

THE ECOPHILOSOPHY OF J.R.R. TOLKIEN:
RURAL, URBAN, AND WILDERNESS ROADS TO
CONSCIENTIOUS LIVING AND ENVIRONMENTAL
GUARDIANSHIP

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Abstract:

A core message of J.R.R. Tolkien's canon concerning the human and non-human global community appears in *The Lord of the Rings* when Gandalf addresses the Captains of the West, as they prepare their plans to march on the Black Gate of Sauron the ecosadist. Within this quotation, Gandalf urges the Captains to, whenever possible, *weed* what, whom, when, and where they can. Throughout the various Ages of Middle-earth, Tolkien exhorts his characters (and his readers) to *weed* and remove "the evil" within their bodies, their minds, and their spirits, as well as the world around them. Tolkien's Middle-earth *Legendarium* highlights how selfishness, more than any other negative trait, can lead individuals and people groups to adopt and increasingly exhibit ecosadistic beliefs and attitudes, which, in turn, causes these morally compromised individuals and groups to commit acts of ecocide. Negative traits like ignorance, callousness, and laziness often reinforce the evil of selfishness in Tolkien's Middle-earth tales, and therefore, often contribute to the destruction of the physical environment as well. These intellectual, moral, ethical, and spiritual failings, therefore, cause considerable damage to the wilderness, rural, and urban environments of Middle-earth (as they do in our world) due to insufficient political, cultural, and ideological weeding. Thus, Tolkien's Middle-earth fantasies explore what comprises beneficial work, while offering messages of cautious hope for the future. Tolkien's texts explain that quality environmental guardianship must consider not only the well-being of the individual but also the well-being of small groups, local communities, nations, groups of nations, and the whole world. Tolkien builds from Judeo-Christian practices, from previous historical eras, and from the ideas of his episteme to create his fantastic visions and the environmental ideologies within his Middle-earth texts. Tolkien's works, moreover, serve as partial precursors to a vast array of contemporary ecophilosophies, for these ecophilosophies condemn selfishness, in general, and callousness, in particular. Both Tolkien's writings and the works of contemporary ecocritics, on the other hand, often argue that humans must strive to better understand *and* satisfy the needs of the marginalized, in general, and non-human nature, in particular, to an even greater degree.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Introduction to Tolkienian Environmentalism

While J.R.R. Tolkien's Middle-earth fantasies sometimes partially conflict with one another in terms of messaging, Tolkien's works emphasize that his characters (and readers) must adopt and practice certain ecofriendly ideas so that they may act and think as respectable guardians of the environment.¹ Characters (and readers) should not strive to "own" an overabundance of lands; Tolkien's texts reinforce this conviction by noting that someone's "property" exists only temporarily while he or she lives. While Tolkien's fantasies recognize the transience of individuals, communities, and nations, Tolkien's Middle-earth works also mention that the characters possess the right to defend themselves and the landscapes, soils, waters, air, flora, and fauna that surround their homes from those who wish to harm them or the physical environment. When Tolkien's characters construct buildings, sow crops, and plant flowers, bushes, and trees, Tolkien's

1. By examining not only *The Lord of the Rings* but also Tolkien's other Middle-earth tales, I demonstrate my agreement with Dimitra Fimi's argument that she voiced in 2009: "We are past the era of Tolkien criticism where *The Lord of the Rings* was seen in isolation from the rest of Tolkien's legendarium. It should by now be clear to all scholars and critics that any of Tolkien's work that are part of the Middle-earth cycle should be understood as part of that bigger picture, and cannot be treated as a self-sufficient entity" (*Tolkien* 202).

works emphasize that the characters must value the environment's aesthetics, consider the short- and long-term environmental effects of their activities, and exchange ideas with those who embrace different environmental viewpoints. Therefore, since the non-human environment possesses inherent value and other Peoples will live on the same lands, drink from the same waters, and breathe the same air in the future, Tolkien's fantasies define righteous environmental guardians as those who not only mentally desire the well-being of the environment but also those who help to improve (or at least maintain) the well-being of the environment. As I indicated previously, Tolkien's fantasies also suggest that humans do not own the earth's lands, waters, soils, minerals, and species. Instead, humans are caretakers of Ilúvatar's (i.e., God's) creation. Tolkien includes this message within the plots of his Middle-earth fantasies, since the unfallen spirits and the Free Peoples² of Middle-earth aim to oversee, guard, and beautify the world that Ilúvatar, the Creator-God, envisioned.

2. As I will discuss in more detail in later chapters, the "Free Peoples" are distinguishable from the servants of Morgoth and Sauron. The "Free Peoples" include the Children of Ilúvatar de jure: the *Firstborn* Elves and the *Secondborn* Men. The Free Peoples also include the Hobbits (who are identified as one group of Men), the Dwarves (i.e., the Children of Aulë), as well as the Ents and the Entwives (i.e., the Children of Yavanna).

The Orcs, the Goblins, the Trolls, and the other servants of Morgoth and Sauron, however, are not among the Free Peoples. Because the Balrogs and other fallen Maiar (e.g., Sauron) chose to rebel with Morgoth and because they refused to repent, these rebellious spirits face the same type of eternal damnation as what the demons face, according to Christianity. Because, as I will discuss in later chapters, some of the Orcs, Goblins, and Trolls are descended from Maiar spirits (or are, indeed, mutilated lesser Maiar themselves), these beings also face eternal destruction. Moreover, because Tolkien's later work suggests that at least some Orcs might be descended from beasts or rocks and because neither animals nor stones possess souls like the Free Peoples, such Orcs could not be accounted among the "Free Peoples." For similar reasons, if Morgoth or Sauron created robotic Orcs, such Orcs could not be among the "Free Peoples," because robots lack souls. In regard to the Orcs whom Morgoth and Sauron altered by corrupting Elves and/or Men, these beings are not among the "Free Peoples" for another possible reason. Because of Tolkien's belief in Christianity, it seems that Tolkien borrows from the idea that non-Believers remain "slaves to sin," and therefore are not among the "Free Peoples" (i.e., the elect), since the Orcs live as slaves of Morgoth and Sauron even though they hate their Dark Lord(s) almost as much as they hate the Free Peoples.

Because, according to Genesis 5:2-3, God made humans in His own image, humans can commune with YHWH, have a conscience, and are intelligent (24) and because the Orcs do not appear to have a conscience (although they are intelligent and may, eventually, be redeemed by Ilúvatar), it is possible that the Orcs do not have free will. The Orcs' apparent lack of a conscience may result from the fact that some Orcs may not have a soul. For the Orcs who descend from stone or animals or are cyborgs, these Orcs (it seems) cannot possess a soul, since God only provided a soul to humans by breathing life into the first humans and because some Orcs have commonality with animals, which are below humans in the order of Creation (Gen. 2:7, 1:26-30). Consequently, these Orcs would not possess free will. As Scott Hahn states, "The infusion of the soul, as the

Although Tolkien wrote his Middle-earth fantasies before the emergence of contemporary environmentalism and literary ecocriticism, I aim to demonstrate that Tolkien's texts parallel some of the same dialogues and arguments that occur between the various factions of environmentalists and ecocritics. By including a variety of environmental worldviews within this dissertation, I hope to help Tolkien scholars, environmentalists, ecocritics, historians, teachers, students, and general readers perceive that Tolkien's Middle-earth fantasies borrow from historical struggles and conversations like those between conservationism and preservationism. Tolkien's texts represent partial precursors (albeit through a fantastic lens) to some of the debates within contemporary ecocriticism, as I discuss in chapter four. Tolkien's fantasies are partial precursors, because the convictions and actions of Tolkien's Free Peoples sometimes parallel portions of contemporary environmental philosophies (such as Moderate Environmentalism, Deep Ecology, Heideggerian Ecophilosophy, and Bioregionalism). By describing Tolkien's Middle-earth fantasies as *precursors to contemporary ecocriticism*, I agree with Matthew Dickerson and Jonathan Evans's eventual conviction that "even the narrowest definitions of environmentalism and environmental literature would have to include Tolkien and his works³" (259). Because I discuss contemporary ecocriticism in the context of exploring how the environmental passages within Tolkien's fantasies (despite predating the emergence of

Church teaches, filled Adam with natural life as well as the supernatural life of holiness and justice, so that Adam was in harmony with himself, with the created order, and with the Creator who made him" (24). Consequently, because the Orcs behave in an unholy and unjust manner, because the Orcs do not live harmoniously with themselves, with other Peoples, or with the physical environment, *many* of the Orcs (at the least) do not possess souls, in part, because their disharmonious actions suggest that they either behave as soulless. It is also possible, however, that the Orcs only *appear* soulless because of their present (and perhaps permanent) state of damnation.

3. Although an argument within Dickerson and Evans's introduction chapter contradicts the aforementioned statement, these critics later note that this earlier (i.e., incorrect) view evolved because of their extensive research and analysis of Tolkien and his Middle-earth fantasies, which led them to alter their earlier theory (xvi-xvii, 259).

these ecophilosophies⁴) share some kinship with contemporary environmental theories, I hope to respond to Susan Jeffers's call for Tolkien scholars to refer to ecocriticism (18). Moreover, I also hope to contribute to fulfilling Dimitra Fimi's call for "new analyses and approaches" to Tolkien's Middle-earth fantasies that are not only "fresh and unexpected" but also "free from some of the prejudices and concerns that had trapped previous criticism within strict borders" (*Tolkien* 200). In any case, I believe that my references to ecophilosophies would receive Tolkien's approval, for he encourages text-based reader responses through his theory of "applicability," which he references in his 1966 "Foreword to the Second Edition of *The Lord of the Rings*" (xv).

In his "Foreword to the Second Edition" of *The Lord of the Rings* and in his *Letters*, Tolkien not only mentions that he disapproves of allegory but also notes that he values reader interpretation. "I cordially dislike allegory in all its manifestations," Tolkien declares in his "Foreword," "and always have done so since I grew old and wary enough to detect its presence" (*Fellowship* xv). Tolkien, however, voices a distinctly different sentiment in regard to reader response in his "Foreword": "I much prefer history,⁵ true or feigned, with its varied applicability to the thought and experience of readers. I think that many confuse 'applicability' with 'allegory'; but the one resides in the freedom of the reader, and the other

4. I have chosen to use "ecophilosophy" and "ecophilosophies" throughout my dissertation, in part, because Deep Ecologist George Sessions penned a newsletter from 1976-1983 called *Ecophilosophy* (Taylor, "Tributaries" 44) and because I believe that "Ecophilosophy" better articulates what I mean to suggest than the more opaque, less pronounceable terms "ecosophy" and "ecosophies."

5. Although he detests allegory, Tolkien also agrees that some "history" (such as legends) and divine "Truth" (albeit mythologized) exists in his fantasies (Carpenter 193, qtd. in 100). Fairy stories, according to Tolkien, also inevitably refer to the Fall, as explained in Judeo-Christianity (194). For example, in Shippey's *The Road to Middle-earth*, Shippey mentions that Tolkien perceived that his fantasies demonstrated that there existed an *applicable* reading that argued that Tolkien's works parallel the medieval distrust of "mechanical cleverness" (172). In regard to characters, however, Tolkien disputes the notion that his characters appear allegorical, arguing that they do not simply *embody* "universals," although he agrees that his characters sometimes "contain universals" (Carpenter 206).

in the purposed domination of the author” (xv). Similarly, although Tolkien acknowledges in his July 31, 1947, letter to Stanley Unwin that readers can find “a ‘moral’” in his Middle-earth fantasies, Tolkien adamantly rejects the idea that he purposely infuses one specific message (i.e., an allegory) within his works (*Letters* 120-21). Consequently, Tolkien implies that readers can find positive meanings within his texts but denounces the idea that he merely includes one-to-one allegorical allusions in his fantasies. In his *Beowulf* essay, Tolkien declares that, when writing, it is “important to preserve a balance, to see that the large symbolism is near the surface, but . . . does not break through, nor become allegory⁶” (17). Tolkien, of course, derides allegories, because such works harm the ability for readers to fully immerse themselves in a work and embrace the “secondary belief” that Tolkien believes is necessary for reading well (17). Tolkien, moreover, held the conviction that a text should only give readers “hints” and must include multiple lessons, meanings, and allusions in order to follow the model of works like *The Lord of the Rings* that do not devolve into one-to-one allegory, which Tolkien characterizes as clichéd and artistically stunted, as Tom Shippey observes (169, 173). Consequently, as Chris Seeman and other critics have already observed (80-81), Tolkien’s works (like other successful fantasies) encourage readers to use their imaginations to contribute to the fantastic texts that the author crafts. Tolkien’s theory of

6. Tolkien puts forward the following argument in this passage concerning *Beowulf*:

Beowulf’s dragon, if one wishes really to criticize, is not to be blamed for being a dragon, but rather for not being dragon enough, plain pure fairy-story dragon. There are in the poem some vivid touches of the right kind [. . .] in which this dragon is [a] real worm, with a bestial life and thought of his own, but the conception, none the less, approaches [. . .] a personification of malice, greed, destruction [. . .] and of the indiscriminating cruelty of fortune that distinguishes not good or bad (the evil aspect of all life). But for *Beowulf*, the poem, that is as it should be. In this poem the balance is nice, but it is preserved. The large symbolism is near the surface, but it does not break through, nor become allegory. (17)

Thus, according to Tolkien, authors should not write overt symbolism, because such a choice reduces the role of the reader to interpreter and because allegories mar the reader’s ability to believe the story, as he or she reads the work.

“applicability,” therefore, encourages readers (such as myself) to search for the significance of his texts and the allusions within his works—but Tolkien definitively denies that he consciously writes any *complete* parallels to people, events, things, or places in the primary world.

Like Tolkien scholars Matthew Dickerson and Jonathan Evans (xviii), I first read Tolkien’s major Middle-earth fantasies (i.e., *The Hobbit*, *The Lord of the Rings*, and *The Silmarillion*) as a young teenager and prior to the release of Peter Jackson’s cinematic versions of Tolkien’s masterpiece: *The Lord of the Rings*. I distinctly recall reading *The Hobbit* so fixedly beside the neighborhood pool that I sat in the summer sun for several hours without pausing, because Tolkien’s fantasy proved so enthralling. Like my own experience, Tolkien’s writings influenced many members of my family, and we continue to chat about topics like the various landscapes that Tolkien created. Because of my age, the majority of my high school years included the release of one of Jackson’s adaptations of *The Lord of the Rings*, each of which led to even more Tolkien-themed conversations between my friends, my family, and myself. Among other topics, I talked about Tolkien’s depictions of nature and his characterizations of the Hobbits, the Elves, and the Ents with my friends and family. While the Shire, the Eagles, Rivendell, Beorn the Bear-Man, Mirkwood, the Ravens, Smaug, and the Lonely Mountain first imprinted themselves on my fourteen-year-old mind, therefore, Tolkien’s visions of Valinor, Beleriand, Númenor, Moria, Lothlórien, Fangorn Forest, the Brown Lands, Gondor, Ithilien, and Mordor also entered my mind soon afterward. These early seeds have now given rise to my subsequent analysis of the environmental philosophy within Tolkien’s Middle-earth texts.

Some literary critics, however, disparage Tolkien, Tolkien's Middle-earth fantasies, and Tolkien's readers with "acerbic" commentaries, as Thomas Honegger mentions (47, 64). Indeed, Tolkien critic Liam Campbell declares that "[A] condescending, elitist and essentially jaundiced position characterized [. . .] much of the anti-Tolkien rhetoric that followed the release (and subsequent commercial success⁷) of *The Lord of the Rings*" (5). For example, according to Joseph Matthewson's 1967 *Esquire* article, *The Lord of the Rings* is "nonintellectual" (qtd. in Ripp 266); moreover, Charles Elliot's 1967 *Life* article declares that Tolkien's aforementioned masterpiece entirely lacks ideas (266). Furthermore, Raymond Schroth argues that Tolkien purposely writes in an obtuse way, declaring the following: "Tolkien glories in his irrelevancy" (66). In other words, as Joseph Ripp states, the irritable critical opinion of Tolkien's Middle-earth fantasy is one that condemns *The Lord of the Rings* for willfully "ignoring earthy topics" (267). Besides the implied dismissal of Tolkien's work because of its (supposed) *irrelevancy* and *escapism*, Campbell also mentions that many literary critics poorly reviewed Tolkien's fantasies because they considered the work as one that foolishly and naively longs for the past (16).

One of the goals of this dissertation is to reduce the instances of such negative reviews of Tolkien's texts by increasing the awareness among environmental activist-writers and contemporary ecocritics of the opportunities to use their expertise to review the environmental sections within Tolkien's canon.⁸ In this dissertation, I include chapters about the historical context of Tolkien's fantasies and the discussions concerning some of the

7. Tolkien's impact, of course, continued well beyond the 1960s (and continues to remain strong); for instance, the British have repeatedly voted Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* as the greatest or second-best book of the twentieth century in a variety of polls (Campbell 10-12).

8. For example, the environmental scholar John Elder praises Tolkien's texts for including references to the problems caused by industrial ignorance, big business farming methods, and individual selfishness within the framework of the increasingly rehabilitated "stewardship" environmental model (ix-xi).

parallels that exist between Tolkien's works and contemporary ecophilosophies to demonstrate the relevance of Tolkien's tales. My discussions of Tolkien's self-acknowledged but *veiled* social commentaries within his tales (*Letters* 211) and of the various repercussions of the environmental successes and failings of the Peoples of Middle-earth further reveal that Tolkien's works are not examples of trivial infantilism, for these texts provide serious environmental commentary about the past—as well as suggestions for the future.

As the previous paragraph demonstrates and as noted by other critics like Dickerson and Evans, literary critics, environmental activists, and contemporary ecocritics tend to overlook Tolkien's fantasies, despite the depth and breadth of the environmental ideas within Tolkien's fantasies and the existence of myriads of devoted Tolkien readers (xvii). The major exceptions to this trend are often Tolkien scholars, such as Dickerson, Evans, Jeffers, Campbell, Shippey, Verlyn Flieger, Humphrey Carpenter, Christina Scull, Wayne G. Hammond, John D. Rateliff, John Garth, Douglas Charles Kane, Douglass A. Anderson, Patrick Curry, Anne C. Petty, Janet Brennan Croft, Marc DiPaolo, and Christopher Tolkien. Of these Tolkien critics, Dickerson, Evans, Hammond, Scull, Jeffers, Campbell, Flieger, Curry, and DiPaolo have written especially important Tolkien ecocriticism that I reference; I aim to add to their scholarship on Tolkien's Middle-earth fantasies. As I detail later in this chapter, my dissertation topic (i.e., the environmental philosophies within Tolkien's texts) shares the most common ground with the scholarship of Dickerson, Evans, DiPaolo, and (perhaps especially) Campbell, although I sometimes present views that qualify or question the readings of Tolkien's works by these scholars.

I also refer to Tolkien ecocritical scholarship of other scholars, such as Andrea Denekamp, Gabriel Ertsgaard, and Jessica Seymour. For instance, I agree with Denekamp's

opinion that Tolkien's fantasies show great sympathy for Entish environmentalism, even though Tolkien grasps that few contemporary humans can—and even fewer would—model their lives after the Ents (2). However, I also discuss the Ents' weeding activities in chapter three, which means that my reading diverges from Denekamp's analysis that the Ents work to preserve every tree (8, 7). Although I build from Denekamp's reference to Entish bioregionalism in chapter four (5), my work lists more Peoples/beings among those who care deeply for the living *and* non-living environments than the Elves and the Ents, as Denekamp argues (5, 7-8). By discussing how Tolkien's fantasies repeatedly condemn industrialized imperialism⁹ in chapters two, three, and four, my work builds off of the efforts of critics like Ertsgaard (214). Because I note some of the overlaps between the environmental messages within Tolkien's Middle-earth fantasies and the writings of Wendell Berry in chapter four, my dissertation again shares some commonality with the work by Ertsgaard (218). Nonetheless, as I detail in chapter four, my commentary qualifies Ertsgaard's notion that Europe is not an appropriate setting for a postcolonial discussion, as well as his convictions that Tolkien's fantasies prove racist by dividing morality according to binaries and that the Men of Darkness appear homogenously terrible (210-12). Because I discuss how the Dwarves inherit not only negatives but also some environmental positives from their Vala father Aulë, my dissertation shares some kinship with some of Seymour's analysis (30, 45).

9. By detailing how Tolkien's fantasies criticize imperialism, I disagree with Elizabeth Massa Hoiem's claim that Tolkien's decision to write myths aligns him with the mentality of imperialists (albeit Hoiem states that Tolkien did not realize this consciously) because of Hoiem's analysis and research methods (76). "It is this denial of the interdependence [...] in favor of isolated individualism," Hoiem believes, "that links the personality of the colonizer with the personality of the artist" (80-81). Hoiem's argument requires some qualification, for Tolkien depended on other voices to help guide him in his writing (e.g., the other T.C.B.S. members and the Inklings, in general, as well as C.S. Lewis and Christopher Tolkien, in particular); he did not work on his Middle-earth tales in isolation like a Romantic caricature of the individual Poet of Genius. Hoiem critiques Tolkien's works by arguing against his use of the often-misused and imperialistic genre of "the adventure story" as well (76), which means Hoiem's arguments again criticize Tolkien's literature by assuming that "guilt by association" is a valid argument.

As my dissertation, in general, and my third chapter, in particular, demonstrate, I concur with Seymour's opinion that Tolkien scholars need to invest additional time studying the wondrous landscapes, soils, weather, rocks, air, and water of Middle-earth, in addition to analyzing Middle-earth's flora and fauna (30, 31). My views differ from Seymour's in several additional ways, however. In my view, Seymour is incorrect when she contends that Tolkien undervalues the beauty of the environment that is neither flora nor fauna¹⁰ (46), in part, to "demonize" Dwarves¹¹ (30). Unlike Seymour (43-44), I believe that the Dwarves often prove callously selfish, such as when Thorin desires to kill Men (as well as Elves) rather than acknowledge his moral and ethical obligation to share the wealth of Erebor with the descendants of Dale and the Men of Lake-Town, as I observe in chapter three. Finally, as I reference throughout my dissertation, Tolkien's fantasies repeatedly allude to the positives of the heterogeneous Free Peoples of Middle-earth and their different environmental ethics, which means that my work resembles the analysis of Denekamp (2), Ertsgaard (211-12), and Seymour (46) in this regard as well.

While I share an interest in studying the environmental ideas within Tolkien's fantasies with Flieger, Jeffers, and Corey Olsen, my analysis sometimes differs from their readings in a more pronounced way, as I will discuss in later chapters. For example, although Flieger compares the ecosadistic Orcs' behavior to the Hobbits' interactions with the Hedge, I believe that Tolkien's works portray most of the Hobbits (despite their environmental

10. According to Seymour, "Dwarves are depicted as reacting to the natural world differently to the other races of Middle-earth, and this difference is often portrayed as reflecting negatively on their race as a whole. The assumption of goodness which is associated with growing things in Tolkien's works marginalizes the parts of the natural world, which, while not associated with plant or animal life, are nonetheless crucial to the development of the fictional world" (46).

11. In the opinion of Seymour, "There is a propensity among scholars, critics, and even Tolkien himself, to demonize the connection Dwarves feel to geology. This appears to narrow the focus of the word 'natural' to trees and growing things, and marginalizes the Dwarves' culture and heritage" (30).

failings) as far, far better environmental guardians than the Orcs.¹² Because I argue that the Free Peoples of Middle-earth interact with the environment in a hierarchical manner, my analysis fundamentally contrasts with Jeffers's ranking of Tolkien's Peoples according to her positive "power with" the environment, neutral "power from" the environment, and negative "power over" the environment categories (16-17). Of these groupings, my views especially diverge from Jeffers's contention that the Elves, the Ents, and the Hobbits have "nonhierarchical" interactions with the environment that enables them to have "power with" the physical environment (16). I do, nonetheless, generally agree with Jeffers's statement that Tolkien's masterpiece "favors the recognition of interdependence and strengthens bonds of interconnection for the benefit of all concerned" (16). Nonetheless, I also believe that Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* (as well as his other fantasies) depict the aforementioned theme, albeit in different ways, among Peoples other than just the Elves, the Ents, and the Hobbits, which differs from Jeffers's analysis (16). To effectively guard the environment, the Free Peoples place themselves in charge of the environments of their realms, as they were destined to do since the singing of the Second and Third Themes of the Music concerning the creation of the world, as *The Silmarillion* alludes to ("Ainulindalë"¹³ 16-17). To help offset the damage caused by Morgoth and the other corrupted ecosadists, the Free Peoples are most

12. I discuss Flieger's aforementioned reading concerning the supposedly Orcish Hobbits in more detail in chapter three.

13. Because of the existence of a plethora of editions of Tolkien's major works, I include the first main word of a sub-text within *The Silmarillion* and the first distinctive word (or phrase) of the chapters within fantasies like *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* in order to help guide readers to the appropriate cited passage. Because of the elongated nature of many of Tolkien's titles, I usually do not include initial phrases of books or chapter titles within in-text citations. For chapters with similar title beginnings (e.g., "Of the Coming of the Elves and the Captivity of Melkor" and "Of the Coming of Men into the West"), I list the first distinctive words in the following manner to shorten the long title and yet maintain readability: "Coming . . . Elves" and "Coming . . . Men," respectively. When I do not include the title of the book or collection in the sentence or sub-works within texts like *The Silmarillion*, these will also appear within the in-text citation, e.g., (*Silmarillion*, "Quenta: Coming . . . Men 141). Thus, the name of the overall collection (*The Silmarillion*) appears first in the parentheses, followed by the sub-work (*Quenta Silmarillion*), the chapter title ("Coming . . . Men"), and the page number (141).

effective as environmental guardians when they listen to and respect each other's beliefs about the environment. The effectiveness of the Free Peoples as environmental guardians also improves when they not only help themselves and their lands but also assist one another's environmental guardianship¹⁴ by protecting and by improving the environments outside of their individual realms.

