its own, to respect, and to use its resources logically.

The second point to illustrate is spirituality, Glotfelty points that modern western man/woman suffers from spiritual death. Although s/he enjoys a comfortable life among the available technologies, s/he feels alienated, empty, and without purpose. Glotfelty points that he does not intend to reject the conveniences of modern life and go back to wilderness or primitive conditions, but his fundamental intention is inviting people to reconsider their behaviours in relation to nature and to return to nature (35). Fisher shares the same view in believing that nature brings the spirit into question. In this case, Fisher uses the word spirit to mirror a kind of experience that tends to a reunion with nature and that functions to overcome the division and separation between realms of being. Moreover, if one goes back into the pre-modern dispirited societies, s/he would discover that spiritual practices have been a fundamental concern throughout the record of human existence. Fisher ensures that spirituality is essential to human experience (97). Bron Taylor notes the difference and distinction between spirituality and religion in which he explains that religion is an organized and institutional belief and practice, while spirituality is

considered to be about personal growth and acquiring a proper understanding of one's place in the cosmos, and more importantly, related with environmentalist actions. Then, a shared feature between the two is that both view nature as sacred, and that those ethical responsibilities naturally follow such a realisation (3-4). In the old religions, most gods and goddesses were representatives of natural elements and forces. Therefore, many of the modern studies on human and nature relationships attempt to study these old religions, or the pagan tribes that still exist in this modern world, such as the religions of Native Americans, to understand the depth and the extent of spirituality and kinship that these tribes have with nature that turned it into sacred.

The third point to explain is language. Abram's intention through his statements in emphasising the strong relation between language and nature is not that language is purely natural but to restore the potentiality of language in the sense that it arises from nature. Because when someone speaks, a voice is given to particular worldly states, and speaking from within the world (Fisher 127). Fisher notes, with reference to primitive cultures, that the peoples who had no knowledge of the alphabetic writing, i.e. oral peoples, in effect, their language cannot be thought as separate from the natural world. The reason is that the form of the words and the stories that these words tell reflect their surrounding environment. Therefore, the oral languages of people are fastened to their environment rather than to a system of writing (128). According to Abram, gestures and vocal gesticulation produce an active living speech in which the sound, the shape and the rhythm of the words are inseparable from the meaning. The communicative sense lies in its profundity and depth. Moreover, it lingers in the experiential sensual dimension. In effect, this results from the native capacity of the body to echo with different bodies, landscape, and the environment as a whole. Abram adds to explain, "Linguistic meaning is not some ideal and bodiless essence that we arbitrarily assign to physical sound or word and the toss

out into the external world.” Instead, the meaning springs up in the profound of the sensory world (74). Abram views, furthermore, the tones, rhythms, and intonations that occur in an oral language, spoken by an oral culture one would observe “that these elements are attuned in multiple and subtle ways, to the scale of local landscape, to the depths of its valleys or ... to the visual rhythms of the local landscape.” He views also that the aforementioned connections and reciprocity that once existed among oral cultures was lost in the technologies of print and writing (140). Accordingly, language of particular group of people is primarily influenced by the geography where it is produced. That is to say, what makes the accent and other aspects of a language differ from the other, is in accordance to the landscape.

1.5. The Role of Imagination in Ecocritical Studies

In the *Cry of the Environment*, Philip N. Joranson emphasises the strong necessity for imagination and art to gain an environmental view. In addition, the current ecological crisis that faces humanity is the consequence of poor imagination. Thus, to develop the creation consciousness, and imagination, a suitable one is an artistic resource because it is through art that people become engaged, being capable to participate in a new vision of the world and human’s position in it (Dickerson & Evans 31). Furthermore, Buell views that environmental imagination is likely to make as a minimum four kinds of engagement with the world. First, it could connect the reader vicariously with humans and non-humans experience. Second, it could reunite readers with places they have been or be sent to locations they would ever visit physically. Third, it may change the thinking and the expectation toward alternative future, and finally, people’s concerns for the environment would be affected, in the sense that, nature would be viewed relatively valuable or endangered (2). Furthermore, interactions that people experience, as Buell thinks are,

realizations of their everyday life and wants. As the social theorist Pierre Bourdieu states, “when habitus encounters a social world of which it is product, it is like a fish in water: it does not feel the weight of the water, and it takes the world about itself for granted” (Buell, 19). In other words, people in modern societies are borne into industrial societies, so that they cannot perceive and realize the need and importance of the natural world unless through imaginative way.

Joanna Macy explains that imagination works as a connector between the past and future, between the rational mind and the physical surroundings, and the beauty of the anima mundi is received (Tarnas, par.2). The perception of the anima, or the soul of the world, would be realized when people are able to understand the ties that used to exist in the past between humans and the environment, and to predict how the ecological situation will be in the future. This could be achieved through imagination.

1.6. The Role of Mythology in Ecocritical Studies

Laurence Coupe discusses the subject of mythology and its relation to ecological concerns. First, he introduces the idea of one of the prominent theorists of myth, Burke Kenneth, who believes that people are more likely to avoid destroying the earth through maintaining their mythic roots. For in myths one could maintain the possibility of relationships, whereas, if humans’ horizon is dominated by technology, we are, then resigned to mere “instrumentality”. Moreover, Roszak illustrates that the natural environment is the original home for human beings; therefore, leaving it would not pass without having psychological consequences. In the other hand, he views nature as sacred, tracing back the primitive religions i.e. “animism”. Mythology personifies the natural phenomena as gods and goddesses. Thus, this maintains the concept of nature as vivid and holly; this is admitted by Roszak as “archaic consciousness” (202-03). Therefore, Roszak

intends mainly to recover archaic spirituality as a healing for modern problems through myth.

1.7. Nature Myth Archetypes

The pastoral is one of the important elements of nature myth to put light on. Frye points that the pastoral myth lies deep in the entire social mythologies, and forms a vision of ideal societies, and a longing for a protected and peaceful world with a spontaneous contact with nature. He considers pastoral myth as social ideal, it is often associated with pioneer living, small towns. In addition to this, what characterizes it is the sense of kinship with the animal and vegetable world (Cook 55,101). The pastoral often evokes the utopian image of stable community that lives in harmony with all its surroundings. However, in the mythic context and as an archetype, it functions, mostly, as a nostalgic image of the evocative past.

Another significant nature myth is the mythic forest that includes trees, the archetypal Green Man, and fairies, such as the elves. The significance of the mythic forest is often symbolic. It appears as a mysterious place that is prevailed by magic (Garry, 470). Trees were seen as reflection of earth and heaven. Various and different cultures created myths of tree gods and tales of “fairy-like” beings, living in the heart of “dark forests” or in the trees such as elves. These universal myths signify and mirror a belief that used to exist in, almost, every culture, giving objects in nature its own power and spirit (Varner, 45). This seems to strengthen the aforementioned Jungian view on the universality of archetypes.

In addition, the Green Man represents also a picture from the very depths of prehistory. In his origins, his existence dates back to the pre-Christian era. In all his manifestations, he is an image of renewal and rebirth. The image of the Green Man appears in a shape of a foliated head, having a face with vines and leaves growing from the

mouth, he has also eyes and a nose, the hair and beard are shaped from leaves and twigs, and an enticing face peering out of a wealth of vegetation. These images are detected in cultures from many different places around the world and throughout time. A question that is important to ponder about is why does the Green Man reappear across the ages and in different parts of the world? Millar explains, “His rebirth seems to coincide with some major human catastrophes. This may have a sense of credibility that the Green Man seems to reappear in times of stress to the Earth — often the doer is the human beings. The annihilation of whole species of plant and animals and their habitats, the destruction of the rain forests and the ozone layer all have resurrected the need for the Green Man to enter our lives and to re-awaken our ties to Mother Earth (Varner, 83-6). Throughout history and all over the world, people viewed nature as a source of life, power, and inspiration. The mythical nature elements are a kind of archetypes that are shared among different cultures, and lingered through different periods in history.

1.8. A Short Biography of the Author

John Ronald Ruel Tolkien was a professor at Oxford University, master of languages and literature of the ancient North, novelist, poet, storyteller, philologist, and the creator of the mythic middle-earth. He was born on January 3, 1892 in Bloemfontein, South Africa and died in 1973 in England. After the death of his father, he moved with his family into England, and grown up in the countryside where he developed a deep love of nature. He was a member of the Inklings, a group of literary discussions, together with his closest friends and writers of children’s literature C.S. Lewis, Charles Williams, and few others. Tolkien enlisted in the army during the First World War, appointed by Queen Elizabeth II in 1972 as the chief commander. Tolkien hated the modern world; the modern world for him meant the machine, and machine meant domination and tyranny. Therefore,

he mythologized the modern machine in *The Lord of the Rings* as the one ring of power (Dench, "J.R.R Tolkien"). Although Tolkien regarded that approaching a novel from a biographical perspective is dismissing and unfruitful, his own biography seems to contain several similarities between his life and the characters in *The Lord of the Rings* especially his anti- materialist tendencies and love of nature, particularly trees.

Tolkien's mother taught him a great deal of botany; therefore, he acquired considerable amount of knowledge about natural elements. However, Tolkien was interested in the "physical" side as well as the emotional side of plants more than its botanical aspects. He was also good in drawing, especially when the topic is a landscape or a tree. In fact, he admired drawing trees, but what he admired most is to be among them. He had a passion to lean against them, climb them and talk to them. There was an event that is evoked in Tolkien's memory from his childhood, on which he wrote: "there was a willow hanging over the mill pool and I learned to climb it...one day they cut it down. They didn't do anything with it: the log just lay there. I never forgot that" (Carpenter 25). Tolkien seem to hold strong affinity with nature and trees, he is highly sensible when it comes to destroying and cutting trees for no purpose.

