

**Mordor and the Threat from the East: Tolkien's Shifting Intentions: Orientalism and Representation in J.R.R. Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings***

by

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## **Abstract**

The purpose of this thesis is to demonstrate the presence of Orientalism in the *Lord of the Rings*; secondly, how orientalist discourse is employed, beginning by defining what Orientalism is and how it relates to the *Lord of the Rings*. By objectifying the East and not permitting the myriad cultures and nations to have their own voice, the East is categorized by the West as its moral and cultural antagonist. The terminology of Orientalism is reviewed as well as major theories in postcolonial studies, which will be utilized in analyzing Tolkien's text. This thesis will also examine the orientalist discourses in the text utilizing a multidisciplinary approach which includes linguistics, anthropology, politics, geography, genealogy, and sociology, using as an example the "corruption" of Saruman with oriental values.

## Resumen

El propósito de esta tesis es primero, demostrar la presencia de orientalismo en *El Señor de los Anillos* y segundo, cómo se emplea el discurso orientalista en las obras comenzando por definir lo que es orientalismo y cómo se relaciona al Señor de los Anillos. Al no permitir que todas las naciones y culturas orientales tengan voz propia y tratándolos como objetos, se categoriza el Este como el enemigo moral y cultural del Occidente. La terminología de orientalismo se discutirá además de teorías importantes en los estudios post-colonialistas, que se utilizará en el análisis del texto de Tolkien. Esta tesis examinará y trazará los discursos orientalistas en el texto empleando un enfoque multidisciplinario que incluye la lingüística, la antropología, la política, la geografía, la geología, la genealogía, y la sociología, usando como ejemplo primario la “corrupción” del personaje Saruman con los valores orientales.

To my family . . .



## Acknowledgements

It has been a long and arduous journey, not unlike when the Fellowship braved the pass at Caradhras. Unlike them, I faced the fury of the mountain and passed to the other side, though not unscathed. I also went into the dark depths of Khazad-dûm and confronted my own personal balrog and came to an understanding with him. Along with me in this twenty-odd year quest was my own fellowship that saw me through the worst scrapes. To my wife, Elizabeth, who has persevered and kept her faith in me intact throughout everything that has befallen us, *Vain Melda, Elen sila lumen omintielmo*. To my children Kenneth and Alexander, I thank them for showing me the true path of adventure. Special thanks my cadre of *Istari*: Leonardo Flores chairman of my graduate committee, Betsy Morales who never lost faith that I could finish, and Manuel Valdes Pizzini for giving me the renewed spark to finish up; their guidance, wisdom, and patience made my journey swifter than a flight of giant eagles. To the personnel at the Interlibrary Loan department in the General Library of the University of Puerto Rico at Mayagüez, without whose help this thesis would have been a more difficult task to accomplish. To J.R.R. Tolkien, his vision kept me on course even though I wanted to claim the Ring as my own.

## Conventions and Abbreviations

Since there are so many editions of *The Hobbit* and the *Lord of the Rings*, citations will be by book and chapter number (referenced to the editions listed in the Works Cited and Consulted). Thus a citation from *The Lord of the Rings*, book two, chapter four, is written (*LotR*, Bk II, Ch iv). The “Silmarillion” indicates the body of stories and poems developed over many years by Tolkien; *The Silmarillion* indicates the volume first published in 1977.

### Abbreviations

<i>FR</i>	<i>The Fellowship of the Ring</i>
<i>H</i>	<i>The Hobbit</i>
<i>LotR</i>	<i>The Lord of the Rings</i> by J.R.R. Tolkien; the work itself irrespective of edition.
<i>RK</i>	<i>The Return of the King</i>
<i>Sauron</i>	<i>Sauron Defeated</i>
<i>Shadow</i>	<i>The Return of the Shadow</i>
<i>shaping</i>	<i>The Shaping of Middle-earth</i>
<i>TT</i>	<i>The Two Towers</i>
<i>Treason</i>	<i>The Treason of Isengard</i>
<i>Letters</i>	<i>The Letters of J.R.R. Tolkien</i>

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## 1 Introduction

My argument takes it that the Orientalist reality is both antihuman and persistent. Its scope, as much as its institutions and all-pervasive influence, lasts up to the present.

Edward W. Said *Orientalism*  
Nothing is so firmly believed as what is least understood.  
Michel de Montaigne

### 1.1 Justification

The purpose of this thesis is to enable readers to perceive, not only the presence of Orientalism in Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings*, but also view its presence in the context of the times Tolkien witnessed and how an Orientalist analysis of *Lord of the Rings* reveals Tolkien's evolution from an initial Victorian mindset to a more modern thinking. Ever since the publication of the *Lord of the Rings*, many theorists have leveled both justifications and accusations at J.R.R. Tolkien and the validity of his work. The study of Tolkien's texts has been relegated to non-mainstream literary criticism and minor attempts in classifying or ascertaining the importance of the texts in literature.

The recent trilogy of silver screen adaptations of the *Lord of the Rings* has catapulted Tolkien's work into the limelight and has initiated a steady trend of serious academic study about his works where, until recently, there was very little. Literary critics have been extremely biased against Tolkien and the genre in general. The merits in studying Tolkien's work are left to the individual scholar; each person who has read Tolkien's works have their own interpretation on the themes that are present in his works. Needless to say, Tolkien's work has had a critical reception, not all good, but certainly worth noting.

Tolkien's pseudo-mythological Middle-earth is an amalgam of real world sources. Real world problems such as politics and representation exist for the races that inhabit

Middle-earth. Tolkien's texts are a testament of his times and a reflection of his world views. Tolkien wrote about the things he knew best: language, mythology, and his love for the simple lifestyle of his boyhood in rural England. Tempered with these life shaping events are the ordeals that molded his adult life; living at the end of the Victorian industrial age and in the beginning of the Edwardian era. He witnessed his beloved rural countryside dramatically change through the technological advances of industrialism, participated in one of the last British imperial ventures, the Great War, and finally had to live through the Second World War. Through it all, Tolkien remained quintessentially a product of his middle class, insular, British, West Midland upbringing. Tolkien compared himself to a hobbit: "I am a hobbit in all respects except for size" (*Letters* 213). And what is a hobbit? It is a representation and idealization on the part of Tolkien of the low to middle class West Midland English, the place where he calls home: "Though a Tolkien by name, I am Suffield by tastes, talents, and upbringing, and any corner of that county [Worcestershire] (however fair or squalid) is in an indefinable way 'home' to me, as no other part of the world is" (*Letters* 44).

Tolkien was the inheritor of a vast socio-cultural milieu that prevailed in England and, to some extent, the United States at the time. He lived in time of decline of the British Empire. Eric Hobsbawm gives the dates 1875-1914 to the formal Empire<sup>1</sup>, the largest expansion of the British imperial territory. Tolkien was born in the fin-de-siècle<sup>2</sup> and was fully immersed in Western culture of that time by virtue of his studies at Oxford University.

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<sup>1</sup> In Elleke Boehmer's *Colonial and Post Colonial Literature* (29).

<sup>2</sup> Generally referred to the years 1890 to 1914; the term has connotations of decadence which are seen as typical for the last years of a prosperous period (*La Belle Époque* at the turn of the 20th century), and of anticipative excitement about — and/or despair facing — impending change which is generally expected when a century or time period draws to a close (definition from wikipedia.org). Tolkien was born January 3, 1892 and, according to John Garth as well as Humphrey Carpenter, he was thought to have written the first lines of a poem related to his fictitious Middle Earth in 1914 (Garth 45-46, Carpenter 79).

The culture of the nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries reflected the nationalist and imperialist ideologies prevalent in Europe and in the United States. Dreams of Empire and Manifest Destiny<sup>3</sup> proliferated throughout British society and in the United States respectively. Western cultures enjoyed the fruits of their imperial grandeur and developed a powerful belief of their own pre-eminence. In their hubris, they separated the world into two unequal halves; the West and the East, or the Orient as it was called in the days of British imperial expansion. Western society alienated what was foreign from itself through a system of representations structured by political forces that brought the Orient into Western learning, Western consciousness and Western empire. The structure they put in place to define the East encompasses every cultural aspect dealing with the Orient.

To understand the representation present in the *Lord of the Rings*, the reader must recognize where the information is coming from and how it affects the perception of those who obtain this information. The elves are the clearinghouse for most of the information pertaining to the East.

The house of Elrond in Rivendell is the chief center of history. Here, the “Free races” gather to plot the overthrow of Sauron, in the “Last Homely House” west of the Misty Mountains. “And here in Rivendell there still live some of his chief foes: the Elven-wise, lords of the Eldar from beyond the furthest seas” (*LotR* Bk II Ch II). Tolkien asserted that, “Elrond the Half-Elven, son of Eârendil, maintains a kind of enchanted sanctuary at *Imladris* (in English Rivendell) on the extreme eastern margin of the western lands. \* [*sic*] Elrond symbolizes throughout the ancient wisdom, and his house represents Lore – the preservation

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<sup>3</sup> Manifest Destiny expressed the belief that the United States was destined to expand from the Atlantic seaboard to the Pacific Ocean; it has also been used to advocate for or justify other territorial acquisitions.

in reverent memory of all tradition concerning the good, wise, and beautiful” (*Letters* 131). Thus the West perpetuates the orientalist outlook by knowing more about the East than the people who live there.

## 1.2 Overview of thesis

The thesis will be an Orientalist analysis of *Lord of the Rings* which reveals Tolkien’s evolution from Victorian to Modern thinking. Understanding how Orientalism is portrayed by the characters, the sociopolitical institutions, attitudes, and concepts from the West is of prime importance because it demonstrates Tolkien's mindset, not only during the creation of the *Lord of the Rings* but also the mindset of the age in which he grew up, the Victorian age. By objectifying the East and not permitting the myriad cultures and nations of the East to have their own voice, the East is categorized by the West as its moral and cultural antagonist. Thus, the purpose of this thesis is to demonstrate the presence of Orientalism in the *Lord of the Rings*; secondly, how orientalist discourse is employed, beginning by defining what Orientalism is and how it relates to the *Lord of the Rings*. Chapter II will begin by defining what Orientalism is and how it relates to the *Lord of the Rings*. The terminology of Orientalism is reviewed as well as major theories in postcolonial studies, which will be utilized in analyzing Tolkien’s text. This thesis also looks at the orientalist discourses in the text and how these discourses can be interpreted. Throughout history, individuals and whole civilizations have been stereotyped by their beliefs, their language, their physical attributes, and their culture. Characters and regions in the *Lord of the Rings* are not the exception to this. This thesis analyzes geographical features between East and West. Historical elements that pertain to both divides are scrutinized, a comparison of racial linguistics between the Elves, Men, Halflings, and Orcs is made, and finally contrasting racial features of the East and the

West are analyzed in the search for orientalist discourse in the *Lord of the Rings*. A cross-disciplinary approach that includes linguistics, anthropology, politics, geography, cartography, geology, genealogy, and sociology is used in the study of Orientalism in the texts of the *Lord of the Rings*.

Chapter three, Tolkien Modern Victorian, goes on to state how Tolkien was a product of his middle-class socio-cultural upbringing, which is late Victorian early Edwardian, and his love for the English countryside of Sarehole shaped his thought and his world-view. Tolkien's academic interest in Anglo-Saxon, Old Norse, and Old Icelandic among other Northern languages, his keen interest in philology also plays greatly in his background knowledge. Coupled with his Victorian upbringing, this section also analyzes the traumatic experiences he had as a Lieutenant of the Lancashire Fusiliers during the worst fighting of World War I, the Somme in 1916 and how this experience affected him and his writing. These two catalytic poles help shape his literary expression that culminates in the *Lord of the Rings*.

Chapter four, The Imaginative Geography of Middle-earth seeks to explain why the map of Middle-earth is the way it is and how it helps perpetuate the exclusion of the East in Western discourse, contrasting landscapes, map features and the omission of details and facts about the East. What is postulated in this thesis is that the map of Middle-earth shows both what the West wishes the viewer to see, namely that the West is a land of variety and both cultural and topographic differentiation, while the East is a land of uniformity, a featureless unknown that ends at the borders with enormous gaps of blanks. Is it true that the wise of the West have no knowledge of the lands of the East after so many thousands of years? Where is

the West obtaining its knowledge? Both questions are essential in understanding Tolkien's motive for the map of Middle-earth.

The fifth chapter, Going Native: The East as the Source of Saruman's Corruption will deal with the corrupting influence of the East on Saruman and his New World Order. In researching and emulating the designs and methods from the East, Saruman has been transformed, in the eyes of the West, from being one of the "White Council" and "Wise into the ways of the Enemy" (*LotR* Bk II Ch II) into a *satrap*<sup>4</sup> puppet dictator. The threat that Saruman poses is the threat of social change. He is changing the status quo and engendering a new socio-political order. Saruman wishes to introduce into the West a totalitarian regime with modernization, mechanization, industry, uniformity, urbanization, and large scale manufacturing, going against the traditional ideal of a feudal-agrarian West. In his bid to acquire a power base for himself, he obstructs the West's plans for destroying the One Ring, adding an additional antagonist to an already impossible task.

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<sup>4</sup> **Satrap** was the name given to the governors of the provinces of the ancient Median and Achaemenid (Persian) Empires and in several of their successors, such as the Sassanid Empire and the Hellenistic empires. The word **satrap** is also often used in modern literature to refer to world leaders or governors who are heavily influenced by larger world superpowers or hegemonies and act as their surrogates. (Wikipedia)

## 2 Review of Literature

And here in Rivendell there live still some of his chief foes: the Elven-wise, lords of the Eldar from beyond the furthest seas. *Lord of the Rings*

The polarization of the West versus the East is not a new concept. In fact, this schism crosses historical and temporal boundaries. Its presence in the *Lord of the Rings* is a reflection of a real world concern and forms a huge part of Tolkien's body of work. Cunningly inlaid within the *Lord of the Rings*, this representation shapes the fabric of the reader's perception and colors the character's biases when dealing with and handing information from the East. An intrinsic duality arises with this representation: the West, the land of good, of freedom and free-will, of comfortable and recognizable things versus the evil, alien, and all-consuming East.