I often present analyses quite different from Olsen's views as well. Olsen argues that the Ents continue to deride the Entwives' environmental beliefs and practices during the War of the Ring era, that the Ents fail to perceive their previous environmental and personal failings, and that the Ents find the Elves' song about the Ents and the Entwives' discord distasteful (e.g., 44-45). However, my reading of Tolkien's Middle-earth fantasies, in general, and *The Lord of the Rings*, in particular, leads me to conclude the opposite of Olsen's findings, as I discuss in chapter three.

Although I write about and analyze Tolkien's views of non-human nature and the environmental messages within his Middle-earth fantasies, I do not hijack his writings or hoodwink readers into supporting a particular political agenda. Instead, I hope to add to the knowledge of Tolkien's environmentalism within Tolkien studies and broaden the appreciation of Tolkien's works. I hope my dissertation proves a healthy leaf upon the ecocritical branch of Tolkienian scholarship that critics and general readers have grafted onto the trunk of Tolkien's *Tree of Tales*. While I sometimes refer to Tolkien's *Letters* for

14. One reason why I have chosen the term "guardianship" is because some Catholic dictionaries (e.g., the *Catholic Bible Dictionary*) indicate that this is the appropriate term to characterize the appropriate role for humans in relation to the physical environment (24). According to Scott Hahn (the editor of the *Catholic Bible Dictionary*), Adam "was to 'keep' (a better translation might be 'guard') the garden, which suggests that he should be ready to defend it from a powerful enemy and protect it from desecration" (24, 302).

additional support, I focus mainly on Tolkien's fantasies, which have helped to deepen my consciousness of some environmental ideas and issues.

I have ordered the sequence of chapters two, three, and four for several reasons. Following the introduction chapter, I focus on the historical roots of Tolkien's texts in chapter two. In chapter three, I focus on my close readings of Tolkien's Middle-earth fantasies.¹⁵ Chapter four, meanwhile, discusses the continued relevancy of Tolkien's Middle-earth fantasies by noting the various parallels that exist between these texts and environmental events that occurred after Tolkien penned *The Lord of the Rings* and by mentioning how Tolkien's works parallel contemporary ecotheory.

In chapter two, I include a comparative analysis of Judeo-Christian texts and the ecophilosophy within Tolkien's Middle-earth fantasies. I do so, in part, because I agree with Tolkien scholar Joseph Pearce's belief that one must perceive the connections between Tolkien's texts and the religious writings of his faith to effectively grasp such topics as *selfless sacrifice*¹⁶ (100, 111, 114). While it is true that Tolkien lived before the emergence of contemporary ecocriticism and therefore did not write Christian apologetics to rebuke some ecocritics who claim Christianity preaches (or at least permits) environmental destruction, it is also true that Tolkien consciously and unconsciously drew from Judeo-Christian Scriptures, deuterocanonical writings, and Catholic¹⁷ environmental traditions to develop his

15. Nevertheless, for readers who agree with the conviction that Tolkien expresses in his essay "On Fairy-Stories" (i.e., Tolkien argues that literary critics should concentrate on "the soup," i.e., "the story," rather than "the bones," i.e., the story's "sources or material") (*Tolkien* 46-47), these readers might consider reading chapter three before chapter two. Chapter three features my close readings of Tolkien's texts; chapter two analyzes the roots of Tolkien's fantasies and how these sources affect our reading of his works.

16. I will discuss this subject in the context of environmentalism in more depth in later chapters.

17. As Boris Gorelik observes, however, Tolkien was baptized as an infant in an Anglican Church in present-day South Africa before Tolkien's mother and her young sons became Catholics (6).

Middle-earth fantasies. After all, as Dickerson and Evans observe, this makes sense, because, “At its best, the Christian faith [. . .] is green” (xxii). Dickerson and Evans rightly describe the Christian environmental model within Tolkien’s fantasies as “benevolent, selfless custodial care” (xx). In my dissertation, I build my argument, in part, based on the work of scholars like Dickerson and Evans.

In this dissertation, I add to the aforementioned Christian ecocriticism by observing that the environmental messages within Tolkien’s Middle-earth texts stress the need to weed and remove the evil trait of selfishness and the corrupted nutrients that often fertilize this ecosadistic impulse— laziness, callousness, and ignorance—from Middle-earth, which Morgoth corrupted and others further tainted. To fulfill such a divine calling, Tolkien portrays the righteous among the Free Peoples striving to end multiple forms of environmental ignorance, laziness, and callousness. In addition to eliminating ignorance caused by naiveté and delusions, eco-friendly individuals and Peoples must work to avoid worthless, counterproductive work that harms the environment. Tolkien’s fantasies teach that eco-friendly groups must also avoid the lazy behavior of ecosadists. Ecocidal groups and individuals repeatedly force others to do their work, neglect to discern the environmental sustainability of an act, refuse to use the natural resources of their own realm in a moderate manner, neglect to prevent or intercede to stop ecosadism, and fail to defend the sentient beings and physical environment of their homeland. Furthermore, ecosadists refuse to teach others the environmental knowledge they possess, commit various types of deception, and neglect to learn more about other People and their environmental expertise. Callousness, meanwhile, is a grievous, ecosadistic sin with many manifestations. Imperialistic warfare, pollution, and reckless irrigation and forestry projects represent forms of environmental

callousness. Destroying landscapes, bodies of water, soils, flora, fauna, and the air—or choosing not to stop those who are committing these ecosadistic acts, therefore, are egregious types of environmental callousness in Tolkien’s works, for Tolkien’s texts teach the inherent value of biodiversity. Consequently, Tolkien’s texts teach that characters and readers should not just value domesticated animals and crops but also remember the worth of liminal animals, feral animals, and wildflowers, for all of these species have their own worth.¹⁸ Slavery, racism, and nativism, moreover, are particularly heinous forms of environmental callousness as well. Disregarding created artifacts and the environmental expertise of others are additional types of environmental callousness. If a People or a leader of a group refuses to use an environmental symbol to represent themselves, this represents a final form of environmental callousness in Middle-earth. Environmentalism in Tolkien’s works, therefore, requires sentient beings to preserve Middle-earth’s air, landscapes, waters, soils, and general biodiversity and to display a sense of wonder when they encounter the sensory imagery of the natural world that Yavanna helped to sing into existence at the direction of Ilúvatar.

To safeguard Middle-earth’s physical environment, this requires the weeding of a percentage of some hyper-aggressive, hyper-fertile, and hyper-intrusive flora and fauna. As the *OED* states, a *noxious weed* is a plant often found on derelict property that is bad for humans, livestock, garden flora, and agricultural flora, because these weeds often supplant flowers and crops (due to their rapid growth) and harm (to various degrees) any person or non-human that eats or otherwise touches them. Tolkien uses these cultural understandings of “weeds” in his fantasies. More importantly, however, Tolkien’s Christianity teaches that

18. As I will subsequently discuss, Tolkien’s works divide non-human animals that are fully animals from ones that appear to be animals but are actually corrupted spirits (e.g., the Great Spiders and Dragons like Smaug); this latter group of fallen spirits are condemned and therefore hunted in Tolkien’s texts.

humans must weed the plants that mutated when God punished humanity by causing some plants (e.g., “thorns and thistles”) to make farming difficult for humanity and that God also punished fallen humanity by causing some animals (e.g., snakes) to have a mutually shared feeling of hatred and distrust for humans (Gen. 3:17-18, 3:14-15). Tolkien’s tales borrow from this Biblical tradition by often associating thorns, thistles, brambles, briars, and nettles with evil. Somewhat similarly, Tolkien’s Middle-earth works also feature spirits that appear in the guise of non-human animals (e.g., the Great Spiders and Dragons) that have—to borrow the Biblical characterization of the distrust between snakes and humanity—mutual “enmity” towards the Free Peoples (Gen. 3:15). Because the Great Spiders, Dragons, and Balrogs—and (perhaps) some of the original Orcs, Goblins, and Trolls as well¹⁹—are damned spirits who rebelled with Morgoth, these beings will forever distrust and hate the Free Peoples, the Valar, and Ilúvatar, Tolkien’s tales again borrow from the Bible. Tolkien’s borrowing from the Bible is evident, for Biblical passages like Revelation 12:3-9 detail how Satan led many lesser angelic spirits to revolt, which, in turn, led to their eternal damnation. Because the Free Peoples and the righteous, non-fallen Valar and Maiar spirits devote themselves to opposing ecosadists and because God made humans “in His own image” so that they might guard the Garden of Eden (Gen. 1:26-27, Gen. 2:15), the many labors of and sacrifices made by the Valar and the Free Peoples, as they work to defeat (i.e., *weed*) Morgoth, Sauron, and their ecocidal forces also partially derive from Tolkien’s Christianity.

Akin to the teachings of Christianity, Tolkien’s Middle-earth *Legendarium* highlights how selfishness, more than any other negative trait, can lead individuals and people groups to adopt and exhibit increasingly ecosadistic beliefs and attitudes, which, in turn, causes these

19. I discuss the origins of the Orcs, the Goblins, and the Trolls in more detail in chapter three.

morally compromised individuals and groups to commit acts of ecocide. Negative traits like ignorance, callousness, and laziness often reinforce the evil of selfishness in Tolkien's Middle-earth tales, and therefore, often contribute to the destruction of the physical environment as well. Gandalf's words to the Captains of the West in *The Return of the King* embody Tolkien's overall message for his Middle-earth *Legendarium*:

Other evils there are that may come; for Sauron is himself but a servant or emissary.

Yet it is not our part to master all the tides of the world, but to do what is in us for the succor of those years wherein we are set, uprooting the evil in the fields that we know, so that those who live after may have clean earth to till. What weather they shall have is not ours to rule. (*Return*, "Last" 861)

Tolkien's qualification that "our part" is only "to do what is in us for the succor of those years wherein we are set, uprooting the evil in the fields that we know" is reminiscent of Jesus' Parable of the Talents. This parable notes that some individuals are blessed with greater gifts and abilities than others and that each will be judged based on his/her abilities, efforts, and attitudes rather than merely on the results of his/her work (Matt. 25:14-30). By "uprooting the evil in the fields that we know," Gandalf's words also parallel the teaching of 1 Thessalonians 5:22: "reject every kind of evil." However, Gandalf's statement echoes Jesus' parable of the weeds in the field more than any other (Matt. 13:24-30, 36-43); Tolkien appears to borrow from verse 41, in particular: "The Son of Man will send out his angels and they will weed out of His kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil." Importantly, therefore, Jesus states that the physical environment (i.e., "everything") will be weeded, as well as humans (i.e., "who") and, as noted in verse 38-39, evil spirits. In Tolkien's Middle-earth tales, the Free Peoples and the righteous spirits "weed" corrupted

spirits, beings, animals, and flora alike, which parallels the aforementioned biblical messages.

According to Christianity (e.g., Gen. 3:17-19), in general, and Catholicism, in particular (e.g., Hahn 909), thistles, thorns, brambles, nettles, and briars (as well as various non-human animals) mutated into “weeds” because they hinder humanity’s ability to farm, which God caused as a divine punishment for Adam and Eve’s disobedience (Gen. 2:15-17; Gen. 3; Is. 34:13; Hos. 9:6). Nevertheless, humans should not simply destroy thorn-bushes and thistles because these plants are a part of God’s Creation that God entrusted humans to guard (Gen. 1:26-30; 2:15), because these bushes retain the soil in wilderness areas, and because thistles and thorn-bushes could provide the kindling necessary for fires that could warm humans (Hahn 909). The act of weeding, consequently, should also occur in moderation.

The Bible indicates that invasive species are often troublesome and can be sent by God as a punishment for humans; however, the Bible also suggests that invasive animals should not be slaughtered wholesale. Similar to how contemporary observers would describe an invasive species, Joel 2:3 compares and contrasts an area before and after the arrival of locusts: “The land is like the Garden of Eden before them, but after them a desolate wilderness, and nothing escapes them.” As Deut. 28:38 and 2 Chr. 7:13 make clear, moreover, YHWH would condemn the Israelites for backsliding by threatening to unleash thousands of locusts to plague them. Nevertheless, because God created humans to guard His Creation (Gen. 1:26-30), humans must not exterminate an invasive species. Instead, according to Christianity (Gen. 2:15), humans should work to guard the overall well-being of

the earth, which may mean that humans must reduce the population a particularly fertile and/or an aggressive species in a particular—but not drive the species into extinction.

Tolkien’s Middle-earth fantasies characterize the Orcs and the other “monsters” corrupted and engineered by Morgoth and Sauron in a way that is similar to the aforementioned Biblical depictions of species like locusts.²⁰ Because the Noldorin Elves and their Sindarin allies attempt to prevent territorial gains by Morgoth and his forces (e.g., the Orcs²¹), because the Elves of Mirkwood and Lothlórien work to prevent the Orcs from proliferating in their realms, and because the Elves believe that no captured Orcs should be killed or tortured since Ilúvatar will also judge the Orcs²²; the Elves’ actions suggest their willingness to allow the Orcs to live under certain conditions. As I will discuss in later chapters, the Elves permit the Orcs to live so long as the Orcs do not live among the Elves, attack the Elves, or harm the other Free Peoples. The Elves’ treatment of the Orcs, I believe, captures a partial synthesis of the Old Testament and the New Testament in regard to vengeance; whereas Exodus 21:23-25 promises equal punishment for a wrong, Romans 12:19 demands that Christians leave “vengeance” to God.

By discussing the intertextual parallels among Judeo-Christian texts, Catholic writings, and Tolkien’s fantasies in chapter two, I hope to build from the analysis of scholars

20. God punishes fallen humanity with several other types of animals as well. The Bible, for instance, states that bees attack people (Psalm 118:12) and that bees harm trees and the fruit of trees (Deut. 28:42). Moses, meanwhile, mentions that worms will eat the crops of the accursed (Deut. 28:39), while Job 7:5 and Acts 12:23 observe that the health of humans can be adversely affected by worms. Psalms 78:45-46, meanwhile, notes that frogs, flies, and grubs can plague people. Passages like James 5:2, moreover, note that moths trouble humans and destroy clothes, while foxes destroy crops and vineyards in passages such as Lamentations 5:18, Song of Solomon 2:15, and Ezekiel 13:4. Finally, the Bible also states that humans should fear bears (1 Sam. 17:34-37; Prov. 17:12; 2 Kings 2:24; 2 Sam. 17:8), snakes (Jer. 8:17; Exod. 4:2-3; Gen. 49:17) and lions (Judges 14:5-6; 1 Sam. 17:34).

21. The Orcs are corrupted Elves, Men, animals, and/or stones.

22. As I will discuss in later chapters, Tolkien’s “Myths Transformed” provides an overview of this Elvish custom (419).

like Glen Robert Gill. Gill, for instance, finds kinship between the Hobbits' harassed departure from the Shire and the Hebrews' exile from Egypt and their subsequent encounter with the Egyptian chariots at the Red Sea—a landscape that Gill later compares to the Dead Marshes in *The Two Towers* (71, 73). Within my dissertation, I reference some of the layerings of Tolkien's social commentary through the "legendary dress" of his Middle-earth fantasies (*Letters* 211), including some of the intertextual parallels between Tolkien's works and environmental passages within Judeo-Christian writings.²³

The 1954-55 publication of Tolkien's Middle-earth fantasies followed centuries of writers, environmental commentators, and historical events that demonstrated that humans needed to cherish the biodiversity of species—as well as the overall well-being and aesthetics of the non-human environment—to a much greater degree. Alexander von Humboldt, Ernst Haeckel, George Perkins Marsh, Henry David Thoreau, John Muir, Aldo Leopold, and others concerned with the environment pleaded with their readers to understand the urgent need to improve their environmental guardianship. These authors effectively communicated their eco-messaging by including emotional, ethical, and logical appeals within their texts covering such topics as recreating, farming, logging, gardening, hunting, eating, and construction. Because of the efforts of these and other nature writers, commentators, and activists; because of the work of various environmental groups; and because of the environmental legislation passed by governments; more flora, fauna, landscapes, and waters were preserved and more urban parks were created. Interestingly, as I will discuss in chapter two, Tolkien's Middle-

23. For example, I also observe how the mutilation of landscapes (such as the Dead Marshes) in Tolkien's works stems from poor environmental guardianship traits like selfishness and the related evils of laziness, callousness, and ignorance. I also mention how the Dead Marshes alludes to other historical events, trends, and writings (e.g., the Great War). In chapter four, I discuss why contemporary ecophilosophers (such as the second-wave ecocritics) can find passages within Tolkien's texts to analyze as well.

earth fantasies repeatedly parallel environmental events, organizations, individuals, and texts of our primary world.

In addition to religious texts and scholars, secular environmental histories and commentaries also sometimes parallel Tolkien's fantasies, for both argue or imply that environmental guardians must duly consider biodiversity, ethics, attitudes, emotions, and aesthetics rather than only (or mainly) thinking about the short-term economic results of a modification to the environment. The ability for an individual, a community, a nation, or a People to judge if an action will harm the environment's well-being can mature in a variety of ways. Akin to the primary-world writings of Humboldt, Marsh, Thoreau, Muir, and others who preceded Tolkien, Tolkien's fantasies encourage his characters (and his readers) to develop their capability to sense and to appreciate the emotional, ethical, and logical justifications to act as environmental guardians of quality. By noting the parallels between the environmental beliefs and writings of Muir and other past environmental writers in chapter two, I hope to extend the analysis of Elder, Dickerson, Evans (ix, x, 182, 209, 227, 228, 248), Ertsgaard (218), and other critics. Ertsgaard, for example, compares the environmental ethics of Muir to the environmental behavior and beliefs of Tolkien's Ents (218). Tolkien's protagonists (and readers), meanwhile, develop a more conscious appreciation for the sublime and beautiful sensory imagery of the environment's various landscapes, soils, waters, flora, and fauna by working (e.g., gardening), by exercising (e.g., walking), and by resting amid nature (e.g., sleeping beneath the trees). Furthermore, Tolkien's protagonists increase the breadth and depth of their environmental knowledge by using their five senses more regularly and by pursuing environmental knowledge holistically rather than narrowly. The abundance of positive feelings for and greater comprehension of

the environment caused by these activities spur a range of beneficial eco-related ethical reevaluations and interventions by Tolkien's protagonists. For example, Tolkien's Free Peoples repeatedly confront (and sometimes fight) individuals and groups who pollute the soils, waters, landscapes, and air of Middle-earth, who harm the sensory imagery of the world, and who kill, maim, and/or torture plants and animals just to amuse themselves. After defeating the various defilers of the environment, the Valar and the Maiar, as well as the Free Peoples and their leaders, aim to rehabilitate Middle-earth as much as possible. To try to accomplish this task, Tolkien's protagonists (e.g., Melian in Doriath, Galadriel in Lothlórien, and Aragorn in Gondor and other northwestern Middle-earth lands) establish wilderness preserves and/or urban parks. No matter the action, Tolkien's texts teach that righteous individuals and groups will consistently work to maintain or (as in the case of Aragorn when he orders the removal of the contaminated fortress-city of Minas Morgul) improve the well-being of the non-human environment, which, in turn, will enhance the Free Peoples' quality of life as well.

Tolkien's Great War service contributed to his depictions of (human and non-human) environmental damage, to his decision to connect the health of an environment with its human inhabitants, to his skepticism of technology, and to his particular interests in the literature of his beloved land of England. Tolkien himself, moreover, provides an essential justification for examining how Tolkien's involvement in the Great War (in addition to other biographical and historical material) affected his writing. As I mentioned previously, in his "Foreword to the Second Edition of *The Lord of the Rings*," Tolkien states, "I much prefer history, true or feigned, with its varied applicability to the thought and experience of readers. I think that many confuse 'applicability' with 'allegory'; but the one resides in the freedom

of the reader, and the other in the purposed domination of the author” (*Fellowship xv*).

Whether or not Tolkien would endorse certain interpretations, Tolkien encourages critical commentary by readers, especially in the absence of a tyrannical author who dictates a reader’s possible response to an artwork. Tolkien, moreover, informs Auden in a June 7, 1955, letter that his writing tendencies lead Tolkien “to cloak such self-knowledge as he has, and such criticisms of life as he knows it, under mythical and legendary dress” (*Letters 211*).

Of these veiled social “criticisms,” Tolkien’s Middle-earth fantasies include allusions to not only Judeo-Christian texts and the various problems (e.g., selfishness) caused by industrialization, urbanization, and commercialization but also similar lessons drawn from the Great War, as I discuss in chapter two.

Within chapter three, I examine how Tolkien’s Middle-earth tales encourage groups with different backgrounds and environmental beliefs to speak to one another to help one another to learn more about, to cherish, and to maintain or improve environmental beings, entities, forms, and created artifacts on the global, regional, and local levels. By mentoring others and by willingly listening in return, the moral spirits and Free Peoples of Tolkien’s Middle-earth fantasies learn to reduce their selfishness and the negative traits that often contribute to this character flaw (e.g., callousness, ignorance, and laziness); by doing so, they reduce the core problems that can inhibit their environmental guardianship. Moreover, the quality of Tolkien’s protagonists’ guardianship of Middle-earth improves as they improve their work on behalf of one another and develop their honesty with, love for, sensitivity toward, and understanding of one another and with the physical environment, in general. Consequently, the tales of Middle-earth teach that wars prove permissible when they are fought to save the physical environment and the Free Peoples of Middle-earth. However,

Tolkien's tales express deep reservations for (and sometimes condemnation for) resorting to violence in order to realize one's personal desires, in general, and to possess artifacts and environmental resources, in particular. As the tales of the Noldorin Elves, the Dwarves, and the Númenóreans show, for instance, the greatest strengths of a People can, ironically, later prove their most regrettable weaknesses. The more that the Free Peoples and spirits compromise their values of sacrifice, love, sensitivity, understanding, worthwhile labor, simplicity, moderation, and honesty, the more these protagonists in Tolkien's Middle-earth tales mutate into the monstrously corrupt ecosadists who gleefully revel in acts of ecocide: Morgoth, Ungoliant, the Balrogs, Sauron, Saruman, the Orcs, the Goblins, and the Trolls. Environmental knowledge, in other words, must not lead to arrogance. A group must not only focus on the quantity of but also the quality of their environmental labors when lending a helping hand to others; no group involved should yield to selfishness or callousness; an honest assessment of one's abilities must not give way to delusions of grandeur. Otherwise, Tolkien's Middle-earth *Legendarium* teaches readers that a culture will devolve in a grotesque, terrifying manner, as tales like the Downfall of Númenor express in detail.

I have generally chosen to divide my third chapter by the Peoples of Middle-earth for several reasons. Most importantly, Tolkien organizes the various groups with labels like the "Free Peoples" and the "Servants of Morgoth." Similarly, Tolkien's memorable ability to describe the bioregions where the various Peoples of Middle-earth live supports my decision to create individual sections concerning the environmental practices and beliefs of the Peoples and the spirits of Middle-earth. Furthermore, Tolkien's texts often center on certain groups, which parallels my choice to examine a particular group within each section. My aforementioned choice generally mirrors Tolkien's decision to focus on the Valar and the

Maiar in the *Ainulindalë* and the *Valaquenta*, the Elves in *The Quenta Silmarillion*, and the Númenóreans in *Akallabêth*. Similarly, Tolkien focuses on the Dwarves in “The Quest for Erebor” short story, on the Hobbits in “The Prologue” at the start of *The Fellowship of the Ring* and “The Scouring of the Shire” chapter within *The Return of the King*, and on the Ents in the “Treebeard” chapter within *The Two Towers*. This methodology reappears in *The Appendices* as well, for Tolkien divides “Appendix A” into three parts: “Númenor,” “The House of Eorl,” and “Durin’s Folk.” Within the “Númenor” section, Tolkien sub-divides this category into the following sections: “Númenor,” “The Realms in Exile²⁴,” “Eriador, Arnor, and the Heirs of Isildur,” “Gondor and the Heirs of Anárion,” and “Here Follows a Part of the Tale of Aragorn and Arwen²⁵.” Tolkien’s division of sections based on People groups is even clearer in “Appendix F” sections: “Of the Elves,” “Of Men,” “Of Hobbits, and “Of Other Races,” which is further subdivided into four distinct passages that concern *Ents*, *Orcs and the Black Speech*, *Trolls*, and *Dwarves*, respectively. By including specific sections discussing the ecophilosophies of the spirits and the Peoples of Middle-earth, meanwhile, the organization for this dissertation, in part, borrows from the title of the final volume of Christopher Tolkien’s edited *The History of Middle-earth* series: *The Peoples of Middle-earth*. Because I evaluate the environmental behaviors, attitudes, and statements of the Free Peoples (among others) in Tolkien’s Middle-earth canon, I avoid the problems associated with analyzing one of Tolkien’s fantasies in isolation since all of Tolkien’s Middle-earth

24. Tolkien further divides the second section as “The Northern Line: Heirs of Isildur” and “The Southern Line: Heirs of Anárion,” which again highlights Tolkien’s decision to focus on particular groups of people in a certain section. Tolkien continues this geographical and ancestral division by dividing the northern Dúnedain from their southern kin in the “iii” and “iv” sections of “Númenor,” as I discuss elsewhere.

25. Because Aragorn’s crowning represents the reunification of the northern and southern lines of the Exiles and because Aragorn’s union with Arwen unifies the Elf-Man lines that separated with the founding of Númenor when Elrond’s brother chose mortality, Tolkien’s choice to separate this story from the others makes sense.

works contribute to the meaning of one another, which means that I am in agreement with Fimi (*Tolkien 202*), as mentioned previously. Since Tolkien often returned to earlier works to revise them years after he began to write these texts (as *The History of Middle-earth* series makes clear), by organizing my third chapter based on particular spirit and People groups, I avoid the problematic appearance that Tolkien's First, Second, and Third Age works progressed in a largely linear fashion. Instead, because individual sections center on the Valar, the Maiar, the Elves, the Dwarves, the Hobbits, the Gondorians, the ecosadists, and others, respectively, this organizational decision creates the opportunity to examine multiple Middle-earth texts in depth in order to better evaluate the aforementioned groups' ecophilosophies.