From his early childhood, Tolkien had shown a noticeable interest in the sounds and shapes of words as well as in their meanings. He studied Latin, Anglo-Saxon, French, Germanic, Nordic, Finnish, and many other languages; On the other hand, he created many languages such as Quenya, Sindarin, and many others. Moreover, he studied old and medieval literature, being mainly influenced by *Beowulf*, on which he wrote critical essays, and translated it and some other medieval texts into modern English (Dench, J.R.R. Tolkien). The first book of fiction that Tolkien wrote was *The Hobbit*, which he wrote for his four children without any intention to be published, but after being read by the Inklings, they persuaded him to publish it, which he did in 1937. It had unexpected wide

popular success that led him to write a sequel to the work, which took about twelve years to write. The sequel is entitled *The Lord of the Rings*, published in three volumes. The latter reflects his literary beliefs and principles concerning fairy stories, imagination, nature languages, and mythology.

1.9. Conclusion

In the light of the aforementioned discussion, the necessary theoretical elements that are required for the analysis of the coming chapters are completed. First, the misunderstanding that accuses fantasy as an escapist is nullified, and agreed on its correct notion. Then, ecocriticism, and ecopsychology provides a rich insight into the study of nature, opening more considerations to the understanding of the relation between the natural world and human beings mythically, spiritually, and linguistically. Last and not least, the biography of the author illustrates a significant correlation between his views of nature and industry and his literature, which could contribute to the understanding of the novel in the coming analysis.

Chapter Two: The Importance of Landscape in Shaping the Mythology, Spirituality, and Language in the Novel

2.1. Introduction

Tolkien has created Middle-Earth with a full history. He provides a full illustration of it in a book that is edited and published after his death by his son Christopher, entitled *The Silmarillion*. Moreover, together with Tom Shippey, he edited a lengthier illustration book entitled *The History of Middle-Earth* to illustrate the detailed mythic creation, and history of Middle-Earth. This makes Tolkien a “sub-creator”, making an imaginary world that is parallel to the real one, and this serves his view of “recovery”. *The Lord of the Rings* takes place, according to the myth that consists of four ages, during the third age, and ends at the beginning of the fourth age that is the age of Men.

Tolkien’s novel, *The Lord o the Rings* is a mythic and mythopoeic fantasy that functions to engage the human with the non-human through the sense of wonder. The non-human, namely, natural objects, shifts into central state, i.e., eco-centric narrative rather than anthropocentric, at least from the ecocritical perspective. Middle-Earth is ensouled, a world into which the reader can step and inhabit imaginally. Moreover, Tolkien uses mythopoeic inventions in which he creates narratives that are meant to be understood as myths.

Therefore, this chapter will focus on the importance of the setting. Indeed, it does not include all the settings that occur within the novel, but only the most significant and which demonstrate the elements that give the novel its eco-central status, being depicted through mythical and spiritual significance. These are The Shire, Tom Bombadil, Lothlorien, and Treebeard; however, before these elements are tackled, it is significant to

understand the mythic and mythopoetic creation of the setting. At the end, a space will be devoted to the relation between language and the environment.

2.2. The Mythic and Spiritual Importance

2.2.1. The Creation

According to the *Silmarillion*, the myth of Creation starts by Lluvatar, the One, who created the semi “Devine beings known as the Ainur.” This latter brought the world into existence through “musical themes,” i.e. the world was sang into existence. In fact, fertility goddesses exist in many mythologies; simultaneously, in Middle-Earth the Vala Yavana is the “giver of fruit” and the “lover of all things that grow in the earth ... from the trees like towers in forests long ago to the moss upon stone.” (Tolkien, *The Silmarillion*, 8) Yavana created the two trees of Valinor. After the creation is done; all plants and animals sang to their creator, namely, Lluvatar. This, in fact, is identical with the Christian tradition that all aspects of creation take part in praising the creator (Dickerson & Evans 121-23). Evans traces the similarities between this and the expression found in psalm 148, “praise the Lord,” then calling star and moon, stars and cattle and other elements to join in. While in Yavana says, “Praise the Lord ... Mountains and hills; fruit, trees, and cedars.” (qtd. in Dickerson & Evans 123). In one hand, Tolkien did not mention in his trilogy *The Lord of the Rings* any direct religious or Christian elements; however, though its mythic Creation is pagan, its core is, obviously, Christian. Hence, Tolkien, markedly, avoids making the novel as if it were a mere Christian allegory; he rather makes it appeal universal, and gives spiritual rather than religious interpretation. In the other hand, the way the intermingling of the two opposite streams of belief seem to foreground the universality and shared beliefs in viewing the natural world of a primary and fundamental importance in the very beginning of existence.

2.2.2. The Pastoral Shire

Notably, the Shire is one of Tolkien's admired mythopoetic inventions in which he borrows heavily from his real life. As Michael Stanton illustrates that in *The Lord of the Rings*, the Shire is situated in Eriador, in west-central Middle-Earth, inhabited by Hobbits. It is a well-organized location, and considered as "the best-defined" setting in Middle-Earth with its history, geography and culture (Drout 608). This passage from *The Fellowship of the Ring* volume would better illustrate this point:

The Shire was divided into four quarters, the Farthings already referred to. North, South, East, and West; and these again each into a number of folklands, which still bore the names of some of the old leading families... The Shire at this time had hardly any 'government'. Families for the most part managed their own affairs. Growing food and eating it occupied most of their time. In other matters they were, as a rule, generous and not greedy, but contented and moderate, so that estates, farms, workshops, and small trades tended to remain unchanged for generations. (Tolkien 236)

It could be seen that the Shire is drawn, to some extent, on the village where Tolkien lived during his childhood as well as the villages and rural lands in the English West midlands during the turn of the twentieth century. Moreover, it holds Tolkien's most loved things "gardens, trees, and non-mechanized farmlands." Within the Shire, no social extremes are found, and although there are the more privileged and the less privileged, there are no social "plutocrats". They are politically neutral and uncomplicated (Drout 608). This exhibits the author's attempt to create a verisimilitude that would link the mythical fantasy world with the real one and indulge the reader's imagination within the novel from its beginning.

The Shire appears as an important element in the novel's well-structured mythology that functions to celebrate the harmonious relationship between myth and culture. This rural dimension in Middle-Earth notifies a utopian image. Therefore, the idealized Shire has been attacked by a number of critics, claiming that it is an idealization of the English countryside. However, Patrick Curry argues that the Shire functions as a nostalgic need and an accurate aspect of Tolkien's mythopoeia, in the sense that it perceives the significance of nature as being one's home. This mythopoeic invention, in reality, pleads to people's needs that are deepened in the psyche that would make a sort of bond with the earth (Coupe 192-94). Furthermore, the romantic values are clearly portrayed in the Shire, with its idealized pastoral land. This is regarded as negative and dangerous as some environmentalists such as Norman Wirzba argues, "It is dangerous to romanticise local communities' life...Farming communities have not always been respectful of the contribution of women, nor have they welcomed new ideas" (qtd. in Dickerson & Evans 100). However, Tolkien does not overlook these points. Hence, these facts are present in the Shire that is, actually, dominated by male Hobbits, while female ones are rarely mentioned, and they do not welcome foreigners, as the narrator states: "His wife stood in the light of the open door. 'You be careful of yourself. Maggot!' she called. 'Don't go arguing with any foreigners, and come straight back!'" (Tolkien, *The Fellowship*, 327). Hence, as Laurence Coupe argues, it brings back the English rural past in comparison to the polluted industrial present. Furthermore, it is a strong form of rhetoric in evoking the past to criticize the present (Coupe 194). In addition, one may notice that the author seems to display a desire for a rural recovery rather than presenting a mere romantic view of the Shire, especially when it comes to Tolkien witnessing the displacement and disappearance of the English rural lands.

In addition, Dickerson and Evan believe that although the shire is a fictional invention, one may consider it as a recreation of an existing past of the actual world where Tolkien has lived, or the few still existing rural lands of the contemporary world (107). Tolkien portrays a scene of inhabitants, community, and land by means of the Shire, its farmers, and its gardeners. This appears to be comparable to the contemporary ecologist's realization of the fact that the mature agricultural use of the environment is the healthy key to a healthy culture (102). This seems to demonstrate the verisimilitude between Tolkien's mythopoeic invented Shire and the existing ones in the real life. Even if it is perceived as a utopian land, the implied realities in its narrative keep it identical with the real world.

2.2.3. The Old Forest

The Old Forest exhibits a kind of malicious animosity toward trespassers with bad intentions. When the hobbits are venturing deep in the forest, Pippin describes the forest as follows: "they all got an uncomfortable feeling that they were being watched with disapproval, deepening to dislike and even enmity. The feeling steadily grew." (Tolkien, *The Fellowship*, 344). The Old Forest's hostility towards the other sentience beings is a consequence of an old history of deforestation. Merry explains to Pippin that, in the past, Hobbits came to make their first settlement in part of the forest that is now the Shire, "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. After that the trees gave up the attack, but they became very unfriendly." (Tolkien, *The Fellowship* 344). This implies that as people could be hostile to the environment, this latter by its turn could be hostile to people in response (Dickerson & Evans 133- 40). Thus, the depiction of the natural world is neither romantic nor ideal; it is, rather, neutral. The hostility between the Old Forest and the trespassers seems to manifest disharmony between human beings and the natural world,

which is a consequence of an endangered world. Arguably, the Old Forest represents the phenomenal world in which the forest is perceived as animate. Hence, the interaction between the Hobbits and the Old Forest is not an imaginary, non-rational relation, yet a performed reality of the phenomenology of nature, as David Abram has illustrated in the previous chapter.