This chapter will discuss the critical tools necessary to study the presence of Orientalism in the *Lord of the Rings*. Orientalism, textual criticism, and cartographical analysis are relevant to this thesis because they provide the answers to the presence of representation, specifically an orientalist attitude, towards the East from the character's perspective as well as the sociopolitical institutions from the West. The author's professed predilection for the traditions and literature of the West establish the tone for representation because the text treats the East as a homogenized whole, while at the same time, not allowing the people of the East to represent themselves.

The chapter will begin with a brief discussion of the history of Orientalism and will continue with the definition of Orientalism and its applicability in the text; then, a discussion about the secondary sources that provide an understanding of Tolkien's background, influences, and events that impacted his worldview as well as the process of the creation of the *Lord of the Rings* is discussed; finally the chapter ends with an overview of cartographical analysis, map

creation and the map as a tool for western domination and the reason for the blank spaces to the East on the map of Middle-earth as a perpetuation of the silence imposed on the East.

## **2.1 The History of Orientalism**

The roots of the schism between East and West stretch into antiquity; Aeschylus' *the Persians* and *the Bacchae* by Euripides provide the earliest examples of the system of representation Occidentals utilized when portraying the East. Orientalism as a structured discipline began in 1312, when the Church Council of Vienne established a series of chairs in Arabic, Greek, Hebrew and Syriac at Oxford, Paris, Bologna, Avignon and Salamanca (Said 49-50).

As a result of the dichotomy between the West and the East, the Orient became an exotic locale; an imagined, fantasized, and idealized stage in which the West played a self-aggrandizing role, but also more importantly, the source of intellectual and economic wealth for the West. Western specialists on the Orient translated Eastern works of literature. Western scholars wrote about experiences in the East, and regained lost knowledge of the arts and sciences from the West's classical age salvaged by Islamic scholars. The plunder obtained by the Crusaders made its way back to the coffers of the papacy and to the noble houses of Europe. In 1453, the fall of Constantinople brought the virtual end of Christianity in Asia Minor. This extended the spread of Islam throughout the northern coast of Africa, the Arabian Peninsula, Turkey, the Central Balkans, Hungary, Bulgaria, Albania, Greece, and the islands of the eastern Mediterranean.

In the eighteenth century, Britain, France, and Germany took the lead in the exploitation of the East; the rivals Britain and France had begun aggressive colonial acquisitions in the Near East, India and Indo-China. Coupled with the commercial venture was a frenetic acquisition and dissemination of discourse about the East. The East was in vogue and Westerners sought to

know and imitate the east. Orientalist literature, architecture, and societies flourished, while the material wealth of the East flowed ever strongly to the West. “For the first time, the Orient was revealed to Europe in the materiality of its texts, languages, and civilizations. Also for the first time, Asia acquired a precise intellectual and historical dimension with which to buttress the myths of its geographic distance and vastness” (Said 77).

The French invaded Egypt in 1798 and with the invasion, the West sought to codify, describe, account and calculate the East. This increased when Western scholars found the links in language to the East and West’s prehistorically shared past evidenced by the Indo-European root language of Sanskrit (Said 51). The West appropriated the systematic studies of these links, the root of philology, Tolkien's ruling passion, in German universities, as well as in French and British academia.

During the nineteenth century, colonial enterprises reached an all-time high, but revolutionary ideals permeated the colonies and resulted in a destabilized and highly charged atmosphere throughout the territories. The former American colonies of the British had now achieved independence, and the French were following suit, albeit in a more bloodthirsty fashion. In India, various unsuccessful attempts were made to throw off English rule setting the stage for future insurrection and pro-nationalist feelings of self-rule generating fears in the Home Office in London and in the very hearts of British subjects. England terminated its rule over India in 1947 but before even that, most of Britain’s territorial acquisitions were gone.

The twentieth century saw the end of most of the colonial rule of the major Western powers; France had neither the resources nor the manpower necessary to compete with Britain in the race to attain colonies because of unceasing conflicts between them. A series of violent slave uprisings from 1791 -1804 in Haiti liberated the country from French rule and proved to be

model for other nationalist movements around the world. By the mid-twentieth century most of the former French colonies had either been liberated or ceded independence by the French. Other Western powers had followed suit; ending European colonization that had been perpetrated against the East for more than five hundred years.

A new focus also began with the population of the formerly colonized peoples. As the people of the former colonies began to educate themselves, usually by going to the universities of the colonizer, they began to question their place in the world and started to write about the search for identity, their sense of displacement and alienation, but most importantly they wrote about their understanding of the power struggle between the colonizer and the colonized; how the colonized were exploited and marginalized.

Postcolonial theory, in its many forms and guises and in which Edward Said is a pioneer, deals with the voices of the other speaking through the former colonizer's words and what they have to say about the relationship, that is to say, power struggle, between the colonizer and the colonized, including the aftermath of colonialism. The unforeseen effect that contact with the colonizer was that the colonized used the language, tropes and symbols of the colonizer to express their thoughts, ideas and insecurities in an attempt to reconstruct their national identity after the colonial reign of the West. Seminal works by Franz Fanon, Aimé Césaire, Albert Memmi, Gayatri Spivak, and Bill Ashcroft among many others all paved the way of a new understanding of the process of othering and representation in Western civilization and how it affects both the colonized and the colonizer.

## **2.2 Tolkien's Orientalism**

Perception in the *Lord of the Rings* is very important as it enables the reader to identify and distinguish between what the narrator views as positive and negative, good and evil, right

and wrong. An important perception in the *Lord of the Rings* is that everything that is evil comes from the East. In the real world, the East is viewed by the West as significantly different from itself when it has to represent an image of itself. Thus the worldview in the *Lord of the Rings* is from the West.

The threat the East embodies is suffused throughout the text. The inhabitants of the so-called “civilized” West view the East with suspicion and outright hostility. In its wisdom, the West views the East as a place of unmentionable evil, the abode of the Dark Lord Sauron and the greatest representation of the “Other.” This perception of otherness, augmented by the fact that the East is by and large unknown and unexplored, allows the reader to interpret the marked distinction between East and West.

Edward W. Said defined the Western practice of representation as a process of othering in his seminal books *Orientalism* and *Culture and Imperialism*. Said laid the groundwork for theoreticians, scholars and critics to discuss the process of representation and its repercussions. Said labeled the process of representation as “Orientalism” and characterizes it as:

A way of coming to terms with the Orient that is based on the Orient’s special place in European Western experience. The orient is not only adjacent to Europe; it is also the place of Europe’s greatest and richest and oldest colonies, the source of its civilizations and languages, its cultural contestant, and one of its deepest and most recurring images of the Other. In addition, the Orient has helped to define Europe (or the West) as its contrasting image, idea, personality, experience (1-2).

Orientalism and “othering” are not new concepts; in fact, for hundreds of years western civilization has been stereotyping the oriental half of the world “The principal product of this exteriority is of course representation: as early as Aeschylus’s play *The Persians* the Orient is

transformed from a very far distant and very often threatening Otherness [*sic*] into figures that are relatively familiar” (Said 21).

*Orientalism* attempts to analyze the basis for the process of differentiation between the East and the West. This dichotomy, according to Said, is imposed on the East by the West as a “systematic discipline by which European culture was able to manage – and even produce- the Orient politically, sociologically, militarily, ideologically, scientifically, and imaginatively” (3).

Said also discusses the hierarchy of power relationships, between the West and the Other, between the active western observer and the passive oriental object. Cultural conceptions, racial biases and archetypes, defining what the familiar (ours) is and the unknown (theirs) are also discussed as well as the reduction of the orient as an entity.

The East is viewed by the West as significantly different from itself when it has to represent an image of the East. Orientalism forces the East to be represented as a homogenous entity; a thing that can be labeled, categorized and studied without having a say about what is being said about it:

In a sense Orientalism was a library or archive of information commonly, and in some aspects together was a family of ideas and a unifying set of values proven in various ways to be effective. These ideas explained the behavior of Orientals; they supplied Orientals with a mentality, a genealogy, an atmosphere; most important, they allowed Europeans to deal with and even to see Orientals as a phenomenon possessing regular characteristics ... Orientalism is better grasped as a set of constraints upon and limitations of thought than it is simply as a positive doctrine (Said 41-42).

Thus, the manner in which the West disseminates information on the East is relevant to the way the East is perceived, not only what it is said about it but how it is being said. This

discourse then has a connotative effect; it is either positive or negative depending on the participant's intention and interpretation in the context which the discourse was given. The preceding body of knowledge placed limits on the discourse on the East.

The rhetoric transmitted the difference between the West "us", "the familiar" and the East "them", "the strange" (43) and always kept up this separation, and had a specific but limited lexicon in maintaining this division so that the West always had the advantage in representing the East because, in Western discourse, the East had no voice or say in what was said about it. This allows the West's incursion to the East to be justified: the West enters the East akin to Prometheus bringing the knowledge of fire to humanity; so would the West bring Order into Chaos; thus perpetuating the dialectic of segregation. In *the Lord of the Rings*, the west, feudal agrarian lifestyle and the monolithic despotic east are at odds.

In *Imperial Fictions: Europe's Myth of the Orient*, Rana Kabbani notes that the West had a catalogue of traits to give the East: cowardly, unclean, lewd, treacherous, indolent, and full of vices (9). The West expected the east to behave in this way; it was reinforced by the aforementioned body of orientalist knowledge accumulated by and for the West. The continuing antagonism between the East and the West is reinforced by the stereotyping of racial characteristics, moral status, and cultural expectations which allow the East to be portrayed. Kabbani states that: "Although anthropology was later to become a leveler of cultures and races, its beginnings often served to bolster the self-esteem of the European by convincing him that he was the culmination of excellence in the human species. Other races were his inferiors, lower down on the great scale of being (how low depending on how dark they were)" (8).

Kabbani's *Imperial Fictions* attempts to unravel the stereotypes of the Orient debunking the myth of the indolent and combative Orient, myths that today still fuels the antagonism felt

between East and West. Europe's territorial acquisition beyond its immediate geographical surroundings allowed the competing nation-states to propagate their individual ideologies and impose their will on these acquisitions. This created self-perpetuating and self-referential stereotypes that are used to describe the oriental experience to Westerners in Western terms. These terms include the industrious imperial officer, the noble savage, and the indolent native, and are among many of the tropes employed in the separation of East and West. Many of these terms were derogatory and discriminatory towards the other; colonial possessions suffered biases and segregation from the colonist's socio-cultural milieu, westerners established a hierarchy of races depending on the color of their skins: "Although discrimination against strangers (especially dark ones) was an ancient phenomenon in the West, the ideology of race was a product of the nineteenth century. The medieval concept of 'The Great Chain of Being' was adopted as a framework for race classification" (Kabbani 62).

A great many descriptions of the Orcs in *the Lord of the Rings* focus on their color and unnatural body characteristics, the "foulness" of their language or their corruption of the "Common Speech" of men, as well as their behavior towards their kind and to strangers: man, elf, hobbit or dwarf. This is explicitly seen in various narrative descriptions.

Jonathan Riley-Smith provides a precise historical background with *The Crusades*. Riley-Smith plots the history and the causes of the Crusades. The rise of Islam and its eventual propagation throughout the lands of the Middle East in the eighth century acts as a catalyst for European foreign aggression, reaching a boiling point in the eleventh century, when in 1095 Pope Urban II preached in Europe the Crusade to liberate the Holy Land and the Eastern Roman Empire from the threat of Islam and the Turks. This action actively pitted East and West against each other for control of the trade routes to the East and possession of the sacred sites in the Holy

Land (Riley-Smith 1). Riley-Smith's historical background helps the reader understand the origin of modern Western aggression towards the East and serves as a mirror in seeing the crusade like attitude that Gondor had against Mordor and parallels Gondor's role as the Constantinople of Middle-earth, that is, the easternmost boundary of the West.

*Colonial and Post-Colonial Literature* by Ellke Boehmer is a critical overview of colonial and postcolonial literature and a reaction towards the discourse of empire. The book clearly sets out to illustrate readers using texts from different stages in the British Colonial Empire including Rudyard Kipling, Joseph Conrad, V.S. Naipaul and many others. Fundamental theoretical terms such as 'subaltern', 'colonial resistance', 'writing back', and 'hybridity' are discussed as well as an analysis of postcolonial anti-colonial writing, women's writing, sexuality, transnationalism, and local resistance.

Bill Ashcroft's *Key Concepts in Post-Colonial Studies* provides important theoretical vocabulary necessary in analyzing Orientalism and post colonialism, race, power relations, politics, and cultural identities. Some of the most important definitions in this book include: Contact zone, diaspora, Fanonism, Going native, hybridity, imperialism, Manicheanism, mimicry, miscegenation, negritude, orientalism, settler-colony, subaltern, subjectivity, and trans-culturation.

Astrid Winegar examines orientalist/racist discourse in "*Aspects of Orientalism in J.R.R. Tolkien's The Lord of the Rings*". Winegar attempts to show how this discourse is used when referring to the physical and ethnic presentations of the different races that occupy Middle-Earth. In no way does Winegar imply that Tolkien was an Orientalist or had an Orientalist perspective, but she clarifies that certain members of the races of men elves and dwarves had lost their

preconceived notions of each other by the end of *The Lord of the Rings* that leads to a better understanding in the overall context of racial relationships.