As to the particular ordering within chapter three, I begin this chapter with a section concerning the spirits of Middle-earth, because they exist prior to any of the Peoples. Of these spirits, I start with the Valar, because they represent the most powerful and righteous beings, aside from the Creator God, Ilúvatar, in all of Eä (i.e., the universe/all of Creation). I then discuss environmental ethics of some of the Valar's helpers: the Maiar. In this section, I begin with Melian, because she lived in Middle-earth during the First Age, whereas Radagast and Gandalf came to Middle-earth as two of the five Istari wizards in the Third Age. I next examine Radagast's qualities as an environmental guardian, since he departed for Middle-earth before Gandalf and because Radagast's failings and successes help to show why Melian fails to some extent as an environmental guardian and why Gandalf proves the greatest environmental guardian. Because of the debate over the identities of Bombadil and Goldberry²⁶ and because of their checkered record of environmental guardianship, I position

26. For more information concerning the identities of Bombadil and Goldberry, read texts like Gene Hargrove's "Tom Bombadil" and Charles E. Noad's "The Natures of Tom Bombadil: A Summary."

these, overall, positive (but problematic) environmental guardians after the sections about the spirits and prior to the sections concerning the Peoples. Within the final sub-section on the Valar and Maiar, I begin with the Dark Lord Morgoth; I then describe the ecosadism of Morgoth's Maia servant, Sauron. Because Morgoth and Sauron mutilate various beings/entities to create mutilated Peoples like the Orcs, the Goblins, and the Trolls; and because Morgoth and Sauron may have used corrupted Maia spirits to produce these desecrators of the environment, I observe the ecocidal behaviors and attitudes of these groups in the same sub-section that describes the ecosadism of the corrupted spirits Morgoth and Sauron. Finally, since Sauron contributes to the apostasy and ecosadism of Saruman the Maia, I end this section on the spirits with a characterization of Saruman's failures as an environmental guardian.

For the next three sections in chapter three, I follow the order of creation among the Peoples by detailing the environmental guardianship triumphs, moderate successes, and failures of the Elves, the Dwarves, and the Ents. While also counted among the last group of Ilúvatar's Children (i.e., Men), I place the Hobbits after the Ents, because the Hobbits remind the Ents of the Entwives, because Merry and Pippin become friends of the Ents, and because the Hobbits (like the three aforementioned Free Peoples) are doomed to fade during the Fourth Age, the Age of Men. Among the "Big People," Men, I write in a chronological order by beginning with the Edain, followed by the Númenóreans. I then include Men reminiscent of earlier ages, though they still exist in the Third Age: the Drúedain and Beorn (who produces the Beornings). Like these Men of Twilight, the Rohirrim represent Men whose environmental guardianship proves better than the Men of Darkness, who serve the ecosadistic Dark Lords. I end chapter three with a subsection on the environmental

guardianship qualities exhibited by the Men of Gondor, since Aragorn reunifies the kingdoms of the Númenórean Exiles, Gondor and Arnor, at the end of the Third Age, as Tolkien's masterpiece *The Lord of the Rings* details. Aragorn's ascension to the thrones of Gondor and Arnor (where the most enlightened and righteous among Men, the Men of Light, live, according to Tolkien's mythology) enables the Age of Men to begin. Therefore, I have chosen to conclude chapter three with a discussion concerning the environmental guardianship among the Gondorians, in general, and Aragorn, in particular.

In chapter four, which observes some of the parallels between Tolkien's Middle-earth fantasies and contemporary ecocriticism, I begin with an overview of some of the environmental topics discussed within each group of texts. I discuss some of the reasons why Tolkien's texts help to nourish readers' environmental sensibilities and to encourage them to work to improve the well-being of the environment. Consequently, I concur with C.S. Lewis' argument that Tolkien's secondary world of Middle-earth estranges Tolkien's readers, who then gain what Lewis calls the *master key* to the primary world, and thereby learn how to improve our earth, as well as humanity (131, 137-39). I, therefore, not only encourage Tolkien scholars to examine the parallels between contemporary ecophilosophies and the fantasies of Middle-earth but I also believe that contemporary ecocritics should invest more time in analyzing Tolkien's Middle-earth fantasies. I agree with scholars like Elder, who suggests that, when contemporary ecocritics analyze Tolkien's texts, these readings parallel the efforts of critics who reevaluate the environmental ideas and imagery within the works by writers like Dante, Cervantes, Shakespeare, Milton, Tennyson, Hardy, and Frost (ix-x). Although contemporary ecocriticism came into existence after the writing and publication of

The Lord of the Rings and although I believe that DiPaolo's contention that "environmentalism" is what *The Lord of the Rings* "is about" excessively restrains the meaning of Tolkien's works (41), I believe that contemporary environmental theories and labels can help critics and readers better analyze the environmental views within Tolkien's works. Therefore, comparing and contrasting contemporary ecophilosophical works with the environmental messages within Tolkien's works will add to the "accretion of significance" of Tolkien's Middle-earth fantasies.

By comparing Tolkien's fantasies to contemporary ecophilosophies, I believe I am following Tolkien's desires and methods, since, as DiPaolo observes, Tolkien concluded his toast at a March 28, 1958, "Hobbit Dinner" hosted by Tolkien's Dutch publisher, Het Spectrum, by declaring, "I look East, West, North, South, and I do not see Sauron; but I see that Saruman has many descendants. We Hobbits have against them no magic weapons. Yet, my gentlehobbits, I give you this toast: To the Hobbits. May they outlast the Sarumans and see spring again in the trees" (qtd. in 283). Readers, therefore, can better understand how to overcome the "Sharkey" and "Ruffians" marring their own Shires by examining the parallels between the contemporary ecophilosophies and Tolkien's fantasies. Similar to DiPaolo's contention that Tolkien yearned for readers who would "appreciate his environmental vision" and who would "join the Hobbits in their opposition of industrial pollution, endless warfare, and the relentless felling of trees" (283), I agree that comprehending the environmental messages within Tolkien's works is essential. Likewise, I believe that choosing to follow one of the environmental models within Tolkien's Middle-earth fantasies represents a primary world "applicability" of Tolkien's fantasies.

Of interest to a variety of ecocritical camps (e.g., *Reform Environmentalists*), Tolkien's texts emphasize the need to counteract (and prevent, when possible) air, water, and soil pollution. Tolkien's discussion of how pollution mars the environment's aesthetics and threatens the well-being of humanity (as well as the non-human environment) would have appeared relevant to historical readers of Tolkien's fantasies who were familiar with the deadly London fogs caused by industries. Indeed, Tolkien's fantasies remain relevant to current readers knowledgeable of the air quality standards in some places of the world (e.g., China). I agree, therefore, with the analysis of critics like Peter S. Beagle, whose 1973 "Foreword" to *The Fellowship of the Ring* states that Tolkien's popularity rose in the 1960s because the ten-year period represented a second decade that exposed the faulty logic of the belief that "progress" meant creating and maintaining non-eco-friendly industrialization (par. 4). Consequently, Tolkien's fantasies urge readers to better value and protect the physical environment (e.g., rivers, trees, and non-human animals). Many Tolkien critics (such as Flieger (e.g., 264-68), Hammond and Scull ("*Lord*" . . . *Reader's* 121), Petty (227-28, 231, 242), and Campbell) (265-69), rightly deride the Hobbits' protection of the Hedge as overzealous. However, Tolkien's depiction of the Hobbits' fierce guardianship of the Hedge (after the Old Forest trees' attempt to destroy the Hedge) provides an important contrast with the mid-to-late twentieth century and the start of the twenty-first century in Britain when a severe reduction of hedgerows occurred. The loss of so many hedges harmed the health of ecosystems and marred the aesthetics provided by the hedges in Britain. Unlike many British citizens for many decades, therefore, the Hobbits perceive the need to protect hedges. Consequently, Tolkien's texts exhort readers to not only cultivate and protect trees more often but also hedgerows. As I mention in chapter four, I agree with (and hope to add

evidence that supports) Shippey's declaration that "Tolkien turns people into birdwatchers, tree spotters, [and] hedgerow-grubbers" (qtd. in Pearce 165).

Furthermore, in chapter four, like other Tolkien critics (e.g., Campbell 21, 199), I also discuss the message of hope within Tolkien's literary works and how hope can apply to the lives of environmentalists by encouraging them to listen to a variety of environmental groups willingly and to invest the time necessary to discern common goals, and thereby achieve unity.²⁷ Consequently, I concur with Dickerson and Evans's mournful reflection on the decades-long feud between conservationists and preservationists, as well as their belief that the two broadly defined environmental groups should cooperate to a much greater extent and that Tolkien's texts provide literary examples of how this can occur (xv-xvi).

In chapter four, I also compare the first three waves of ecocriticism to Tolkien's works, because this produces additional opportunities to analyze Tolkien's Middle-earth tales.²⁸ By including passages that parallel works by the first-wave ecocritics (who, like Tolkien, often wrote during the twentieth century), Tolkien's works repeatedly discuss the *wilderness*, local environments, and aesthetic wonders of the physical environment in an effort to reacquaint humanity with the physical world that humanity is increasingly alienated from. However, Tolkien's fantasies also problematize terms like *wilderness*, which helps to demonstrate why Tolkien's fantasies also share some affinity with works by second-wave ecocritics, who question the meaning of *wilderness*, in part, by noting how often the physical

27. In other words, because Tolkien's Middle-earth fantasies feature Peoples who espouse differing environmental views and reference the ecofriendly aspects of the cultures of the various Free Peoples, this core Middle-earth message generally parallels Michael Tomko's description of the aim of the Inklings' group learning. As Tomko mentions, the Inklings embraced "a shared sense of significance" rather than a single perspective (241-42). Tolkien, of course, was a central figure of the Inklings.

28. For more information concerning the "waves" of ecocriticism and the contemporary ecophilosophies, read chapter four. While chapter four provides additional detail to the aforementioned subjects, I do not intend to suggest that I discuss all of the main convictions of each ecocritical group; instead, I am only focusing on the most important ideas that share some kinship with Tolkien's Middle-earth fantasies.

environment alters (even without apparent human involvement). Similarly, Tolkien's works and second-wave ecocriticism each examine how the environment includes humanity, human-created artifacts, and non-human nature.²⁹ Tolkien's fantasies also parallel second-wave ecocriticism's interest in ecocide (i.e., environmental destruction). Finally, Tolkien's works partially parallel the third-wave of ecocriticism—postcolonial ecocriticism—as I will discuss later in this chapter and in chapter four.

By referring to the second-wave of ecocriticism and how it includes humanity and human artifacts as part of the environment,³⁰ this method helps readers grasp why Campbell perceives environmental connections between Tolkien's texts and the writings of several ecocritics. Campbell, for instance, mentions Cheryll Glotfelty's conviction that human ideas (e.g., literature) exist as part of the environment because humanity is a part of the environment (221), as well as William Rueckert's belief that literature represents a limitless natural resource that can endlessly energize readers (239-40), as evidence of similarities between the writings of certain ecocritics and Tolkien. While the concerns of these ecocritics share some commonality with second-wave ecocritics, McKibben's fear that humanity is losing the ability to even conceive of non-human wilderness (which leads him to exhort his readers to preserve this endangered environmental "idea") (qtd. in 87) somewhat fuses the two ecocritical waves. McKibben fuses the waves by including the "wilderness" *and* including humanity as part of the environment. Tolkien's works, by providing environmental examples like Beren and Aragorn, possess the energy to encourage readers to reexamine their environmental beliefs and behaviors, which will lead them to better value various ecosystems

29. Therefore, because I repeatedly reference Tolkien's descriptions of the physical environment in wilderness, rural, and urban areas in my dissertation, my views differ from those held by Moorcock, for Moorcock derides Tolkien's works as "strongly anti-urban" and mocks them because of Tolkien's "moderation" (6, 7).

30. In my dissertation, I will also discuss how some Heideggerian Ecophilosophical tenets relate to this topic.

(including wilderness areas) by motivating readers to eliminate selfish environmental practices that encourage ecosadistic traits like callousness and ignorance.

By noting the parallels between the environmental ideas within Tolkien's texts and contemporary ecocriticism in chapter four, I hope to again build from the work of previous critics. Campbell, for example, repeatedly refers to ecologist Barry Commoner's 1972 statement that "Everything is connected to everything else" in the environment (cf. 33). Furthermore, Campbell mentions that Tolkien's Middle-earth fantasies parallel the Deep Ecological argument that the soils, flora, fauna, landscapes, and other parts of the physical environment possess inherent value—apart from human use (35). In addition to elaborating on these points that Campbell references, I will discuss other parallels between Tolkien's works and Deep Ecology (and several other ecophilosophies).

By referring to Tolkien's Christianity and the kinship between his texts and Deep Ecological writings, however, I present a view somewhat different from Campbell's belief that Tolkien's works diverge from Deep Ecology in regard to religious/spiritual topics. According to Campbell, Deep Ecology is an anti-Christian ecophilosophy,³¹ because Tolkien's Christianity would oppose Deep Ecology's desire to reduce the human population (35). Although Tolkien would not have agreed to all eight of the core convictions listed on the Platform of Deep Ecology,³² Tolkien, in my view, would have agreed with six or seven

31. I do not intend to suggest, however, that Campbell's statement possesses no merit. According to the analysis of the Deep Ecologist Bron Taylor, "Many Greens, *perhaps especially those identifying with deep ecology*, [wrongly] believe that monotheistic religions foster environmentally destructive behavior" ("Deep" 270, 276, 280, emphasis added). Elsewhere, Taylor observes that some Deep Ecologists have repeatedly bashed Christianity as one of the (if not *the*) reason for the earth's environmental problems ("Tributaries" 42-43).

Similarly, environmental writers like M. Amos Clifford wrongly assume that the environmental stewardship model promoted by various religions *must* devolve into "domination" and exploitation (159-60).

32. The Deep Ecology Platform consists of the following tenets:

1. The well-being and flourishing of human and nonhuman life on Earth have value in themselves (synonyms: inherent worth, intrinsic value, inherent value). These values are independent of the usefulness of the nonhuman world for human purposes.

Deep Ecological tenets, and therefore, Tolkien would have been a 6- or 7-point Deep Ecologist. Tolkien, nevertheless, would have certainly disagreed with many of the possible methods (e.g., abortion) to reduce humanity's population (as the fifth Platform point advocates) because of his conservative, Catholic beliefs. Tolkien's conviction that humans need to borrow from the physical environment in order to eat, drink, take shelter, defend themselves, keep warm, *and* express themselves artistically, moreover, may be too broad of a definition of "vital needs" to fulfill the third Deep Ecological Platform tenet. However, Tolkien's fantasies and letters show his agreement with the Deep Ecology Platform's first, second, fourth, sixth, seventh, and eighth points. Moreover, Campbell's claim that Deep Ecology is an anti-Christian ecophilosophy (35) seems somewhat overly broad, because Arne Naess and George Sessions developed the Platform of Deep Ecology, in part, "to encourage people from different religious and philosophical backgrounds to forge a consensus concerning political activity in concrete situations regarding the environment" (Katz, Light, and Rothenberg x). Furthermore, Naess's *apron diagram* prominently includes Christianity as a religion that *can* feed into Deep Ecology³³ ("Deep . . . Aspects" 77, 79).

2. Richness and diversity of life forms contribute to the realization of these values and are also values in themselves.

3. Humans have no right to reduce this richness and diversity except to satisfy vital needs.

4. Present human interference with the nonhuman world is excessive, and the situation is rapidly worsening.

5. The flourishing of human life and cultures is compatible with a substantial decrease of the human population. The flourishing of nonhuman life requires such a decrease.

6. Policies must therefore be changed. The changes in policies affect basic economic, technological, and ideological structures. The resulting state of affairs will be deeply different from the present.

7. The ideological change is mainly that of appreciating life quality (dwelling in situations of inherent worth) rather than adhering to an increasingly higher standard of living. There will be a profound awareness of the difference between big and great.

8. Those who subscribe to the foregoing points have an obligation directly or indirectly to participate in the attempt to implement the necessary changes.

33. Interestingly, DiPaolo mentions that ecofeminists (e.g., Rosemary Radford Ruether) are increasingly attempting to create coalitions of environmentally conscious Peoples of Faith to work to reverse the earth's various environmental problems as well (159).

While I mention how Tolkien's Middle-earth fantasies often represent precursors to contemporary ecocriticism, I do not mean to imply that Tolkien "may have anticipated green studies as a literary discipline," as Campbell does³⁴ (250). I also do not mean to imply that I am willing to place a definitive or hesitant label on Tolkien's environmental texts like Philip Irving Mitchell's assertion³⁵ that Tolkien's works appear to be "conservationist, if not green" (113). Likewise, my views differ from Petty, who (in a brief aside) selects "managed" "loss" as the best way to describe Tolkien's environmental views (242). Although I agree with Petty that Tolkien's tales often emphasize the repetitive nature of ecocide, I believe that the victories of the Free Peoples over the ecosadists at the end of works like *The Silmarillion*, *The Hobbit*, and *The Lord of the Rings* demonstrates that Tolkien believed humanity could do more than just manage the environmental decline of the world. Tolkien's works do not declare that we can only hope to merely slow down the destruction of the physical environment. Petty's aforementioned description suggests the type of worldview that overemphasizes human-centeredness in a manner akin to the phrase "sustainable development"; on the other hand, I believe that Deep Ecology scholar Edward Grumbine's phrase "sustainable landscape" (387, 390-91) best matches the environmental messages within Tolkien's fantasies. In other words, while characterizing Tolkien's exact convictions seems problematic in my view, a core environmental theme is discernable in his texts. Moreover, because (like other authors of Tolkien's era) many of his Great War peers already penned literary texts that reference the environmental damage caused by warfare prior to

34. In my view, Campbell's characterization is problematic in large part because of the word choice of "anticipated." Because Tolkien largely wrote prior to the era of contemporary "green studies," I believe that the following is a better characterization of the commonality that exists between the canons by Tolkien and contemporary "green" writers: *Tolkien's Middle-earth fantasies share some commonality with writings by eco-friendly (i.e., "green") writers of the past few decades.*

35. Unless otherwise noted, when I write "Mitchell," I am referring to Philip Irving Mitchell.

Tolkien's Middle-earth fantasies, I also differ from Petty, who theorizes that Tolkien may be "the first eco-author of his day"³⁶ (219). Instead, I think that contemporary readers may in hindsight perceive how Tolkien's works provided partial previews for later ecophilosophies. Nevertheless (as Campbell also states) (250), Tolkien did not consciously intend for this to occur, and instead created his texts mainly because of his yearning to tell stories (i.e., Tolkien's fantasies are not an allegory or a polemic). Because Tolkien's works share some kinship with several ecophilosophies, this helps to explain why critics (such as Mitchell's aforementioned cautious characterization) find it difficult to conclusively place Tolkien's texts in a specific environmental category beyond the overly broad categories of "Christian Environmental Stewardship" and "Conservationism." Moreover, I do not intend to suggest that ecocriticism is the only appropriate theoretical lens to use while analyzing Tolkien's canon—although I find it an excellent way to examine Tolkien's Middle-earth texts. Finally, an additional benefit of incorporating contemporary ecotheories into Tolkien studies more fully is that (as my fourth chapter observes) some vital environmental arguments within Tolkien studies will be answered more fully.

I begin my discussion of the parallels between Tolkien's Middle-earth fantasies and contemporary ecophilosophies in the sub-section "The Wood between the Worlds: Tolkien's Middle-earth Fantasies as Precursors to Contemporary Ecocriticism" of chapter four by observing how Tolkien's texts share some kinship with Moderate Environmentalism before transitioning to other contemporary ecotheories. Tolkien's fantasies exhibit some commonality with Moderate Environmental texts, because both exhibit the inherent tension

36. Petty justifies her cautious description by noting Tolkien's affection for the physical environment throughout his life and by observing that Tolkien wrote about memorable environmental passages in his texts, in part, to allude to contemporary environmental problems (219).

of noting the need for humans to use environmental resources, while also displaying concern for environmental results, in particular, and for how, why, where, and when these resources are used, in general. Somewhat similarly, both groups of texts encourage readers to appreciate the physical environment's sensory imagery and to protect the physical environment in order to preserve its beauty and well-being for the benefit of future generations of humans and other beings (i.e., humans must reduce their selfishness in order to preserve the earth and its resources for the benefit of others). However, when problems occur, each canon again shows some tension between the need to emphasize that individuals and small groups must contribute to helping the environment and the need to articulate the belief that only large groups and governments can provide long-term environmental aid.

The environmental beliefs and ethics of some of the individuals and groups within Tolkien's Middle-earth fantasies also parallel the messages and models within Deep Ecological works. Besides including *global* environmental perspectives, both canons emphasize the need for environmental improvement at the personal level, which includes a renewed emphasis on simple living and non-consumerism (e.g., individuals must reduce their selfishness). To improve in these areas, Deep Ecologists state that individuals must experience the process of "self-realization" and feel environmental "identification";³⁷ Tolkien's Middle-earth fantasies feature passages that generally parallel these ideas that help to broaden an individual's sense of self and to improve their environmental appreciation and knowledge as well. For such a process to occur, Deep Ecological writings and Tolkien's works each indicate that the physical environment possesses intrinsic/inherent value, which we (and Tolkien's characters) must work to "listen" to and to comprehend in more depth

37. As mentioned previously, I discuss these and other ecophilosophical terms in more depth in chapter four.

(i.e., we should not permit ourselves to lazily ignore—and otherwise fail to understand and appreciate—parts of the environment). For this improvement to occur, Tolkien’s fantasies and Deep Ecological texts encourage readers to not only protect biodiversity but also adopt (in the phraseology of Deep Ecology) the perspective of “ecocentrism” (i.e., ecosystem-centered ecophilosophy), which also values living *and* non-living entities (e.g., stones), rather than “biocentrism,” which only considers living things (e.g., animals) of worth.³⁸ While Tolkien’s works and Deep Ecological writings suggest that it is natural to feel more drawn to some landscapes, waters, flora, fauna, or soils, we should not cavalierly dismiss other portions of the environment that do not match our idiosyncratic environmental biases (i.e., humans should reject selfish callousness that can contribute to this ecosadistic trait). Rather, readers (and the characters within Tolkien’s works) should exhibit an “egalitarian attitude” toward the environment as a “whole” and work with other eco-friendly persons and groups (who may cherish other things and beings in the environment) to salvage, preserve, celebrate, comprehend, nourish, and/or rehabilitate the physical environment.

Heideggerian Ecophilosophy³⁹ features three tenets that parallel messages within Tolkien’s works. According to this ecophilosophy, humans should adopt a less human-centered approach to the environment; if humans can avoid environmental conflict (e.g., felling trees), humans should “let beings be” rather than callously destroy what can otherwise be saved. Consequently, Heideggerian Ecophilosophy parallels Tolkien’s writings by disputing the idea that selfish economic motivations *alone* provide sufficient reason to harm

38. Because I note how Tolkien’s texts share some kinship with *ecocentrism* and *biocentrism*, my analysis sometimes parallels Denekamp’s reading of Tolkien’s Middle-earth fantasies (11, 25); I discuss how my views differ from Denekamp’s in regard to these topics in chapter four.

39. Timothy Clark states that the ecophilosophy’s origins date to Heidegger’s mid-twentieth century analysis of Friedrich Hölderlin’s German Romantic poetry (59).

the environment.⁴⁰ Because Heideggerian Ecophilosophy observes that there are problems with a stance that emphasizes artifacts over the physical environment (and/or vice versa), Heideggerian Ecophilosophical ideas again seem akin to critical environmental messages within Tolkien's fantasies.

While radical preservationist texts espouse some beliefs that definitively differ from those found in Tolkien's fantasies, writings by radical preservationists and Tolkien possess some commonality as well. The environmental views within Tolkien's fantasies sometimes differ from radical environmentalism because Tolkien's writings do not condemn Judeo-Christianity, anthropocentrism, domestic animals, private property, agricultural societies, or those who remove weeds. Moreover, unlike some writings by radical preservationists, Tolkien's works provide qualified praise for created artifacts. Nevertheless, radical preservationist texts and Tolkien's works each praise non-agricultural societies and eco-friendly activities, art, and literature; meanwhile, both canons champion the overthrow of willful degraders of the environment.

Although many of the Peoples and beings in Tolkien's fantasies live in realms with clearly defined geographical borders, violence often erupts where the various topographies join. Tolkien's Middle-earth texts, therefore, align with one of the key criticisms of the bioregional idea that more nations should define their borders by geographical boundaries, which Bioregionalists advocate. However, in a more optimistic direction, Bioregionalistic

40. Although passages within Tolkien's fantasies like "The Scouring of the Shire" demonstrate the problems of consumption and the potential ecological damage of landowners bent on accumulating wealth even at the expense of the environment, I have chosen not to discuss the parallels between Anti-consumerism and Tolkien's fantasies in detail within this dissertation. I believe such a discussion becomes too tenuous, because Anti-consumerism focuses on such matters as the ecological problems of advertising and obesity caused by the fast food and soda pop industries, in general, and capitalism, in particular (Humphrey 38, 33, 82, 211-12); readers do not encounter such industries within Middle-earth.

texts and Tolkien's fantasies each encourage readers to know more about—and to labor on behalf of—their local ecosystems, which Denekamp indicates when she states that the “Ents have an unusually strong attachment to bioregion” (5). Likewise, each body of texts cautions readers against embracing unregulated industrialization and urbanization, in part, because each of these versions of “development” not only often degrades the physical environment but also seemingly leads to the devolution of human morality and ethics by causing humans to act less as environmental guardians and more like callously selfish overlords.

Some of the ideas within the various forms of Ecofeminism⁴¹ also share some commonalities with Tolkien's works. Both canons (albeit to a lesser extent in Tolkien's texts) observe the fluidity of gender expectations⁴², both critique “ableism,” and both sometimes mention the desire to preserve the physical environment by avoiding a carnivorous diet (and thus both arguably reject forms of callousness that can lead to selfishness). Furthermore, somewhat like the writings of various Ecofeminists, Tolkien's fantasies encourage the act of speaking with others as a means to avoid unnecessary violence. By listening to and then appreciating other eco-friendly perspectives, Ecofeminist writings and Tolkien's fantasies encourage readers to reduce their environmental ignorance, which, in turn, will reduce their selfish impulses. As these aforementioned categories imply, Tolkien's texts (like those by Ecofeminists) indicate the need for a “plurality of voices,” for Tolkien's works encourage the development of one's environmental ethics by talking with others who possess different environmental beliefs and attitudes.