2.2.4. Tom Bombadil & Goldberry

The most mysterious character in *The Lord of the Rings*, according to many critics, is Tom Bombadil. For instance, Frodo asks Goldberry, his spouse, about the exact identity of Bombadil; she replies, “he is,” then Frodo asks a further question about his possession of the land. She replies, “the trees and the grasses and all things growing or living in the land, belong each to themselves...he has no fear Tom Bombadil is the master.” (Tolkien, *The Fellowship*, 358). Tolkien demonstrates in one of his letters that Bombadil, in fact, serves as a comment and symbolises nature itself. According to Chris, Bombadil reflects Tolkien’s theory of nature and recovery (Brawley, par.11). This is to say that Tom’s presentation as the spirit of nature, being the master but not its owner, is meant, also, to address people of the real world, telling them that even if people are the superior beings in the world, it does not mean that they own it.

Christy Di Frances traces the mythic roots of the character of Tom Bombadil, believing that originally he stems from Tolkien’s fondness of Norse mythology, knowing that the Nordic mythical tradition contains various natural elements in which they play significant role. Di Frances points that the north men, i.e. people of northern Europe, viewed nature as a spirit, or collection of spirits, “whose every whim was to be revered and feared.” (8). Even the house of Tom Bombadil holds mythical qualities that are manifested in the supernatural aspects the Hobbits sense when they enter into it, and

become enchanted. They have dreams in forms of omens, and prophetic visions of instant and future actions. On the one hand, the house is ordinary in its appearance, simple and joyful. This, as Evans and Dickerson view, is the demonstration of the “ordinary created world that is extraordinary in its purpose and beauty”. Arguably, Tolkien makes use of fantasy and myth to illustrate the spiritual, sacred, and transcendent that is manifested in the surrounding every day environment (Dickerson & Evans 161). On the other hand, another facet of the forest is revealed through the character of Old Man Willow. Tom Bombadil rescues the Hobbits from being swallowed by a tree, named the Old Man Willow, the character that signifies the hostility in the Old Forest. He stimulates other creatures to him for their consumption. His will is characterized by strength and malice, Bombadil declares that the willow has “a hatred of things that go free upon the earth” (Drout 471). Ostensibly, Tom Bombadil and Goldberry convey the knowledge of the beauty and, to some extent, the dangers that could exist in the forests. In addition to the emphasis that even though forests and woods seem to be a dangerous place because it is untamed, it is, still, beautiful and should be respected.

In addition, Tom’s spouse Goldberry is considered as water Spirit, as she presents herself to Frodo: “I am the daughter of the river.” (Tolkien, *The Fellowship*, 357). She is a mythic creature, a nature goddess, who represents the beauty of the mythic and natural, while Tom Bombadil makes part of a “deep and old myth,” while C.S. Lewis sees him as an archetypal vegetation god (Dickerson & Evans 47, 185). This could be detected when Goldberry tells the Hobbits:

Tom was here before the river and the trees; Tom remembers the first raindrop and the first acorn. He made paths before the Big People, and saw the little People arriving. He was here before the Kings and the graves ... When the Elves passed westward, Tom was here already, before the seas were bent. He knew the dark

under the stars when it was fearless - before the Dark Lord came from outside.

(Tolkien, *The Fellowship*, 366).

Goldberry is said also to symbolise the natural and domestic. She is described as a woodland goddess, a loving wife and devoted daughter (Anderson, 2008, 35). Tom Bombadil tells the Hobbits that: “This is Goldberry's washing day,” he said, “and her autumn-cleaning” (Tolkien, *The Fellowship*, 364). Each member of the couple has his/her own significance and function in the narrative; simultaneously, their union provides an ecological rendering that is in varied shapes of stewardship over nature (Dickerson & Evans 187). A further function of Tom Bombadil is providing the Hobbits with information about the forests and the woods and about what lies behind the borders of their Shire. Therefore, he prepares them for their journey to destroy the ring of power.

Concerning this point, Tolkien wrote in one of his letters:

He is then an ‘allegory,’ or an exemplar, a particular embodying of pure (real) natural science: the spirit that desires knowledge of other things, their history and nature, because they are ‘other’ and wholly independent of the enquiring mind, a spirit coeval with the rational mind, and entirely unconcerned with ‘doing’ anything with the knowledge.” (qtd. in Dickerson & Evans 21)

This demonstrates that Bombadil has the desire to require knowledge that makes him more powerful; however, he has no desire to manipulate, or any desire for possession, as it is illustrated earlier, Bombadil is the master, but he owns nothing; in addition to that, the Ring of Power does not affect him in any sense. For instance, when he wears the Ring, its effect does not work on him, “Then Tom put the Ring round the end of his little finger and held it up to the candlelight. For a moment, the hobbits noticed nothing strange about this. Then they gasped. There was no sign of Tom disappearing” (Tolkien, *The Fellowship*,

368). Hence, this may suggest that some elements in nature could be corrupt, but the spirit of nature could never be corrupted.

2.2.5. Lothlorien

Tolkien reaches a new level in his description of nature when he reaches Lothlorien. It is another forest often called Lorien, which means dreamland. It is labelled also the Golden Wood; it is secret and unvisited by strangers.

Stuart Lee and Elizabeth Solopova delve in the roots of the Mythical woodland Lothlorien, and found to be traced back to the fourteenth century poem “Pearl”, whose narrative is about the death of the author’s daughter, dreaming her as a wife of Jesus in paradise. It had been discovered with the manuscript of *Gawain and the Green Knight*, and it belongs to the genre of dream vision in which setting and actions are uncommon to every day experience. Hence, the medieval account of paradise could be detected in Frodo’s description, and reaction the moment he enters into Lothlorien. This could be found in the following passage:

“In the land of Lorien no Shadows lay...no blemish or sickness or deformity could be seen in anything that grew upon the earth... here ever bloom winter flowers in the unfading grass... that he was in a timeless land that did not fade or change or fall into forgetfulness” (Tolkien, *The Fellowship*, 601).

In “Pearl”, the author uses the “immortal mind” to perceive the delight and magnificence of the paradisiacal land, in the same way, the dreamer’s emotional ambivalence are those of happiness and bewilderment. Moreover, the dreamer notes that it is impossible for any human to succeed in describing the land he views; simultaneously, Frodo, “stood awhile lost in wonder ... A light was upon it for which his language had no name” (Tolkien, *The Fellowship*, 599-602, Lee & Solopova 167). Suggestively, this represents Tolkien’s deep

knowledge of the medieval texts, which he reconstructed to establish his mythopoeia, and a large space of it is devoted to the setting from an ecocritical perspective.

Lothlorien is dwelled by the Elves, whose name in this location is Galadhrim, which means 'tree people'. Their name, explicably, signifies their horticultural commitment. These firstborns has the primary role of stewardship. Dickerson and Evans describe how they "see themselves as stewards and guardians of [Lothlorien] beauty," and link them to "Tolkien's view of *sustainable horticulture* [sic]" (99). Moreover, the successive description of grass and flowers in the area demonstrates the Elves' devotion to the preservation of natural beauty of their land (108). Thus, Even the Hobbits, who, as it has been discussed, live in harmony with the natural environment, feel as if they experience the beauty and sensation of nature for the first time. This is apparent when:

Frodo prepared to follow [the elf guide], he laid his hand upon the tree beside the ladder: never before had he been so suddenly and so keenly aware of the feel and texture of a tree's skin and of the life within it. He felt a delight in wood and the touch of it, neither as forester nor as carpenter; it was the delight of the living tree itself. (Tolkien, *The Fellowship*, 601).

In addition, although ordinary objects exist in Lothlorien, they are described by Frodo as if he sees them for the first time. For instance, he describes the colours he views as "He saw no colour but those he knew, gold and white and blue and green, but they were fresh and poignant, as if he had at that moment first perceived them and made for them names new and wonderful"(Tolkien, *The Fellowship*, 600). For Dickerson and Evans, Tolkien seems to suggest an earthly paradise through Lothlorien as a realm that represents the undying land. It, also, suggests the longing for the perfection of the natural order, a lament of the lost Eden, and a lure for future Paradise (114-16). Furthermore, Siegel adds:

For Tolkien, nature (when uncorrupted) is alive and manifests the goodness of

Lluvatar, or the One ... the elves, and Lothlorien all seem to live in a constant contemplative awareness of nature, all time, and space” (qtd. in Dickerson & Evans 109).

On the one hand, this allows a glance on how Tolkien himself experienced trees, and loved to pass time with them and to speak to them. Lothlorien, on the other hand, based on the author’s Catholicism, possibly alludes to the fact that paradisiacal beauty lies in its aesthetic created nature.

3.2.6. Treebeard and the Ents

The Ents, as recorded in the history of middle earth, exist before Men and the other races are created. They are Tree-like beings, having the power to speak the concerns of trees and defend them. They, also, represent the value of the forest, being moulded in mythological narrative. However, this does not value only trees; it transcends them to contain the whole concept of wilderness. Moreover, while the Shire is seen as a value of a “well ordered nature”, the wilderness, in the other side, is seen as “unordered nature,” i.e. Middle-Earth in its original form. The Ents stand in opposition to the technologies where nature is exploited for civilized aims. Therefore, Treebeard represents a side of an environmental perspective that stands against the distraction of the wild life (Dickerson & Evans 124). This could be seen in Treebeard’s description of the Ents for the Hobbits Merry and Pippin: “We are tree-herds, we old Ents. Few enough of us are left now” (Tolkien, *The Two Towers*, 724). Treebeard and the Ents seem to have a position like that of feminists or slaves, rejecting oppression, and calling for their rights. Treebeard is given the power to speak in the behalf of trees, which have no power to do so.