In contrast, “Notes Toward a History of the Easterlings”, by Ruth Lacon pieces together a history of the Easterlings extrapolating from the description of the Easterlings (see Appendix A of *Lord of the Rings*) and deduces their relationship with the nation-state of Gondor. Lacon compares the relationship between the Gondorians and the Easterlings as “the attitude of medieval Europeans to Islam and the East – belligerent incomprehension” (28). This uncertainty and outright hostility between both people lead to conflict and incursions from the East to the West and vice versa mirroring the primary world’s encounters between East and West.

In analyzing orientalist attitudes in *Lord of the Rings* and Victorian literature is Joseph Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness*. It is a Victorian story of imperialism, corruption and the de-evolution of the self. Set in the Congo during the height of European domination of Africa, *Heart of Darkness* is a journey into madness and the loss of the western identity in the face of Eastern moral values because of the lack of Western oversight. This story is used to compare analogous traits between Saruman and Kurtz and their acceptance of Eastern traits over the West, which marks them as traitors.

### **2.3 Tolkien: The Man and His Works**

There are many texts that focus on Tolkien, his life and his works, but one of the most important is Humphrey Carpenter's *J.R.R. Tolkien: A Biography*. Carpenter presents Tolkien's life and the course of the development of his mythopoeia, which includes *the Hobbit*, *The Lord of the Rings*, and *the Silmarillion*, *the Adventures of Tom Bombadil*, non-Middle-earth texts such as *Farm Giles of Ham*, *Smith of Wootton Major*, *Leaf by Niggle*, as well as more academic works such as translations for *Beowulf*, *Gawain and the Green Knight*, *Pearl*, *Sir Orpheo*, *the Acrene*

*Wisse, On Fairy Stories, and Beowulf: The Monster and the Critics*. Humphrey provides critical information needed to understand the man and his works. It also unabashedly notes the reasons why Tolkien took so many years in writing the *Lord of the Rings* and why he did not finish his beloved *Silmarillion* in addition to many other academic obligations.

*Humphrey Carter* also edits *The Letters of J.R.R. Tolkien*. The *Letters* are an important source of information regarding the developmental process and the justifications of Tolkien's creations. Carter narrates through Tolkien's correspondence his thought processes while writing his mythopoeia. In his personal correspondence, Tolkien dealt with topics that range from explanations of his state of mind while writing *the Hobbit* and the *Lord of the Rings*, to life in general and is of great interest in the studies of Tolkien and his life and times.

Tom Shippey is arguably the premier Tolkien scholar. *The Road to Middle-earth* and *J.R.R. Tolkien: Author of the Century* has set the tone for modern Tolkien studies post year 2000. In them, Shippey elucidates Tolkien's stylistic choices in the creation of his mythopoeia, the vast interlinked and intertwined stories, poems, verses, and prose that made his life's work, apart from his academic occupation. Shippey also considers not only Tolkien's background, as a philologist and inheritor of the Victorian fantasy traditions prevalent in Tolkien's time, but also the enormous mental dedication that Tolkien devoted to his mythopoeia.

Christopher Tolkien's *The History of Middle-earth: The History of the Lord of the Rings*, Part 1: *The Return of Shadow*, Part 2: *The Treason of Isengard*, Part 3: *War of the Ring*, and Part 4: *The End of the Third Age* are invaluable in the study of Tolkien's mythopoeia because they offer a rare insight into Tolkien's mind and creative process. The set, chronicles the evolution of Tolkien's text, a la John Bryant's *Fluid Text*, tracking the changes from the earliest drafts to its revisions and corrections all through the publications of the *Lord of the Rings*.

Supplementing Christopher Tolkien's set of the *History of the Lord of the Rings* as a background to understand the textual changes that occurred during the creation of the *Lord of the Rings* is John Bryant's *Fluid Text*. Bryant suggests that any literary work exists in a multiplicity of versions and that no text is final or authorial. Each version of the text brings something that other versions do not have and also include the shifts in the author's intentions as he or she writes, revises, proofreads, and revises his or her work. Also important are the other people who have a hand in the publishing of the texts: the publishers, editors and proofreaders also change the text according to cultural and stylistic principles.

According to Bryant, fluidity is "inherent in the phenomenon of writing itself" (1). In addition, Bryant places importance on the historical moment in which the texts are produced; this interaction creates the variations in the texts creation within the social context of its creation or editing. The historical moment provides the environment which nurtures the creative vision of the artist and the flow of events supplies additional input that can be perceived in a text. Bryant argues for the importance of looking at these variations in their cultural contexts because of the valuable record they provide of the interactions between the artist and society. He argues that although literary works are often considered to be fixed objects, in fact they are fluid works-in-progress that shift and change according to their cultural situation. This applies to Tolkien because of his marked worldview and the narrowness of his area of interest, the Northwest of the Old World, Europe and his work reflects the society which he belonged to.

During Tolkien's lifetime there were great events that shaped both his thinking and Tolkien's way of life. The first of these events was the Victorian age. Tolkien was born in 1892 in Bloemfontein, South Africa, but from 1895 he lived in England. Tolkien was steeped in the

thought prevalent in the Victorian era, a period of relative political stability, and the notion of the greatness of the British Empire.

Eric Hobsbawm gives an overview of the Victorian Age in *The Age of Empire: 1875-1914* which is exactly within Tolkien's lifetime. Hobsbawm analyzes British economy, politics, mindset, social classes, the rise of feminist and workers movements, and the transformation of science and the uncertainty of man's place in the world in light of recent scientific discoveries. Ben Wilson's *The Making of Victorian Values: Decency and Dissent in Britain: 1789-1837* discusses the foundations of Victorian thoughts and morals: the dichotomy of high moral standards with the necessity for comfort, wealth, material acquisition, and rigid social stratification, both competing and suppressing one another, self-consciousness was the prevalent thought of the Victorian age.

Barbara Tuchman's *the Proud Tower* and *A Distant Mirror* also serve to encapsulate the society of the Victorian age, a society with the need for social stability yet highly unsure and afraid of the idea of freedom and anarchy. Both books are important because they serve to illustrate the mindset and society during the Victorian era. Stephen Prickett's *Victorian Fantasy* establishes the credentials of this creative genre that gave birth to writers such as George MacDonald, Arthur Machen, J.M. Barrie, and of course Tolkien. Victorian fantasy is a genre that was:

Largely a reaction of the Gothick, another is the revival of religious mysticism and renewed feeling for the numinous - the irrational and mysterious elements in religious experience; a third is the purely human revulsion against the squalid and degrading conditions of the early industrial revolution. In all three we can trace that curious ambivalence between imagination and fantasy that was to so haunt the Victorian

consciousness, and turn it inward towards the creation of dreamworlds. Coming to terms with this ambivalence in art, in literature, and in religion was the greatest self-critical act of the age (Prickett 13).

Certainly Tolkien was the inheritor of this trend; due to his belief in a better primary world and the belief in the mysticism of his religious participation, and the hatred that he felt towards the urbanization, industrialization, and change of his childhood countryside led him to create nonsense words and the creation of the dreamworld of Middle-earth. Tolkien articulates his desire to preserve the elements that had shaped his early life, using his extensive knowledge in philology by writing a body of myth surrounding his interests in Anglo-Saxon, Finnish and Norse mythology as well as the languages these were written in. Language building was his chief concern, and the stories of Middle-earth serve as a backdrop for the development of his languages.

Tolkien's background is wholly Victorian yet there are elements in *The Lord of the Rings* that are entirely modern. This is due to the fact that the second great event that shaped Tolkien's life occurred when Tolkien was 22; the Great War (World War I). Paul Fussell's *The Great War and Modern Memory* is a look at the experience during the First World War (1914-1918), with a focus on the literature during this time period. Fussell discusses the different prevalent themes and thoughts prevalent shaped by the experiences of the war. He also emphasizes the futility and the irony of war. The First World War was the world's introduction to the brutality of the twentieth century where nineteenth century idealism, Napoleonic tactics, medieval chivalry, and modern automatic weapons meet in the trenches.

The so-called lost generation flocked to enlist, driven by the idealism of the nineteenth century, massacred by the thousands, in the bloody fields of no man's land. For example, Fussell

notes that: "[...] 1915 had been one of the most depressing years in British history. It had been a year not only of ironic mistakes but of a grossly unimaginative underestimation of the enemy and the profound difficulties of siege warfare" (Fussell 11). This book helps the reader form a time frame of reference when Tolkien participated in World War I.

*Trench Warfare: 1914-1918: The Live and Let Live System* by Tony Ashworth and *Eye-Deep in Hell: Trench Warfare in World War I* by John Ellis both deal with the specific experience of trench warfare. Both books explain how trench warfare evolved and was refined in the bloody melee of the Western and Eastern Fronts. They also discuss how the soldiers lived, fought, died, and coped during the horrors of the first industrialized war. H.P. Willmott's *World War I* is an illustrated account of the First World War, presenting graphically the horrors of the first modern industrialized war. John Garth's *Tolkien and the Great War* narrates biographical information on Tolkien's life before, during, and immediately after World War I. It chronicles possible influences on Tolkien's writing by his experiences in the war and the death of two of his closest childhood friends who died during the Great War.

*War and the Works of J.R.R. Tolkien* by Janet Brennan Croft details the themes of loss, personal bravery in the face of insurmountable odds and the horror of modern warfare prevalent in Tolkien's writing resulting from his experiences in World War I and later World War II (in which two of his sons, Christopher and Michael, were combatants). These experiences are tempered with his religious beliefs, the belief in a better world, and the expression of his experiences and beliefs in the sub-creation of his Middle-earth that links him to writers of Victorian fantasy. These elements; the grand style of the past tempered with the mindfulness of the present gives Tolkien's text a timeless quality.

Present with the heroic style of the high mimetic form is an undercurrent of modernism, words, institutions and behaviors incongruous to the high mimetic world of Tolkien, such as the mail or postal office in Hobbiton, pocket watches, museums, as well as the behavior and terminology of modern soldiers that is present in the *Lord of the Rings*. Croft discovers that Tolkien's philosophy on the nature of the human condition and his pessimistic outlook is tempered with pragmatism and hopefulness in the better world; themes also present in Humphrey Carter's *Biography* in addition to Shippey's *Road to Middle-earth*.

Anna Vanniskaya's article, "Tolkien: A Man of his Time?" discusses that his work is "representative of late nineteenth and twentieth century preoccupations" (1). Vanniskaya posits that Tolkien, "shared in the mood of his time" (2), that is, the desire to create a body of work coming from and tailored to the interests and history of England. The *Lord of the Rings* contains many references to modern ideas, Vanniskaya's article ties in with Janet Brennan Croft's *War and the Works of J.R.R. Tolkien* in that both texts look for the undercurrent of modern thinking present in Tolkien's mythopoeia. Included in the mythopoeia are *The Hobbit*, *The Lord of the Ring*, *The Silmarillion*, and *The Adventurtes of Tom Bombadil*. Also included are the poems, verses, and other material specifically centered in or about Middle-earth which Tolkien wrote.

#### **2.4 The Geography of Middle-earth**

One area that the majority of Tolkien studies, especially of his mythopoeia, is lacking is that of maps and geography. The foremost essay in this field is Karen Wynn Fonstad's *The Atlas of Middle-earth*. The atlas drafts all major maps of Middle-earth from the First to the Third ages. The atlas also describes the topography and geology of Middle-earth. Tolkien's landscape is thus a result of vivid mental images based upon specific areas with which he was familiar (Wynn Fonstad, x-xi).

Andreas Moehn measures the locations on the Map of Middle-earth and correlates them with the positions on the map of Europe in the primary world in *A Meridional Grid on the Middle-earth Map*. He also corrects Tolkien's assertion of the positions of certain correlations because Tolkien did not take into account the curvature of the Earth. The *Atlas* and the *Grid* ties in with J.B. Harley's *The New Nature of Maps*. Harley writes a series of critical essays about cartographic theory using various approaches, including postmodernism and deconstructionalism. Harley defines a map as a "social construction" and argues that maps "redescribe the world - like any other document-in terms of relations of power and of cultural practices, preferences, and priorities" (35). That is to say maps serve the cultures that made the map in the first place; serves its need to control the information by highlighting certain aspects and oppressing others.

Harley also ponders the meaning of blank spaces on maps the silences that are intentional: the absence of something must be seen to be as worthy of historical investigation as is its presence (106). Peter Turchi's *Maps of the Imagination: The Writer as Cartographer* also deals with the blank spaces in maps and what they mean: "blanks within the borders of maps can represent many things, among them the deliberately withheld [...] [b]lanks can also represent what is known, but deemed unimportant in a particular context, for a particular map" (32-33).

Turchi also asserts that maps are artistic creations that blend the reality that is present with the need to represent that reality in a medium which has severe limits. The mapmaker/author must balance his/her intentions with what is present in reality.

*The Power of Maps* and *Rethinking the Power of Maps* by Denis Wood show how maps are not impartial but rather charged documents that persecute the makers agenda; by

communicating power relationships and its "arbitrary character" (*The Power of Maps* 19), maps embody their authors' prejudices, biases, and partialities" (*The Power of Maps* 24).

Mark Monmonier's *How to Lie with Maps* shows the reader that geometric distortion and graphic generalization of data are unavoidable elements of cartographic representation.