41. Within my dissertation, I discuss only some of the sub-groups that comprise Ecofeminism.

42. Tolkien, as a devout, conservative Catholic, would have not agreed with contemporary gender identity fluidity in which people who are biologically born one sex can/should alter their bodies to match their mental and emotional conception of identity. However, not only does Éowyn's warrior prowess defy traditional expectations but also other characters and groups as well, as I will subsequently discuss.

Indeed, in acknowledgment of the work of Ecofeminists and other Feminist critics, one of the reasons why I chose “guardianship” over “stewardship” is because of the gendering of the latter term. Whereas “guardianship” is more gender neutral and can apply to all, the *Oxford English Dictionary (OED)* provides some gendered meanings for “steward,” such as “supervising the service of *his* master’s table” and “One who manages the affairs of an estate on behalf of *his* employer” (emphasis added). Moreover, rather than the more passive role of *supervisor*, *guards* intently “watch” yet remain “cautious” in order to avoid wanton violence, for they “protec[t]” and “stan[d] on the defensive,” as the *OED* observes; the aforementioned description should appeal to a variety of readers, including Ecofeminists.

Because I hope to demonstrate that Tolkien’s works parallel some of the tenets of Ecofeminism, my work shares some common ground with DiPaolo’s recent work *Fire and Snow: Climate Fiction from the Inklings to the “Game of Thrones.”* In the opinion of DiPaolo, Tolkien’s Middle-earth fantasies parallel tenets of Ecofeminism because Tolkien’s works emphasize the depth of joy that the protagonists feel when they behold the sensory imagery of Middle-earth’s physical environment and because Tolkien’s texts show a yearning to reverse harmful industrialization (156). Because of such parallels between the texts by the Ecofeminists and the fantasies by Tolkien, DiPaolo declares that “the Ecofeminist genre writers examined in this book are the true inheritors of the ‘spirit’ of Tolkien, and of his efforts to portray a world in which Nature is re-sacramentalized and the values of Eden are brought back into the corrupt present to redeem it” (282). While I would not go so far as to suggest that the Ecofeminists “are the true inheritors of the ‘spirit’ of Tolkien,” as DiPaolo does⁴³, I certainly agree with DiPaolo that the arguments within texts

43. I find such a statement too narrow and yet too broad; by using the exclusive description of “the true inheritors,” as DiPaolo does, this minimizes the parallels that the works by Tolkien and non-Ecofeminist

by Ecofeminists sometimes parallel the environmental messages within Tolkien's fantasies in a notable way.

Middle-earth fantasies share some commonality with Eco-Marxism⁴⁴ as well. Somewhat similar to Tolkien's writings, Eco-Marxists argue that small groups and individuals alone cannot sustain substantial environmental alterations that improve the general well-being of the overall environment (i.e., including human communities). Works by Tolkien and Eco-Marxists cast a skeptical eye on industrialization because of its pollution, because both favor small-scale farming, and because both indicate that local inhabitants should decide how to regulate, work, and guard their local environments. Both canons, therefore, decry the deluded selfishness of unregulated industrialization, the lazy impulse that can lead to environmentally dubious forms of industrialized farming, and the callous-driven selfishness of distant, imperialistic governments dictating to local communities.

Postcolonial ecocritical texts and Tolkien's fantasies also share some commonality. For example, Tolkien's works feature messages that emphasize the need for local decision-making (e.g., Aragorn recognizes the rights of the indigenous Hobbits, Ents, and Wild Men to make decisions concerning their local environments), which means that both note that *global* perspectives do *not* mean everything. Similarly, both canons provide readers with the idea that there are positives to what contemporary readers would call "ecotourism"; likewise, both canons attacks those who value animals more than people in life or death situations. Postcolonial ecocritics, moreover, condemn the act of selfishly privileging one's own group as "hegemonic centrism." This is a recurring message in Tolkien's texts as well, which

ecocritics sometimes share. Furthermore, a second issue with this characterization is that it largely glosses over the definitive differences between some of the tenets of Ecofeminism and the environmental messages within Tolkien's Middle-earth canon.

44. This ecophilosophy began to flourish in the early 2000s (Lievens 3-4).

occurs in passages like those that depict the Númenóreans' slide from helpers of the Middle Men to enslavers and murderers of Men and defilers of the physical environment. Tolkien's Middle-earth fantasies, therefore, also parallel postcolonial ecocriticism's findings that aid missions to the unfortunate "Other" can, in time, yield the horrors of imperialism. Because *some* of Tolkien's descriptions of the Wild Men protagonists seems akin to stereotypical depictions of environmentally knowledgeable indigenous peoples who should be allowed to live their own lives, Tolkien's works do sometimes include what postcolonial ecocritics call the certainly problematic but less negative form of what "environmental racism" can become. Nonetheless, because Tolkien characterizes the Wild Men as intelligent and features Ghân-buri-ghân speaking, this means that Tolkien provides a voice for a minority group.

By discussing what postcolonial ecocritics⁴⁵ call "environmental racism" within Tolkien's texts, I hope to build from the work of such scholars as Ertsgaard and Anderson Rearick III, as well as Fimi. For instance, Fimi contends that the works that comprise Tolkien's *Legendarium* display a progressive, positive shift away from Victorian racial theories to more contemporary views on race and race relations ("Teaching" 149). As Fimi observes, Tolkien's earlier stories can create hierarchies of "races" based on their ethics, morals, languages, and spirituality, because of the prevalent influence of "scientific" (i.e., what we would now call *pseudo-science*) views of *fixed* racial divisions that were prominent during the Victorian and Edwardian eras (145-47). Some of Tolkien's later works, such as his "Myths Transformed," somewhat remedy this problem by theorizing how the Orcs and other monsters were not inherently damned as a group to eternal evil.⁴⁶ Finally, while discussing

45. Postcolonial ecocriticism falls within the general description of Eco-socialism/Eco-Marxism (Huggan and Tiffin 14-15).

46. I, therefore, believe that Rearick's contention that the Orcs should not be judged like the Free Peoples in terms of race and ethnicities possesses a degree of merit (870).

Tolkien's works and the topic of *environmental racism*, I also observe how Morgoth, Sauron, and Saruman practice heinously selfish ecocidal acts rather than practicing the righteous environmental guardianship of the virtuous Valar and Maiar. By doing so, my discussion notes how Tolkien's spirits (as well as the Peoples) display diverse environmental behaviors and attitudes. Furthermore, my analysis builds off of some of the earliest environmental evaluations of Tolkien's texts. For example, in his previously referenced 1973 "Foreword," Beagle characterizes Tolkien's Middle-earth, in general, and Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*, in particular, as a "green alternative to each day's madness here in a poisoned world" where many callously praise those who selfishly steal the lands where others dwell (par. 5). Postcolonial ecocriticism texts and Tolkien's fantasies, therefore, share some commonality in terms of messaging.

Some points within Post-humanism and Social Ecology are also relevant when analyzing the accretion of significance of Tolkien's Middle-earth fantasies. Post-humanism's theories concerning "Trans-subjectivity" (which examines how food renders human identity fluid) and "transcorporeality" (which observes how physical bodies and the surrounding environment affect one another's identity in activities like gardening) have fantastic parallels in Tolkien's works. Likewise, Post-humanism's efforts to increase the presence of the physical environment in urban areas also share some commonality with environmental messages within Tolkien's works. Tolkien's Middle-earth texts, moreover, parallel Social Ecology's advocacy that readers should emulate individuals and groups with exemplary environmental behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes as well. By learning positive environmental traits from eco-friendly allies, we will reduce our ignorance of other views and become less callous in regard to how we behave and believe; as a result, our selfishness should also

diminish. Tolkien's works suggest that it is possible for readers, like the characters within Tolkien's Middle-earth fantasies, to develop greater environmental sensitivity.

Some contemporary ecocritics (e.g., the postcolonial ecocritics Graham Huggan and Helen Tiffin) dismiss "harmony" and "stability" as passé examples of well-intended but naïve tenets of Eco-Populism (e.g., 73, 93n). As I detail in chapter four, however, I believe that Tolkien's works display environmental ideas of greater interest to ecocritics (as well as general readers) than just overgeneralized environmental ideas like *harmony* and *stability*, in part, because of the parallels that exist between Tolkien's fantasies and the previously referenced contemporary ecophilosophies.

Joshua Mabie, meanwhile, notes that the recent move among postcolonial ecocritics to examine texts from non-Western countries and the environments of the working classes reduce the anti-human-centeredness bias of postcolonial ecocriticism, in particular, and twenty-first century ecocriticism, in general (279-80, 284). As a result of this development, as well as a marginal increase among certain ecocritics to discuss how Christianity influences the portrayal of the environment in literature (280-81), contemporary ecocriticism's concerns and Christian environmentalism's tenets now share more in common (279-80, 284), which reconnects Christianity as a source for contemporary ecocriticism, as was the case in the mid-1990s (281). Indeed, Mabie notes that "caricatures" often distort the actual environmental messages of eco-friendly Christians and secularists, which has contributed to the *perceived* great divide between the *stereotypical* views held by Christian and secular environmentalists (i.e., only human needs matter vs. only non-human needs matter), respectively (282-83). This communication problem between ecocritics and Christians has continued even into the third-

wave of ecocriticism, Mabie writes, since postcolonial ecocritics like Huggan and Tiffin assume literature inspired by the Bible is the equivalent of biblical texts themselves (289-90).

As Mabie highlights, nonetheless, the third-wave of ecocriticism by postcolonial ecocritics critiqued first- and second-wave ecocriticism, in part, because the texts by these earlier ecocritics predominantly focus on American and British literature (283-86).

Consequently, I contend that this means that Tolkien, who was born in South Africa but lived most of his life in Britain, represents an interesting figure whose works can function as a bridge between these earlier waves of ecocriticism and the third-wave of ecocriticism that gained momentum in the 2010s decade (285-86, 280).

Tolkien's fantasies are touchstones, in part, since his texts demonstrate that bridges can be made between postcolonial and early ecocritical concerns. The works of these two groups of literary theorists featured four main differences in focus, as Mabie notes: nationalism's problems vs. praise for nationalism, the intersection of cultures vs. non-human wilderness, marginalized cultures vs. individual reunion with non-human nature, and forced rootlessness vs. local rootedness (286-87). Because of the importance and inclusion of both envisioned destruction (e.g., Sam's vision of the Shire's destruction via the Mirror of Galadriel) and witnessed environmental ruin (e.g., Mordor) in Tolkien's tales, Tolkien's fantasies observe the importance of both the imagination and realism when depicting apocalyptic environmental scenes. Consequently, this tendency means that Tolkien's fantasies feature methods that some second-wave ecocritics use, as Timothy J. Burbery would likely observe (192-93). These middle two differences form the foundation for the long separation between Christian environmentalists and secular ecocritics of the first- and second-wave, according to Mabie, for Christ calls on His followers to protect the needy, the

sick, the elderly, the poor, and other marginalized groups (287). Because of the relevancy of Tolkien's fantasies to ecocriticism, in general, and Christian ecocriticism, in particular, I believe my work answers Mabie's calls for more Christians to examine the environment in literary texts and for more Christians to care about the environment—just as Christians care about helping to reduce evils like poverty and sex trafficking (292, 290). Moreover, by examining the environmental messaging within the fantasies by Tolkien, a devout Catholic, I add my own voice to those who answered Burbery's request in 2012 for Christian literary critics to examine literary masterpieces that included environmental messaging, in general, and to examine the environmental themes within works by Christians, in particular⁴⁷ (206-08).

Sabrina Danielsen, meanwhile, states that American evangelical Generation X and Millennial youths have shown more concern for the environment than previous generations (201). Danielsen also writes that major magazines (the conservative *World*, the moderate *Christianity Today*⁴⁸, and the moderately liberal *Sojourners*⁴⁹) that target Christian evangelicals as the intended audience published dramatically more environmental articles in 2004 (209-10, 205-06). This trend continued through the year that her article was published (i.e., 2010) after a decade of diminished focus on the environment, which causes Danielsen to wonder why this occurred (209-10, 205-06).

47. Burbery highlights environmentally themed works by Christian writers like Annie Dillard, Bill McKibben, and Wendell Berry (194-95).

48. By entering keywords like "environment," "creation care," and "biodiversity" in the search menu of the *Christianity Today* website, viewers will find hundreds of articles that promote eco-friendly, faith-based behaviors and beliefs.

49. While *Christianity Today* and *Sojourners* expressed a willingness to improve humanity's guardianship of the environment after 2003, *World* condemned Christian evangelicals endeavoring to improve the environment, deeming such advocacy as a tertiary concern when compared to sexual matters (209-10).

I believe that many American Christians—and perhaps especially youths of this early 2000s era—were influenced by the late 2001, 2002, and 2003 cinematic adaptations of Tolkien’s *The Lord of the Rings* that memorably depict the destruction of a variety of environments, such as Fangorn Forest and Mordor. After all, New Line Cinema did not release various DVD versions of *The Return of the King* film until 2004.⁵⁰ When combined with my earlier reading of Tolkien’s masterpiece, I know the fact that I witnessed Peter Jackson’s dramatization of Saruman’s and Sauron’s annihilation of the environment in pursuit of imperialistic designs deepened the impact of Tolkien’s eco-friendly messages on my youthful mind. I believe that reading Tolkien’s fantasies and watching Jackson’s adaptations of Tolkien’s texts heightened or re-awoke the environmental consciousness of young Christians in America. Like myself, the early childhood years of these youth included the environmental awakening among Christian evangelicals between 1988-1995; moreover, the high school and/or college years for these individuals included the 2004-10 era when some Christian evangelicals again embraced “Creation Care,” as Danielsen notes (206-07, 209-10). In other words, I believe that the cumulative weight of Tolkien’s texts and Jackson’s 2001-2003 movies enhanced the environmental consciousness of American Christian evangelicals, which means I believe Tolkien’s works are more important in this regard than the so-called “ecodisaster” film that Danielsen suggests: *The Day After Tomorrow* (2009). More specifically, I believe that the environmental themes of Tolkien’s works may have especially reawakened the urge to improve the environment among those whom Danielsen observes as those who became more vocally supportive of national and international efforts

50. Because Mark Moring writes a separate 2004 review of the extended versions of Jackson’s versions of Tolkien’s masterpiece entitled “*Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King* Special Extended DVD Edition” after *Christianity Today* had already published multiple articles about the theatrical versions of the film, the impact of the films on subscribers to the moderate magazine is clear.

to improve the environment⁵¹ and whom she labels as “moderate” Christian evangelicals⁵² (cf. 207, 209-10). Indeed, as Matthew Sleeth’s September 2018 article “What Trees Teach Us about Life, Death, and Resurrection—Other than People, They’re the Most Mentioned Living Thing in the Bible” demonstrates, Tolkien’s texts continue to inspire writers whose works have been recently published by *Christianity Today*. In any case, I believe that, by examining Tolkien’s classics through the lens of Christian environmentalism, this will encourage more Christians to better guard God’s creation by encouraging them to eliminate their selfishness and to recognize that “godliness” includes caring for the environment that the Creator made.

In summary, I chronicle some of the historical roots for Tolkien’s fantasies in chapter two to better answer the series of questions concerning the origins for the refutations of environmental selfishness and the poisonous waters that feed this core ecosadistic trait—callousness, laziness, and ignorance—and to better discuss the various solutions to these problems in Middle-earth. To better understand how Tolkien’s works build from the beliefs of environmental organizations, build on the ideas from his era and those of previous time periods, and continue to feature noteworthy environmental messages applicable for the decades following the 1950s, I include chapter four. I observe in chapter four how Tolkien’s Middle-earth fantasies share kinship with several contemporary environmental issues and portions of many of the contemporary ecophilosophies (e.g., Moderate Environmentalism, Deep Ecology, and Postcolonial Ecocriticism). I also include a section concerning

51. Danielsen also mentions that the moderates advocate for eco-friendly involvement at the individual and small group levels (207, 209-10).

52. Daniels uses this description when referring to the editors of *Christianity Today* (210).

contemporary Christian environmentalism within chapter four that highlights the similar environmental messages of a 2015 encyclical by Pope Francis and Tolkien's Middle-earth fantasies. By doing so, I hope to observe how the Middle-earth fantasies by Tolkien, a devout Catholic⁵³, continue to remain relevant to contemporary environmental discussions and how Tolkien's fantasies build from Judeo-Christianity's long environmental history, and thereby add to my earlier statements within chapter two concerning how Tolkien's fantasies share some kinship with and sometimes allude to Judeo-Christian Scriptures.

As Campbell mentions, Tolkien's works represent "reflections of" (i.e., history) "and windows on" (i.e., the present and the future) "external reality" (217). This type of connection among Tolkien's fantasies, the earth's history, and the various lessons that Tolkien's fantasies teach readers helps to explain my organizational structure and layout for chapters two, three, and four of this dissertation. In other words, similar to how neither the trunk of a tree nor its leaves could exist without the tree's roots, my dissertation begins with a chapter on history, since Tolkien's fantasies and contemporary ecophilosophies each draw nutrients from the roots of the past, as I detail in chapter two. Meanwhile, chapter three focuses on the environmental messaging within Tolkien's Middle-earth fantasies, while chapter four concludes with potential ecocritical connections that I tie to the branches of Tolkien's *Tree of Tales*.

53. Claudio Testi (who cites Tolkien's *Letters* as evidence) mentions several reasons why Tolkien was a devout Catholic. As Testi mentions, Tolkien went on pilgrimages, condemned divorces, believed in guardian angels, argued that Christians should take communion every day, and lived as a devout Catholic, in part, in order to show his love for his mother, whom Tolkien believed died as a Catholic "martyr" in Protestant England (qtd. in 183).

1.2. A Note on the Hierarchy and Choice of Texts

The pinnacle of the Tolkienian fantasy hierarchy includes three works. Because *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* were the only Middle-earth prose fantasies published in Tolkien's lifetime, these two texts covering the end of the Third Age and the start of the Fourth Age of Middle-earth enjoy a privileged position. Of these two, the more mature, adult-oriented *Lord of the Rings* outranks the less polished and less serious *Hobbit* both in terms of importance and in terms of references pertaining to the topic of the environment in Tolkien's prose. Tolkien's "On Fairy-Stories" essay also ranks on this top-shelf of the Tolkien canon, for Tolkien penned the work in 1938 (i.e., shortly after the publication of *The Hobbit* in 1937 and during the time of his initial work on *The Lord of the Rings*) (Tolkien 31). Moreover, the essay is quite important, because "On Fairy-Stories" includes key information regarding Tolkien's theories of fantasy and because the essay features some of his environmental views. Therefore, although I refer to the essay somewhat infrequently when compared to the aforementioned Middle-earth fantasies, the overall nature of the "On Fairy-Stories" essay and several noteworthy passages assure the work's place within the premier level of the Tolkien canon hierarchy.⁵⁴

Following these works in importance are the works that comprise *The Silmarillion*. This classic text was published posthumously but contains what Tolkien's son, Christopher (whom the elder Tolkien often sent letters and story drafts to for commentary, and whom the elder Tolkien entrusted as his literary executor), considers to be the most sophisticated drafts of his father's work for these First and Second Ages Middle-earth stories. Moreover, Tolkien

54. As the hierarchical note suggests, the content within the texts at the top of the hierarchy of Tolkien's canon trumps any contradictory statement referred to in his lesser works. Nonetheless, for relevant passages, I include footnotes that mention relevant ideas within Tolkien's minor texts that deviate from the main threads of his fantasies.

continued to write versions of the stories that Christopher includes in *The Silmarillion* after the elder Tolkien completed *The Lord of the Rings*, which means the collection includes texts by Tolkien once he had developed as a writer; such points Christopher discusses in portions of the final four volumes of *The History of Middle-earth*. For example, Tolkien began to write the *Akallabêth*⁵⁵ (which concerns the Downfall of Númenor and appears within *The Silmarillion*) in 1951, and he completed the work in perhaps 1958 (*Peoples* 148, 141-42; *Letters* 360). Moreover, *The Silmarillion* again proves important to my analysis of Tolkien's portrayals of the physical and the created environment because of its inclusion of the work *Of the Rings of Power and the Third Age*. Because *The Silmarillion* includes the important historical text *Of the Rings of Power and the Third Age*, this means *The Silmarillion* features the text that provides an overview of the history of these magical artifacts and briefly mentions the wars fought over the Rings of Power that result in widespread devastation. As a 1948 letter by Tolkien implies (*Letters* 130) and Christopher observes (*Treason* 144-46), Tolkien already drafted the aforementioned text by 1948 and originally intended to include it within "The Council of Elrond" chapter of *The Fellowship of the Ring*, which indicates that the work derives from an era when Tolkien matured as a writer. Furthermore, Tolkien expresses anxiety when he could not immediately locate the manuscript for Mrs. Katherine Farrer; Tolkien, moreover, describes *Of the Rings of Power and the Third Age* as an

55. Like other Tolkien scholars (e.g., Hammond, Scull, and Kane), I have chosen to italicize the works within the published *Silmarillion*. I have italicized these works not only because other Tolkien critics have chosen to do so but also because I wish to emphasize the importance of these texts. In the case of Tolkien's story-centric fragments like *The Lost Road*, *Aldarion and Erendis*, *The Notion Club Papers*, *Athrabeth Finrod Ah Andreth*, and *The New Shadow*, I italicize these works as well. However, because Christopher Tolkien chose to list the aforementioned Middle-earth tales as sub-works within *The Silmarillion*, *Unfinished Tales*, and various *History of Middle-earth* volumes, when these works are cited, they appear in quotation marks to conform with *MLA* standards.

For Tolkien's individual essays that focus on Middle-earth's history (e.g., "The History of Galadriel and Celeborn"), I have placed these works in quotation marks.

irreplaceable *link* (along with the *Akallabêth*) between the First and Third Age tales of Middle-earth (*Letters* 130). Therefore, *The Silmarillion* exists as an invaluable touchstone concerning the histories of the lands of Valinor, Beleriand, Númenor, and Middle-earth, despite the fact that Tolkien failed to entirely complete and/or publish the various texts that comprise *The Silmarillion* prior to his death in 1973.

Nevertheless, because *The Silmarillion* exists as a coproduction resulting partially from Christopher's editorial efforts and Guy Kay's ghostwriting contributions⁵⁶, the texts of *The Silmarillion* rank within the second-tier of the Tolkien canon hierarchy. While the content of *The Silmarillion* receives general (albeit qualified) approval from even fairly critical scholars like Kane,⁵⁷ Kane also notes that Christopher's eccentricities led him to omit intriguing passages of his father's works and excessively alter basic writing elements within his father's texts (e.g., punctuation, capitalization, and spelling) (e.g., 26, 42-43, 261-62). Yet, *The Silmarillion* works remain highly important because of their enormous wealth of information, because of the decades of interest devoted to the collection by readers and scholars, because *The Silmarillion* includes many of the tales that Tolkien cherished so much that he stated, "[T]he Silmarils are in my heart" (*Letters* 26), and because Tolkien worked on the tales within *The Silmarillion* the most. Consequently, although the published form of *The Silmarillion* lacks Tolkien's final, definitive approval, the importance of the collection's content for the First and Second Ages of Middle-earth leads me to refer to the works that

56. Kay, for example, penned portions of the "Of the Ruin of Doriath" chapter, which he based, in part, on the elder Tolkien's rough drafts and letters; nevertheless, Christopher later regretted making these changes within *The Silmarillion* to some extent (*War . . . Jewels*, "Tale" 354-56).

57. Kane calls the collection *successful* overall, in part, because Christopher mainly uses Tolkien's more polished work from the post-*Lord of the Rings* era (25, 27).

comprise *The Silmarillion* more than any other Tolkien fantasy text, aside from *The Lord of the Rings*.

Similarly, Christopher published his father's *Unfinished Tales* after J.R.R. Tolkien's death; however, while these tales include some of the most interesting and best-written fragments by Tolkien, these fantastic writings remain only partially written and are edited by Christopher. Therefore, these works cannot hold the same weight as *The Lord of the Rings* or *The Hobbit*. Because *The Lord of the Rings* represents the most celebrated literary triumph for Tolkien, every text Tolkien penned after he had finished writing the rough draft and final revisions to *The Lord of the Rings*⁵⁸ (and to an even greater extent after the 1954-55 publication of *The Lord of the Rings*) represents a work that deserves some critical attention. This seems especially true of the various versions of "The Quest of Erebor" and "The Hunt for the Ring," which (as Hammond and Scull note) Tolkien wrote in 1954-55 in the hope of including them within "The Appendices" to *The Lord of the Rings* but could not due to page count considerations ("*Lord*" . . . *Reader's* xxxiv). "The Istari" and "The Palantíri" fragment essays, furthermore, deserve scholarly consideration as well. While not included in the original "Appendices," I analyze these works, because "The Istari" and "The Palantíri" essays derive from Tolkien's work on his *Index to The Lord of the Rings* in 1954. I also examine these texts, because Tolkien continued to work on these essays as he revised *The Lord of the Rings* for its second edition in 1966 (Hammond and Scull, "*Lord*" . . . *Reader's* xxxiv; *Unfinished* 12-13, 384, 394). Moreover, in the case of "The Istari," Tolkien continued to work on the essay, even writing additional material for it during the final year of his life

58. Wayne G. Hammond and Christina Scull believe that the writing of the rough draft portion of *The Lord of the Rings* took place from December 1937-1948, while initial revisions occurred in 1949 ("*Lord*" . . . *Reader's* xviii, xxvii). Hammond and Scull believe that the final revisions to *The Lord of the Rings* occurred from 1952-53 ("*Lord*" . . . *Reader's* xxxi-xxxiii).