The Ents appear as preservationists who believe that they have to take the responsibility of managing the earth as a way to make balance among species, and to be in

charge of its use without any negative effects. Nonetheless, the Entwives have parted the Ents to the unknown (Dickerson & Evans 124). Furthermore, Douglas comments on this separation between the Ents and Entwives as a depiction of the “compelling insight on the complexities and conflicts of life in a fallen world.” Thus, the fact that each is devoted solely to its interest: Ents for wilderness, the Entwives for gardens; this breaks the balance between wilderness and domesticity (Stanton 46). Treebeard demonstrates to the Hobbits:

But our hearts did not go on growing in the same way: the Ents gave their love to things that they met in the world, and the Entwives gave their thought to other things, for the Ents loved ... the wild woods, ... and ate only such fruit as the trees let fall in their path; and they learned of the Elves and spoke with the Trees. But the Entwives gave their minds ... to the meads... and the green herbs ... [t]he Entwives ordered them to grow according to their wishes, for the Entwives desired order, and plenty, and peace. So the Entwives made gardens to live in. But we Ents went on wandering ... Then when the Darkness came in the North, the Entwives crossed the Great River, and made new gardens... and we saw them more seldom. (Tolkien, *The Two Towers*, 733-34)

Anne Petty observes in her book *Tolkien in the Land of Heroes* that Tolkien does not treat the trees in his novel as mere symbols, but he transcends that to being humanized. For instance, the Ents are searching for the Entwives; however, they fail to find them, conveying, in the same time, the melancholy and loneliness of the tree Ents. This gives them a psyche of their own (Anderson, 2005, 40). Stanton explains further this point, arguing that the non-cooperation of the two makes their story tragic, because their vision differ they are said to have become estranged sometimes in a distant past of Middle-Earth history. Consequently, the Ents as a race are doomed for the lack of offspring. Toward the end of the trilogy Treebeard’s face becomes sad, saying “forests may grow but not Ents.”

This is to say that environmental position should be held with conviction, but divergent views should not be adhered to so fiercely as to threaten one's very survival. Regardless of whether Tolkien was consciously aware of environmental disagreements over the policies of conservationists and preservationists, he had the foresight to create as a part of his epic, a moving and troubling myth that captures these issues in a persuasive way. Explicably, the myth of the Ents and Entwives serve as a powerful warning (Dickerson & Evans 252). In the light of what has been discussed the Ents seem to represent a primordial mythological association between man and nature, known as the Green Man archetype. A further point is that Tolkien, also, gives nature, through Treebeard and the Ents a voice as an attempt to fulfil an urge for dialogue beyond the boundaries of the human self, to speak of its own cause, and to criticize the evil of industry that causes harm to its forest.

2.3. Language

Tolkien believes that sound, shape, etymology, and resonances for words play a role in defining their meaning. Thus, Tolkien includes passages in *The Lord of the Rings* without providing a translation or any explanation of their meaning. In addition, Tolkien argues that the receiver may perceive the core and the beauty of words even though the text is incomprehensible (Smith 69). This may be noted in the passage when Tom Bombadil is accompanying the Hobbits, and singing:

Hey! now! Come hoy now! Whither do you wander?/ Up, down, near or far, here, there or yonder?/ Sharp-ears, Wise-nose, Swish-tail and Bumpkin,/ White-socks my little lad, and old Fatty Lumpkin! ..., but it was chiefly nonsense, or else perhaps a strange language unknown to the hobbits, an ancient language whose words were mainly those of wonder and delight" (Tolkien, *The Fellowship*, 382).

Apparently, this passage seems to illustrate Tolkien's view of taking delight in the language itself even if it is not understood, and that the effect of untranslatable language on the perceiver functions in the same way as music does, in which one appreciates the structured sounds even if the message behind it is not perceived. Moreover, taking into consideration that Tom Bombadil, as it is discussed above, represents nature's soul, and the Hobbits who venture to the forest for the first time view it as a place of wonder that brings delight, simultaneously, especially in Tom's house. This could suggest that Tom's song is that of nature, more precisely, that of the forest.

Tolkien views that the root of a language is tied to the environment where it emerges. This concept of language, as being ingrained in coherence with the environment where it is produced, is illustrated in this following passage where Legolas, the elf companion, does not understand the language of Rohan in which Aragon is singing: "That, I guess, is the language of the Rohirrim...for it is like to this land itself; rich and rolling in part, and else hard and stern as the mountains. But I cannot guess what it means, save that it is laden with the sadness of Mortal Men" (Tolkien, *The Two Towers*, 767). What Legolas conveys in this passage is the extent in which the oral "pre-industrial" cultures are "in tune with the landscape" (Smith 74). Therefore, it could be argued that Language has undergone several changes in the light of the modern industrial life that developed a gap between language and the environment where it emerges.

Ball Martin illustrates that the Rohirrim's language and culture are characterized by their orality and ritual poetry. By extension, they sing in their way to battle to lament the dead in alliterative meter, knowing that Tolkien adopted these features from the Old English language, in which he copies out passages from *The Beowulf* and *The Wanderer* through which Tolkien himself laments the cultural values that are lost with the loss of

language (Ball, II, par.6). This is to say, language does not only lose its ties with its environment, but also its culture.

The most interesting characters that manifest the relationship between language and the environment are the Ents, whose language has a long historical evolution. For instance, Treebeard, as it has been explained, being the most antique and the long-lived tree among the Ents says about his name, “My name is like a story. Real names tell you the story of the things they belong to in my language, in the Old Entish as you might say.”(Tolkien, *The Two Towers*, 721). In this respect, Smith observes that Treebeard reflects Tolkien’s view on the development of language that he adopted from the poet Owen Barfield. This latter’s views that language’s etymology reflects change through history in the words’ meaning and the societies that speak them, noting that “a large part of our lexis can be traced to natural phenomena” (Smith 76). Thus, this seems to give Treebeard the status of a philologist, who traces back the etymology of words from their current use to their origin.

Another aspect of the ties between language and nature is depicted in the novel when Gimli, the Dwarf, is asked to explore whether the Orcs are tracing the fellowship’s path: “Gimli halted and stooped to the ground. ‘I hear nothing but the night-speech of plant and stone,’ he said” (Tolkien, *The Fellowship*, 586). Gimli, as Smith notes, emphasises the fact that the trees and rocks do not simply make noises, but they ‘speak’. This holds figurative meaning, but there is slight significant difference that lies in the choice of the word ‘speak’. Gimli does not choose to say “night-sound,” or “night-noise”, rather he says “night-speech”. This indicates the desire to show the natural world producing meaningful sounds. This, arguably, depicts how the pre-modern societies were much closer to nature than the modern industrial ones as it is proved in the modern linguistic studies of the ancient texts. Furthermore, this demonstrates how these societies in particular treat their

natural environment as active and animate, having mutual influence, knowing that in such societies knowledge did not exist in the written texts, rather, it existed in natural objects (Smith 78). This aspect, apparently, sums up what has been discussed earlier about the Hobbit's perception of Bombadil's song and Treebeard's explanation of the significance of his long name.

In addition, Treebeard informs Merry and Pippin that the Ents learnt language from the Elves: "Elves began it, of course, waking trees up and teaching them to speak and learning their tree-talk" (Tolkien, *The Two Towers*, 724). However, the Entish language is not similar to the Elvish tongue. In fact, the Entish language is mainly characterized by the length of its utterances, while the Elvish language is "quick worded" (Honegger 23). This is to say, language, even if it springs from the same source, is reshaped to reflect its speaker.

According to Treebeard, language has to reflect the entities that its words indicate. Furthermore, he explains that words become shorter when the things they refer to are disappearing. Therefore, he tells the Hobbits that "Lothlorien" used to be called "Laurelindorenan", and "a- lalla-lalla-ramba-kamanda-lind-or-burumë" is just a part of a word in the Entish language (Honegger 24). Thus, Treebeard represents the beauty and value of ancient languages, specifically, names.

The word "Ent" reflects its identity. It means in the Anglo-Saxon language "giant" and it is defined in Old English as "Ens", i.e. "something which has existence, a being, entity." Moreover, it means also (essence). As a result, an Ent means Tree, representing the essence of being. One of the levels of meaning that Treebeard addresses is being the representative of language itself. He has knowledge about languages, and he seems to explain it as a linguist in which he illustrates the fitness between words and the things they name. Treebeard knows the etymology of his name, "well, I am an Ent, or that's what they

call me. The Ent ... you might say, in your manner of speaking. Fangorn is my name according to some, Treebeard others make it.” (Tolkien, *The Two Towers*, 719). He reflects the characteristics of the primordial stage in the development of the Indo-European languages (Dickerson & Evans 128-29). Ostensibly, Tolkien presents his theories on language precisely in the character of treebeard, on the one hand, to strengthen the view that language was tied to the environment, on the other hand, Treebeard is the character who embodies Tolkien’s love for nature, languages, and mythology.