Monmonier also states that map data can also be manipulated into showing what the map creator wants the viewer to perceive as important: "not only is it easy to lie with maps, it's essential. To portray meaningful relationships for a complex, three-dimensional world on a flat sheet of paper or a video screen, a map must distort reality... to avoid hiding critical information in a fog of detail, the map must offer a selective, incomplete view of reality" (1). Yet Monmonier also cautions that: map users seldom appreciate the map's power as a tool of deliberate falsification or subtle propaganda" (1). These texts will help the reader understand the power behind the map of Middle-earth as a tool for the propagation of the idea of the irreparable schism between East and West; a great divide to which only the West has a voice.

The secondary sources that are used in this thesis illustrate the persistence of representation in Tolkien's Occidental worldview. The map of Middle-earth and the attitudes of people and the institutions of the West serve to limit the East by establishing concrete boundaries while juxtaposing the featureless silences in the Eastern blanks to the varied and detailed West. This is due to Tolkien's Victorian upbringing coupled with a modern sensibility, which allows Tolkien to explore the East without it having to enter completely in the West, an idea that will be developed in the next chapter, Tolkien Modern Victorian.

### 3 Tolkien, Modern Victorian: Bridging the Gap

The conquest of the earth, which mostly means taking it away from those who have a different complexion or slightly flatter noses than ourselves, is not a pretty thing when you look into it too much.

-Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness*

The culture of the nineteenth and twentieth century reflected the nationalist and imperialist ideologies prevalent in Europe and in the United States. Dreams of empire and Manifest Destiny<sup>5</sup> proliferated throughout British society and in the United States. Western cultures enjoyed the fruits of their imperial grandeur and developed a powerful belief of their own pre-eminence. In their hubris, they separated the world into two unequal halves; the West and the East, or the Orient as it was called in the days of British imperial expansion. Western society alienated what was foreign from itself through a system of representations structured by political forces that brought the Orient into Western learning, Western consciousness and Western empire. The structure they put in place to define the East encompasses every cultural aspect dealing with the Orient.

Understanding the Victorian mindset and the effects of World War I are of crucial importance if we are to discern the roots of Tolkien's Orientalism in the *Lord of the Rings*, since he shared many of the traits of the writers of this period. This chapter discusses the sources of Tolkien's Orientalism, which stems from his Victorian upbringing. This chapter also places Tolkien as a writer of Victorian fantasy, by analyzing the characteristics of the writers of this era and comparing them to Tolkien's writing. Finally, the chapter ends by putting into context his modern outlook which were the result of Tolkien's experiences in the Great War and how both

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<sup>5</sup> Manifest Destiny expressed the belief that the United States was destined to expand from the Atlantic seaboard to the Pacific Ocean; it has also been used to advocate for or justify other territorial acquisitions. Advocates of

Victorian and modern influences affect the narrative of the *Lord of the Rings*. Tolkien's background is Victorian but tempered with the experiences of the early twentieth century. It can even be stated that Tolkien bridges the gap between Victorian morality and twentieth century modernism through his writing. Essentially, Tolkien is a modern author with Victorian sensibilities.

Queen Victoria's reign (1837 - 1901) coincides with the period of highest imperial acquisitions as well as the coming of age of Industrialism, sweeping social reforms, and the ground shattering evolutionary theories of Charles Darwin in *On the Origin of Species* (1859). The effects of these and other social and political changes of the Victorian age are far reaching and are well within the scope of Tolkien's youth and formation.

The Victorian era was a time that saw the basic assumptions of humanities' place in the world transform through the belief of empirical science and reason. The nineteenth century was a time of pragmatic dogmatism that had inherited from the previous century the expansion of industrialism and a desire for a literature that recalled realistic characters and situations that reflected the time. "The widespread interest in and market for stories of real life with ordinary, believable characters grew and flourished concurrently with the increasing dominance of the scientific method, the expansion of the industrial revolution, and the unfolding of related historical developments, including changes in printing and publishing technologies, increasing literacy, and a rising middle class" (Matthews 3). But behind this pragmatism and reasoning a growing uncertainty was present. The truly important question for the Victorians was how to reconcile their spiritual beliefs with their need for material acquisition.

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Manifest Destiny believed that expansion was not only good, but that it was obvious ("manifest") and certain ("destiny").

Victorians, especially the middle and upper classes of Victorian society, asserted that they were cultured, self-confident, and self-righteous. They had a positive outlook on life; the period in which they lived in was largely benign, one of the main reasons being that England was isolated and self-contained from the rest of Europe by its location. Victorians had an unspoken conviction in the separation of the classes and to extension, of race. The distinct and layered social stratification of the Victorian age was rigidly adhered to because they believed that class status was inherent, manifesting in a specific set of social traits. These traits were plainly evident and could not be rid of, marking a wide gulf between the classes. The key word is inherited, because these traits could be passed on from generation to generation. There were three basic divisions in Victorian society. The first was the Upper Class which consisted of the nobility (the aristocracy), landed gentry, higher echelon government officials, and the rich; nouveau riche or otherwise, second, the Middle Class who were non laboring professionals and merchants, and finally, the Lower Class which was made up of the working class and the destitute.

In *Victorian Fantasy*, Stephen Prickett notes the paradox of Victorian society: a shared consensus that bound both morality and materialism in the Victorian era. Prickett does not generalize the Victorian era solely on, “the product of social repression and inhibition” but in the, “peculiar emotional and intellectual compromise between forces whose conflict would otherwise have threatened the stability of the whole social order. In short, for the sake of certain immediate practical advantages, it was as if Victorian society tacitly agreed to pretend that quite incompatible beliefs and aims could successfully coexist” (37-38), or as the hobbits seem to do: focus their attention in their little microcosm and ignore what is going on outside in the wide world. This parochial attitude is best encapsulated in the second chapter of the first book of the *Lord of the Rings*, “The Shadow of the Past.” The news of Sauron’s alleged ascension and the

troubles brewing in the East and in the South, plus the inordinate number of Elven escapists and Dwarven refugees do not particularly trouble the hobbits because that is someone else's problem:

There were rumors of strange things happening in the world outside; and as Gandalf had not at that time appeared or sent any message for several years, Frodo gathered all the news he could. Elves, who seldom walked in the Shire, could now be seen passing westward through the woods in the evening, passing and not returning; but they were leaving Middle-earth and were no longer concerned with its troubles. There were, however, dwarves on the roads in unusual numbers. The ancient East-West Road ran through the Shire to its end at the Grey Havens, and dwarves had always used it on their way to their mines in the Blue Mountains. They were the hobbits' chief source of news from distant parts – if they wanted any: as a rule dwarves said little and hobbits asked no more. But now Frodo often met strange dwarves of far countries, seeking refuge in the West. They were troubled, and some spoke in whispers of the Enemy and the Land of Mordor [...] one evening in the spring of Frodo's fiftieth year, showed that even in the comfortable heart of the Shire rumours had been heard, though most hobbits still laughed at them (*LotR* Bk I Ch II).

Prickett also asserts that the Victorian era was full of contradiction: “an image of a divided mind, and a divided society, terrified to come to terms with its own deepest needs and desires” (102-103). It was a severely self-conscious age caught between an upswing of evangelical morality and imperial materialism. They did not know how to reconcile the dual nature of their morality and their thirst for greater commodities and material wealth. This created a rift in the Victorian psyche that prompted them to repress and fear that which did not conform to their standards, including sexuality and the other, often linked together. Prickett

quotes that: “G.K. Chesterton<sup>6</sup> for example summarizes the prevailing mood of the mid-century as the “Victorian Compromise” (37).

The fears that the unknown provoked led the British Victorians to isolate themselves; separation, segregation, and labeling were used to distance themselves from the other. According to Elleke Boehmer in *Colonial and Post-Colonial Literature*, the fears (anxieties) of the Empire were miscegenation, or racial mixing, regression and degeneration, the contact with the other that created social, moral and spiritual vulnerability, and threats from outside the colonized limits (58). These fears were very real to Victorians and prompted them to promote a system of mutually exclusive classes and races in which “keeping to oneself bore an openly racialized and sexualized aspect [...] at the time when Social Darwinist ideas were popular, it was generally believed that consort with dark peoples compromised white selfhood and threatened race purity [...] [e]specially in the second half of the nineteenth century, the post-Mutiny period”<sup>7</sup> (65).

According to Prickett, the literary subject matters of the Victorian age are a result of “unresolved tension in the writer” (12). These fears and tensions were reflected in their literature and one prime example is Joseph Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness*, whose literary similarities with *The Lord of the Rings* will be discussed in chapter V. Later in the period, “the tension is not removed, but sublimated into a framework of rich and complicated symbolism – at once literary and theological” (12). Many of these Victorian fears seeped into the *Lord of the Rings*. Saruman’s genetic experiments and his betrayal of Western values, the degeneration races into

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<sup>6</sup> Gilbert Keith Chesterton (1847-1936).

<sup>7</sup> The Indian Mutiny in 1857 was a widespread revolt in India against the rule of the British East India Company, and was sparked by *sepoys* (native Indian soldiers) in the Company’s army. The rebellion, involving not just sepoys but many sectors of the Indian population as well, was largely quenched after a year. In response to the Mutiny, the

barbarism, and the interest in the primitive and the primeval, for example, Ghân-buri-Ghân of the Wild men of the Woses are some of the fears that are dealt in the *Lord of the Rings*. The Victorian preoccupation with maintaining the status quo, the tiered hierarchy of social order that led to widen the distinctions and distancing of the classes, and the attitudes towards the Other are themes that are also discussed.

The predominant literary tradition of the nineteenth century was realism which sought to express life without over sentimentality. Prickett asserts that, “The classical ideal of nineteenth-century realism was ostensibly one of order, coherence, and limitation” (1). Prickett also states that the roots of Victorian fantasy are found in German Romantic literature, criticism, and theology, including the English Romantic tradition of the eighteenth century and in the Gothic tradition of the nineteenth century, all of which ran as a counter tradition to nineteenth century realism. The writers of Victorian fantasy and Tolkien in particular, as inheritor of these traditions:

Deliberately, they tried to extend and enrich ways of perceiving “reality” by a variety of non realistic techniques that included nonsense, dreams, visions, and the creation of other worlds. Against the mainstream of realistic fiction there developed a much stranger undercurrent that included works by Thomas Hood, Charles Dickens, Edward Lear, Lewis Carroll, Charles Kingsley, George MacDonald, Nesbit and Kipling. In place of limitation and exclusion, each in his or her own way was in search of a wider vision, seeking the complexity and ambiguity that reflected their own experiences, even at the expense of form (Prickett 3).

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East India Company was abolished in August 1858 and India came under the direct rule of the British crown, beginning the period of the British Raj. (definition from wikipedia.org)

Tolkien expresses this “wider vision” by writing against realism and the post-war feeling of pessimism and disillusionment prevalent in the nineteenth and twentieth century, using sources as diverse as the Kalevala, the Elder and Poetic Eddas, the Völuspá, Greek mythology, and his interests in language, and language building. His encyclopedic knowledge in these areas and the use and creation of a body of artificial languages, the depth and breadth of their extent, and which Tolkien himself called nonsense language<sup>8</sup> that ties Tolkien to Victorian writers of fantasy. Prickett notes that, “Nonsense is a product of the Victorian era. It is the true inversion or underside of its culture in that, so far from being *free* or formless, it is the most highly organized and, in many ways, the most rigidly controlled of all forms of fantasy” (120).

Tolkien sought to create languages and a myth cycle for a time in Earth’s prehistory; not on another planet or dimension, but in our *middangeard* (Middle-earth) that have filtered down through the ages, sometimes altered, to us, yet still having the same root. Tolkien’s wider vision sought to explain the fragments of myth and language that survive in abbreviated form and which Tolkien always lamented. It was a journey from the parochial to a broader, newer and deeper understanding of familiar things. It was a mythology that was dedicated “to England” (*Letters* 131) but it has unintentionally spread to the rest of the world. In *J.R.R. Tolkien: Author of the Century*, Tom Shippey reasons that, “Tolkien, then, was a philologist before he was a mythologist, and a mythologist, at least in intention, before he ever became a writer of fantasy fiction. His beliefs about language and about mythology were sometimes original and sometimes extreme, but never irrational, and he was able to express them perfectly clearly [*sic*].

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<sup>8</sup> “I have done some touches to my nonsense fairy language – to its improvement. I often long to work at it and don't let myself 'cause though I love it so it does seem such a mad hobby!” (*Letters*, no. 4)

In the end he decided not to express them not through abstract argument, but by demonstration” (xvi).

Tolkien’s Victorian reaction in *Lord of the Rings* is to maintain the West as a heterogeneous feudal-agrarian structure with a rigidly tiered social hierarchy, yet Tolkien shows progressive modern ideas and themes in the setting. Initially, there is no upward social mobility in *Lord of the Rings* but as the story progresses towards the end, the reader can notice shifts in the class structure. Tolkien, merging both his Victorian sensibilities and his modern perspectives, shows how a lower-class hobbit gardener, Samwise Gamgee, rises in social stature to become Mayor of the Shire. From the original parochial attitudes ingrained into him by his father, Gaffer Gamgee, “Don’t go getting mixed up in the business of your betters, or you’ll land in trouble too big for you” (*LotR* Bk I ch I 24), Samwise gains a better understanding of the world, not only of his immediate surroundings, but of the much wider world. When confronted with the dead Haradrim soldier thrown from the Mûmak, Samwise can even empathize with the enemy: “It was Sam’s first view of battle of Men against Men, and he did not like it much. He was glad he could not see the dead face. He wondered what the man’s name was and where he came from; and if he was really evil of heart, or what lies or threats had led him on the long march from his home; and if he would not really rather have stayed there in peace” (*LotR* Bk IV Ch V).