(*Peoples* 377, 384-85). In other words, Tolkien *desired* to include these fragments within his masterpiece, yet publishing limitations (and sometimes time and Tolkien's notorious perfectionism) prevented this from occurring. Christopher, moreover, mentions that Tolkien penned multiple fragments in 1960, including "A Description of the Island of Númenor" and *Aldarion and Erendis: A Mariner's Wife* (*Peoples* 141, 163n; *Unfinished* 7-8, 10). In the cases of the fragments "The Disaster of the Gladden Fields," "Cirion and Eorl," "The Battles of the Fords of Isen," "The Drúedain," and "The History of Galadriel and Celeborn," Tolkien wrote these works "in the final period of [his] writing on Middle-earth" (*Peoples* 141, 163n; *Unfinished* 7-8, 10). Consequently, in addition to further explaining key characters and peoples in Middle-earth, these texts derive from the era in which Tolkien's Middle-earth was the most developed, and therefore, these texts merit critical discussion to some extent.

Tolkien's *Letters* provide additional support for examining the First Age and Second Age fragments within his *Unfinished Tales*, in general—and especially *Aldarion and Erendis*. In his September 12, 1965, letter to Dick Plotz, the so-called "Thain" of the Tolkien Society of America (TSA), Tolkien states the following about the tales of Númenor, in general, and *Aldarion and Erendis*, in particular:

As for Númenor, the tale of the *Akallabêth* or Downfall is fully written. The rest of its internal history is only in Annal form, and will probably remain so, except for one long Númenórean tale: *The Mariner's Wife*: now nearly complete, concerning the story of Aldarion and his tragic relations with his father and his wife. This is supposed to have been preserved in the Downfall, when most of Númenórean lore was lost except that that dealt with the First Age, because it tells how Númenor became involved in the politics of Middle-earth. (*Letters* 360)

The aforementioned passage is not only important because it features Tolkien consciously singling out *Aldarion and Erendis* as the lone Second Age story (other than the *Akallabêth*) worthy of finishing but also because it alludes to the gravity of the plot within *Aldarion and Erendis* that details the origins of the Númenórean assistance to the Elves and Men resisting Sauron. Within this same letter, moreover, Tolkien alludes to the *Ainulindalë*, *Valaquenta*, *Of the Rings of Power and the Third Age*, and “The History of Galadriel and Celeborn” (i.e., texts that Christopher placed/preserves within *The Silmarillion* or the *Unfinished Tales*) as the Middle-earth works that he devoted himself to writing. Tolkien informs Plotz and the TSA that “There is also a large amount of matter that is not strictly part of the *Silmarillion*: cosmogony and matter concerning the Valar; and later matter concerning Númenor, and the War in Middle-earth (fall of Eregion and death of Celebrimbor, and the history of Celeborn and Galadriel)” (*Letters* 360). Consequently, out of respect for Tolkien’s efforts and interests—and because of the information within them—I sometimes examine the environmental passages expressed within not only the aforementioned short works from *The Silmarillion* but also the Second Age fragments concerning the latter three subjects as well.

As Christopher explicitly mentions in his “Preface” to *The Children of Húrin* (9), his father viewed the tales of Beren and Lúthien,⁵⁹ Túrin, and the destruction of Gondolin as the chief stories, the Great Tales of the First Age of Middle-earth. Because *The Silmarillion* lacks some of the material for the latter two stories that Tolkien wrote, the longer works that include this content, *The Children of Húrin* and *The Fall of Gondolin*, also deserve and receive consideration in my work. In the case of *The Children of Húrin*, Christopher endeavored to present his father’s work in a less “inaccessible” manner for readers by

59. Partially because the recently published *Beren and Lúthien* (2017) lacks any new material (11), I usually refer to *The Silmarillion* for discussions concerning Beren.

presenting it as “an independent work [. . .] with a minimum of editorial presence [. . .] without distortion or invention, despite the unfinished state [of the work]”⁶⁰ (7). Moreover, as Kane observes, *The Children of Húrin* is also essential, because it actually features the Wood-Elf Nellas (206). In the case of *The Fall of Gondolin*, however, the work exists as one of less quality, for it (arguably) represents the greatest of Tolkien’s juvenilia, and it mainly derives from 1916-17—a date that is quite early in Tolkien’s development as a writer. Nevertheless, in terms of plot and authorial-endorsed importance, *The Fall of Gondolin* should not fall into oblivion but receive a share of critical commentary.

Athrabeth Finrod Ah Andreth (i.e., *The Debate of Finrod and Andreth*) and “Myths Transformed,” which Christopher published in *Morgoth’s Ring* (i.e., the tenth volume of *The History of Middle-earth*), also receive critical attention in my dissertation. Like other works mentioned previously, I examine these First Age texts, for Tolkien penned these writings after completing *The Lord of the Rings* in the mid-to-late 1950s (*Morgoth’s* 304, 370-71, 409). After all, *Athrabeth Finrod Ah Andreth* deserves serious consideration, for Tolkien explicitly declared that it “[s]hould be [the] last item in an appendix” to *The Silmarillion*⁶¹ (*Morgoth’s* 329), and Christopher calls the work “very remarkable” (*Morgoth’s* 303). Finally, I also opt to refer to these aforementioned texts, because they include some key passages that help further illuminate, question, and/or analyze the environmental beliefs and practices of Morgoth, Sauron, the Elves, Men, and the various kinds of “Orcs.” However, of these two works, “Myths Transformed” certainly ranks below *Athrabeth Finrod Ah Andreth*.

60. Consequently, I agree with Jesse Mitchell’s belief that Christopher Tolkien should receive credit for the final, published form of *The Children of Húrin* but that the elder Tolkien should still receive credit for “the story” (88).

61. Unfortunately, Christopher ignored his father’s wishes when he published *The Silmarillion* by not including *Athrabeth Finrod Ah Andreth*.

As Christopher describes “Myths Transformed,” it is “ambiguous and allusive,” for this work consists of a series of rough drafts that feature a “fluidity of ideas” (*Morgoth’s* 369).

While a distinct level down in importance from the previously referenced texts (which leads me to only occasionally refer to this brief story in this dissertation), *The New Shadow* fragment remains an intriguing work to examine for several reasons. Although Tolkien abandoned the story multiple times, the short fragment drew his attention in the 1950s and again in the late 1960s (*Peoples* 410). As Tolkien discusses in multiple letters that Christopher references in *The History of Middle-earth* (*Peoples* 410), Tolkien stopped writing *The New Shadow*, because he came to view the text as mere entertainment rather than a work with engaging instruction for readers. Nonetheless, Borlas’ conversation with Saelon contains a significant amount of discussion about the environment and about humanity’s role as environmental guardians (or exploiters), which (together with the fact that Tolkien penned the fragment after he matured as a writer) guarantees the fragment a place in this dissertation that analyzes Tolkien’s environmental views. Finally, since the plot of *The New Shadow* occurs after every other Middle-earth text, *The New Shadow* features a setting (although mythologized) slightly closer in time to Tolkien’s readers. In terms of time, the Fourth Age (i.e., the Age of Man) text *The New Shadow* draws a closer parallel to how contemporary readers should and should not interact with the non-human environment than any other Middle-earth work. This is the case for two important reasons: Tolkien intended to create his Middle-earth tales as a *mythology for England*, and Tolkien endorsed the “applicability” of textually supported reader interpretation (*Fellowship*, “Foreword” xv). As a result, I choose to reference this fragment in my dissertation concerning the environment in Tolkien’s Middle-earth fantasies.

I also occasionally refer to *The Lost Road* and *The Notion Club Papers*, which I regard as texts that deserve some comment but rank below each of the aforementioned works. At nearly the same time as Tolkien began writing *The Lord of the Rings*, he penned *The Lost Road* fragment in 1936-37 (*Lost* 10, 108). The somewhat more polished *Notion Club Papers* fragment came into existence in 1946, as Tolkien continued working on the final portions of the completed rough draft of *The Lord of the Rings* (*Peoples* 140). Although Tolkien chose to abandon these works and even though Tolkien wrote these works prior to completing his further maturation during the era when he finished *The Lord of the Rings*, I include this pair of intriguing texts for two main reasons. Although *Akallabêth* and “The Appendices” within *The Lord of the Rings* discuss the history of the Downfall of Númenor, I wish to include stories of the Second Age that help to explain the Peoples, events, and places during the Second Age of Middle-earth in a manner similar to how *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* provide readers with a better understanding of the end of the Third Age. More importantly, the plots of *The Lost Road* and *The Notion Club Papers* feature characters who undergo various types of time travel (physical and/or mental), which links the ancient pre-historical eras of Middle-earth with contemporary earth. Although he lost interest in the plots of these stories, by explicitly connecting Númenóreans with contemporary humans, Tolkien implies that the environmental lessons of Númenor also apply to the environment of our own primary world.

Finally, as I discuss the environmentalism within Tolkien’s texts, I also occasionally include footnotes regarding the topic of Tolkien’s environmentalism drawn from other less polished, less critical, and/or hitherto unpublished works by Tolkien. I intend for these notes to further

elaborate on points discussed in the main body of the text rather than to suggest that the works are on an equal footing to any of the aforementioned texts that I reference.

CHAPTER II

THE SHAPING OF TOLKIEN'S MIDDLE-EARTH: THE HISTORICAL TREE FOR TOLKIEN'S BRANCH OF ENVIRONMENTALISM

2.1. Tolkien's Christian-Based Environmentalism

Tolkien's views of non-human nature and human artisanship derive, in part, from cultural reactions to the historical trends concerning gardening, forestry, industrialization, urbanization, and artisanship. Moreover, Tolkien's personal environmentalism partially results from his interest in and affection for a variety of flora and fauna (albeit with the caveat of privileging certain species groups, such as trees) and from his desire to and his enjoyment of time outside amid non-human nature (e.g., walking in various woods, in particular, and in the countryside, in general). Tolkien also displayed a distinct skepticism of (and sometimes a profound dislike for) industrialization and urbanization. Tolkien loathed how industrialization and urbanization in many Western countries led to air, water, and soil pollution, landscape degradation, moral devolution, and assaults on the human senses because of a cultural disregard for the aesthetics and the general well-being of the environment in favor of economic savings and time efficiency. While Tolkien voiced his disapproval of more modern manifestations of industrialized agriculture, he

understood that his approval of earlier modes of farming still yielded an altered landscape. Tolkien, in other words, urged humans to do their utmost to ensure that the effects of each activity would not radically change the environment—and with the ability to reverse these environmental modifications relatively quickly. Therefore, while Tolkien’s passion for the non-human environment and his righteous condemnation of those who wantonly harm plants, non-human animals, soils, landscapes, bodies of water, and the air matches many of the preservationists of his time and the environmental activists of later decades, Tolkien’s analytical abilities also acknowledged the existence of human needs. To warm, cool, feed, water, shelter, and defend themselves, humans (like other beings) possess the right to meet these necessities; moreover, humans can and should pursue (within limits) environmental activities that please their sense of aesthetics.⁶²

Within his *Letters*, Tolkien overtly acknowledges his indebtedness to Christianity while creating his literary masterpiece: *The Lord of the Rings*. In his December 2, 1953, letter to Robert Murray, Tolkien explicitly declares that “*The Lord of the Rings* is of

62. Tolkien’s aforementioned stance is consistent when one compares his ecophilosophy to the one expressed within Christianity. Although YHWH created/creates humans to guard His Creation on His behalf, the Fall inhibited/inhibits the success of this design for humans and the non-human environment alike. Because of Jesus’ sacrifice, however, Christianity teaches that human believers possess the Holy Spirit, who guides Christians to choose rightly, though they may still fail. As Rom. 8:1-14 and 8:22-24 discuss, this means Christians represent a threshold between the fallen world and the perfected world that is to come, because, while their mortal bodies continue to possess sinful inclinations, the Holy Spirit indwells within them and urges Christians to live as God originally intended. To offset the fallen state of non-human nature and fallen humanity—while also meeting the needs of humans (e.g., shelter and sustenance)—YHWH first provided the Law of the Old Testament before enabling the Spirit to enter the bodies of believers to help guide the attitudes, behaviors, and beliefs of Christians on such things as their relationship with the environment. To maintain the proper perspective to distinguish between wants and needs, Tolkien believed personal experiences of working, playing, and resting amid nature would help reduce the development and frequency of the human traits often responsible for selfish, environmentally destructive behaviors and attitudes: callousness, laziness, and ignorance. Only then can humans hope to foster/maintain some of the environmental goals within Tolkien’s texts, i.e., ensuring the sustainability of landscapes and the preservation of non-invasive species.

course a fundamentally religious and Catholic work; unconsciously so at first, but consciously in revision [. . .] the religious element is absorbed into the story and the symbolism” (*Letters* 172). Indeed, this is not the lone statement made by Tolkien in his published *Letters* where he agrees that Christianity forms at least a portion of the foundation for his fantasy. Tolkien notes in his May 12, 1965, letter to W.H. Auden that he “actually intended it [*The Lord of the Rings*] to be consonant with Christian thought and belief” (355).

Because Tolkien acknowledges his creative indebtedness to his Christianity, this leads to a discussion about what comprises Christian environmental ethics, in general, and Catholic environmentalism, in particular. By examining environmental passages within the Bible and by analyzing papal encyclicals that focus on environmental guardianship, we find that Tolkien correctly calls his work “Christian” and “Catholic.” Tolkien, YHWH, and various Popes all rebuke humans for their lazy, callous, selfish, and ignorant environmental records and offer alternatives to help humanity improve their environmental ethics and the non-human environment’s well-being. Borrowing from Judeo-Christian Scriptures, deuterocanonical texts (e.g., the Books of Wisdom and Ecclesiasticus), and papal encyclicals, Tolkien’s texts teach that righteous environmental behavior requires consideration for biodiversity, obedience to divine commands, reverence for the non-human environment’s sensory imagery, and an ethical, moderate use of environmental resources to meet human needs (e.g., shelter, fuel, defense, and sustenance). Consequently, Tolkien’s works also borrow from and (to varying degrees) support two of the dominant Catholic environmental worldviews, *Nature is Divine* and

Nature as the Realm of Supernatural Forces,⁶³ while rebuking those who believe that (and/or behave as if) *Nature is* (merely) *matter* to use without consideration of how such a stance will affect the non-human environment. I, therefore, believe that DiPaolo is right to point out throughout his work that Tolkien's fantasies strongly reject "Dominion Christianity," the anti-environmental philosophy of the *Nature is matter* worldview and the type of bastardized, corrupted Christianity Lynn White Jr. scathingly derides in his work "The Historical Roots of Our Ecologic Crisis."

Tolkien's Middle-earth fantasies borrow from this tradition, because the general quality of an individual and a People in Middle-earth directly corresponds with his, her, or their environmental behavior(s) and attitude(s). YHWH's example of meeting the various physical needs of non-human animals and flora (which demonstrates His compassionate and conscious effort to sustain the lives of these animals and flowers) implores Judeo-Christian adherents to emulate this behavior and spirit. In other words, as Robin Attfield suggests (24), the fact that God cares for the various plants and non-human animals in passages such as Psalm 104 leads one to conclude that YHWH wants the continuation of biodiversity and that humans should work to achieve this divine desire.⁶⁴ While humans may kill non-human animals for food (or for defense) and use

63. Since God created the world, *Nature is Divine* (i.e., Christians should cherish and protect that which God has made). Because God created the world and because fallen spirits endeavor to corrupt the world and humanity as a way to challenge God, *Nature is a Realm of Supernatural Forces*.

64. Psalm 104:10-11 references how YHWH causes water to exist in a valley for feral, non-human animals (e.g., wild donkeys), while Psalm 104:14 notes that YHWH enables grass to prosper for the benefit of cattle. Psalm 104:12, 16-17, meanwhile, mentions that YHWH causes trees to grow in order to provide dwellings for birds; Psalm 104:18, likewise, focuses on YHWH's creation of mountains for the sake of goats and cliffs for badgers. In Psalm 104:24-26, the writer praises YHWH for His creation and provision for the earth's animals, in general, and the non-human animals of the oceans, in particular. Luke 13:15 includes Jesus implying his blessing on the act of caring for animals by providing them with water, while Luke 14:5 depicts Jesus praising the hypothetical action of saving an ox that fell into a cistern. Jesus also notes in Matthew 6:26-30, Matthew 10:29, and Luke 12:6 that God provides for and meets the needs of non-human beings, such as birds and flowers. Paul, in Romans 8:19-22, also references the fact that YHWH created (and will eventually redeem) the earth and the non-human animals and plants within it.

animals for work, YHWH will reward and punish humans based, in part, on their records as environmental guardians of YHWH's creation that He called "very good" in Genesis 1:31.

By portraying the Valar and the Maiar as beings who create a beautiful Arda that Ilúvatar first designs and by observing Morgoth's fall and subsequent corruption of all of Arda (including the behavior and attitudes of the Children), Tolkien's Middle-earth *Legendarium* often parallels the general historical events that the Judeo-Christian Scriptures discuss.⁶⁵ Humanity's work in nature dates from the origins of the earth,

65. According to Judeo-Christianity, Adam and Eve's sin causes the Fall; however, the rebellion of Satan and the demons occurs prior to Adam and Eve's sin; therefore, negative influences existed on the earth, despite the fact that YHWH's created earth and humanity had not yet "fallen." Satan's devious cunning and deceit contributes to humanity's Fall, which means that some commonality exists between the Fall of earth and the corruption of Middle-earth, albeit Morgoth's corrupting of Middle-earth occurs *before* the birth of the Peoples of Middle-earth, whereas Adam and Eve enjoy a non-fallen earth for a period of time (although corrupted spirits lurk nearby).

Ilúvatar instructs the Ainur's singing, *and* he enjoys their songs, as they learn how to sing harmonically during the First Theme. Consequently, in contrast to what other Tolkien scholars like Flieger suggest, Ilúvatar enjoys the Ainur's songs *before* he improves the Music with a Second Theme, before he encourages the Ainur to qualify this Second Theme by improving it still further, and before Ilúvatar enables a final improvement after the end of the world, as Jonathan McIntosh observes (57-58). McIntosh argues that the aforementioned passages in Tolkien's *Ainulindalë* also parallel the "good" and "very good" Creation model within The Bible, as well as YHWH's instruction to Adam and Eve to continue to work to work amid and beautify God's Creation, which will eventually be renewed after the return of Christ (58-59).

Somewhat akin to Tolkien's partial borrowing from the Judeo-Christian tradition of the Fall, Tolkien also borrows from the Judeo-Christian tradition of the Creator creating an even better world, despite the rebellion of created beings. Although many of the angels and then the original pair of humans rebel, YHWH promises the Messiah who will redeem the world. Christians believe that, because of Christ's sacrifice and after thousands of years of countless problems, Believers will enjoy an even better heavenly experience than Adam and Eve's experience in the Garden of Eden. In Tolkien's *Ainulindalë*, Ilúvatar overcomes Morgoth's dissonant chords by combining them with Ilúvatar's own harmonies, which, in turn, results in a more magnificent Theme. The Vision that follows the Music, moreover, enhances the Music, in part, by demonstrating that the wonders within Ilúvatar's Theme and the particular chords that the Ainur add contribute to improving the world prior to the awakening of the Elves and the other Peoples (McIntosh 59-60). Consequently, Tolkien's tales concerning the origins of Arda and beyond do not show that each subsequent cycle/age of the world deteriorates to an even greater extent than what preceded it (59-60). Therefore, the Vision is even more important than the earlier Music in the *Ainulindalë* (60). As McIntosh argues,

Even the discord introduced into the Music by Melkor ultimately serves not to lessen its beauty but provides Ilúvatar with the occasion to enter again into the Music and make it more beautiful still. Where the Ainur's Music alone is concerned, therefore, the pattern is clearly not the

according to Judeo-Christianity. When God commands humanity to “take care” of and “to work” within the Garden of Eden in Genesis 2:15, this means that humans should maintain God’s creation by beautifying the physical environment and by maintaining it (qtd. in Attfield 25). In order to achieve these environmental aims, this requires that humans practice wholesome shepherding of plants and non-human animals, that humans should perceive the beauties of the non-human environment, and that humanity should eat in moderation.⁶⁶ Work—not idleness—lies at the center of Christian environmental stewardship. Such labor calls for tenderness so that non-human fauna and flora also benefit. Somewhat similar to the implied appreciation of non-human animals that is conveyed by not listing them among the original available subjects for the human diet (Gen. 2:15, 1:28-31), YHWH desires that the sympathetic imaginations of humans will lead them to appreciate the inherent beauty of non-human nature (e.g., trees) (Gen. 2:9). Prior to the Fall, therefore, humanity’s ability to perceive wholesome aesthetics, to work with the non-human environment, and to pursue nourishment remained pure by lacking all callousness and selfishness toward the non-human environment.

The evil influences of the demented Vala and Maia spirits in Tolkien’s Middle-earth fantasies possess some origins within the Catholic environmental traditions that allude to the centrality of the problem of self-centered callousness and its effect on the environment. Drawing upon the tradition of *Nature as the Realm of Supernatural Forces*, Per Binde observes that one Catholic theory argues that environmental catastrophes can

metaphysically entropic one of an inescapable loss of beauty or being, but rather a progressive, eschatological movement from glory to greater glory. (58-59)

66. It appears that, in addition to providing counsel on how much to eat, YHWH originally directed the humans and non-human animals to eat only vegetables (Gen. 2:15, 1:28-31a).

occur because of the impishly destructive actions of evil spirits (22). This ideology helps to explain why horticulturalists in the 1700s still believed that fell winds could influence the lives of plants, which led them to counsel the transplanting of flowers only if the wind blew west or south⁶⁷ (Wulf, *Brother* 11). Moreover, this ideology may help to explain one reason why the devoutly Catholic Tolkien portrays the selfish Dark Lords as callous manipulators of Middle-earth's environment. In scenes featuring environments like the Dead Marshes, Tolkien mentions a wind with the implication that an evil force (from the *east* where Sauron dwells) negatively affects the environment—including its corrupted flora (*Two*, "Passage" 615). The Downfall of Númenor, moreover, should especially remind readers of the tradition of *Nature as the Realm of Supernatural Forces* tradition. Ilúvatar and the Valar elect to destroy the rebellious Númenóreans and the island of Númenor with water; however, they also opt to compassionately save the Faithful by

67. Tolkien's *Legendarium* parallels a particular historical scientific debate, as well as multiple biblical passages in regard to environmental destruction by fire and water. Fantasies, such as *The Silmarillion*, note that Morgoth spreads devastating fires across large swaths of Middle-earth by annihilating the Two Lamps and mention that the Valar destroy Númenor and heavily reshape Middle-earth's western coasts by unleashing an enormous tidal wave that engulfs the rebellious Númenóreans and their island ("Quenta: Beginning" 35-37, "Akallabêth" 278-80). Since one may argue that late eighteenth-century and even nineteenth-century scientists remained indebted to religion for their views of nature, the late eighteenth-century debate concerning the world's origin between the Vulcanists and the Neptunists may also partially derive from religious sources. As discussed by Wulf, while the *Vulcanists* believed cataclysmic disasters (e.g., volcanoes) created the earth, the *Neptunists* were convinced that the movements of water formed the world (*Invention* 94). In Gen. 1:2, the Bible states that "the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters" just prior to God's creation of the world. In Genesis 7, however, God annihilates much of the earth by unleashing torrential rain that causes the Flood; in Gen. 19:24, YHWH incinerates Sodom and Gomorrah by unleashing "burning Sulphur." Similarly, 2 Pet. 3:10 declares that God will return and destroy the unrighteous "by fire." Somewhat akin to Tolkien's aforementioned texts, therefore, such biblical passages parallel (to some degree) the aforementioned scientific theories of creation through destruction by fire or water.

This sense of starting anew following apocalyptic events also somewhat parallels the nineteenth and twentieth century environmental activist and writer John Muir's observation that "Destruction [. . .] is always creation," which he said while witnessing an earthquake in Yosemite Valley in 1872 (Wulf, *Invention* 381).

enabling them to arrive to Middle-earth safely, despite the epic storm and winds of divine judgment (e.g., *Return*, “Appendix A” 1013).

Because of their callous and ignorant spirits, some selfish humans view non-human nature as merely *matter* at the disposal of far superior humans⁶⁸ (16-18). This type of ideology can foster a destructive attitude in humanity that stymies the human ability to perceive the aesthetic beauty of non-human nature and prevents humans from seeing how the community’s well-being suffers when supposed Christians (and humans, in general) consider the non-human world as mere things to seize and exploit. Tolkien references some of the evils caused by the aforementioned unfortunate conviction that reduces the earth and its flora and fauna to only objectified things to use for whatever whim in multiple passages, including those that feature the clear-cutting of myriads of trees by increasingly evil Númenóreans, as I discuss in greater detail in chapter three.

Such antagonistic and greedy approaches to nature were not always as typical among Catholics and other Christians, for another Catholic environmental tradition considers *Nature as Divine*, a conviction among Christians that gained prominence in the 1100s (Binde 18-21). Akin to the beliefs and actions of its most famous advocate, St. Francis of Assisi, the *Nature as Divine* philosophy encourages humans to treat non-human nature with respect and with tenderness, as they shepherd the world that God created⁶⁹ (18-20). To help combat the human tendency toward callous, self-centered

68. Attfield believes that Stoicism probably contributed to the adoption of unethical environmental practices that advocated the notion of using natural resources with reckless abandon (15-16), because the Stoics thought “the irrational existed for the sake of the rational, and that people could do with nonhuman nature as they pleased without moral constraint” (22). This selfish, callous, and ignorant trend accelerated during the first half of the seventeenth century and again during the nineteenth century (22).

69. Late seventeenth-century and early eighteenth-century Quakers like William Penn similarly advocated that humans should treat the environment well, because God created nature (Wulf, *Brother* 23). The eighteenth-century British writer and critic of literature, architecture, painting, flowers, birds, and other

practices that exploit the environment, St. Francis of Assisi (according to Catholic tradition) advocated that plants held a central place within “the community of living things” and that humans must use caution when felling trees in order to maintain *environmental sustainability*⁷⁰ (Kiser 230-31). Humans could not and should not, therefore, recklessly use and abuse the physical environment at will. Instead, Assisi’s example showed that humans should cherish and guard the environment; in this regard, Assisi’s beliefs and behavior parallel Christian environmental teachings.