2.4. Conclusion

In the light of what has been discussed, the lands of Middle-Earth are diverse and each region has its own characteristics. Starting from the Hobbit’s land, the Shire is well-constructed domestic area; it represents the unpolluted and comfortable life, being far from the complexities of the urban life. The next path is through the animated Old Forest, the spirits of nature, namely, Tom Bombadil and Goldberry, in addition to the Old Man Willow are analysed. For modern readers, this imaginal mythic forest aids to understand the reality of its life apart from themselves. However, it is worth noting that the old pagan religions, from which Tolkien has extracted this mythic archetype of the Old Forest, believed that forests are animated and inhabited by spirits. Nevertheless, this does not imply that Tolkien wants readers to have pagan beliefs, but to spot the light on the extent of the phenomenal ties that used to exist between humans and nature. This is to regain the lost spirituality that used to exist in the past, and that disappeared in the present, for mechanical mind left no space to such transcendence. The four Hobbits continue their way to Lothlorien, the paradisiacal reflection of natural beauty, inhabited by the immortal Elves. It is in this setting that one experiences the aesthetic creation of preserved natural beauty. After leaving Lothlorien, the two Hobbits Merry and Pippin, after they are taken

by the Orcs, find themselves in Fangorn Forest, where they meet the Tree's Shepherds, tree-like beings the Ents, and Treebeard, who forms the Green Man mythic archetype. This forest suffers abolishment, deforestation and destruction. Treebeard speaks on behalf of trees as well as represents the history of language, more precisely, names.

Apparently, non-human entities, in *The Lord of the Rings*, are represented as being perceptive and having thoughts and feelings that correspond to those of human. This analogy functions, seemingly, to defy the human-centric view of the world, shifting it into an eco-centric view.

The important points that Tolkien exhibits through the use of mythic background of the analyzed settings are that nature is beautiful for its own sake, and that one should value beings other than themselves. These points play a key significance in changing people's attitudes towards global ecological matters, and encourage readers to recover the idea that they live in a world that they have to give it its merits. The coming chapter would base its study on the way an exploited environment could cause psychological problem to the characters.

Chapter Three: The Effects of Industry on the Environment and on the Hobbits

3.1. Introduction

As it is presumed to be demonstrated in the novel, this chapter is mainly held to analyze the humans/nature relationship and the effects of industrial development that affect both of them. This analysis mainly focuses on the Hobbits, since they reflect the real world of farmers, specifically the British lifestyle before the industrial revolution, in addition to Saruman and Sauron as the main figures who reflect the aspects of modern societies.

First, the study carries an examination of the Journey's significance for the ecocritical understanding of human/nature interaction that is reflected through the four Hobbits. This journey is two folded, in which the hobbits journey physically from their homeland, while readers would undertake it psychologically through the imaginary process. In the second point, though the characters and the setting are medieval, it provides an illustration of the representativeness of the modernized elements exhibited through the Ring, Saruman and Sauron. The following point to tackle is a study of the quest of Frodo, Sam, and Gollum into the land of Mordor for the purpose of destroying the Ring of power. This study takes an ecopsychological course in the sense that it studies the influence of the land and the industrial power that is symbolized through the Ring on the character of Frodo and Gollum, the Ring bearers. The following point scrutinizes the way Tolkien exposes the suffering of the natural world as any other living creature, giving it, mythically, a voice to speak of its own experience with the damage that some of the people of Middle-Earth cause to them. The last point exhibits the reconstruction of the Shire after its transformation into semi-industrialized during the absence of the Hobbits who set to undergo a Journey to prevent such an action.

3.2. The Importance of the Journey for the Environmental Experience

It should be noted first that the narrative of *The Lord of the Rings* shifts in events from the familiar into the unfamiliar, strange, and mysterious places, and events are not only strange to the readers but also to the Hobbits. Thus, as Steve Walker indicates, imagination works to make a psychological adjustment of the “wild parts” with the familiar world. Subsequently, the Hobbits and the readers, simultaneously, beyond the borders of their homeland, see the outer world with wonder and amazement. They explore the lands and its inhabitants for the first time. This experience, arguably, includes the reader’s imaginal experience together with the Hobbits’ (29). This experience is exhibited in the following passage in which Pippin asks Merry in the Old Forest:

Are the stories about it true? ... Merry answered. If you mean the old bogey-stories Fatty's nurses used to tell him, about goblins and wolves and things of that sort, I should say no. At any rate I don't believe them.” (Tolkien, *The Fellowship*, 343)

Walker adds that whether it is a “psychological projection” or “supernatural miracle” Middle-Earth’s reality could be perceived as a way of amalgamating art and life (33). Allan Morgan points that the Shire is a homely place in which Tolkien manifests the fighting for survival and recovering from the social, political, geographical, and moral systems. Those are mythically recounting the psychological and physical recovery of place (92). Noticeably, The Hobbits have never ventured outside the borders of the Shire, having no experience of what lies behind them. This is because they neither have knowledge of wilderness, nor of the cities. Therefore, eco-critically, experiencing the natural environment seems prerequisite to have a clear view, a clear understanding, and a respect of it. Based on the role of imagination in ecocriticism, through the Hobbits’ experience of the different places of Middle-Earth, readers by their turn are discovering and perceiving the importance of the landscapes they imaginatively visit. The readers in this instance,

expectedly, undertake the quest together with the Hobbits for the discovery and recovery; this is to say that recovery makes them recognize the amount of danger that the Shire is exposed to when it is under the control of Saruman. By extension, the Hobbit's Journey could be understood as a metaphor for human's Journey that they are supposed to undergo, in an imaginative way, with the Hobbits and set aside the anthropocentric worldview.

3.3. The Symbolic Importance of the One Ring of Power

Ginna Wilkerson demonstrates the effect of the Ring, as it is sensed by Frodo, illustrating that he discovers the Ring's magic to have greater power than that of invisibility. She notes that the Ring has its own agency. Gandalf, the wizard, tells Frodo of the letter where he finds the following description of the Ring: "One Ring to rule them all, One Ring to find them/ One Ring to bring them all/ And in darkness bind them." (Tolkien, *The Fellowship*, 277). The Ring, Ishay Landa explains, has the power to part the soul from the outer world to become enclosed within the mind only (Bratta 37-39). Ishay Landa views the Ring of power as a "historical dilemma of Capitalism," whereas John Clark adds that this anthropocentric supremacy forms a barrier to natural and social evolution and dominates nature itself. Moreover, he claims that Sméagol/Glum personifies the outcome of the matter (Bratta 34). It should be noted that the Ring is left to Frodo by his uncle Bilbo Baggins, the hero of Tolkien's children book *The Hobbit* that *The lord of the Rings* is its sequel. Bilbo, in his adventure, takes the Ring from Gollum. This latter is corrupt by the Ring's power, knowing that before being corrupt, Gollum was a Hobbit who is named Sméagol.

3.4. Saruman and Sauron as Figures of Modernity

Sauron, as Elrond the Elf explains, is not always evil; nonetheless, he has put the purpose to control the world in the second age, ending by being defeated. He returns in the third age, recovering his power together with his servants who are corrupted by the lust for power. To fulfill his plans, Sauron has to regain the Ring of Power. In the following passage from the novel, Gandalf, the wizard (as the archetypal wise old man), explains to Frodo, who asks him to take the Ring and destroy it himself:

If any of the Wise should with this Ring overthrow the Lord of Mordor, using his own arts, he would then set himself on Sauron's throne, and yet another Dark Lord would appear. And that is another reason why the Ring should be destroyed: as long as it is in the world it will be a danger even to the Wise. For nothing is evil in the beginning. Even Sauron was not so. I fear to take the Ring to hide it. I will not take the Ring to wield it. (Tolkien, *The Fellowship*, 511)

In addition, Sauron does not appear in the novel except in the conversations in the minds of the other characters, yet he is represented as a watchful red eye (Lobdell 58-59).

Sauron's labour, as Evans and Dickerson examine, is of totalitarian regime and reflect the warfare in the real world, especially the industrialized big-city of England in the early 20th century. Gandalf tells in the counsel of Elrond that Mordor has turned from a land green and fair into that of pits and forges (193). From this, one learns that Mordor has undergone a transformation. This is to say that this land was characterized by natural resources and beauty, and it was with the arrival of the tyrannical leader Sauron that the land morphed into a wasteland.

According to Patrick Curry, a difference should be emphasized between the purely scientific urge to comprehend the universe for its own sake, which Tolkien sets with the aesthetic, and the use of the scientific findings of science intimidate the world in the

advantage of one's own strength. This latter is achieved through a process of progressive technological warfare, the uncontrolled consumption of natural resources, and the mistreatment of advanced methods of communication. Curry adds that Tolkien associates the industry with "magic", as it is presented through Saruman, while he uses the word "enchantment" to refer to art, as it is presented through Lothlorien (104). Arguably, the misuse of science and knowledge are presented in the character of Saruman, who wants the power and dominion, by contrast to the science and knowledge discussed in Tom Bombadil, who seeks knowledge for no harmful means or ends.

Ralph Wood points to Tolkien's belief that the pre-modern world is in several ways superior to the modern one in which humans are now enslaved by the means of manufacture. In addition, the ends, for Tolkien, do not justify the means; this is to say that the scientific experiments should be good in themselves, and not merely good in the ends they serve (31). Furthermore, Richards & Witt add that Tolkien witnessed how the growth of the English cities did not give any regard for the beauty of its countryside. Furthermore, his participation in the war filled him with hatred of the machines whose main purpose is to kill people in huge numbers at once, but did little to military advancement (121). Actually, in many states and several characters exists a reflection of Tolkien's own views either in his rage for industry or in his profound love for nature.

The following passage from the novel illustrates Saruman's, changing attitude, betrayal, and the claim for power; he attempts to brainwash Gandalf to join him, knowing that Saruman's name before he changes used to be Saruman the white, he says: "For I am Saruman the Wise, Saruman Ring-maker, Saruman of Many Colours!" Gandalf tells Saruman that he prefers the white, and then Saruman answers:

"White!" he sneered. 'It serves as a beginning. White cloth may be dyed. The white page can be overwritten; and the white light can be broken... The Middle

Days are passing. The Younger Days are beginning. The time of the Elves is over, but our time is at hand: the world of Men, which we must rule. But we must have power, power to order all things as we will, for that good which only the Wise can see” (Tolkien, *The Fellowship*, 502).