In contrast to the Victorian themes and motifs that are present in the *Lord of the Rings* is the failure of Frodo to destroy the Ring. If the *Lord of the Rings* had truly been a work of Victorian or even Edwardian literature, Frodo would have stoically held out the Ring in his hand and said something along the lines of “For the Shire!” cast it in and turn his back on the whole affair. But this is certainly what does not happen. The reader witnesses Frodo broken down physically, mentally, and spiritually by the Ring, where he had no choice but to claim it as his

own. The Ring has to be forcibly taken from him by an unlikely savior, Gollum, for the whole mission to succeed. ‘But do you remember Gandalf’s words: *Even Gollum may have something yet to do?* But for him, Sam, I could not have destroyed the Ring, the Quest would have been in vain, even at the bitter end” (*LotR* Bk VI Ch III).

Another modern motif that the *Lord of the Rings* describes are the withdrawal symptoms of a drug addict forced to go without his “fix” which Gollum, Bilbo and Frodo all feel when parted from the Ring. Also, Frodo’s harrowing and traumatic journey into darkness and despair leaves lasting marks on Frodo; the physical wound given by the Witch King’s Morgul blade: “Also in the autumn there appeared a shadow of old troubles. One evening Sam came into the study and found his master looking very strange. He was very pale and his eyes seemed to see things far away. ‘What’s the matter, Mr. Frodo?’ said Sam. ‘I am wounded,’ he answered, ‘wounded; it will never really heal.’ (*LotR* Bk VI Ch IX), the lack of recognition for his deeds: “Frodo dropped quietly out of all the doings of the Shire, and Sam was pained to notice how little honour he had in his own country. Few people knew or wanted to know about his deeds and adventures; their admiration and respect were given mostly to Mr. Meriadoc and Mr. Peregrin and (if Sam had known it) to himself” (*LotR* Bk VI Ch IX), and the mental anguish that comes from a great loss. ‘It is gone for ever,’ he said, ‘and now all is dark and empty’ (*LotR* Bk VI Ch IX) Frodo cannot recover from his ordeals or stand the anguish and pain he is going through:

“But,’ said Sam, and tears started in his eyes, ‘I thought you were going to enjoy the Shire, too. For years and years after all you have done.’ ‘So I thought too, once. But I have been too deeply hurt, Sam. I tried to save the Shire, and it has been saved, but not

for me. It must often be so, Sam, when things are in danger: some one has to give them up, lose them, so that others may keep them' (*LotR* Bk VI Ch IX).

Victorian literature certainly did not have this happen to its heroes. Tolkien noted the difference between Bilbo, a more Victorian hero and Frodo, his modern counterpart: "Frodo is not intended to be another Bilbo... but he is rather a study of a hobbit broken by a burden of fear and horror – broken down, and in the end made into something quite different" (*Letters* 151). The previous examples are the words and experiences that any war veteran suffering from post-traumatic stress can relate to: the recurring pain of an old war wound, the alienation brought about society's inability to comprehend the veteran's experiences in the war, and the mental torment of the veteran reliving his experiences from the war.

The reason Tolkien is different from Victorian writers of the previous age is that the Great War intervened in his life and the lives of the rest of England. The First World War, beginning in 1914 and ending in 1918, is commonly called World War I or the Great War was waged primarily in Europe. For many British, especially in the middle and upper classes, the war shattered the illusion of the self-righteous superiority of Victorianism and the belief that war was a noble endeavor. Newly developed technologies brought from the factories and industries were used in combat with frightening results, in addition to the carnage of trench warfare where combat doctrines dating from the Napoleonic era were used to the detriment of the soldiers. Improvements in range and accuracy of firearms, especially tanks, airplanes, machine guns, bombs, and mustard gas caused an appalling number of casualties on both sides.

France became a killing ground: "The fighting that took place along the Western Front occurred along a system of trenches, breastworks, and fortifications separated by an area known as no man's land. These fortifications stretched 475 miles (more than 600 kilometres) and

defined the war for many.”<sup>9</sup> Soldiers had to cross no man’s land which was full of mines, blast craters, barbed wire, hidden sniper’s nests, and enemy machine gun emplacements. Many times, the soldiers had to slog their way in muddy uneven ground which made their advance more difficult. Strategic coordination between elements became next to impossible and soldiers sometimes died inadvertently due to friendly fire. Stunted trees and water-filled craters dotted the landscape and mangled bodies littered the ground as far as the eye could see.

Tolkien’s experiences in the trenches of the Somme made their way in the *Lord of the Rings* as the description of the plains of Dagorlad or the Dead Marshes, the nightmarish land before the gates of Mordor. “On either side and in front wide fens and mires now lay, stretching away southward and eastward into the dim half-light. Mists curled and smoked from dark and noisome pools. The reek of them hung stifling in the still air [...] It was dreary and wearisome. Cold clammy winter still held sway in this forsaken country. The only green was the scum of livid weed on the dark greasy surfaces of the sullen waters. Dead grasses and rotting reeds loomed up in the mists like ragged shadows of long forgotten summers" (*LotR* Bk IV Ch II).

One image stands out as something a veteran of war might say when describing a battlefield is Frodo's description of the dead bodies lying in the marshes: “. . . They lie in all the pools, pale faces, deep deep under the dark water. I saw them: grim faces and evil, and noble faces and sad. Many faces proud and fair, and weeds in their silver hair. But all foul, all rotting, all dead . . .” (*LotR* Bk IV Ch II). Tolkien himself admitted the similarities: “The Dead Marshes and the approaches to the Morannon owe something to Northern France after the battle of the Somme” (*Letters* 226).

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<sup>9</sup> Ashworth, Tony. Trench warfare 1914–1918. Macmillan Press, London. pp 3–4. 2000.

For Tolkien, the war claimed the lives of three of his closest friends and changed some of his Victorian perceptions. Tolkien had a series of experiences that made him reevaluate some of his Victorian attitudes and thoughts. “World War I is commonly seen as a watershed between two distinct periods of history, in many ways marking the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in terms of its scale and the lethal power of the weaponry involved. At the same time, however, it had very real links with the 19<sup>th</sup> century, none more obvious than the ideas and beliefs that shaped national and social attitudes and contributed to a climate of mutual hostility between the Great Powers of Europe” (Willmott 10).

The survivors of the Great War, as Tolkien, felt the change that the war brought: “The technologized slaughter of that war revealed the immense capacity for destruction of a mechanized civilization obsessed with dominance” (Boehmer 121). New themes which had never been discussed before in literature emerged during and immediately after the war which reflected the mood of British society. For instance, the horror and dehumanization of war such as Samwise's encounter with the dead Haradrim, the collapse of moral values displayed in Saruma's betrayal of the West, explained in greater detail in chapter V, alienation from society and a sense of bereavement; the same feelings that Frodo felt when he returned to the Shire after the War, disillusionment and loss of faith such as Denethor's breakdown and madness because he saw no hope of escape from Mordor's terror, and a new focus on the individual were some of the topics discussed.

Tolkien's first-hand war-time experiences did not embitter him or provoke an existential change in him as it did so many others of the period. If he had been truly and completely a part of Victorian society, Tolkien would have been devastated by the effects of the war as it happened for many of the combatants. Writing the *Lord of the Rings* provided a medium to relate his

experiences without directly recounting them. He couched his experiences in terms and events of another time in order to lessen their direct impact on him. According to Janet Brennan Croft, “Tolkien is especially interesting because he avoided the ironic response of his contemporaries and instead mythologized his experiences, creating a more universally understandable work.”

(10). When Tolkien was writing the *Lord of the Rings* in the years that followed the war, his experiences, both his Victorian upbringing and his modern outlook, would allow him to write a work untouched by the bitterness and disillusionment that haunt many other works of the period. John Garth also associates Tolkien’s literary interests to the sublimation of the war’s effect on him:

It is possible that his unconventional tastes in Germanic literature gave him a different view of war that of most contemporaries. Embracing the culture of the ancient European North, Tolkien turned his back enthusiastically on the classics that had nurtured his generation at school. They had become romantically entangled with Victorian triumphalism, in the words of one commentator, ‘As the long prosperous years of the Pax Britannica succeeded one another, the truth about war was forgotten and in 1914 young officers went into battle with the Iliad in their backpacks and the names of Achilles in their hearts [...] Back in Oxford, Tolkien confided in a Catholic professor that the outbreak of war had come as a profound blow to him, “the collapse of all my world’ (42).

The Great War is the formative modern experience for Tolkien. Before this time, his Victorian attitudes were never called into question. Consequently, even though Tolkien was a modern author, he exhibits Victorian sensibilities and themes in the *Lord of the Rings*. Janet Brennan Croft sums the complex attitude Tolkien had of war: “His fiction, criticism, and letters demonstrate a range of attitudes changing and maturing over his lifetime, in the end appearing

pragmatic and rational, if regretful and pessimistic, about human nature, evil, and the inevitability of conflict” (2).

Tolkien’s Victorian upbringing and his modern experiences shaped the *Lord of the Rings* into a complex and compelling work that has verisimilitude in the primary world for its richness and depth. Tolkien’s texts are a testament of his times and his world views. Perception in the *Lord of the Rings* is very important as it enables the reader to identify and distinguish between what the narrator views as positive and negative, good and evil, right and wrong. An important perception in the *Lord of the Rings* is that everything that is evil comes from the East. In the real world, the East is viewed by the West as significantly different from itself. The polarization of the belief and attitude towards the East in the *Lord of the Rings* is a reflection of this real world concern and is a huge part of Tolkien’s texts.

There is an Orientalist attitude from the characters and institutions of the West, but there is also a modern sensibility that is coeval with the passage of time and experience of certain characters, mainly Frodo and Samwise, turning parochial attitudes into a more modern outlook. But even after the downfall of Sauron, Lord of the Rings, The West still harbored negative attitudes towards the East, and during the reign of King Aragorn Elessar II the realm of Gondor invaded Rhûn due to an unspecified "problem" (Lacon 28, 33). The Orientalist attitude towards the East does not end with the War of the Ring, as in the case in the real world. The next chapter, The Imaginative Geography of Middle-earth, will examine the map and how Tolkien's cartography perpetuates the myth of the Orient, another indicator of orientalist attitudes in the *Lord of the Rings*.

#### 4 The Imaginative Geography of Middle-Earth

Maps are defined by what they include but often more revealing in what they exclude. Peter Turchi, *Maps of the Imagination*

Tolkien's map of Middle-earth is full of details for the realms of the West, but remains curiously and conspicuously blank about the lands east of the Anduin River. In many ways this is intentional; the Western half of Middle-earth is the most important feature of the *Lord of the Rings*. In fact, it can be argued that the Western half of Middle-earth is a character unto itself. Tolkien's maps of Middle-earth are important in the story because it allows readers to track the journey of the Fellowship through the landscape<sup>10</sup>.

This chapter deals with the geography of Middle-earth, focusing on Tolkien's use of the map as a means of keeping the East contained, enclosed, and separated from the West. Three of Tolkien's maps will be used to illustrate the geographic differences between East and West and how they affect the story Tolkien wished to tell. Tolkien did not write about or draw the features of the East on the map because the East was not his area of expertise, nor was it the expertise of his age. All his knowledge was centered on the West. The East merely serves as the backdrop to adventures from West, as a reflection of Western ideals and representation of the Other. Tolkien's interest was always squarely with the West, particularly with the northwest: "The North-west of Europe, where I (and most of my ancestors) have lived, has my affection, as a man's home should. I love its atmosphere, and know more of its histories and languages than I do of other parts" (*Letters* 211).

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<sup>10</sup> Tom Shippey, one of Tolkien's most eminent scholars argues that, "The first three books of the Lord of the Rings can be seen in particular as a kind of complex map, a map of cultures, races, languages, and histories, which gives the world through which the characters move its special depth and being." (Shippey, 102)

Maps are an integral part of civilization; they allow us to know where certain things are; to the society they serve, they impose limits and define boundaries between the known and the unknown. Maps attempt to make sense of the world around us by forming a logical and ordered framework in which we can navigate and in some way describe. This is one of the most important features of the map, a physical representation of the landscape that surrounds and encompasses, which has distinctive features and particular characteristics that can be recognized and organized in a particular manner.

Maps also have ulterior motives, that is to say, maps are products of the society that produced them and have specific “agendas” in their creation and dissemination:

The framework of definite historical circumstances and conditions produces a map that is inescapably a social and cultural document. Every map is linked to the social order of a particular period and place. Every map is cultural because it manifests intellectual processes defined as artistic or scientific as they work to produce a distinctive type of knowledge [...] Maps are not outside society: they are part of it as constitutive elements within the wider world (Harley 44).

As a result of the need to distort geographical features and enhance those aspects that the map creator wishes to bring to the viewer’s attention, details and information that are not pertinent to the mapmaker’s agenda remain hidden or erased completely from the map. This applies to Tolkien’s map of Middle-earth in the areas east of the Anduin River and to the south of gradually lose definition and eventually go blank. The map puts into sharp focus the lands of the West but blurs those features of the East. H.J. de Blij states in his introduction to Mark Monmonier’s *How to Lie with Maps* that:

All maps distort reality. All maps use generalization and symbolization to highlight critical information and to suppress detail of a lower priority. All cartography seeks to portray the complex, three-dimensional world on a flat sheet of paper or on a television or video screen [...] all maps must tell lies. And sometimes these lies are not so little. Maps are informative, but they can also be deceptive, even threatening (xi).