Building from these religious traditions, Tolkien characterizes the quality of characters and Peoples based on their attempts to resolve the tension between endeavoring to beautify and to maintain the world’s environment. This means that characters and groups in Tolkien’s tales are judged, in part, based on their care for the well-being of the flora, soils, waterways, and landscapes of their realms. Likewise, Tolkien’s texts teach that the sick, the weak, the elderly, the defenseless, and the marginalized among the Free Peoples and species of flora and fauna not mutilated by Morgoth and Sauron should be helped. Whenever the Free Peoples consume (or otherwise use) the land, waters, flora, and fauna of Middle-earth, Tolkien’s texts teach that it is entirely acceptable to do so to satisfy the Free Peoples’ essential needs of fuel, shelter, defense, and nutrition. However, when the Free Peoples use natural resources because of their desire for knowledge and because of their aesthetic yearnings, Tolkien’s

topics, John Ruskin, also encouraged the study of the non-human environment, because such work “glorifies and illuminates both God, whose work it is, and, by reflection, those who study it” (Hunt).

70. In this respect, I concur with Campbell’s analysis that, because Gandalf displays an “egalitarian” attitude toward the environment (170), Gandalf shares some of the same characteristics that St. Francis of Assisi apparently exhibited. Gandalf demonstrates his egalitarianism in a variety of ways (e.g., by talking to Middle-earth’s flora and fauna and by fighting against Sauron on behalf of not only the Peoples but also the physical environment of Middle-earth).

works teach that more exceptions exist. Whether characters borrow or take from the environment for the purposes of fuel, shelter, defense, nutrition, knowledge or aesthetics, however, Tolkien repeatedly emphasizes the need for characters (and readers) to “respect” the intrinsic value of the non-human environment, as well as the lives and cultures of other Peoples (e.g., *Silmarillion*, “Quenta: Aulë” 45-46). Wholesome individuals and cultures “respect” the environment and other sentient beings, because *nature is divine*, since it derives from the mind of Ilúvatar, and therefore, the non-human environment is not simply *matter* to use and abuse at will. In other words, righteous individuals and Peoples endeavor to meet the various needs of the less powerful and to minimize their threatened status. Likewise, one reason why Tolkien’s texts praise and condemn individual characters, as well as groups of Peoples, based on their willingness to sacrifice themselves to defend the lives of their subjects, workers, livestock, and/or land. Moreover, another reason why Tolkien’s texts praise and condemn characters and Peoples is because of their efforts (or the lack thereof) to preserve flora, soils, waters, fauna, landscapes, and sentient beings on principle—rather than simply trying to maximize short-term economic prosperity for themselves. To satisfy such aspirations, Tolkien’s protagonists must weed invasive and/or genetically altered species of flora and fauna, as well as oppose philosophies that parallel the destructive, monopolizing behavior of weeds in ethical, moral, and spiritual terms. Tolkien’s texts, consequently, present the ecosadistic, selfish characteristics of deceitfulness, ignorance, callousness, laziness, and gluttony as some of the antagonists that one may thwart with honesty, selflessness, sensitivity, worthwhile work/utility, and generosity. However, as Tolkien himself notes in his September 25, 1954, letter to Naomi Mitchison, Tolkien includes much more than the

skewed summary of “Some reviewers” who, because of their “hurry,” falsely divide Tolkien’s texts along the lines of moral binaries (*Letters* 197). Therefore, each of the Free Peoples of Middle-earth (and the leading individuals among these groups) exhibit some poor traits as guardians of their human (or human-like) subjects and of their non-human environments; the level of their qualities depends on their remorsefulness and repentance for behaving selfishly and holding a self-centered worldview. Because all of the Free Peoples display (among other failings) environmental shortcomings and because the Free Peoples live in a variety of ecosystems, Tolkien’s Middle-earth fantasies provide multiple examples for readers, as well as communities, to emulate—and, at other times, avoid.

By describing the necessity—and sometimes the righteousness of—weeding certain species of flora and fauna, Tolkien’s texts dispute some of the reported teachings of St. Francis; yet, by doing so, Tolkien’s works parallel the directives within Judeo-Christian Scriptures.⁷¹ To help preserve plants and to reduce human greed and callousness, seemingly, St. Francis of Assisi taught that there were no weeds, that no hierarchy of beings existed, and that humans should cease cultivating vineyards and agricultural crops and should, instead, depend on God for sustenance (Kiser 236-39). By removing the notion that humans rose above non-human animals and far above flora and by arguing against the idea that some fauna and flora needed to be weeded out of existence (i.e., by democratizing nature), St. Francis of Assisi and his followers hoped to

71. While I have been unable to discover primary sources that explicitly discuss Tolkien’s views of St. Francis of Assisi, because he was a devout Catholic and because of his knowledge of the medieval period as an English academic, Tolkien would have certainly known about and generally appreciated St. Francis of Assisi’s affection for the physical environment. Nonetheless, as I subsequently discuss, Tolkien would have disagreed with some of St. Francis of Assisi’s environmental ideas as well.

reverse the long-standing tendency among Christians to treat non-human nature in a cavalier manner. St. Francis of Assisi's alleged beliefs concerning the supposed lack of weeds actually contradicts biblical passages, however; indeed, the Bible includes many types of "weeds." *Thorns, thistles, and briars*, for instance, represent some of the general types of weeds that devolved because of the Fall, and therefore afflict humanity, in general, and (more specifically) men (Gen. 3:17-19; Job 31:40). The environment, in other words, suffered (and continues to suffer) a fall that parallels humanity's Fall (Rom. 8:22-23); consequently, weeds can thrive because of God's cursing of humanity.⁷²

St. Francis of Assisi, however, contradicts various biblical passages by reportedly condemning the idea that a hierarchy of beings exists, which means some of his failings also match those of the wizard Radagast in Tolkien's Middle-earth fantasies. When God discusses the creation of humanity, He repeatedly orders humans to "rule" the earth and all beings, entities, and landscapes within it, which God gave to his human stewards so that humans could "work it and take care of it" (e.g., Gen. 1:26, 28-30; Gen. 2:15). While God and the angels exceed humanity's position, humans clearly rank ahead of the rest of creation in the hierarchy/chain of being, according to Judeo-Christianity. While more debatable, this hierarchical trend may extend still further, based on the distinguishing of some groups of species in the order of creation. God created "seed-bearing vegetables and trees" on day three of creation (Gen 1:11), fish and birds on day five (Gen 1:20-21), and (in the earlier portions of day six) livestock animals, "creatures that move along the ground" (e.g., probably non-human animals with short legs or no legs), and feral animals

72. If humans embrace slothful laziness, weeds spread, because weeds appear in order to create more work for fallen humanity (Prov. 24:30-34). Passages like Matthew 13:25-30, meanwhile, provide followers of Christianity with knowledge pertaining to weeds by instructing agricultural workers to destroy weeds at the harvest so that the farm workers can better distinguish the weeds from the crops.

(Gen 1:24-25). Later on day six, God created the first representative of His environmental guardians: humanity (Gen 1:26). Because God empowers humans to *rule* and because humans represent the final creation of the first week, this may imply that God’s creation follows the rank of importance—with each grouping outranking the previous set of groups (e.g., birds and fish represent beings of more value than plants but of less value than the other animals). Tolkien’s works may allude to this aforementioned biblical tradition concerning the hierarchy of Creation, albeit by depicting Ilúvatar ordering the Valar to create the world, as well as the fauna, flora, soils, landscapes, air, and waters within it, before the awakening of the Children (e.g., *Silmarillion* “Quenta: Beginning” 35).

Tolkien’s Middle-earth fantasies certainly contrast with St. Francis’s reported teachings on hierarchy; consequently, Tolkien’s works parallel the idea of the hierarchy of creation (which exists in various religions, including Judaism and Christianity). In addition to Tolkien himself, the majority of Tolkien’s characters repeatedly emphasize that Ilúvatar’s Children outrank the fauna and the flora of Middle-earth. Even Yavanna herself distinguishes particular types of flora by selecting a specific floral group to privilege: trees (*Silmarillion*, “Quenta: Aulë” 45). Because Tolkien’s beloved Hobbits live in an agricultural society, one can also suggest that Tolkien’s works similarly privilege “seed-bearing vegetables” as well.⁷³ Even among the Children,⁷⁴ rankings exist. While the Elves rank as the Firstborn and Men follow afterward, Ilúvatar only *adopts* Aulë’s Dwarves (*Silmarillion*, “Quenta: Aulë” 44). Yavanna’s Ents, likewise, rise in power during the era in which the Elves and (increasingly) Men dominate Middle-earth;

73. Genesis 1:10, 12, and 29 reference this general type of flora.

74. As I explain elsewhere, I regard the Dwarves and the Ents as Children of Ilúvatar as well.

thus, the Ents always remain second to another People (*Silmarillion*, “Quenta: Aulë” 45-46).

Whether or not these hierarchical theories are accurate, however, the Bible certainly distinguishes *trees* from other types of flora and separates non-human animals into five groups: fish, birds, livestock, short and/or no-legged creatures (e.g., reptiles, insects, and worms), and wild animals, which is different than Francis’ reported teachings and Radagast’s example. Moreover, humans outrank all of God’s earthly creation. Because God curses snakes and humans by causing them to eternally mistrust and fight one another, this may also help to explain why “creatures that move along the ground” strike fear among many humans. This divine curse may also explain why many humans regard worms, insects, and reptiles as the least of all non-human animals rather than (as I discuss in the previous paragraph) the original, higher placement of snakes in the order of creation, according to the aforementioned theory. By (supposedly) preaching that no hierarchy existed among the animals (including humanity), St. Francis of Assisi preached a heretical view, according to the Judeo-Christian Scriptures. By overvaluing non-human nature, St. Francis of Assisi somewhat parallels Radagast the Brown,⁷⁵ who forsakes his mission to help the Children and, instead, mainly studies and communes with the birds and beasts of Middle-earth. Consequently, I disagree with several of Campbell’s suggestions, including his beliefs that Tolkien borrows from St. Francis of Assisi’s

75. Campbell also notes that St. Francis of Assisi and Radagast parallel one another because each display great love for birds and because each wear brown garments (170).

To create his “mythology for England,” Tolkien, an Old English and medievalist specialist, may have partially modeled Radagast, the isolated lover of birds and beasts, on St. Guthlac as well. After all, the “greedy” ravens (in addition to the fishes and the “beasts” of the area where St. Guthlac lives) listen to and are fed by the often-solitary early medieval Anglo-Saxon hermit St. Guthlac, according to Felix (51, 53, 55).

reputation fairly neutrally to help create the characters of Gandalf and Radagast, that St. Francis did not overemphasize the physical environment, and that St. Francis did not underemphasize the uniqueness of humanity (170).

The late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Protestant theologian G.H. Pember also provides a theory regarding the hierarchy of animals; his *Animals: Their Past and Future*, moreover, shares some kinship with Tolkien's works. According to Pember, God divided animals into *six great tribes*, such as cattle, birds, and beasts of the field, each of which were named by Adam (Pember 9; Gen. 2: 19-20). Because these three groups were named by the first representative of the sixth and greatest animal tribe (i.e., humanity), the final two tribes that lack specific names, fish and "the creeping things," rank below the others (9). Pember, moreover, believes the faces (i.e., humanity, eagle, ox, and lion) of the Cherubim/Living Creatures provides additional evidence for this theory, because these faces refer to the uniqueness of the four chief tribes (i.e., humanity, birds, cattle, and beasts) (Pember 11-13). Pember also notes that Gen. 9:9-10 lists the same four groups in the covenant promised by God to Noah (14-15). Furthermore, the images of the cherubim appeared in the tabernacle, on the Holy of Holies' veil, and upon the Ark, which indicates YHWH's profound affection for non-human animals and His promise to restore at least some of the non-human animals in the future (Exod. 26:1, 31-33; Pember 16, 43-48).

Pember's ideas share some commonality with Tolkien's fantasies. Besides placing Men as the central People after the end of the Third Age, Tolkien features Eagles as the greatest of the birds. Based on Pember's groupings, Radagast's failure appears even more

pronounced because Radagast only concerns himself with birds and beasts; using Pember's theories, therefore, Radagast ignores two-thirds of the animal *tribes*.⁷⁶

Although perhaps less pronounced, Tolkien's fantasies also arguably imply a hierarchy among non-human animals. Based on the amount of text that refers to horses and the tone concerning their treatment, Tolkien appears to suggest that a special relationship exists between humans and horses. This is unsurprising, since Tolkien served in a cavalry unit at Exeter College, Oxford, where he trained horses (Garth, *Tolkien* 24). Indeed, Garth observes that "Tolkien had a strong affinity with horses, which he loved" (*Tolkien* 24). An early but important fragment, *The Fall of Gondolin*, meanwhile, includes Morgoth's corrupted "creatures of blood": snakes, wolves,⁷⁷ dogs, weasels, owls, falcons, and flies (*Book . . . 2* 168, 167, 196, 212n); of these creatures, snakes, weasels, and flies each possess no legs or short legs, while owls and falcons, as birds, possess fewer similarities with humans than animals like horses.⁷⁸ Tolkien continued to include evil winged creatures in his later works, such as bats, Balrogs, crows, crebain,⁷⁹ and the winged steeds of the Ringwraiths. Importantly, even among the greatest of the

76. In Tolkien's fantasies, this number is even higher, since Radagast largely ignores not only Men but also the rest of the Free Peoples.

77. In the latter half of the 1800s, the conservationist George Perkins Marsh noticed that wolves returned to various locations in Europe because of the absence of many men, who were waging war against Napoleon's French forces (Wulf, *Invention* 346-47). Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* includes a minor reference that parallels Marsh's observation. Within *The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King*, Butterbur notes that, because of the Rangers' departure from the north to fight Sauron's forces further to the south in Gondor, wolves migrate to the Bree area for the first time in many years ("Homeward" 971).

78. Scientific classification supports this notion, since these birds, while in the same kingdom and phylum as mammals (e.g., horses and humans), are in a different scientific class.

79. Because Tolkien features Saruman using the crow-like crebain birds as spies to track the Fellowship members who oppose Sauron (*Fellowship*, "Ring" 278-80), Tolkien's depiction somewhat parallels the recent scientific discoveries that crows recognize particular humans who antagonized them years before and that crows inform other crows (e.g., their descendants) what these human enemies look like (Ackerman 107, 113-14).

birds, the Eagles, Tolkien's narrator notes that one must remain wary among the fierce and "proud creatures" (e.g., *Hobbit*, "Out" 95).

As far as fish and "creeping" animals are concerned, Tolkien mentions (in addition to various groups and individuals eating fish) the horrifying Watcher in the Water and the irredeemable dragons. Consequently, these characterizations indicate that Tolkien's ordering of these non-human animal *tribes* generally follows the pattern that Pember describes (i.e., these animals appear lower in the hierarchy of creation and/or are irredeemable). While Tolkien names few water creatures, Sam compares the notorious Watcher in the Water in *The Fellowship of the Ring* to "snakes" ("Journey" 301). Thus, while not the typical image of a fish or a snake, the Watcher lives in an environment where fish can dwell and conjures images of the most notorious non-human animal in Judeo-Christianity: the snake. The serpentine Great Dragons/Worms (especially Glaurung and Smaug), moreover, rank among the fiercest enemies of the Free Peoples and again remind readers of the snake's cursed place in the order of being in Judeo-Christianity.

Consequently, Tolkien's texts argue that successful environmental guardianship necessitates that humanity must maintain biodiversity, in general, and preserve various flora, fauna, landscapes, and bodies of water, in general, which may entail the curtailing of an invasive species population. The hierarchy of beings, therefore, implies an ordering of priority in meeting the essential needs of individuals among these species and Peoples, which may, in turn, infringe on or negate the needs of individual representatives of the species lower in the hierarchy so long as it does not willfully endanger the existence of

the other, “lower” species. Tolkien’s works, in other words, articulate a moderated form of Free People-centered environmental guardianship.

The messages within Tolkien’s fantasies, moreover, generally follow Paul Halligan’s description of Aquinas’ environmental ideas (which also fall within the previously discussed *Nature is Divine* tradition) to an even greater degree. Like Tolkien’s works, Aquinas’ writings reveal that he also believed that “mild” human-centeredness is the appropriate environmental worldview (Halligan 791-93), since God—though He loves the entire physical environment—created and maintains an environmental hierarchy and displays greater affection for certain species (e.g., humans outrank all other animals) (769). Because God created humans as the premier species, Aquinas suggests that environmental ethics dictates that humans must contemplate how their actions and beliefs will affect later generations and remedy any problematic traits (788). Nonetheless, although Aquinas states that humans should treat non-human animals decently because God desires it and although Aquinas writes that humans should preserve biodiversity for the sake of future humans (788-89, 804), Tolkien’s works are more environmentally focused, since Tolkien’s fantasies repeatedly suggest that humans must treat animals well because of the inherent value of each animal. In any case, whereas plants clearly fall below non-human animals in Aquinas’ environmental hierarchy (789-90), Tolkien’s texts describe the maiming or death of a tree with as much pathos (if not more) as the scenes featuring something/someone harming animals.⁸⁰ Aquinas (like Tolkien), however, states

80. Tolkien’s emotional and ethical appeals regarding the treatment of trees shares some kinship with St. Francis of Assisi’s deconstruction of the hierarchy of the Great Chain of Being, for Tolkien’s Middle-earth fantasies complicate the ease in which observers can clearly place the needs of trees beneath those of non-human animals.

that the universe is worth knowing more about and that humans should routinely display appreciation for the environment (776). Consequently, Aquinas urges people to seek environmental understanding and not to just consume natural resources, in part, because humans prove happier when they behave in this manner (793). Tolkien's works often include versions of the aforementioned idea; for example, the villains in Tolkien's fantasies (e.g., the Orcs and Lotho Sackville-Baggins) are usually presented as unhappy, selfish, and callous consumers and destroyers. According to Halligan, Aquinas' environmental views can gratify those "saddened by consumerism and the consequent harm to plants, animals, land, water, and air. Yet it shows how such an environmentalist may also be a proclaimed humanist and theist" (806). I contend that Tolkien's environmental messaging within certain scenes of his Middle-earth fantasies, such as the "Scouring of the Shire" and the subsequent rehabilitation of the Shire, strongly parallel Halligan's aforementioned characterization of the environmental statements within Aquinas' texts.

Describing proper environmental shepherding—including methods for curtailing selfish consumption and the roots of this conduct among humans (e.g., ignorance and callousness)—also occurs in papal encyclicals penned while Tolkien wrote portions of his masterpiece *The Lord of the Rings*, which he eventually published in 1954-55. For example, Pope Pius XII's speech concerning rural life (which he delivered on November 15, 1946, to the Convention of the National Confederation of Farm Owner-Operators in Rome) parallels this sentiment. Pope Pius XII argues that farmers perform an act of godliness through their craft: "Under the sun of the Heavenly Father your lives are

dedicated to bringing forth from the depths of the earth the abundant riches which His hand has hidden there for you. Your contact with Mother Earth also has a deep social significance because your families are not merely consumer-communities but also and especially producer-communities” (“Pope”). Agricultural labor, therefore, can help *reduce* laziness, while the resulting crop can potentially benefit *many*; consequently, agricultural labor can reduce the laziness and self-centered callousness endemic within consumer-centered societies. Similarly, Pope Pius XII, in his aforementioned 1946 speech, counsels that farmers should behave as “adaptable, attentive, and active stewards of [their] native soil, which is to be used but never exploited” (“Pope”). To work as “adaptable, attentive, and active” guardians of the environment, farmers must invest much time, thought, and energy into learning more about their lands, human beings (e.g., nutrition requirements for humans), and the non-human environment overall. Likewise, by including a restraining order on production, Pope Pius XII not only references the economic utility that notes the unprofitability of harming non-human nature, but also, by including the phrase “never exploited,” Pope Pius XII alludes to the unrighteousness of treating non-human nature in a selfishly callous manner. Repeatedly, Pope Pius XII warns Catholics against self-centered heartlessness, instructing them to refrain from simply pursuing monetary wealth for themselves. Within the “Rural Culture” section of his 1946 speech, Pope Pius XII encourages farmers “to aid one another within the family circle and amongst families, from home to home. All of these qualities we must have animated with a true religious spirit, for without such a spirit these very virtues tend to degenerate into unbridled greed for profit” (“Pope”). To avoid the sins associated with permitting one’s pursuit of inordinate wealth to harm others, therefore, Pius XII

champions the ability for farming to foster greater community within the nuclear family, the extended family, and the local community. Tolkien writes works with messages similar to Pius XII's aforementioned claims within chapters like the "Scouring of the Shire." In this chapter of *The Lord of the Rings*, Tolkien repeatedly notes how Lotho's avarice destroys the (relatively) healthy farming practices in—and the local culture of—the Shire in order to try to gain more wealth for himself. One reason for Lotho's increasing avarice is Saruman's influence, for the fallen wizard seeks to dominate and to destroy, rather than fulfill his Valar-sanctioned mission to rehabilitate Middle-earth.

Tolkien, consequently, consciously and unconsciously borrowed from Judeo-Christian teachings and deuterocanonical writings concerning the environment when he wrote his Middle-earth fantasies. Similar to the Bible, Tolkien's fantasies teach that humans should guard the well-being of the environment. Therefore, humans should typically strive toward moderation (e.g., in regard to the quantity of agricultural yields) and should oppose pollution, deforestation, counterproductive water projects, and any activities that endanger the existence and welfare of the world's fauna, flora, landscapes, soils, and bodies of water. If Tolkien's Peoples refuse these ethics outright or abandon such righteous behavior, they face divine punishment. Tolkien's works, therefore, resist advocates favoring the *Nature as matter* worldview, as well as the voice of St. Francis of Assisi, who taught that no hierarchies exist, and therefore, no weeding should take place. Tolkien's works instead argue that, as shepherds/guardians of their realms, the Peoples weed the portions of Ilúvatar's Arda that Morgoth corrupted, which means Tolkien's texts also include elements of the *Nature is Divine* and the *Nature as the Realm of Supernatural Forces* perspectives. Tolkien's Middle-earth fantasies parallel the teachings

of papal encyclicals as well. This is the case for multiple reasons. Like the messages of various papal encyclicals concerning God and the primary world, Tolkien's texts refer to Ilúvatar designing the world. Moreover, Tolkien's fantasies judge the qualities of the individual characters and the various Peoples based on their willingness to share and not hoard environmental resources and knowledge, and Tolkien's Middle-earth tales note the problems resulting from immoderate desires to possess. While paralleling Aquinas' model of mild human-centeredness, Tolkien's texts teach readers to value the environment, in general, regardless of how it benefits humanity, and buck the trend to place all flora below animals by raising trees to be an equal to (or even above, in some cases) the worth of non-human animals.

2.2. Tolkien's Environmental Views and Historical Contexts of "Greening" in Great Britain and Elsewhere

To redress existing environmental challenges and to prevent future problems caused by humans, eighteenth-, nineteenth-, and twentieth-century environmental activists and writers tried to increase human knowledge of the environment and to urge others to reform their environmental ethics. The renowned German scientist-explorer-writer-artist Humboldt proved one of the most important of these environmental writers. It seems likely that Tolkien, who devoted countless hours to philology over the years (Carpenter 43, 70, 136), would have been familiar with Humboldt's exploits and writings, in part, because Tolkien would have known about the writings of Humboldt's brother, Wilhelm, a renowned philologist whose linguistic ideas became increasingly known in

Britain after 1850⁸¹ (Joseph 10-16). Humboldt and other environmental writers of the era, in any case, noted the potential benefits of humans learning to appreciate nature's wonders through their five senses, in general, and by walking, in particular. To deepen human understanding of and love for non-human nature, Humboldt and other environmental writers pursued knowledge on a holistic basis and penned works for audiences other than just specialists. Because of their goals to develop human comprehension of the environment and to reduce human callousness toward other beings and entities in the environment, these environmental advocates included governments and individuals alike within their target audience. Scientists and other environmentalists encouraged governments to reform industrial and urban construction practices and to rehabilitate humanity's treatment of flora (e.g., trees) and non-human animals (e.g., birds); by doing so, these environmental proponents often encouraged governments to establish and then maintain nature reserves, preserves, and parks. This appeal to increase the involvement of national governments in environmental issues helped to foster national symbolic identification with certain aspects of the environment and the mixed blessings of this development.

Partially because of the measured success of government-driven environmental action during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and partially because of the influence of charismatic, influential, and environmentally aware political leaders like

81. Indeed, Wilhelm believed that language should be preserved, in part, because each language represents a "worldview" and a portion of humanity's intellectual "richness" (Pajević 3-4, 2, 4). Wilhelm's aforementioned conviction generally matches Tolkien the philologist's statement "that it is [. . . a] damn shame" that the English language is used by too many people and wish that "the curse of Babel" might return, which Tolkien expresses in his December 9, 1943, letter to his son Christopher (*Letters* 65). Tolkien also discusses his sorrow that the English imperialists attempted to eliminate the Welsh language for many years in his "English and Welsh" essay (164).

Thomas Jefferson, however, the citizens of some countries (e.g., the United States) became overly reliant on governmental action to improve the environment. By the middle of the twentieth century, environmental writers like Aldo Leopold urged readers to stop shirking their own individual responsibility under the self-delusion that governments can fix all environmental crises without the contributions of individuals. By focusing on the roles of individuals and certain groups in renewing non-human nature, Leopold built from a foundation laid by others in earlier centuries that perceived the possibility to expand environmental knowledge and appreciation among humanity by writing to and admonishing industrial operators (e.g., owners of factories and mines), gardeners, farmers, loggers, and urbanites. Because Tolkien's fantasies repeatedly emphasize the importance of individual contributions (e.g., the results of the work by the Fellowship of the Ring and the consequences of the Four Hobbit Companions' return to the Shire's devastated environment), Tolkien's fantasies share a kinship with the aforementioned tenet within Leopold's works. The eras preceding and coinciding with Tolkien's life, therefore, demonstrate the importance of fostering community and understanding between and among various groups. In other words, individuals, governments, cities, rural communities, regional areas, nations, and the world itself are all worthy of respect and all can foster greater environmental knowledge, beneficial work, consideration for others, honesty, and general environmental sensitivity.