It is worth noting that Saruman’s desire for power is not for Gold or other forms of riches; nevertheless, he seeks power for the power’s sake to dominate other’s desires (Richards & Witt 131). Nonetheless, Paul Fussell views war as the “ultimate anti-pastoral,” destroying nature while taking place within it. This has its roots in English imperialism together with the Industrial Revolution (Croft 34). In the modern world, wars are undergone to gain power over other states and people, as Saruman, or to exploit other’s resources; in both cases, the unavoidable result of these actions is the ultimate destruction of the natural environment.

3.5. An Eco-psychological Journey to Mordor

As it is already discussed in the previous chapter, the Hobbits’ Shire is a comfortable area with which its inhabitants live in harmony and peace. Convincingly, Frodo’s decision to leave such comfort and hold the burden of destroying the Ring of Power came after his recognition that, as Gildor the Elf tells Frodo: “The Shire is no longer any protection to you” (Tolkien, *The Fellowship*, 313). This is besides Gandalf’s report that Sauron, the Dark Lord and owner of the corrupting Ring, is sending evil missionaries after that he reconstructed the Dark Tower in Mordor. Gandalf adds that Sauron’s purpose from that is to regain the One Ring. Moreover, since the Ring is between the hands of Frodo and Sauron is searching for it; the Shire, therefore, is in danger and should be protected (Neil & Zimbardo 104- 105). Hence, the journey starts as a sacrifice from Frodo and his followers to save the Shire.

Ginna Wilkerson adds that Frodo's departure from the Shire to Mount Doom in Mordor witnesses his alteration into a Gollum form. In the previous discussions, the extent to which the Hobbits are attached to their environment is examined. Thus, Tolkien exhibits the way the natural order and the people who are strongly connected to nature are affected by the negative consequences of industry through reflecting, in one side, the corruption of power and industrial development resented in the One Ring, and its consequences on its bearers who are Sméagol and Frodo (Bratta 37- 38). This, obviously, equates with Hillman's eco-psychological view of the "anima mundi." Hence, bearing the Ring throughout the journey mirrors the stages in which the world becomes "deanimated," in Hillman's words, noting that Frodo's approach to Mordor in the novel echoes an advancement to the modern technological world in reality. In addition, the more Frodo advances, the more he is dispirited, and the more his ties to nature diminish from his imagination.

Gollum is the character who holds the Ring for the longest time; furthermore, Frodo would be a developed image of Gollum if he kept the Ring for so longer. Bratta illustrates the case of Gollum, who is originally a Hobbit named Sméagol and this means he lived the same as Frodo's lifestyle. He belongs to a wealthy family and lives in harmony with nature. Nonetheless, after he and his friend finds the Ring, it starts influencing them; Sméagol kills his friend to claim it for himself alone; he leaves the shire and takes refuge in the dark underground of the mountains, especially that his community no longer accept his changing behaviour. Afterward, Sméagol develops a schizophrenic personality, being torn between Sméagol the Hobbit, and Gollum the corrupted Hobbit. Bratta maintains that Sméagol/Gollum exposes the binary between nature and industry, on the one hand, and an inner conflict between his natural self that lived in harmonious relationship with nature, and the distorted self that is disconnected from nature, on the

other hand (33). In short, what has been discussed entails a clash between nature and industry and the binary relationship between humans and nature as connected and disconnected from it, in addition to the dehumanizing outcomes of this latter. This equates with eco-psychological point, which emphasized that because of the advance of industry and the isolation from nature, humans lose their emotional unconscious self with natural phenomena.

With the advance of Frodo, Sam, and Gollum into the realms of Mordor, the austerity of landscape turns to be the major threat. Therefore, the relative importance and dominance of anatomy in the landscape mirrors the appropriateness of the setting to the immediate situation. Steve Walker reasons that Middle-Earth is lively depicted as the artistic equivalent of experience. He adds that the craft of the anatomical topography is exhibited from a non-imaginary, but imaginative perspective, that is to say, it forms a bridge that reflects reality rather than building illusions (44). In Middle-Earth as Walker continues explaining, “Boulders galloping, forests striding, clouds hurrying.” These aspects display communicative vividness between the characters and landscape. These two make a balance of mutuality that foretells a psychic and sentient landscape. Therefore, the environment shapes the character (50). Noticeably, it is not only the land that shapes the characters, since the relationship between them is mutual, yet even the characters have the power to influence and reshape the land. For instance, Sauron corrupts the land of Mordor, while this latter, besides the ring, corrupts Frodo.

Mount Doom that is under the domination of Sauron makes noise as “a rumour and a trouble as of great engines throbbing and labouring” (Tolkien, *The Return*, 1067). Roger Sale states that the landscape through which Frodo must move is Sauron’s most powerful weapon, “a valley of the Shadow of death”, thus the use of the pastoral is a comparison to expose the depth of Frodo’s torment and suffer, and the extent of his loss (228). He says:

I feel that as long as the Shire lies behind, safe and comfortable, I shall find wondering more bearable...I tried to remember the Brandywine, and Woody End, and the water is running through the mill at Hobbiton, but I can't see them now.

(Tolkien, *The Return*, 1207)

This exhibits that Frodo's image of the Shire that he keeps along his way in his mind is the source that pushes him forward to accomplish his task; however, the existing lands through which he passes prevent him from remembering the beauty of the Shire. Therefore, this separation of Frodo from the Shire, physically and then psychically, is the very reason that allows the Ring to corrupt him and prevent him from throwing the Ring in Mount Doom.

The land of Mordor exposes Tolkien's view of the devastating effects of industry on nature because of the tyrannical leader the Dark Lord Sauron. Frodo says when entering this land, "[h]ere neither spring nor summer would ever come again" (Tolkien, *The Two Towers*, 899). This, noticeably, displays the disorder of the seasonable cycles that is an obvious result of the environmental devastation (Evans & Dickerson 187). Additionally, in Mordor, as Evans and Dickerson point, the "high mounds of crushed and powdered rock" bring to mind the real life troubled nature of the mountains' mining wastes. Its land is "fire-blasted" in the same way as with bombs, and "poison stained" like the toxic wastes of factories that pollute the earth (187). Actually, Evans and Dickerson are drawing the verisimilitude between the fictional and its applicability to the real. In the following passage, Frodo draws the image of the aforementioned analysis. The first sight of this land appears when Gollum guides Sam and Frodo into the black gate the guards Sauron's territory:

Here nothing lived, not even the leprous growths that feed on rotteness. The gasping pools were choked with ash and crawling muds, sickly white and grey, as if the mountains had vomited the filth of their entrails upon the lands about. High

mounds of crushed and powdered rock, great cones of earth fire-blasted and poison-stained, stood like an obscene graveyard in endless rows, slowly revealed in the reluctant light... ‘I feel sick’, said Sam, Frodo did not answer (Tolkien, *the Two Tower*, 899).

Evans and Dickerson exhibit Tolkien’s own influence of the facts he witnessed in the city of Birmingham in the nineteenth Lancashire “fusiliers” during the First World War, where the poisonous chemicals, the dismay of trench warfare, and the battle of the Somme impressed him. They view further that Tolkien suggests that there is a persistent will for survival even in the midst of such destruction as it is stated in *The Return of the king*: “Mordor was a dying land, but not but not yet dead. And here things still growing harsh, bitter, struggling for life” (1210). Nonetheless, when the company get close to Morgai, i.e. the defensive wall of Sauron, they see: “The living things gave up their struggle; the tops of the Morgai were grassless, bare, jagged, barren as slate... the smokes trailed on the earth and lay in the earth...and fumes leaked from fissures in the earth” (Tolkien 1211; Evans & Dickerson 189). This, effectively, demonstrates a strong image of an agonized nature, struggling for survival in the midst of the polluting, and toxic substances that fill the earth and the air.

According to Richard and Witt, since Frodo has lost any sense of the Shire, the corrupting power of the Ring that he bears becomes stronger (131). In this instance, Frodo says in *The Return of the King*: “I am naked in the dark Sam, and there is no veil between me and the wheel of fire...and all else fades” (Tolkien, *The Return*, 1227). By extension, Frodo is not motivated by the desire of wealth, yet it is the “psychological landscape” and the ring that distance him from the creation (131). Presumably, The Environmental annihilation does not make Frodo and Sam only lifeless, and spiritless, but it also makes him void of any enjoyable memory that they have ever experienced. Their imagination is

now completely detached from natural images. By extension, Frodo's character becomes similar to that of the land as lifeless and corrupt.

3.6. Nature's Voice through Treebeard

In Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*, industry, as Douglas points, is depicted most of the time through negative metaphor; the complexity of Saruman's industry appears during the Ents' attack on Isengard, calling Saruman "the tree killer." (56). It should be noted that, mostly, all the characters in middle-earth use woods and cut trees for their needs and their manufacturing. This indicates that Saruman's evil, as Douglas illustrates, does not lie, essentially, in the products he makes, but in the amount of destruction that he causes to the environment in order to make what he produces (60). In the novel, Tolkien raises the issue of falling trees as a critical aspect of environmental ethics.

Indeed, a number of critics examine the ethical matter of falling trees, for instance, Verlyn Flieger points to the different treatments of the Old Forest and Fangorn Forest, which suffer the same circumstances but differ in their actual character. This is to say, on the one hand, the Old Forest's, as it is illustrated in the previous chapter, trees are felled when Hobbits first settle in the land, turning it into the actual Shire and leaving the rest of the forest into a forgotten hostile one. On the other hand, Saruman fells trees of Fangorn Forest to feed his fires. What she views as peculiar is the fact that, the first forest is depicted as evil, while the second as good. Furthermore, she concludes that in both cases "Civilization is necessarily locked into a war with nature (Douglas 62). This is to say that in order to construct a civilization by a group of people, they need to tame the land where they settle, thus the land is subjugated to a radical transformation by these settlers, including the cutting of trees in large scale.