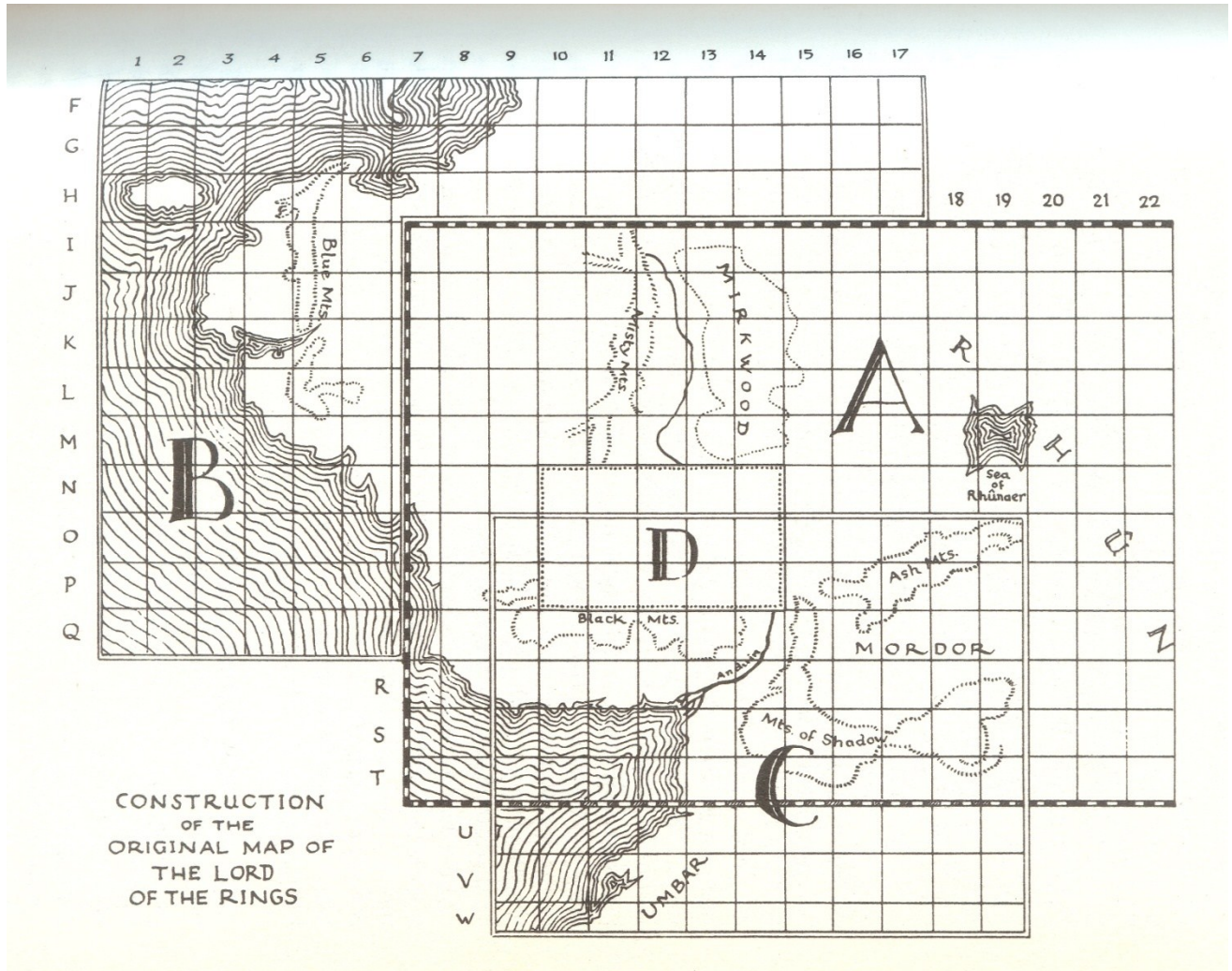
The map of Middle-earth was not a static map. Tolkien worked on the map of Middle-earth through various stages before, during and after the creation of the *Lord of the Rings*, as evidenced by Christopher Tolkien's *The History of Middle-earth Part 2: The Treason of Isengard*. Tolkien continually changed names and features that best suited the story he was weaving, even after he was done. The additions, subtractions and emendations done to this working map are described in great detail: "The First Map was my father's working map for a good while, and thus as it stood when he left it - as it stands now - it represents an evolution, rather than a fixed state of the geography" (296). During all these changes, the East continued to be a blank vastness of the unknown that juxtaposed the great number of details the West contained. Most important of all, Tolkien's map was a work in progress:

The original element in the map consisted of two pages glued together along their vertical edges, and is the big rectangle framed in the figure by a black and white line and lettered A. East of the vertical line of squares numbered 22 it extended for a further three lines, but these were left blank (*Treason of Isengard*, 295-296).

Here Tolkien is developing the Western part of Middle-earth. This is where most of the changes of the map occur. Tolkien placed another revision, marked D, where Isengard and Rohan were placed; according to Christopher Tolkien, "[it] is by far the most complex part of the map, as the region covered is also crucial in the story: from the Gap of Rohan and Isengard to

Rauros and the mouths of Entwash” (*Treason of Isengard*, 295-296). As Tolkien is developing the West, Tolkien is keeping the East blank; he does not feel the need to develop the east at all.

Superimposed on this, a new section of the map, marked C (Figure 1), also receive extensive revisions during the writing of the *Lord of the Rings* and replace the southern half of the map.



**Figure 1 The First Map of Middle-earth during the Third Age (Treason of Isengard 305)**

Figure 1 shows the meticulous care that was given in the creation and evolution of the map, but a glaring fact is evident: There are no significant changes to the East in the map. Even

though the West is constantly being reformed and refined, it is not true of the lands of the East (marked A, “Rhûn” in Figure 1) and of the South. Tolkien has left these areas blank, an omission that has basis in the history of the primary world:

Many eighteenth-century map makers preferred blank spaces to a relict Indian geography. This was defended on the grounds that it was good scientific practice to avoid mapping what could not be verified. Yet the ideological implications of the silence about Indian geography cannot be overlooked. It lent unwitting support to the legal doctrines of *terra nullus* and *vacuum domicilium*, which, since the earliest days of the colonies, had featured among the grounds for acquiring land title and assuming political jurisdiction. The English in particular believed that Indian land awaited their immediate settlement because it was vacant. There is a moral neutrality about a blank space which is easily divided and ruled (Harley 146).

Even Frodo felt the allure of the white spaces that represent the unknown on maps: “Frodo began to feel restless, and the old paths seemed too well trodden. He looked at maps, and wondered what lay beyond their edges: maps made in the shire showed mostly white space beyond its borders” (*LotR* Bk I Ch II).

In Tolkien's map of Middle-earth, Terra nullus, or the empty lands (and were thus named so by him) of the East were devoid of features, in terms of geography and inhabitants. It is true that the Haradrim and the Southrons come out of this area, but looking at the map gives no indication of this phenomenon. Since, according to the map, nothing and no one is there, therefore the East is nothing. The silence the East exhibits is imposed by the West. The reader must consequently ask what is in the East: "Thus we learn that that which is absent from maps is as much a proper field for enquiry as that which is present [...] Silence can reveal as much as it

conceals and, from acting as independent and intentional statements, silences on maps may sometimes become the determinate part of the cartographic message (Harley 86). Harley goes on to say that:

Such silences also help in the reproduction, the reinforcement, and the legitimation [sic] of cultural and political values. Finding them expressed geographically on maps points to their universality. There is no such thing as an empty space on a map. Revealed by a careful study of the cartographic unconscious and its social foundations, their hidden agenda have much to offer historians of cartography in coming to an understanding of how maps have been—and still are—a force in society (106).

The silences in Tolkien's map are revealing. The topography of Middle-earth is very distinctive. In the West, each region has its own peculiarities and idiosyncrasies and has countless names, in English and in the dialects of the elves, for each feature. The East remains virtually unexplored and unaccounted for. The lands east of Rhovanion (Mirkwood), the brown lands and east of Eryn Muil are featureless and nameless which seems surprising in light of Tolkien's meticulous care and planning. The large blank that is the East is intentional.

According to Peter Turchi, in *Maps of the Imagination: The Writer as Cartographer*: “blanks within the borders of maps can represent many things, among them the deliberately withheld [...] [b]lanks can also represent what is known, but deemed unimportant in a particular context, for a particular map. [...] more ominously, Native American tribal areas were not included on early European maps of the Americas, giving readers the impression no one lived there—at least, no one of consequence” (32-33). This also applies to the narrative in a story. Authors have the same functions as a mapmaker for the society in which he or she lives. Turchi goes on to say that: “In every narrative, by providing certain details and omitting others, we are

signaling to the reader how we want her to focus her attention” (63). Thus, the ability to create a map empowers the mapmaker and the society that uses them and projects an image of control towards the space that is being represented. Monmonier argues that: “In showing how to lie with maps, I want to make readers aware that maps, like speeches and paintings, are authored collections of information and also are subject to distortions arising from ignorance, greed, ideological blindness, or malice” (2).

Almost nothing is known of the Easterlings and the Haradrim, the human races that inhabit the East and the South respectively, except for a few lines in the *Lord of the Rings*, and in the appendices in the *Lord of the Rings*; namely the few entries in Appendix A, section IV; remarkable in light of Gondor’s reputation as a center of learning, no knowledge of the East is transmitted to the West. But the East constantly remains fixed in western minds as a continual threat. By and large, the East is not just a mirror image of the West, but it is the perception of “otherness” that is the real threat. Western forays into the East were relatively nonexistent, but the antagonistic feeling erupted into outright warfare. According to Ruth Lacon, in “Notes Toward a History of the Easterlings”, whenever the East is mentioned in the appendices it is from a hostile viewpoint: “the entry was written from the point of view of a scholar of Gondor and, in places, is flagrantly biased” (28). Lacon goes on to note that “[t]he Easterlings belonged to cultures alien and often hostile to that of Gondor: the proper comparison here is with the attitude of medieval Europeans to Islam and the East – belligerent incomprehension” (28). The root of Gondor’s antagonism is the East’s continual encroachment into the West. The East’s incursion is fueled by western propaganda: “Stirred up, as was afterwards seen, by the emissaries of Sauron, they made a sudden assault upon Gondor” (Appendix A, IV).

The West fears to be consumed by the East. The western mindset, in Middle-earth as in the primary world is the same, Said explained: “There are Westerners, and there are Orientals. The former dominate; the latter must be dominated, which usually means having their land occupied, their internal affairs rigidly controlled, their blood and treasure put at the disposal of one or another Western power” (36). The Appendix goes on to state a victorious incursion by the West and the proper result of the East’s subjugation:

It was Ostoher the seventh king who rebuilt Minas Anor, where afterwards the kings dwelt in summer rather than in Osgiliath. In his time Gondor was first attacked by wild men out of the East. But Tarostar, his son, defeated them and drove them out, and took the name of Rómendacil 'East-victor'. He was, however, later slain in battle with fresh hordes of Easterlings. Turambar his son avenged him, and won much territory eastwards (Appendix A, IV).

The East disgorges its contents into the West in the form of the orc/goblin races as well as the Southrons, Haradrim, and Easterlings that are attacking western institutions. Even the Misty Mountains serve as both a physical barrier and a symbolic representation of the split between East and West. The two ranges that border Mordor, the Shadow and Ash mountains, are placed to fence in the foulness of the eastern lands and the smoke billowing out from the volcanic Mount Doom. Looking at the map of Middle-earth, the viewer can perceive the physical separation between the East and the West. The map even includes a large letter “E” as the fence line that demarcates Mordor and indeed the whole of the East, a “here be dragons” or the sea monsters printed on the edge of medieval maps (fig 2).

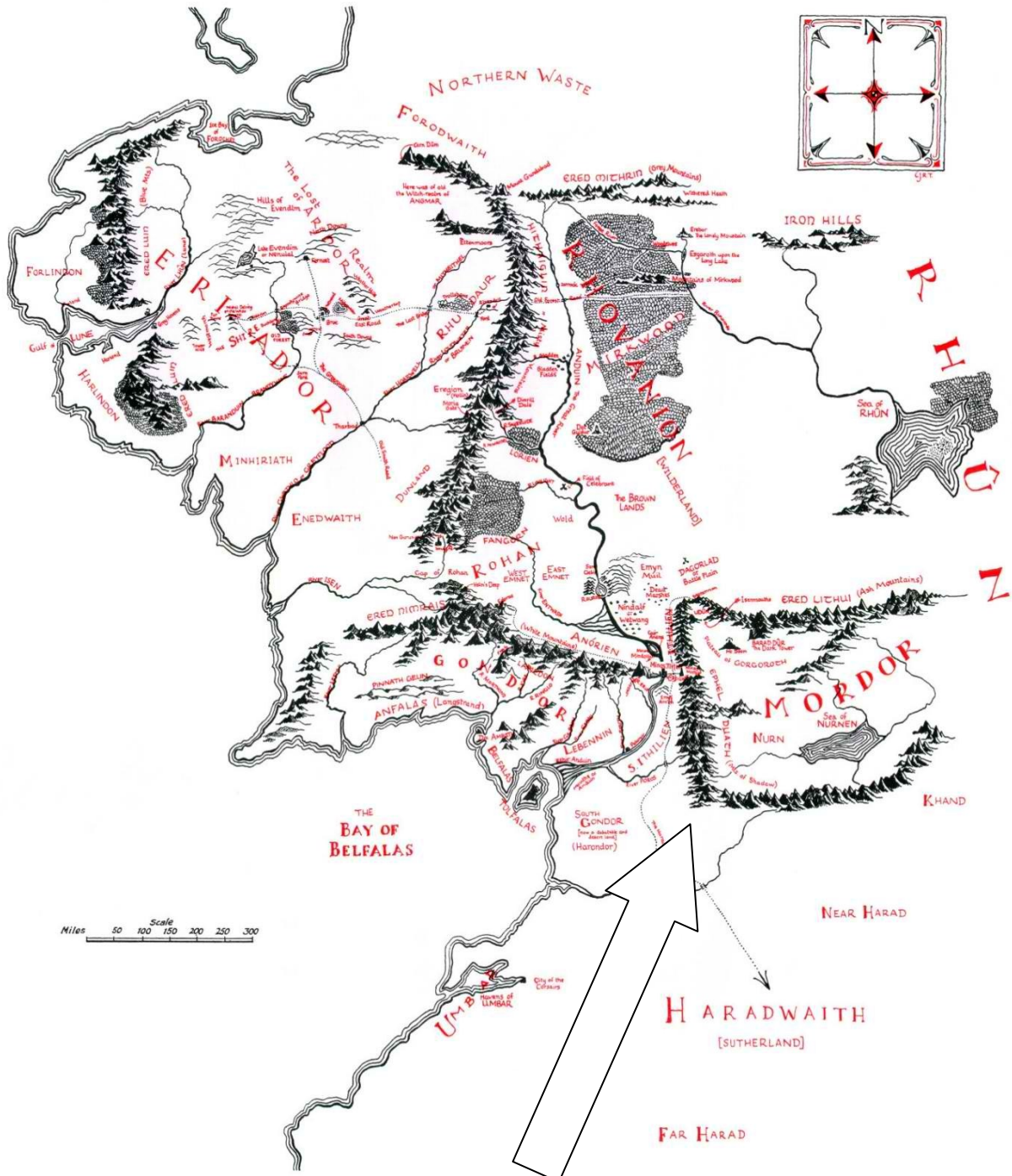


Figure 2 map of Middle-earth (notice the prominence of the mountain ranges that serve as a border to and from the East. The arrow points to the large “E” that is made up of the ranges of the Ash and Shadow Mountains and the hills bordering the eastern fringe of the Plateau of Gorgoroth).