Many scientists, writers, politicians, and adventurers (especially in the latter half of the 1700s and afterward) perceived that communal bonds can and should exist between the educational disciplines and within the environment itself. To value merely economic considerations or to fixate on the interests of just oneself, therefore, is

insufficient; instead, the physical, mental, emotional, ethical, and spiritual well-being of other humans should also be a concern. Likewise, the subsequently discussed scientists, adventurers, politicians, and writers living before and during Tolkien's lifetime observe the need to value the well-being of not only humans but also the air, fauna, flora, waters, soils, and landscapes of the earth, as well as the stars and planets beyond the earth.

Indeed, many of these individuals embody the spirit of a community of knowledge (i.e., a global, holistic pursuit of learning and labor) that can often remind readers of Tolkien's own traits and pursuits. Consequently, Tolkien's fantasies contend that human morality and social responsibility must include environmental guardianship, which, in turn, affects how readers should evaluate the morality of the spirits'/Peoples' approach to agriculture, gardening, tree cultivation, parks, reserves, preserves, artwork, and buildings.

Unfortunately, the centuries preceding Tolkien and the era in which Tolkien lived demonstrated a profound need to weed (i.e., remove) problematic views and methods concerning agriculture, gardening, tree cultivation, tree preservation, non-human animal lives, the floral trade, rural sightseeing, architecture, industrialization, urbanization, and commercialization in Britain, the United States, and elsewhere. Sixteenth- and seventeenth-century commoners, for instance, bore the brunt of the selfishness and callousness of the English nobility when aristocrats like Sir Robert Cecil engaged in a combination of bullying and a version of eminent domain by forcing small, local farmers to cede their lands to Cecil and others who wanted the lands of the poor for their own (Wulf and Gieben-Gamal 14-15). As a parallel to this class strife centering on the enjoyment of, use of, and claims to England's non-human environment, antagonisms also plagued the relationship between continental Europeans and the environment. Although

Denmark altered its logging and agrarian practices to stymie environmental problems caused by excessive logging for military purposes during the 1600s (qtd. in Cioc, Linner, and Osborn 399), many other countries behaved much differently. Indeed, the average European mindset helped to produce this problematic stance, because, in the 1700s, European societies generally believed that, when compared to pristine forests, farming produced far superior views (Wulf, *Invention* 67). This widespread belief helped to foster a selfish temperament that produced ignorant, counterproductive tree-felling practices, as I will discuss later in this chapter.

Somewhat similarly, in Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*, wealthy landholders like Lotho Sackville-Baggins seize more and more lands and fell more and more trees—to the detriment of the communities like the Shire and individuals like Lotho (as Farmer Cotton notes) (*Return*, “Scouring” 989-90). Consequently, characters like Lotho appear somewhat akin to the aforementioned Sir Robert Cecil. Because of the teachings of Bombadil and others, Frodo and his companions learn to appreciate the wilderness even more, as mentioned elsewhere. As the renewal of the Shire's environment at the end of *The Return of the King* demonstrates, the Hobbits display a great love for trees and an even greater sense of righteous anger toward those who wantonly harm trees (“Grey” 998-1001).

The actions of Lotho and the Ruffians in his employment should also remind readers of “Enclosures” in Britain. This is the case for three main reasons: Lotho's accumulation of land, his expansion of industrialization and agriculture, and his felling of many trees (such as the Party Tree, the loss of which Sam memorably mourns) that once shaded Hobbit travelers who walked beneath these shade trees (*Return*, “Scouring” 989-

90, 993). The fact that Tolkien pays particular attention to the destruction of the Shire's trees because of the greed of Lotho and the malice of Saruman, the Ruffians, and Sandyman (993, "Grey" 999) somewhat parallels the focus of the mid-seventeenth century Diggers, who condemned aristocrats for felling trees for personal gain (Hessayon 16). Moreover, similar to how the collective effort of the Shire Hobbits (in addition to Galadriel's blessing) causes the Shire's environment to drastically improve (999-1000), the Diggers worked together to produce crops for the benefit of the whole community (Hessayon 6). While the aforementioned example of the agrarian Hobbits sharply contrasts with the actions of the pollution-causing, industrial-minded Lotho (*Return*, "Scouring" 989-90), the Diggers behaved much differently than the industrialists who repeatedly polluted the air, soil, and water of Britain (Hessayon 11-12). Alun Howkins, meanwhile, states that Enclosures during the 1800s occurred more and more often in order to build more houses and industries, to increase the quantity of and sales of agricultural crops, and for the socio-economic elites to more effectively control members of the lower-middle and working class (115, 114, 115-16). Howkins's descriptions of the Enclosures of this era generally parallel Farmer Cotton's characterizations of Lotho's land grabs:

It all began with Pimple [. . .] he wanted to own everything himself, and then order other folk about. It soon came out that he already did own a sight more than was good for him; and he was always grabbing more [. . .] mills and malt-houses and inns, and farms, and leaf-plantations.

[. . .] But at the end o' last year he began sending away loads of stuff, not only leaf. [. . .] And before we knew where we were [the Ruffians] were planted

here and there all over the Shire, and were felling trees and digging and building themselves sheds and houses just as they liked. [. . .] soon they began lording it around and taking what they wanted.

[. . .] if anyone gut ‘uppish’ as they called it, they followed Will [to jail].

So things went from bad to worse. (*Return*, “Scouring” 989)

It seems likely, therefore, that the troubling and damaging process of Enclosures in Britain during the nineteenth century (and several centuries prior to the 1800s) contributed to Tolkien’s depiction of the destruction of the Shire by corrupted Hobbits like Lotho, the Ruffians, and Saruman.

Whether one considers Aldarion’s gift of Mallorn seeds to Gil-galad, Galadriel’s gifts of some blessed earth and a Mallorn seed to Sam, or the Elves’ gifts of birds and trees to Aragorn’s Gondor, Tolkien’s Middle-earth fantasies display an interest in how the Peoples move flora from one land to another. Consequently, the *applicability* of Tolkien’s works includes the likelihood that the movement of flora and fauna between the Free Peoples implicitly represents a modified, morally rectified, idealized version of the European floral trade and the process by which England gained many flowers.⁸²

82. Tolkien’s fantasies romanticize the floral trade by removing many of the moral issues stemming from imperialism by having the Firstborn giving floral gifts to the Secondborn and by having the early Númenóreans giving gifts to the Eldar and to the Men of Middle-earth. Nonetheless, Tolkien subsequently depicts the horrors of imperialism by detailing the Númenóreans’ devolution into brutal imperialists), whereas the earthly floral trade often featured Europeans seizing plants from colonies without ever behaving like the early Númenóreans. While the trade between the Americans and Europeans became more equal (as I will discuss later in this chapter), the Americans were not asking permission from the American Indians before they sent off the floral specimens across the ocean, certainly. Consequently, I intend to suggest that this interaction between the Elves and Men is an idealized form of the floral trade, albeit one that should still raise questions like, “What is the environmental impact of gifting plants and birds?”). I also mean to suggest that Tolkien obviously mourns European imperialism through his characterizations of the interactions between the middle and late Númenóreans and the Men of Middle-earth, as I discuss elsewhere in more detail.

Because of Mark Catesby's explorations of Virginia, Carolina, and the Bahamas in the 1710s and 1720s (which enabled him to gather prized seed collections), England's desire for plants accelerated (Wulf, *Brother* 26-27). Partially because of Catesby's botanic specimens, the British began to yearn for more plants, which eventually resulted in Britain sporting the most plants in the world by the middle of the 1700s (Wulf, *Brother* 133). Because England (and other European countries with colonies) reaped the rewards of possessing colonial settlements, this affected the morality of the gardening of this era, in general, and the floral trade, in particular, perhaps especially for a country like England that featured few flowers even into the early 1700s when compared to subsequent centuries.⁸³ Indeed, because a new political era often corresponds with an alteration of gardening style (Wulf and Gieben-Gamal xi), because Holland gained some flora from the Dutch colonies,⁸⁴ and because of the overall lack of flowers in England, King William and Queen Mary chose to bring flowers from Holland to England in 1689 (*Brother* 8).

Environmental historian Andrea Wulf, in fact, mentions that she was "surprised" to discover that much of the flora, as well as many of the gardening techniques, used by contemporary gardeners only came to Britain in the 1700s (*Brother* 4):

When I then discovered the correspondence between Peter Collinson, a wealthy English merchant, and the American farmer John Bartram, it ushered me into a world in which flowers, trees and shrubs took precedence over war and politics. I realized that the English landscape garden had its roots in America because it was

83. The overall increase in flowers in England (and elsewhere) occurred, in part, because of Thomas Fairchild's creation of the first hybrid flower in 1716 (Wulf, *Brother* 6-7, 15).

84. The Dutch colonies that sent flowers to Holland included Tolkien's homeland in present-day South Africa (Wulf, *Brother* 8).

Bartram who had dispatched from Philadelphia to London hundreds of boxes filled with seeds and plants, furnishing the groves and shrubberies that would later be imitated everywhere in Europe and in America herself. Over four decades Bartram and Collinson transported America's evergreens, magnificent trees and colorful shrubs to Britain, transforming the parkland into a new 'natural' landscape [. . .] a picture began to emerge of a horticultural and botanical revolution which had laid the foundations of the English garden.

[. . .] I saw how letters sent between Collinson and Bartram, but also between famous Enlightenment men like Carl Linnaeus, Hans Sloane, Benjamin Franklin and Joseph Banks, fostered an international community where plants and ideas could be exchanged across vast distances. By the mid eighteenth century American trees were flooding into Britain, changing the landscape forever, and by the end of the century Banks had added thousands of plants from Africa, Australia and the Far East. In tandem with the expanding empire the numbers of plants that arrived in Britain increased, providing gardeners with an ever wider choice. As the nineteenth century dawned, even the most humble garden could boast exotic flowers and shrubs. The gardens had undergone such seismic changes that England, which only a hundred years earlier had been largely parochial and insular, had emerged as the garden of the world. Now, when I walked out into my little plot, I saw it not as a chaos of unidentifiable plants but as the ordered result of pioneering work by an extraordinary and dedicated group of men who turned their fellow countrymen into a nation of gardeners. (4-5)

Within this passage by Wulf, she mentions several important ideas, including the popularity of gardening in England in the early 1800s, which caused England's culture to believe that "an essential prerequisite for happiness—and perhaps Englishness itself"—rested on whether or not one owned a garden (240). In the aforementioned quotation, Wulf also includes a more expanded definition of what *gardens* means, for she includes not only "flowers" but also "trees" and "shrubs." Indeed, within her "Author's Note," Wulf declares, "I use the word 'garden' in its broadest sense rather than in the narrow meaning of 'kitchen garden'—it also includes lawns, groves, and flowerbeds, as well as the larger cultivated ornamental landscape of an estate" (*Founding xi*). Likewise, while using the American Founding Fathers as examples, Wulf intends for *gardening* to mean not only "kneeling in the flowerbeds weeding," but also when someone is "involved in laying out their gardens, choosing plants (sometimes planting themselves) and directing their gardeners." (xi). Since the Founding Fathers and others needed knowledge of and often worked with flowers, trees, grasses, shrubs, and the architectural designing of homes and landscaping, these types of gardening indicate a trend of thinking and acting in a more holistic manner. In this chapter and elsewhere, I contend that Tolkien's texts also describe the environment, in general, and gardens, in particular, in the rather inclusive manner that Wulf describes in the aforementioned quotations.

Furthermore, within the aforementioned passage by Wulf, readers learn of the cooperation between Americans, Englishmen, and others from around the globe, as they worked together to learn more about and to cherish additional species of flora.⁸⁵ As I subsequently discuss, because of the cooperation among the Free Peoples, the Free

85. Because the English (and other colonial powers) also acquired plants and other goods through coercive measures, however, the floral trade was indicative of the significant problems with colonialism as well.

Peoples likewise learn more about—and cherish—additional environmental species, entities, and forms. Wulf notes that, in the 1700s and the 1800s, English gardens gained myriads of floral species from the colonies in America and elsewhere, with a specific focus on American trees—especially evergreens.⁸⁶ Wulf’s writing also highlights the fact that the floral trade contributed to the rapid rise in the number of gardens, as well as an interest in and love of gardening, in England at the homes of not only the rich but also the middle and working classes. Indeed, American flora, in particular, helped to increase the informality of the gardens of England, as well as the rest of Europe, toward the end of the eighteenth century (Wulf, *Brother* 96). While price initially kept the floral trade in check to some extent, this ceased to be the case, since the price steadily dropped by the 1780s, which resulted in flowers gaining an even greater prominence in English gardens (229, 233). Nevertheless, one should also note that 90% of North American plants died before reaching England, while even more died during the attempt to grow the remaining flora in England (23). While the giving of flora from one group of humans to another demonstrates a reduction in selfishness, the fact that so many plants died during the process necessitates the questions, *Is the floral trade successful? Does the floral trade aid, harm, or effect no net deterioration to the environment’s well-being?* Such questions only accelerated when the nineteenth-century conservationist Marsh noted that, as humans migrate, humans often transport specific kinds of flora, actions that will

86. Since the Elves help to enable this environmental renaissance in Gondor by bringing birds and plants to Aragorn’s previously flora-poor Minas Tirith (e.g., *Return*, “Steward” 947), Tolkien’s Minas Tirith somewhat parallels early eighteenth-century England (which received many trees from America) (Wulf, *Brother* 8, 4-5).

profoundly affect the flora's native ecosystem, as well as the ecosystem that humans introduce the aforementioned flora to⁸⁷ (Wulf, *Invention* 340).

Somewhat akin to the greening of Aragorn's Minas Tirith (a process I discuss in greater detail later in this chapter), the substantial increase of flora in England from the international flora trade, of course, not only went to rural places but also to urban areas. This spike in the quantity and quality of plant life in England contributed to theories regarding the condition of the mental, physical, and spiritual lives of the English, corresponding with the number of green areas and plants living in his/her city. Wulf references the immense variety of gardens in mid-eighteenth-century London alone:

London [. . .] in the summer of 1760 was a city of gardens. There were private gardens, nursery gardens, market gardens and pleasure gardens as well as residential garden squares and parks where Londoners walked along meandering paths, found shade in little pavilions and enjoyed the soothing trickle of fountains. These were the sanctuaries [for various classes] from the coal-smoke, which clouded the air. [. . .]

Even the bustling streets of London were not devoid of plants: on every corner old women and girls sold small bunches of flowers to passers-by, and almost every house had a little yard either at the front or the back which was often crowded with flowerpots and beds. These urban gardens brought, one visitor thought, 'the pleasant enjoyments of a country life in the midst of the hubbub of the town.' By now gardening and horticulture had become a defining part of the English way of life, much more so than on the Continent. (*Brother* 132-33)

87. Later in this chapter, I discuss passages in Tolkien's works that share some kinship with these repercussions of the floral trade.

Even in the mid-1700s, therefore, Londoners displayed a keen appreciation for the sight, smell, and touch of plants in a polluted city that improved their sense of well-being, overall, and of their appreciation for plants, in particular. Likewise, this passage by Wulf explains that many in 1760 London already believed that the sound, sight, smell, (and perhaps) touch of moving water in a fountain could also help to improve the physical and mental health of city dwellers. As the word *sanctuaries* implies, gardens represented *refuges* for urbanites to momentarily escape the problems of pollution and urbanization. The eighteenth-century British horticulturalist Peter Collinson, similarly, believed that working with flora helped to improve one's virtues, including moderation (Wulf, *Brother* 24), while others noted that gardening caused a rise in one's stamina, vigor, and physical prowess (36). The aforementioned passage by Wulf also observes the fact that many 1760 Londoners believed that the city's (many) flowers,⁸⁸ gardens, parks, and fountains meant prosperity and progress. Such beliefs helped to eventually establish "garden cities" and nature reserves, preserves, and parks in cities, as well as rural areas. Readers of Tolkien's works, of course, encounter similarly beneficial ecosystems in Middle-earth.

In the 1800s, gardening in England increasingly referred to morality that demanded an alteration in gardening practices. Wulf and Gieben-Gamal observe that wealthy nineteenth-century Englishmen sometimes altered their gardens to appear less callous toward the working classes, in particular, and to the environment, in general:

By the early nineteenth century attitudes had changed yet again.

Picturesque gardening and the preference for blasted trees and ruins over a neat and tidy village was increasingly seen as selfish. People such as [Humphrey]

88. Floral-inspired jewelry also demonstrated the deep love of flowers felt by many in England (Wulf, *Brother* 238).

Repton's friend Nathaniel Kent, agriculturalist and land improver, promoted model cottages, declaring that it was the 'moral duty' of the landlord to provide 'happiness' for his labourers. So [no] Gothic follies [. . .] near tenant dwellings, and ploughed fields would replace windswept heathland. Crumbling cottages overgrown with honeysuckle might have given the landowner aesthetic pleasure, but they did not provide their inhabitants with adequate living conditions. (182)

The environmental focus in the nineteenth century, consequently, shifted away from the supposed beauties of abandoned buildings and general decay toward the culinary, herbal, and medical utility of crops, as well as toward the erection of healthy homes for the members of the rural working class. Jane Austen's *Sense and Sensibility* (c. 1811) serves as an example of a literary work of the time that voices such concerns. Austen's *Sense and Sensibility* denounces those who believe that wounded trees, desolate houses, and weeds like "nettles" and "thistles" are aesthetically pleasing (qtd. in 182-83).

Unsurprisingly, since more wealthy Englishmen began helping the poor, many English gardeners incorporated their farms and crops (e.g., barley) into their gardens by the 1820s (Wulf and Gieben-Gamal xiv-xv). The aforementioned social rebuke of the wealthy landowners, moreover, coincided with critiques of rich industrialists, in general, and critiques of the ignorant industrial myth that the pollution from their machines resulted from and represented "progress," in particular (Wulf and Gieben Gamal 182-83).

As Tolkien's many passages that detail the destruction of forests note and his paintings of the wounded, dying, and dead trees left in the wake of the misanthropic dragons Glaurung and Smaug imply (e.g., Hammond and Scull, *Artist* 51, 137), Tolkien agreed with the English gardening tradition that opposed the notion that "blasted trees"

symbolized forlorn beauty (Wulf and Gieben-Gamal 182). Tolkien's *Fellowship of the Ring* follows Austen's aforementioned floral characterizations by calling the Bonfire Glade (which includes "rampant nettles and thistles") "A dreary place" where the trees of the Old Forest fail to grow, following the felling of many trees by the Hobbits years before the War of the Ring ("Old" 110, 109-10).

In terms of his presentation of ruined buildings, Tolkien borrows from the Romantic and Classical depictions of various relics. According to Theodore Ziolkowski, the Romantics prize things in decay (e.g., collapsing buildings), in part, because nineteenth-century Romanticism focuses on the ruins of the Middle Ages (and, in particular, on the collapsing structures in Germany) and the various types of "fragmentation" that occurred during the era—without the hope for an era of recovered glory (273-74, 275, 274). When Galadriel discusses the inevitable doom of the Elves of Middle-earth and their works of artisanship no matter the outcome of the War of the Ring in *The Fellowship of the Ring* ("Mirror" 356), Tolkien arguably borrows from this Romantic tradition of perceiving the bittersweet beauty of declining prowess and worthwhile, memorable artisanship. The German Romantics, however, celebrate German unification in their works, which explains one reason why some German Romantics emphasize the need to reverse architectural decay (278-79). French Romantic works, meanwhile, sometimes celebrate the armed defeat of previous governments, as symbolized by the disheveled architectural ruins (278). Although Tolkien's works celebrate the Free People's victory over Sauron's armies, Tolkien's works also sharply contrast with the aforementioned version of Romanticism practiced by French writers⁸⁹

89. Tolkien disliked other aspects of French culture—most notably the French language, as Tolkien acknowledges in his *Letters* (288).

(278). Tolkien's differences with the French provide reasons for why Tolkien's works share some commonality with nineteenth-century German Romanticism that (as I mentioned previously) praised unification, albeit Tolkien's works convey a greater sense of hope that the unification and strengthening of an ancient kingdom is possible than what appears possible in some texts of German Romanticism. For example, when the characters in *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* approach the ruins of Dale, Weathertop, and elsewhere in Middle-earth, respectively, all of the protagonists mourn the demise of the earlier, more stable, and more prosperous eras, as I discuss in the next chapter. Indeed, one of the purposes of the War of the Ring is to return a king (i.e., Aragorn) to the thrones of Arnor and Gondor in order to revitalize both realms. Nevertheless, the setting of Tolkien's Middle-earth texts is far earlier than the medieval era, and therefore, some distinct differences between Tolkien's fantasies and Romanticism exist.⁹⁰

Tolkien's fantasies also somewhat parallel Classical views of ruins. *Ruins*, according to the standard Classical interpretation, can encourage viewers to aspire to improve the present era, because the crumbling structures imply that humanity reached greater heights in the past and can rise to new heights once again (268, 270), albeit viewers must also recognize that all humans will die and that all human-created works will inevitably collapse, respectively (269). The Hobbits' and Gandalf's conversation with Butterbur in Bree concerning the return of a king to Arnor and the impending transition from the desolation of the former Arnorian lands and "wilderness" (i.e., Butterbur labels the region "Deadmen's Dike") into a powerful realm with urban areas

90. Because one source for the Shire is nineteenth-century England (as I mention in chapter three), this also distinguishes Tolkien's fantasies from the typical Romantic preoccupation with the medieval era.

(*Return*, “Homeward” 971) is reminiscent to the aforementioned Classical understanding of ruins. Classical art, moreover, suggests that Egypt, Greece, and Rome serve as historical models for contemporaries since these ancient civilizations amassed great power and the remains of some of their artisanship remain even to this day (268), despite the fact that these civilizations ceased to exist many hundreds of years ago. Interestingly, while Tolkien notes that he partially modeled the climate of Gondor on Italy⁹¹ (*Flood*), the birthplace of the Roman Empire, Tolkien’s *Letters* also reveal that the Egyptians served as one inspiration for the Faithful Númenórean Exiles who founded the Gondorian realm (281). Besides sharing some similarities with ancient civilizations, the aforementioned civilizations of Middle-earth Men also parallel Classical understandings of ruins once the realms of the Númenórean Exiles decay.

In any case, a major reason for the previously referenced alteration that led many to embrace farms rather than “heathland” occurred because of the work of Humphrey Repton. Repton, who presented his visions for revising the gardens, grounds, and homes of his clients by placing his ideas in a *Red Book*,⁹² worked at Abbot Upcher’s Sheringham home during the 1810s (Wulf and Gieben-Gamal 190). Rather than the long vistas and lawns of other gardens at the time, Repton designed Sheringham’s gardens to include

91. Since Wilhelm von Humboldt wrote Classical poems concerning the rise and fall of ancient Rome, in general, and Roman ruins, in particular (Ziolkowski 269-70), this means that his work again partially parallels Tolkien’s works, albeit Tolkien’s devout Catholicism led him to mourn the death of a unified Christendom led by the Vatican. For more information concerning the similarities between Wilhelm von Humboldt’s works and the texts by Tolkien, read earlier sections of this chapter.

92. Because Repton placed his ideas for how to transform the gardens and grounds of his clients in a *Red Book*, which he filled with the drawings of his gardening ideas that emphasized the inclusion of flowerbeds and crops; consequently, this forms an interesting parallel with Tolkien’s fantasies. Frodo, of course, mentions that Sam will read from the *Red Book* to remind people of the Quest for Erebor, the War of the Ring, and the end of the Third Age in order that the garden-loving, agrarian society of the Hobbits may then “love their beloved [and renewed] land all the more” (*Return*, “Grey” 1006). Moreover, some of Tolkien’s greatest artwork, such as *The hill: hobbiton-across-the Water* (Hammond and Scull, *Artist* 106), features the gardens/farms of the Shire.

flower gardens and crops near the home (Wulf and Gieben Gamal 200). Both of these decisions proved immensely influential, since many English landscapers and aristocrats altered their grounds to emulate the Sheringham design (Wulf and Gieben Gamal 200, 211). In addition to the flower gardens and crops, Repton's use of trees for the landscaping of Sheringham also influenced visitors, for Upcher and Repton's choice to plant slow-growing trees at Sheringham, meanwhile, conveyed the message of "longevity," "stability, and continuity" for he and his heirs (Wulf and Gieben-Gamal 205-06). Repton's design, consequently, influenced how and what flowers, crops, and trees appeared and represented in English gardens in the opening decades of the nineteenth century.

Tolkien's descriptions of the approach to Bombadil and Goldberry's home and to Thranduil's gate and his discussions concerning the importance of Gondor's White Tree, the mellyrn trees of Lothlórien, and the Party Tree/Mallorn in the Shire form historical parallels with the primary world. Similar to how eighteenth-century English gardens often included lawns (Wulf and Gieben Gamal 200), Bombadil maintains "a wide sweep of grass" and a stone path to his home (*Fellowship*, "Old" 119, "House" 129). As Tolkien's artwork for *The Elvenking's Gate* depicts, moreover, Tolkien's artwork for *The Hobbit* (e.g., Hammond and Scull, *Artist* 128) features a long vista leading to the gate of a kingdom of the *Firstborn* Elves. "Stability," "longevity," and "continuity," which Upcher and Repton wished to imply by planting trees at Upcher's estate (Wulf and Gieben Gamal 200), shares much kinship with Galadriel's Lothlórien where "there was no stain" and seemed "a vanished world" that once was more widespread (*Fellowship*, "Lothlórien" 341). After many years without a king and an even longer period of fighting wars,

meanwhile, the planting of a new White Tree in Minas Tirith signals stability and longevity for Gondor's realm (*Return*, "Steward" 950). Because Sam cultivates the Mallorn seed where the Party Tree stood before Saruman and Lotho's ecocidal forces felled the tree and generally destroyed the Shire's environment (*Return*, "Grey" 1000), the long-lived Mallorn of the Shire also symbolizes renewed stability, longevity, and continuity for the Shire Hobbits.