Patrick Curry elaborates on this, viewing that people's existence cannot be without clear-cutting and taming large spaces of wilderness, yet the conflict between nature and

civilization is an old one. Curry indicates that nature needs sustainable management, being used to life necessities, rather than for mere profits. Moreover, Michael Brisbo views that even though Tolkien supports the stewardship of nature over its dominion, this relationship would not be ideally harmonious. Hence, stewardship of nature exists within dominion not out of it (Douglas 64). It could be noticed that Tolkien does not blame or condemn the Hobbits for their action. This is because the Hobbits are not hostile to the environment where they live. Moreover, they did not cut trees to be replaced by polluting industries, yet to make a better use of the land in which both the land and its inhabitants serve each other.

Verlyn clarifies that humans tame the wilderness whose gradual destruction is an inevitable loss. This is reflected in Fangorn forest where Treebeard tells Merry and Pippin that the Forest and the Ents are doomed, knowing that the Entwives have already disappeared (65). John Garth emphasizes that though machines and machinery are made by humans' crafts, "In the Hell of Iron, the higher arts and sciences are subsumed or crushed in the service of mechanical industry"; therefore, the desire for power becomes an infinite desire (223). In this stance, one may note that the Hobbits' destruction of the Forest creates Shires that are tamed spaces from nature, i.e. the environment is not damaged. Rather, it is a well organized natural space that benefits its inhabitants and the inhabitants benefit it in turn through its sustaining; while Saruman destroys Forests and Shires to create wastelands, i.e. he damages the environment and the damaged environment harm its inhabitants in turn, physically and psychologically, as it is seen through Gollum and Frodo. Curry notes that the phenomenal world encompasses a living cosmos that oversupplies the entire novel, and middle-Earth itself is presented as a character whose agency is non-human. This permits a sense of ancient myth that evokes a time when the earth itself was a living cosmos (50). He adds that in any war the obvious

question to be asked is in which side one stands. In the *Lord of the Rings*, Treebeard answers:

I am not altogether on anybody's side, because nobody is altogether on my side, if you understand me: nobody cares for the woods as I care for them...And there are some things, of course, whose side I am altogether *not* on; I am against them altogether: these -- burbrum' (he again made a deep rumble of disgust)' -- these Orcs, and their masters..." (Tolkien, *Two Towers*, 728).

This again reflects Tolkien's own view of trees for which he acknowledges a deep love. He says in one of his letters: "I am (obviously) much in love with plants and above all trees, and always have been; and I find human maltreatment of them as hard to bear as some find ill-treatment of animals" (Tolkien, *Letters*, 233). He adds, "I take the side of trees against all enemies" (qtd. In Curry55). Curry explains the strong sympathy that Tolkien develops toward trees, demonstrating that half of the remaining woodlands are annihilated in the last fifty years, and the last four centuries. Ten percent are left from the forested areas (55). Treebeard aids to plant in the Ents the power to reason and to speak. Treebeard tells the Hobbits: "Nobody cares for the woods as I care for them, not even Elves nowadays" (Tolkien, *the Two Towers*, 728). Hence, the novel presents treebeard as the spokesperson on the behalf of the natural world generally, and trees, specifically.

The novel, indeed, calls for the dominating humans to appreciate and care for the longer perspective of other things in the world, and to be responsible for one's actions towards the planet (Bassham & Bronson 163). When the war of the Ring ends, Legolas discusses with Gimli the future of the world under Human race's dominion in the Fourth Age. He says;

It is ever so with the things that Men begin: There is a frost in Spring, or a blight in Summer, and they fail of their promise'. 'Yet seldom do they fail of their seed,' said

Legolas. ‘And that will lie in the dust and rot to spring up again in times and places unlooked-for. The deeds of Men will outlast us, Gimli.’ (Tolkien, *the Return*, 1160).

Treebeard and the Ents must be “roused” to act against Saruman’s deeds; however, Treebeard tells Merry and Pippin: “We Ents do not like being roused; and we never are roused unless it is clear to us that our trees and our lives are in great danger” (Tolkien, *Two Towers*, 742). This is because it disturbs their lifestyle. Norman Wirzba observes that agrarianism is about learning to take responsibilities that protect, preserve, and celebrate life. For instance, in the Sire, the Hobbits are not quick to deal with the evil that surrounds them; therefore, the result of this is the easy fall of the Hobbits into the hostile forces toward their agrarianism that is their civilization. This will be examined in the coming discussion. Treebeard recognizes that non-action leads to further damage. Therefore, he states, “it is likely enough... that we are going to our doom: the last march of the Ents”. However, if we stayed at home and did nothing, doom would find us anyway, eventually. Simultaneously, people in the real world dislike being “roused” for minimizing the use of fossil fuels; for instance, they demand undesirable and uncomfortable substitutes in that alter daily habits. Moreover, the consumption of food that grows by “sustainable” schemes demand well agricultural “stewardship” that is not an easy task, for its cost is higher. Nevertheless, one should take action and responsibility for change (Nicholay 247-50). Thomas Honegger and Frank Weinreich illustrate that the Ents march to Isengard, dramatizing the vengeance of trees against their attackers. Saruman and Sauron poison watercourses, fill the air with smoke, contaminate the soil, cut trees and create deserts where grass once grew. It refuses the despondency that considers such developments as permanent and affirms the resistance of the earth for survival (90). In the *Lord of the Rings*, the natural world is animated; subsequently, it fights back, being allied with other

characters who lament the loss of parts from the environment because of Sauron's and Saruman's irritation and destruction of the environment. Yet, the wars that are fought in Middle-Earth are not only to protect and defend its people, but also to protect and defend its environment.

3.7 The Restoration of the Shire

After the war ends, the company of Hobbits returns to the Shire, passing through Isengard, so as they can see the beginning of its environmental repair. This is illustrated in the following statement from *The Return of the King*:

They rode to Isengard, and saw how the Ents had busied themselves. All the stone circle had been thrown down and removed, and the land within was made into a garden filled with orchards and trees, and a stream ran through it. (Tolkien 1272)

In the above extract, Tolkien is mainly calling for social care. Evans & Dickerson point that most of the arguments that take the side of environmental causes are centered on financial and economic reasons tied in communal, individual or governmental self-interest. For instance, a number of financial benefits go with the tidying of polluted water sources; in addition, using alternative energy sources and recycling, produce new industry that creates jobs (227). In this case, Tolkien appears as not completely against all forms of industry; however, he supports its use in case that it does not harm the environment, and in sustaining it; this is to say, he supports the industry that cares for the ends as much as it cares for the means.

In the chapter entitled "The Scouring of the Shire," Tolkien exhibits what Patrick Curry calls "an account of local resistance" that is supposed to inspire the readers to make similar reaction against the destruction of their own environments in the primary world (41). When Saruman falls, being defeated by the Ents and Gandalf, he changes his identity

and becomes known as Sharkey who takes revenge by the destruction of the Shire through planting in its midst an “ugly and stench-making industry,” and morphing the peaceful, and well-organized community into a “heartless bureaucracy” (Wood 23). When the four Hobbits are back home, after accomplishing the quest for destroying the Ring, they have their “first really painful shock.” They see their Hobbits homes become deserted, or disappeared and substituted by new ugly houses. The Hobbits remember:

An avenue of trees had stood there. They were all gone. And looking with dismay up the road towards Bag End they saw a tall chimney of brick in the distance. It was pouring out black smoke into the evening air (Tolkien, *the Return*, 1299).

Dickerson and Evans note that this equates with what modern readers have witnessed in the real world, that they accept this as the inevitable side effect of development (206). John Elder thinks that “Saruman’s projects resonate with many of the destructive outcomes of political and commercial globalization today” (Dickerson and Evans xi). Andrew Light argues that in this part of the novel, the engagement of readers gets “a clear critique of the ravages of industrialism pulling apart the traditional connections between people and the land” (151). Moreover, Saruman’s deeds and its applicability to the real world is best depicted by Tom Shippey, who demonstrates that Saruman equates with the picture of one of the modernity’s characteristic vices which still has no specific name. He adds that it is a sort of “restless ingenuity, skill without purpose, bulldozing for the sake of change”. By extension, the Saruman-like of the primary world fills their supporters with visions of a future technological paradise, i.e., a “modernist Utopia”. Nonetheless, the result is no more than the blasted and damaged landscapes of Eastern Europe. Shippey points that though some would not agree with Tolkien’s “diagnosis” of this condition by using pastoral resolutions to it; Tolkien has attempts through this to give a historical and psychological dimension (Shippey 171). One could suggest that through understanding Tolkien’s theory

of “recovery”, the view of the pastoral, as inappropriate solution, would be nullified. For instance, “This was Frodo and Sam’s own country, and they found out now that they cared about it more than any other place in the world” (Tolkien, *the Return*, 1299). Actually, Sam views that the Shire is worse than Mordor; he says, “Much worse in a way. It comes home to you, as they say; because it is home, and you remember it before it was all ruined” (Tolkien, *The Return*, 1347). When the Hobbits return home, they are already experienced with the environmental distraction in Isengard and Mordor because of Sauron and Saruman’s Industry. Therefore, when they return home and see their Shire transformed into semi-industrialised, they consider it worse than Mordor, because they know very well what evil industry could cause.