Said called this practice "imaginative geography", a delimitation that divides the known from the unknown. As stated in chapter II, the rhetoric transmitted the difference between the West "us", "the familiar" and the East "them", "the strange" (Said 43) and always kept up this separation, and had a specific but limited lexicon in maintaining this division so that the West always had the advantage in representing the East because, in Western discourse, the East had no voice or say in what was said about it:

This universal practice of designating in one's mind a familiar space which is "ours" and unfamiliar space beyond "ours" which is "theirs" is a way of making geographical distinctions that can be entirely arbitrary. I use the word "arbitrary" here because imaginative geography of the "our land-barbarian land" variety does not require that the barbarians acknowledge the distinction. It is enough for "us" to set up these boundaries in our own minds, "they" become "they" accordingly, and both their territory and their mentality are designated as different from "ours"... Imaginative geography is figuring out the boundaries between the familiar "us" and the unfamiliar "them". It is also a charged hierarchy of power positions, "So space acquires emotional and even rational sense by a kind of poetic process, whereby the vacant or anonymous reaches of distance are converted into meaning for us here". (Said, 54-55)

Thus, the ability to create a map empowers the mapmaker and the society that uses them and projects an image of control towards the space that is being represented. There is no room for the East to have their voice in the West's discourse. There have been attempts to correlate the map of Middle-earth with that of the primary world. Tolkien himself wrote:

The action of the story takes place in the North-west of 'Middle-earth', equivalent in latitude to the coastlands of Europe and the north shores of the Mediterranean. But this is

not a purely 'Nordic' area in any sense. If Hobbiton and Rivendell are taken (as intended) to be at about the latitude of Oxford, then Minas Tirith, 600 miles south, is at about the latitude of Florence. The Mouths of Anduin and the ancient city of Pelargir are at about the latitude of ancient Troy. (*Letters* 294)

Recent studies in topography have proven Tolkien wrong in certain aspects. Andreas Moehn in his article "A Meridional Grid on the Map of Middle-earth" correctly places the site of the ancient city of Pelargir closer to Istanbul. Tolkien did not account for the curvature of the earth, consequently as one goes south the distance between latitudes is longer, so the distance in the correlation between maps is farther than Tolkien projected (Figure 3) as stated by Moehn:

Projected on the map of real Europe, the **LR** [*Lord of the Rings*] map covers Central Europe and the Mediterranean: its area spans across 20 degrees of latitude (55 to 35 deg.) and, at the northern edge of the map, up to 40 degrees of longitude (29 deg. West to 10 deg. East). If we assume Hobbiton at the location of Oxford, this superimposes the **LR** [*Lord of the Rings*]map on the geographic territory between Scotland and Crete, and between Ireland and Kiev [sic]. Minas Tirith and Osgiliath are getting submerged in the Adriatic Sea at 43 deg. N, 17 deg. East, somewhat South of the Croatian city of Split. Barad-dûr is found in Western Serbia, not very far from Belgrade (Moehn, "A Meridional Grid on the Middle-Earth Map")

Tolkien's correlation of the positions and the divisions in the map as the border between East and West reinforces an orientalist attitude; Tolkien, a man from the West, is dealing with an unknown East, using the blank spaces of the East to juxtapose the detailed lands of the West.



**Figure 3 map of Middle-earth superimposed on Europe**  
[http://lalaith.vpsurf.de/Tolkien/M-e\\_Euro.jpg](http://lalaith.vpsurf.de/Tolkien/M-e_Euro.jpg)

#### 4.1 Description of the Topography and Hydrology of Middle-Earth

It would be a massive undertaking to describe in this work the prodigious amount of topographical features of Middle-earth, which Tolkien described as his “secondary creation”. Fortunately, Karen Wynn Fonstad has already done so in *Atlas of Middle-earth*. In describing what Middle-earth is and more specifically where it is, Tolkien wrote: “Middle-earth is just archaic English for *νοικονμενη*, the inhabited world of men. It lay then as it does. In fact just as it does, round and inescapable. That is partly the point” (*Letters* 151). In the prologue to the *Lord of the Rings* Tolkien comments: “...the regions in which Hobbits then lived were doubtless the

same as those in which they still linger: the North-West of the Old World, east of the Sea” (*The Lord of the Rings* Prologue, 1, *Concerning Hobbits*).

The reader is shown in the *Lord of the Rings* only one map of the world and merely presents part of it. On viewing the map of Middle-earth, one continental land mass fixes the viewer’s attention. The regions of Harad, divided into Near and Far Harad, to the south and Rhûn to the East, which incidentally means south and east respectively, are featureless, save for the Sea of Rhûn and an unnamed forest encircling the eastern edge of the sea and a nameless hill region on its western flank.

The blank spaces in Tolkien’s map of Middle-earth are the result of his inexperience or lack of interest in dealing with the Orient; his professional and academic knowledge was wholly centered on the West. Tolkien himself wrote: “In any case if you want to write a tale of this sort you must consult your roots, and a man of the North-west of the Old World will set his heart and the action of his tale in an imaginary world of that air, and that situation: with the Shoreless Sea of his innumerable ancestors to the West, and the endless lands (out of which enemies mostly come) to the East” (*Letters* 163).

Tolkien also states that: “The placing of Mordor in the east was due to simple narrative and geographical necessity, within my 'mythology'. The original stronghold of Evil was (as traditionally) in the North; but as that had been destroyed, and was indeed under the sea, there had to be a new stronghold, far removed from the Valar, the Elves, and the sea-power of Númenor” (*Letters* 22).

Thus, the East is reduced to a plot device. Unsure of what was in it; the regions, peoples, and features were erased; excluded from Tolkien’s discourse, made into a more manageable whole. Tolkien’s lack of knowledge about the East is the result of the narrow view that the

Victorians had about the things that they did not understand, amalgamating the few pieces of information and making general assumptions based on those conjectures.

In its basic form, the split between East and West extends from geography to culture. This schism represents an insurmountable obstacle that the characters and institutions cannot reconcile. Western maps propagate the fallacy that blank spaces are empty places devoid of anything worth noting. Thus, the east and the west will forever remain apart, two halves of an always incomplete whole. The next chapter, *Gong Native: The East as the Source of Saruman's Corruption*, reflects on the Western perception that the East is a corrupting influence and the Victorian source of this fear in comparison to Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*.

## 5 Going Native: the East as the Source of Saruman's Corruption

Never before has any voice dared to utter the words of that tongue in Imladris, Gandalf the Grey,' said Elrond [...] 'And let us hope that none will ever speak it here again,' answered Gandalf. 'Nonetheless I do not ask your pardon, Master Elrond. For if that tongue is not soon to be heard in every corner of the West, then let all put doubt aside that this thing is indeed what the Wise have declared. *Lord of the Rings*

The threat that Saruman poses is the threat of social change. He believes that he is changing the status quo and engendering a new socio-political order. He is also destabilizing the Western paradigm. Unknown to powers of the West, Saruman has fallen prey to his desire to possess the One Ring for his own: "The Ruling Ring? If we could command that, then the Power would pass to *us*!' As he said this a lust which he could not conceal shone suddenly in his eyes" (*LotR* Bk II Ch II). Saruman has set up a shadow hegemony in the West in parody of Sauron's despotism. "Wolves and orcs were housed in Orthanc, for Saruman was mustering a great force on his own account, in rivalry of Sauron and not yet in his service" (*LotR* Bk II Ch II). In Saruman's attempt to emulate Sauron, he brings the East to the West, an unforgivable act to those of the West and betraying everything the West holds dear. In essence, Saruman is the ultimate orientalist.

Saruman's betrayal of the West is proof of the corruptibility of the West to Eastern influences. This chapter will deal with the Western perception of the East as a corrupting influence, specifically on Saruman and his New World Order. It also illustrates how Saruman's threat proves to be a shadow of the threat of the East that solidifies Western opposition; where before there was factionism and the splintering of decisions, thereafter galvanized Rohan and precipitates the return of Aragorn to the throne of Gondor and Arnor.

This chapter also demonstrates how Western fascination with the East as an exotic, different, and sensual locale is defined in the Victorian fear of the losing one's Western identity and adopting Eastern values, namely Saruman's choice to 'go native', using Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* and paralleling Saruman's corruption with that of Kurtz's descent into madness. In researching and emulating the designs and methods from the East, Saruman wishes to introduce into the West an autocratic regime with modernization, mechanization, industry, uniformity, and large scale manufacturing, going against the traditional ideal of a feudal-agrarian West.

Saruman's position as head of the White Council in opposition to Sauron and as the wisest of the wise gives him access to the West's knowledge and their plans against Sauron. Yet even at this early juncture, the reader can perceive that something is not completely clear with Saruman's intentions. Nevertheless, when Gandalf spoke to Frodo about Saruman, he established his credentials:

Yet he is great among the Wise. He is the chief of my order and the head of the Council. His knowledge is deep, but his pride has grown with it, and he takes ill any meddling. The lore of the Elven-rings, great and small, is his province. He has long studied it, seeking the lost secrets of their making; but when the Rings were debated in the Council, all that he would reveal to us of his ring-lore told against my fears. So my doubt slept - but uneasily. Still I watched and I waited (*LotR* Bk I Ch II).

Saruman is the only sedentary wizard, having under his control the Tower of Orthanc in Isengard in contrast to the other two known wizards, Gandalf the Grey and Radagast the Brown. In the *Two Towers*, Treebeard tells Merry and Pippin a little more about the wizards and how Saruman came to Isengard:

Who is Saruman? asked Pippin. 'Do you know anything about his history?' 'Saruman is a Wizard,' answered Treebeard. 'More than that I cannot say. I do not know the history of Wizards. They appeared first after the Great Ships came over the Sea; but if they came with the Ships I never can tell. Saruman was reckoned great among them. I believe. He gave up wandering about and minding the affairs of Men and Elves, some time ago -- you would call it a very long time ago: and he settled down at Angrenost, or Isengard as the Men of Rohan call it (*LotR* Bk III Ch IV).

His studies in Ring lore and history make him a formidable enemy to Sauron, but his pride proves to be his downfall. Saruman has for so long and so thoroughly studied of the ways of the 'Enemy' he begins to question why the West has failed to stop Sauron. Saruman has also failed to maintain Western objectivity to the influences of the East. He begins to aggressively incorporate from his studies artifice, the large scale use of machinery and technology used without thinking about the consequences of their impact in the environment, all associated with evil in Tolkien's cosmology. Saruman's betrayal therefore is the incorporation of these 'modern' Eastern traits emulated from Sauron into the West. These traits prove to be additional threats that the West has to overcome. Furthermore, Saruman tries to imitate Sauron's power and dominion, but he is not completely successful in this task. The deeper Saruman delved into the ring-lore, the more he became ensnared with the idea of finding and controlling the Ruling ring for his own uses. Saruman covets the One Ring; he is corrupted by the desire to possess it. Tolkien added his view that the technology of Sauron:

[...] drew little distinction between magia and technology—both were simply means to manipulate the world. In letter 155, he noted that “both sides” in the struggle “live

mainly by ‘ordinary’ means.’’ The same motives that drive ‘‘The Enemy’’ to use magia also turn it to machinery. Both reduce ‘‘to a minimum . . . the gap between the idea or desire and the result or effect.’’ He goes on to note that because magia ‘‘may not be easy to come by,’’ slaves and machinery can serve in its place—hence the vast armies of Saruman and Sauron (Drout 401).

The reason that Saruman yearns for the One Ring is that he is tired of the perceived failures of the West to stop Sauron due to the weakness of the West and their factionism. Saruman desires power and order for their own sake, not for the benefit of the West and its paradigm. This despotic regime is unconcerned with the welfare of its subjects but only cares for power as its own reward. Tolkien asserted that once this path is trod, it becomes an all-consuming passion: ‘‘[o]f course another factor then comes in, a moral or pathological one: the tyrants lose sight of objects, become cruel, and like smashing, hurting, and defiling as such’’ (*Letters* 155).