This point is further examined by Patrick Curry who maintains that the Hobbits’ grief of witnessing the damage of such magnitude in their own home is significant in its reflection upon the primary world. The sense of a terribly endangered environment is savaged by human greed and ignorance around the globe (17). This is to say, only the Hobbits who have experienced the amount of environmental destruction in Mordor and Isengard realize the extent to which the Shire is damaged, while the Hobbits who live and do not leave the Shire are tricked by Saruman’s promises, and they do not realise that they are damaging their ideal home rather than reconstructing it.

Tolkien believes that the urge for money, in addition to property and power, are the very reasons of the environmental roots of evil that the Shire witnesses. He views that people seek to acquire more land and own everything themselves. This makes it the motivation of the one Ring, and as Sam notes, an extension of Mordor (Evans & Dickerson 212). On this fact, the narrator in *The Return of the King* states:

The trees were the worst loss and damage, for at Sharkey’s bidding they had been cut down recklessly far and wide over the Shire; and Sam grieved over this more

than anything else. For one thing, this hurt would take long to heal, and only his great-grand children, he thought, would see the Shire as it ought to be (Tolkien, *The Return*, 1319).

The environmental vice is mainly linked To Saruman and Sauron in Isengard and Mordor with their armies of Orcs. Sam evokes that the damaged Shire would take two generations to heal as a minimum for the obvious scars to diminish. Hence, in the real world people live with the outcomes of the preceding generations' environmental contamination. Evans and Dickerson illustrate this point arguing that some of the traces of toxic products could be detected even after a long time of their prohibition; in addition, though a hundred of years have passed since the burning of fossil fuels, their fossil fuels, and waste products are traced in the ice layer at both poles (212). Leopard adds that the cutting of trees symbolizes the loss of flora; consequently, this leads to an immediate extinction of certain animals (Evans & Dickerson 213). The scouring of the Shire conveys to the real world that healing from the effects of industry could not be immediate rather it happens gradually.

Sam's description of the modernized Shire echoes Tolkien's own view of the modern improvements of the suburban housing tracts. Thus, the new buildings appear as offensive for the Hobbits because the cost is the loss of traditional Hobbits dwellings, which entails the loss of heritage and craftsmanship that modernization brings (Nicholay 30). These undergoing events in the Shire bring the merits of the past in comparison to the present and the future. This latter brings a sense of pathos (41). This illustrates that beside the physical and psychological effects that the industrialized environment causes to the individuals and communities, it also affects their very culture.

3.8. Conclusion

In the light of the previous discussions, Tolkien's profound admiration of trees led him to give Middle-Earth a character of its own, which defeats and is defeated. In addition, to give this a sense of truthfulness for modern readers, he uses mythic creatures that have historical roots that are popular, as they are presented in the previous chapter. Furthermore, despite the fact that the characters and the setting are medieval, it is symbolically molded to fit the modern and postmodern age through verisimilitude and symbolism.

Tolkien exhibits through the Characters of Sauron and Saruman the extent to which the lust for power corrupts even if the intentions behind its use are good ones, applying the fact that power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely. Therefore, the corruption of these two totalitarians leads them to claim power over all creatures; nature is the first living creature that suffers, since power needs an extreme exploitation of the natural sources especially trees that have undergone a great amount of deforestation. In addition, the kinds of wars in which chemical substances are used kill the fertility of the landscapes. Hence, nature is enslaved while treebeard comes as the spokesman on the behalf of the suffering trees.

The effects of people's lust for power ,besides a spoiled environment, affect the physical and psychological makeup, as it has been examined in the characters of Sméagol/Gollum and Frodo. It should be noted that, the Ring has been with Frodo's uncle, namely, Bilbo for years before it passed to Frodo. It is true that Bilbo becomes strongly related to it and does not want to give it up; nevertheless, he is not corrupt because, presumably, he stays in the Shire, i.e., his ties with the natural world prevent him from being corrupt.

At the end of the novel, the Shire is rebuilt. Sam restores the gardens by seeding and planting trees. Through this, Tolkien, noticeably, proposes that there still hope to

recover what has been spoiled in the natural world, noting that this would take time and generation to be recovered; however, people should make action to sustain the environment after the recognition of the caused damage.

General Conclusion

In the light of the rapidly growing industrialization and technologies, increasing calls and voices, in turn, sound the alarm over the environmental destruction that these technologies have brought. Hence, reactionary green movements emerged, starting from the second half of the twentieth century, that strive to raise social awareness of this issue. In Europe, art and literature play influential role to convey moral issues, considerably, J.R.R. Tolkien contributed to the rising awareness concerning this issue, noting that Tolkien writes in Fantasy that is a popular genre; in addition, being the second bestselling novel of all times, it emphasises the extent of his influential writing on people. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* makes readers journey back in history into a world where industrialization does not exist, yet where wilderness is not as occasional as it is in the current world, and a where the world is not less sentient than any other character. Tolkien raises the reader's awareness against pollution and the rise of machines.

Understanding the environmental theme in Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* presupposes an examination of the importance of imagination as an element of perception that works through the use of mythology, as it is introduced in Tolkien's own view on the importance of Fantasy in its reflection of reality. In addition, they are essential elements in the ecocritical approach that links people, anywhere, to the environment, making an imaginary contact with the landscape. It also could make a bridge between the past and the present. Tolkien and the ecocritics, simultaneously, believe that people are more likely to prevent the destruction of the earth if they maintain their mythic roots. Another point is that language is deeply rooted in nature; Furthermore, Tolkien portrays nature as animated, having a life, a sensation, and a character of its own. Another point that is shared between Tolkien and ecocritics is the view that language is deeply rooted in nature, and that it has

been influenced by industrial life, causing its break from nature. Taking into consideration that Tolkien wrote *The Lord of the Rings* long before ecocriticism has been introduced, the similarities between Tolkien's views and those of the ecocritics would suggest him as a pioneer to this approach.

The landscapes of Middle-Earth are diverse and each region has its own characteristic features. The analysis of the main places in the novel is made to illustrate how Tolkien uses medieval mythology to provide, on the one hand, a sense of history that makes the readers have an evocation of reality. On the other hand, the extent to which nature has sacred and spiritual connectedness to its inhabitants in the past would give a sense of recovery. Starting from the Hobbit's land, the Shire is an agricultural land that works as a representative of the unpolluted and comfortable life.

The next examined location is the animated Old Forest, Tom Bombadil and Goldberry who are found to be the spirits of nature, in addition to the Old Man Willow, inhabit this forest. For modern readers, this imaginary mythic forest aids to understand the reality of the life of forests apart from themselves. It also spots the light on the extent to which the phenomenal ties used to exist between humans and nature. This is to regain the lost spirituality that used to exist in the past. Lothlorien is an enchanting forest, inhabited by the immortal Elves. It is in this setting that one experiences the aesthetic creation of a preserved natural beauty. Fangorn is another forest in which one finds the tree's Shepherds and tree-like beings who are the Ents and Treebeard. This forest suffers abolishment, deforestation and destruction. Treebeard speaks on behalf of trees as well as representing the history of language, more precisely, names. Apparently, Trees in *The Lord of the Rings* are represented as being perceptive and having thoughts and feelings that correspond to those of human. This gives an eco-centric view of the world rather than an anthropocentric one.

In addition, the important points that Tolkien exhibits using mythic background of the analyzed settings include love for nature for its own sake, that is to say, people's relation to it should not be basically and essentially pragmatic and for profitable reasons, and that one should value beings other than themselves. These analysed places are crucial in changing people's attitudes towards global ecological matters and encourage readers to recover the fact that they live in a world, which they have to give its merits.

The exploitation of natural sources in modern Britain portrayed in *Lord of the Rings* through the realms of Mordor and Isengard and the characters of Saruma and Sauron, in addition to the Ring of Power that symbolizes the rising power of industry; these figures represent totalitarianism in its highest level. Nature is the first living creature that suffers, since power needs an extreme exploitation of the natural sources especially trees that undergo a great amount of deforestation. In addition, in wars, the chemical substances that are used lead immediately to exhaust the fertility of the lands. In this stance, nature is enslaved whereas treebeard comes as the representative on the behalf of the suffering trees.

The physical and psychological situations of the characters are presented as essentially tied to the situation of the environment where they live, as it has been examined in the characters of Sméagol/Gollum and Frodo. As for the way the natural world is tied that to the industrial one, one may note that the Ring has been with Bilbo, Frodo's uncle, for years before it has passed to Frodo, this is to say, Frodo keeps the ring for a short time in comparison to his uncle. It is true that Bilbo becomes strongly tied to it; nevertheless, he is not corrupt because, presumably, he stays in the Shire, this is to say, his ties with the natural world prevent him from being corrupt. Frodo actually does not destroy the Ring; he wears it while the fully consumed Hobbit by the Ring's power, namely Sméagol, destroys it and is destroyed by it. This demonstrates people's failure to resist the industrial power,

and, like the Ring, the inability to resist the illusionary delight that it brings, neglecting the harmful effects behind it.

Tolkien, at the end of the novel, proposes that there is still hope to recover what has been spoiled in the natural world, noting that this would take time and generations to be recovered; however, people should make action to sustain the environment after the recognition of the damage that they cause.

To conclude, *The Lord of the Rings* presents a journey in space and time, from a preserved agricultural natural world into an industrial realm where nature agonizes to survive. This journey takes an imaginary form that raises the awareness of readers to recognise these dangers in the real world. For instance, the more Frodo gets near into Mordor, the more his desire to wear the Ring escalates, suggesting that the more one is indulged with industrial life, the more the person could be easily corrupt by the urge for power that would destroy the environment at a large scale.

It is recommended that the results of this study be expected to give contribution for literature students who are interested in analyzing literary works using Eco-criticism theory as well as other students who are interested in *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy. Furthermore, it provides further researches that focus its study on the nature/human relationship on this novel with a background, in which further investigations could be held.

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