Saruman’s speech to Gandalf in book two, chapter II reveals his vision: to establish a new world order where Sauron gains dominance over Middle-Earth, but in reality his goal is obtaining the One Ring for himself and displacing Sauron as Dark Lord. Saruman wishes to participate in the acquisition of power, not merely to be an observer and messenger as was his and all the wizards’ charge. He justifies his decision to betray the West because he believes the West will fall to the ravaging hordes of the East. In *Treason of Isengard*, Christopher Tolkien presents an earlier draft of Saruman’s speech to Gandalf, where Saruman believed that the inevitability of Sauron’s triumph was reason enough to betray the West:

We fought it in vain - and foolishly. We knew much but not enough. We looked always at it from the outside and through a mist of old falsehood and hate; and we did not consider its high and ultimate purpose. We saw not the reasons, but only the things done,

and some of those seemed evil; but they were done under necessity. There has been a conspiracy to hinder and frustrate knowledge, wisdom, and government (*Treason* 150). The final version emphasizes the fact that throughout history; time and again, the West has failed to stem the tide of the East:

The Elder days are gone. 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 all that good which only the wise can see...I say we, for we it may be, if you will join with me. A new Power is rising. Against it the old allies and policies will not avail us at all. There is no hope left in Elves or dying Númenor (*LotR* Bk II ChII).

The essence of Saruman's argument is simply this: there is an inevitable change in the Western order of things. A person must join with this new change to benefit from it. But for the change to occur there must be someone to help it. Within his argument, Saruman has cleverly initiated a political analysis of how history has not helped in deposing the threat from the East. Saruman wants to establish patterns in history. He parallels the end of the Elder Days with the waning of the elves and the fall of Númenor with the ending of the Middle Days. Saruman wishes to join himself to what he sees as historical inevitability. Since the old Western regime has not worked out, then it is time for a new one, an Eastern paradigm. Saruman seeks to impose his vision of how things should be, should the new Eastern order dominate Middle-earth:

As the Power grows, its proved friends will also grow; and the Wise, such as you and I, may with patience come at last to direct its courses, to control it. We can bide our time, we can keep our thoughts in our hearts, deploring maybe evils done by the way, but

approving the high and ultimate purpose: Knowledge, Rule, Order; all the things that we have so far striven in vain to accomplish, hindered rather than helped by our weak and idle friends. There need not be, there would not be, any real changes in our designs, only in our means (*LotR* Bk II ChII).

With his plans laid bare, Saruman finally exposes that his lust for the One Ring is his true objective, to become a power himself, bending the will of the Ring to his own, and thereby becoming like Sauron. Treebeard also divines Saruman's desire:

I think that I now understand what he is up to. He is plotting to become a Power. He has a mind of metal and wheels; and he does not care for growing things, except as far as they serve him for the moment. And now it is clear that he is a black traitor. He has taken up with foul folk, with the Orcs (*LotR* Bk III Ch IV).

There were no problems as long as Saruman was only studying the ways of the enemy, but once he empathized with Eastern thinking, as represented by Sauron and the One Ring, then he betrayed the Western paradigm. In opposing the perceived entity that is the East, the West views itself the defender of freedom and of equality against an unknown despotic East. The East is thus made by the West to reflect its qualities and to deflect its bad traits. In contrasting East and West, Tolkien sets up the opposition and mutual antagonism between the two halves. This perception of otherness, augmented by the fact that the East is by and large unknown and unexplored by the West, allows the reader to interpret the marked distinction between East and West. The inhabitants of the West view the East with suspicion and outright hostility. The West views the East as a place of unmentionable evil, the abode of the Dark Lord Sauron and the greatest representation of the “Other.”

Tolkien also reduces the East into a more manageable whole while the western cultures remain largely independent from one another such as the Victorian Hobbits, The medieval Gondorians, the Anglo-Saxon Rohirrim, and the Ancient Greek elves. Said states, "Because it is made into a general object, the whole Orient [East] can be made to serve as an illustration of a particular form of eccentricity" (102). The East's unity of purpose, to destroy the West, is by far, the single most distinctive feature of the East, as exemplified by the arrival of armies of men to the gates of Mordor: "These were Men of other race, out of the wide Eastlands, gathering to the summons of their Overlord; armies that had encamped before his Gate by night and now marched in to swell his mounting power" (*LotR* Bk IV, CH III). Saruman greatly desired to have a shadow hegemony in parody of Sauron's realm in Mordor: "I looked on it and saw that, whereas it had once been green and fair, it was now filled with pits and forges [...] Over all his works a dark smoke hung and wrapped itself about the sides of Orthanc" (*LotR* Bk II, ChII).

Tolkien's ideas on the origins of the Orcs and the uruk-hai are the precursors to the modern Twentieth century preoccupation with genetic manipulation and the fear of cloning which in turn stems from the Nineteenth century fear of miscegenation. The *Lord of the Rings* reflects the Victorian fear of losing their individuality and their collective and individual Western distinctiveness. Westerners fear Eastern social values and norms. The descriptors in *Lord of the Rings* of the races, lands, and cultures of the East stem from the Victorian fear of the other and the manifestation of repressed fear which allocates monstrous or inhuman qualities to the unknown, further alienating the familiar from the unfamiliar, creating a rift between them. Treebeard commented on Saruman's choice of soldiers and what he was doing to them:

Worse than that: he has been doing something to them [the orcs]; something dangerous. For these Isengarders are more like wicked Men. It is a mark of evil things that came in the Great Darkness that they cannot abide the Sun; but Saruman's Orcs can endure it, even if they hate it. I wonder what he has done? Are they Men he has ruined, or has he blended the races of Orcs and Men? That would be a black evil! (*LotR* Bk III Ch IV).

As stated previously, Saruman's racial mixing and genetic manipulation, which in many regards precedes the modern fear of cloning and losing one's identity, is one of the Victorian era's greatest fears. But the phenomenon of "going native", that is, the betrayal of Western ideals and the adoption and acceptance of Eastern values and ideals akin to the degeneration of humanity into a savage state is an anathema to the Victorian mindset. Tolkien created mutually exclusive races that are further evidence of his Victorian mindset. The only exceptions are the human-elf interbreeding which is very rare and end in tragedy, in which these half-elves have to choose between being elves or being human with all that this implies. The elves, Tolkien's chosen creatures, embody, "beauty and grace of life and artifact" (*Letters* 73). They also are symbolic of all that is good and noble in man. This could be interpreted as the Victorian social and racial stratification:

I should say that they really represent Men with greatly enhanced aesthetic and creative faculties, greater beauty and longer life, and nobility – the Elder Children doomed to fade before the followers (Men), and to live ultimately only by the thin line of their blood that was mingled with that of Men, among whom it was the only real claim to 'nobility' (*Letters*, no. 144).

The Victorian novel *Heart of Darkness* has a similar motif of Western degeneration through contact with the Other. In *Heart of Darkness*, Kurtz fulfills the same role as Saruman.

His vision as the great reformer and plotter has been tainted by his acceptance of the natives' abject adoration and his relationship with his African mistress. Kurtz's moral degeneration is an erosion of the Western ideal of the bringer of civilization and order. What the West represents is inconsequential in the face of an alien culture that has a totally different set of values. In his delusional state, Kurtz feverishly relives the phantoms of his plots that had not come to fruition:

I had immense plans , I was on the threshold of great things [...] The wastes of his weary brain were haunted by shadowy images now -- images of wealth and fame revolving obsequiously round his unextinguishable gift of noble and lofty expression. My Intended, my station, my career, my ideas -- these were the subjects for the occasional utterances of elevated sentiments. The shade of the original Kurtz frequented the bedside of the hollow sham, whose fate it was to be buried presently in the mould of primeval earth. But both the diabolic love and the unearthly hate of the mysteries it had penetrated fought for the possession of that soul satiated with primitive emotions, avid of lying fame, of sham distinction, of all the appearances of success and power (Conrad 148, 152).

Kurtz, chief of the Inner station in the Congo is corrupted by absolute power over the station. The company gave Kurtz complete autonomy to run the station as Saruman was given autonomy in studying the devices of Sauron and given Orthanc unsupervised. Since there is no unified action in the West, there is no way to oversee what Saruman is doing. Kurtz's activities are also uncontrolled and unsupervised by a company half a continent away which precipitates his acquisition of Eastern traits, blurring the distinctions between Westerner and the Easterner. Both Saruman and Kurtz start with good intentions but both are corrupted by the situations they are faced with.

Saruman, like Kurtz, has sought to obtain justification to the Western audience through words rather than through direct physical confrontation, and so, tries to convince Gandalf, who is analogous to Marlow, of the righteousness of his schemes. In order to achieve this, Saruman uses his intelligence and his resources as a wizard, but most important of all, he uses his voice. Saruman's voice is extremely dangerous. It has the power to beguile and enchant the listener and to make him or her susceptible to Saruman's suggestions: "[b]ut none were unmoved; none rejected its pleas and its commands without an effort of mind and will, so long as its master [Saruman] had control of it" (*LotR* Bk III Ch X).

The power of Saruman's voice is augmented by the power of his rhetoric. Saruman reveals that he is no longer Saruman the White, but Saruman of Many Colors. Readers can assume that the prismatic hues on Saruman's robes are an indication of his shifting alliances, but also a shifting of his attitudes towards racial mixing. The rationalization that Saruman uses to justify his change is that white can be polluted or changed and that it serves as the basis of something else, like a blank canvas on which a painter will work. Saruman wishes to change who he is, to blend in with the easterners and acquire eastern traits. Rana Kabbani asserts that: "The disguise permitted its wearer to move from one racial category to another as if by magic [...] it was reflective of the severe regimentation of Victorian society, where any serious divergence from the consecrated hierarchies would lead to complete ostracism" (144).

Saruman uses his rhetoric to attempt to entice Gandalf into joining him. His address to Gandalf is conspiratory and elitist; they will rule for they alone are wise enough to do so. He relies on this false sense of friendship in choosing correct words to try to entice Gandalf's sensibilities. He chooses words such as "old friend", "We", "us" "our" to emphasize the

conspiratorial nature of the speech. With their wisdom, they can redefine the order in Middle-earth and create it in whatever fashion they wish. In joining this change, subverting it and making it his own, for in reality Saruman needs Gandalf only as a pawn, Saruman can set things right. Gandalf, confronted with Saruman and knowing full well the power of the Ring falling into his hands, easily breaks Saruman's rhetoric and does not join him or tell him the whereabouts of the Ring and sometime thereafter escapes Orthanc carrying the tale of Saruman's betrayal to the Rest of the White Council.

Saruman's corruption and fall from Western grace is Tolkien's Victorian cautionary tale. It is a warning to the dangers of falling for the allure of the East. Coveting the One Ring is the same as permitting Eastern influences to supplant Western ideals. Even though Saruman never got near the One Ring, he fails the test that was put before him; he is tempted and succumb. Only Gandalf and Galadriel prove to be stronger and thus perpetuate the Western ideal.

Saruman's rhetoric sounds very plausible in the face of so many facts. He has truly assessed the threat and has weighed the consequences of denying the inevitable, yet he has failed to see that to ally with the darkness is to become it. In lusting for the Ring, he has lost Western Identity, his position as head of the Wizard's order and put himself apart from those who had esteemed him as wise. His actions are just mimicry of Sauron's power; Saruman has only a fraction of the power, resources, evil, and will of Sauron.

The new world order, which Saruman envisions, crumbles shortly thereafter. Saruman is unable to deliver the Ring to its true master and mistrusted by both sides, his dreams of world dominance is shattered by the reversal of the tides of history which Saruman did not envision would happen in the face of overwhelming historical proof.

## 5.1 Conclusions

This study has reviewed how the East is viewed by the characters and institutions from the West in the *Lord of the Rings*. Orientalist discourse is very much a part of Tolkien's text. It is used to describe persons, places, or things outside the knowledge of the West. The descriptions and their connotations are a direct result of Tolkien's Victorian upbringing. Tolkien had no knowledge of the East, so he used the East merely as a backdrop of the deeds and adventures from the West. As inheritor of the Western Victorian paradigm, Tolkien polarized the worldview of the West versus the East by making the two halves of Middle-earth irreconcilable in their differences in topography, language, industry and culture. As a writer with modern sensibilities, Tolkien broadens the parochial minds of the protagonists, Frodo and Samwise, only at the cost of their harrowing experiences during their mission eastward to Mordor.

The way that Orientalism is present in the *Lord of the Rings* is both subtle and blatant. Orientalism is present in the way Tolkien writes about places, characters and situations and in the vocabulary to describe each of these elements. Vocabulary usage is quite important in evoking response from the reader; nostalgic prosaic and idyllic verse is used for familiar Western elements, while harsh, strident and derogatory words are used for the stranger Eastern aspects of Middle-earth. Maps also show how Western orientalist discourse keeps the East contained, enclosed and undefined, while describing the West in great detail, blatantly excluding the East from the West's discourse imposed upon it. Finally, Saruman adoption of Eastern thought is proof that the West is susceptible to the corrupting influences of the East.

Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* is an invaluable contribution to literature that has changed the way many people write fantasy. Tolkien has inspired millions of readers because of the depth of

his secondary creation and the accessibility of his characters. Yet Tolkien was a product of his time and readers can perceive important preconceptions of his Victorian background in his works. Readers must also note, while these preconceptions might at first glance, be considered offensive, there is no way that we can capture how it truly felt to be in an age that was moving rapidly in terms of social and industrial reforms as well as inherited notions of race and class. Tolkien also crosses the boundaries of his Victorian background by illustrating his modern sensibilities in representing such modern themes such as post-traumatic stress, environmental awareness, and gene manipulation. There is no doubt that Tolkien's mythopoeia will continue to become important sources of discussion due to continued interest in his work as well as recent media exposition owing to Peter Jackson's film adaptations the *Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit*.

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