Tolkien's Middle-earth fantasies also share *some* commonalities with other nineteenth-century English gardening traits. Somewhat similar to the Hobbit holes within the ground that some Hobbits call home (e.g., *Fellowship*, "Prologue" 6; Hammond and Scull, *Artist* 106), gardening in England in the mid-1800s included not only flowers, plants, shrubs, trees, and grasses from all over the world but also architectural structures⁹³ (e.g., homes and fountains) (e.g., Wulf and Gieben-Gamal 269). Joseph Paxton proved the most influential garden designer during this era. Paxton remodeled the Duke of Devonshire's gardens at Chatsworth in a more artistic, formal, human-centered style known as *gardenesque*,⁹⁴ which included his invention of the *bedding system*, a type of gardening that some critics found increasingly questionable as time passed. Paxton's bedding system refers to the rotation of flowers based on the season when they bloom and to growing the out-of-season flowers in greenhouses (a process Wulf and Gieben-Gamal label a "mass production" technique with similarities to assembly lines) (228). By preserving the environment—despite the changing of the seasons—Paxton's gardening

93. Wulf and Gieben-Gamal state that architecture and gardens are consistently tied to one another in speeches, articles, and (in general) the minds of amateur and professional architects and gardeners (e.g. 299-300).

94. The *OED* credits the origins of the *gardenesque* style to the nineteenth-century work of the Scotsman John Loudon.

methodology shares some kinship with Galadriel's Lothlórien. *However*, Galadriel's Ring of Power negates the alteration of seasons through *magical* means: "In winter here no heart could mourn for summer or for spring" where all flora appeared "fresh and poignant" (*Fellowship*, "Lothlórien" 341).

Nonetheless, whereas, in Lothlórien, Haldir can honestly state that "Here ever bloom the winter flowers in the unfading grass" (341), Paxton's gardening model caused the wanton destruction of many types of flora. To enable the bedding system to flourish, Paxton built precursors to contemporary greenhouses (i.e., glasshouses/hothouses) to encourage the growth of non-native species that he gained through the floral trade from English colonies (and other European colonies). For example, Paxton built his Great Conservatory glasshouse in 1836-51 and, subsequently, the Lily House glasshouse to cultivate the renowned, massive *Victoria regia* lily (Wulf and Gieben-Gamal 234, 259-62). Furthermore, the Great Conservatory provided an aesthetically pleasing sight of awe-inspiring architecture, fauna, flora, and minerals from around the world that led visitors from various social classes to seek more knowledge of—and express greater appreciation for—the environment. Indeed, in addition to including various flora, Paxton's Great Conservatory also housed fish, monkeys, birds, stalactites, meteorites, and rock crystals (Wulf and Gieben-Gamal 250). Later gardeners, however, questioned the ethics of the floral trade, the bedding system's callous practice of throwing away flowers every few months, and the building and maintenance of glasshouses like the Great Conservatory that enabled flora to thrive in seasons and climates they would "naturally" never survive (Wulf and Gieben-Gamal 246-47). Tolkien's depictions of Lothlórien's beautiful—but ultimately doomed—flora and his criticisms of the Elves' selfish desire to "embalm"

Middle-earth in order to prevent change (as I discuss elsewhere) imply that Tolkien's sentiments and passages within Tolkien's fantasies matched/match some of those of the aforementioned gardeners of subsequent generations after Paxton, who critiqued Paxton's gardening methods.

Paxton's gardenesque style, moreover, also included other traits later gardeners rejected as immoral or counterproductive, a view that Tolkien's Middle-earth tales seem to express as well. Paxton's choice to establish Chatsworth's arboretum (which the *OED* defines as a "botanical tree-garden") exemplifies his environmental practices. Wulf and Gieben-Gamal mention that,

In January 1835 Paxton began to clear forty acres of woodland, to the east above the garden [. . .] Over the next six months Paxton felled thousands of trees; diverted two miles of stream from the surrounding moor to the area designated for the arboretum; laid out a mile-long walk and planted 1670 species of trees. As with the pinetum six years earlier, he combined a scientific with an aesthetic approach. Along the meandering walk he planted the trees in groups according to their botanical classification, which totaled seventy-five different orders [. . .]

The arboretum was designed to encourage visitors to broaden their horticultural knowledge while taking pleasure in the picturesque woods. (229)

One wonders if Paxton's choice to fell *thousands* of trees and his decision to alter the courses of multiple bodies of water outweighs his decision to replant some trees with the purpose of teaching human visitors about trees and of encouraging them to appreciate the sights, the scents, and the touch of trees. Some observers (especially among later generations) criticized Paxton's gardening habits as unsuccessful, because, by callously

altering the landscape in whatever way he and the Duke desired, Paxton's gardening style changed the ecosystem at the very least or (at worst) actually diminished the well-being of the environment for many years. The tone of Tolkien's unfinished *Aldarion and Erendis* novella, for example, suggests that Tolkien felt great unease for the gardening style of people like Paxton, for Tolkien repeatedly suggests that Aldarion's cultivation of trees and maintenance of tree farms to build ships (as well as other things for the Númenóreans) lacks the proper love of the earth and for plants like trees (e.g., *Unfinished*, "Aldarion" 176-77, 181-182, 190-92, 201-02, 206).

Paxton's most famous example of shaping the environment for aesthetic effect, however, occurred when he entertained Queen Victoria at the Great Conservatory, which will also remind Tolkien readers of Galadriel's Lothlórien. When Queen Victoria and Prince Albert visited the large iron structure filled with various flora, minerals, and fauna in 1843,⁹⁵ Paxton provided what the Victorians viewed as exquisite entertainment, since Paxton ordered the lighting of the Great Conservatory by means of tens of thousands of lights of various kinds, including oil lamps. Wulf and Gieben-Gamal observe that "Three thousand Russian lanterns hung in the trees, the fountains sparkled like liquid diamonds, and the Cascade was lined with an ever-changing ribbon of Bengal lights, from white to blue to red. In a magnificent finale, fireworks lit up the whole park⁹⁶" (250-51). Thus,

95. Paxton's aforementioned decision to house environmental specimens within metal buildings may parallel Ramer's descriptions of Númenor in Tolkien's *The Notion Club Papers*; within this fragment by Tolkien, Ramer recollects images of gardens, water, metal, flowers, and stones (*Sauron* 198-99).

96. Although the fireworks do not occur until the end of the party, Gandalf (whose exquisite environmental guardianship skills I discuss in the previous chapter) displays his skill with fireworks at Bilbo's birthday party, the ending of which leads to the announcement of Bilbo's final dinner in the Shire. Gandalf, moreover, uses a flash of light to help to mask Bilbo's sudden departure when he adorns the Ring before his dumbfounded Hobbit guests in *The Fellowship of the Ring* ("Long-Expected" 27, 30, 31). The fact that Paxton combined fireworks with displays of the environment may help to explain another reason why Tolkien features the most "faithful" guardian of Middle-earth among the Istari repeatedly setting-off fireworks for the Hobbits, in addition to often enjoying gardens and crops (e.g., *Hobbit*, "Long-Expected"

within a climate-controlled structure of iron, Paxton accented the flora, fauna, and minerals from around the globe with various human-created lighting to impress his royal visitors. Because of Paxton's mastery of human-centered architecture and gardening, Wulf and Gieben-Gamal declare that "England's twin personae—'workshop of the world' and 'green and pleasant land'—had become one" with Paxton's efforts (264). Because the Elves place lamps on the trees of Lothlórien (*Fellowship*, "Mirror" 344-45), Tolkien's description of Lothlórien somewhat parallels Queen Victoria's visit to the lamp-lit Great Conservatory glasshouse designed by the gardener-engineer Paxton (Wulf and Gieben-Gamal 250-51). One could argue that Galadriel's inclusion of these lamps amid the trees perfectly balances her memory of the Noldor's great artisan abilities, in general, and their "ever-shining" Fëanorian lamps, in particular (e.g., *Children*, "Death" 152), with the woodland Silvan Elves' love of trees. While self-centered environmental changes that feature cultural examples of environment beauty, Paxton's Great Conservatory and the Elves' Lothlórien cannot be characterized as expressions of environmental laziness.

Ruskin and William Morris, meanwhile, proved two influential voices, who condemned aspects of Paxton's environmental work; moreover, the environmental writings of each of these authors often parallel Tolkien's depictions of Middle-earth's

6-7). After all, Hammond and Scull mention that the Hobbits' Shire shares many commonalities with nineteenth-century British culture ("*Lord*" . . . *Reader's* 65). Furthermore, because Paxton's metal Great Conservatory of the nineteenth century functioned as a preserve for many environmental species from around the world, this creates another parallel with the Rings of Power (one of which Gandalf wears), which aim to preserve the Elven lands of Middle-earth. Although the Great Conservatory visit by Victoria occurred half a century before Tolkien's birth, I believe that Tolkien would be aware of such a visit for two main reasons. Namely, Tolkien's well-known interest in flowers would probably lead him to research about the Great Conservatory and Paxton, while the fact that Victoria was one of the most powerful British monarchs of all time would cause Tolkien to know a great deal about her life.

environment.⁹⁷ Along with other commentators, the aforementioned Arts and Crafts Movement leaders—Ruskin and Morris—despised Paxton’s vision of architecture and standardized mechanization; Ruskin and Morris regarded these elements of Paxton’s work as crass and superfluous (i.e., callous and worthless work) (Wulf and Gieben-Gamal 264). Ruskin and Morris, moreover, also hated the artificial use of hothouses/glasshouses/greenhouses to enable non-native flora to survive in England (Wulf and Gieben-Gamal 279). People like Ruskin and Morris disliked the arguably selfish motives of Paxton and others who coveted certain flowers that would not grow outdoors in England at all or only in certain seasons and viewed the creation of glasshouses as deceitful, since glasshouses enabled various flora to grow that would

97. Ruskin’s works influenced Tolkien’s fantasies, as some critics, such as Veldman, have previously noted (36-38, 305). As Veldman mentions, Ruskin’s *The Stones of Venice* states that, during industrialization, humanity will devolve to the point that humans are mere “‘machine[s]’” and calls this negative transition “‘unhumanization’” (19). Ruskin’s aforementioned vision of machine-like humanity mutilated by industrialization somewhat parallels Tolkien’s characterization of the Orcs’ laughter as akin to “metal” in *The Fall of Gondolin* fragment (*Book . . . 2* 161) and Tolkien’s theory that the industrialist Morgoth may have decided to place *records* within the original Orcs, an idea that Tolkien mentions in “Myths Transformed” (*Morgoth’s* 410). Rosebury, similarly, contends that messages within Ruskin’s texts often parallel messages within Tolkien’s fantasies (e.g., discussions of class and labor) (161). Scull and Hammond, meanwhile, note that Tolkien’s close friend, Rob Gilson, wrote and presented a paper about John Ruskin (*J.R.R. . . . Chronology* 20); consequently, Tolkien may have been indirectly influenced by Ruskin via Gilson’s influence as well.

Since Tolkien purchased three of Morris’ writings after winning an English monetary award (Carpenter 77), readers may assume that Morris’ texts are sources for Tolkien’s fantasies. Although this fact would not be enough to argue that Morris’s works are major sources for Tolkien, it is clear that Morris’ works did influence Tolkien’s fantasies. For example, Tolkien explicitly mentions his indebtedness to Morris’ romances as a young adult in an October 1914 letter to his future wife Edith and again later in his life in a December 31, 1960, letter to Professor L.W. Forster (*Letters* 7, 303). In fact, readers can understand the depth of Tolkien’s respect for Morris by the fact that Christopher Tolkien inherited *eleven* of Morris’ literary works from his father (Scull and Hammond, *J.R.R. . . . Reader’s* 600). Readers can also notice Morris’ influence on Tolkien’s fantasies, because (according to Christopher Cobb) both writers craft stories that trigger ethical and emotional responses among readers because works by both Morris and Tolkien compare and contrast various cultures; moreover, Morris also mentions “simple, earthy” characters in his romances, which somewhat resemble Tolkien’s Hobbits (116-17). Marjorie S. Burns, meanwhile, argues that Morris’ “Icelandic Journals” might represent a literary source for Tolkien’s Middle-earth fantasies, because the existence of mountains and volcanoes in Middle-earth shares commonality with the topography of Iceland and because, like Morris’ romances, Tolkien’s works are deeply skeptical of industrialization and consumerism (367, 370-72, 368-69). Veldman, likewise, observes that Morris and Tolkien include passages condemning industrialization and consumerism within their fictions as well (38).

otherwise die, if left to the natural climate of England. As mentioned previously, the purpose of both the Elves' Rings of Power⁹⁸ and Paxton's Great Conservatory is the preservation of the vitality and beauty of various forms of non-human nature beyond their typical longevity and fertility. As a result, both efforts drew rebukes from observers (Wulf and Gieben-Gamal 264, 279) for their (to use Tolkien's word choice for the Elves) selfish, "embalming" practices (*Letters* 197). Consequently, Tolkien's critiques of the Elves generally parallel the type of criticisms Paxton received from Ruskin and Morris.

However, in spite of their general dislike for Paxton's overt alterations of the environment (e.g., Wulf and Gieben-Gamal 272), the nineteenth- and twentieth-century horticulturalist/garden designing duo Gertrude Jekyll and Edwin Lutyens still borrowed some of the formal gardening practices of Paxton and other gardeners, such as the inclusion of soils and flowers within wall crevices. At Hestercombe in Somerset (which Wulf and Gieben Gamal declare as the subsequent "epitome of the English garden") (xvi), Jekyll and Lutyens "set flowers in irregular drifts and in the nooks and crannies of walls, so that nature seemed to reclaim the manmade structures, creating the perfect balance between the two [. . .] [c]haracterised by its walled enclosures, old English plants, geometric flowerbeds and pergolas, it evoked an era of timeless aristocratic stability" (xvi). While speculative, readers of Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* may encounter a similar gardening practice in Aragorn's rehabilitated Minas Tirith. Because King Aragorn's crowning signals environmental renewal and a sense of permanence for Gondor, in particular, and the northwestern region of Middle-earth, in general, perhaps

98. Celebrimbor and the Eregion Elves, who create the Rings of Power because of their love of creating artifacts and their desire to protect the lands they cultivated, somewhat parallel the temperament, gifts, and weaknesses of the English gardener-architect Paxton.

readers should envision flowers within “the nooks and crannies of [Gondor’s] walls,” since this architectural gardening symbol is how the respected gardeners Jekyll and Lutyens implied “an era of timeless aristocratic stability” (xvi). Portions of Paxton’s gardening methods, such as the placement of flowers within walls, represents quality work, in general, and expressions of environmental, in particular.

The trading and general treatment of animals also profoundly influenced the environmental consciences of nineteenth-century and twentieth-century Englishmen, Americans, and others. George Catlin, for instance, appeals to the consciences of Americans in the hopes of reducing selfish and cruel behavior toward non-human animals when he calls the annihilation of hundreds of American buffalo during the 1830s “cruel and wanton” and describes the slaughter as acts motivated primarily by “the pleasure of *destroying*” (qtd. in Brinser and Shepard 205-06). The excessive hunting of animals also targeted African elephants, which angered nineteenth- and early twentieth-century environmental activists like the Society for the Preservation of the Wild Fauna of the Empire’s E.N. Buxton, who accused such hunters of “bloodthirstiness” (Prendergast and Adams 252). Rather than slaughtering elephants, Buxton proposed that humans use elephants as creatures of burden that would carry various things (Prendergast and Adams 253). The problems of overfishing, pollution, and dams, meanwhile, led Marsh to mention how these human-centered environmental decisions led to a reduction in biodiversity in the U.S. and elsewhere around the globe by dramatically reducing the numbers of fish (Wulf, *Invention* 342). Nineteenth-century environmental observers, therefore, not only observed that excessive hunting and fishing were to blame for a loss

of non-human animal species, but these eco-friendly individuals also noted that irrigation projects and industrial pollution were concerns as well.

As Buxton's aforementioned efforts demonstrate, conservation practices also occurred in Tolkien's geographical homeland of (what is now) South Africa⁹⁹ by the middle of the 1800s. One particular preservation issue in South Africa concerned threatened non-human animal species in South Africa often hunted by supposedly conservationist-leaning, upper-class European males; this trend derived from traditional European aristocratic practices (Prendergast and Adams 251-52). Although not described in such terms at the time, the South African reserves of the 1800s represent something akin to "sustainability."¹⁰⁰ Because of the difference in motives between the conservationists and the preservationists in South Africa (and elsewhere), the preservationists increasingly desired to part company from conservationist sportsmen. Increasing friction occurred between the two groups partially because the preservationists regarded the sportsmen as callous, selfish, and deceitful, since the conservationist sportsmen desired to protect non-human animals and other aspects of the environment in order to kill some of the animals themselves at a later date (Prendergast and Adams 251-57).

99. Beth Russell observes that too many Tolkien Specialists neglect to state that Tolkien's family lived as British foreigners (i.e., *Uitlanders*) living in the Republic of the Orange Free State: one of the two "independent" Boer countries (225-26). When scholars call Tolkien a "South African," Russell contends that these writers obfuscate the imperialism of the era and make anachronistic claims (225).

100. The aforementioned typical hunting and conservation behaviors practiced by the European nobility that Prendergast and Adams allude to is explained by Sheail. As observed by Sheail, the British Parliament made it illegal to hunt wild birds from May 31st to August 31st and unlawful to filch wildfowl eggs from March 1st to June 30th in 1533 (*Nature* 1); the Parliament enacted this Act to ensure a steady supply of food for nobles and commoners alike (*Nature* 2). As noted by Sheail, in the sixteenth century and the early seventeenth century, "It is clear that concern for plants and animals was conditional on their being of direct value to man. Very little sympathy or interest was shown for wildlife itself" (*Nature* 2).

Within *The Lord of the Rings*, Tolkien incorporates a version of these aforementioned ideas into his fantasies by depicting multiple Southrons riding atop the giant Oliphaunts (i.e., immense elephant-like creatures of burden), as they fight during the War of the Ring (*Two*, “Herbs” 646-47). Moreover, Tolkien’s *The Lord of the Rings* shares some commonality with Catlin’s condemnation of needless slaughter and with Buxton’s efforts to conserve elephants in Tolkien’s homeland in present-day South Africa. Tolkien’s masterpiece shares some commonality with Catlin’s work and Buxton’s labors because Tolkien’s masterpiece exhibits a somber tone when the narrator mentions that the Oliphaunts are extinct in Middle-earth (in part, because of their needless deaths during Sauron’s imperialistic wars). Finally, the preservationists’ previously described disgruntlement with the conservationists in places like South Africa (Prendergast and Adams 251-57) shares some commonality with Tolkien’s characterizations of the Ents and the Free Peoples. Whereas Treebeard and the Ents mourn the fact that they alone seek the protection of the trees to the utmost (*Two*, “Treebeard” 455), the rest of the Free Peoples—like conservationists—make a variety of exceptions, as I discuss in the next chapter.

Some of Tolkien’s portrayals of birds and bears also create intertextual parallels with European history. Tolkien’s descriptions of the Eagles, the Ravens,¹⁰¹ the Thrush,

101. Tolkien’s descriptions of the Ravens somewhat parallels contemporary findings concerning the intelligence of ravens. This is the case for five main reasons: Tolkien’s *The Hobbit* features the long memories of the Ravens; Roäc states that he learned information concerning Thorin and the Dwarves from Carc, his father; Thorin appears to promise to reward Roäc the Raven for the bird’s information concerning the demise of Smaug and the approaching armies of Men and Elves; Roäc repeatedly counsels that Thorin make peace with the Men of Lake-town and the Woodland Elves; and Roäc perceives that the Master of Lake-town is corrupt but that Bard is a righteous Man whom Thorin should make peace with (“Gathering” 231-33, “Thief” 240). According to scientists, ravens can remember one another for multiple years; ravens teach their descendants pertaining to the identification of beings not seen for many years; ravens can recall the faces of humans who mistreat the birds; ravens may return offerings of thanks to humans who treat

and Beorn (and his descendants) as, overall, morally wholesome Middle-earth characters that the Free Peoples should protect, respect, and value in texts like *The Hobbit*, for example, share kinship with the history of British environmentalism. After all, more people in Britain began to recognize the need to save flora and fauna from overzealous, callous collectors and hunters during the mid-1800s (Sheail, *Nature* 2-3). The Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals in Britain championed a similar message of inclusiveness and protection of non-human animals from human misanthropy in the middle of the 1800s when the group began working to protect not only domestic animals but also birds and bears (Sheail, *Nature* 10). Indeed, Sheail notes that, by the late 1800s and early 1900s, bird egg collectors (oologists) became increasingly unpopular, as the numbers among preservationists increased (Sheail, *Nature* 63). Many disliked the egg-collectors because of the collectors' callous greed, which would cause a death cycle for bird species: "Unlike Nature and the game-preserved, they concentrated their destructive power on the rare, and as the number fell so the value of each specimen rose and the stimulus for collecting it increased. In the eyes of many, this made the collector the greatest villain in the preservation of rare species" (*Nature* 8). Within *The Lord of the Rings*, Tolkien probably refers to this controversy when Gandalf chides Pippin for his youthful mistakes; these sins include filching eggs from bird nests in order to expand his collection (*Return*, "Minas" 737; Hammond and Scull, "*Lord*" . . . *Reader's* 516).

them kindly, and ravens may react negatively if one bird is given preferential treatment over another (Ackerman 105-06).

Moreover, Wohlleben also contends in his book *The Inner Life of Animals* that ravens can discern one another's voices even after years of separation; indeed, ravens send a noticeably different call toward the ravens they like than those they dislike (105-06). These facts should interest Tolkien readers, since Roac warmly greets Thorin and Balin by name in *The Hobbit* ("Gathering" 231). For a more in-depth examination of the contemporary parallels to Tolkien's fantasies, read chapter four.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, another debate raged between human-centered advocates and bird preservationists during the time of the town sanctuary dialogue, which stands as a microcosm for one of the critical debates between conservationists and preservationists: the ethical response to certain animal species perceived as invasive, violent, or otherwise undesirable. Many preservationists argue that humans should not interfere with the non-human environment of the nature preserves, and therefore, they wish to remove humans from these ecosystems. Conservationists, meanwhile, may argue for the need to eradicate certain species deemed invasive/harmful to the ecosystem, which, in turn, draws the ire of many preservationists who condemn this conservationist desire as selfish and callous, for such policies promote slaughter, in part, because of human-centered interests. An early example of this conservationist principle occurred in 1813 with the establishment of the first nature reserve in Britain when Charles Waterton made his Walton Hall residence a sanctuary for most wildlife—but not for foxes and rats (Sheail, *Nature* 171). Sheail, moreover, observes that a particularly troubling environmental controversy in the 1920s focused on protecting predator animals, such as the peregrine falcon, which sometimes killed pet homing pigeons (*Nature* 49-50). While preservationists wished to preserve the predator bird species (and thereby maintain biodiversity), conservationist pet pigeon owners desired to protect the lives of their cherished pet birds, the money they invested in purchasing and raising their pigeons, and their ability to see the flight of (and hear the calls of) their pet pigeons. Thus, the battle centered on what to privilege: biodiversity, the aesthetic value of the predator birds, the potential ecosystem problems resulting from the eradication of predator bird species, and the repercussions of the subsequent proliferation of pet pigeons vs. the aesthetic and economic value of pet pigeons. Despite such

controversies, however, the British parliament approved of many wild bird protection bills, such as those passed in 1869, 1872, 1880, 1881, 1894, 1925, and 1930 (Sheail, *Nature* 24-27, 29, 40).

While perhaps subtle allusions, Tolkien's Middle-earth fantasies include parallels with some of the debates between conservationists and preservationists in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Tolkien's brief passage detailing the anthropomorphic inner thoughts of a fox in the Shire in *The Fellowship of the Ring* ("Three" 71), for example, fosters reader empathy with this historically maligned animal found in England, as Waterton's policy makes clear (Sheail, *Nature* 171). *The Hobbit* may also build from the historical animosity between British farmers and predator birds, in general, and the peregrine falcon vs. pet pigeon controversy, in particular, (*Nature* 49-50), since Tolkien portrays the Woodmen trying to kill any Eagle they see for fear that the Eagle may eat the Woodmen's sheep ("Out" 101).

Because of environmental degradation, meanwhile, Marsh mentioned his belief that people should switch their diets to vegetarianism, since wealthier classes increasingly consumed non-human animals to correspond with their rising incomes (Wulf, *Invention* 342). Rollo Russell (a notable nineteenth- and early twentieth-century British activist and writer on various topics related to smoke and other forms of pollution) similarly believed that urbanites were more likely to discard moderation in favor of not only drinking a disproportionate amount of alcohol but also eating an immoderate amount of meat (Stradling and Thorsheim 14). Both Marsh and Russell, therefore, suggest that industrialization and urbanization cause humans to increasingly consume other beings

cavalierly, a development which can reduce biodiversity, as well as harm the well-being of ecosystems.

Tolkien's support for farming and his aversion to more evolved systems of technology also affected his food choices. While Tolkien expressed great passion for the environment's welfare, he enjoyed an omnivore diet, which included various meats, such as lamb, fish, veal, and ham (e.g., Scull and Hammond, *J.R.R. . . . Chronology* 762, 320-21). At some meals, however, Tolkien ate other types of food, in addition to meat, or he entirely abstained from eating meat.¹⁰² Within Tolkien's October 25, 1958, letter to Deborah Webster, Tolkien declares, "I like gardens, trees and unmechanized farmlands; [. . .] good plain food (unrefrigerated), [. . . and] I am fond of mushrooms (out of a field)" (*Letters* 288-89). By connecting quality work (i.e., gardening and farming without machines) with non-preserved foods, Tolkien rebukes those he characterizes as too lazy to garden or farm by hand, and Tolkien chides those suffering the delusion that preserved foods equal the worth of organic food. Tolkien, in other words, indicates that machine-driven farming is as unnatural as food from a refrigerator.

Environmental history and Tolkien's willingness to eat an omnivore diet likely contribute to his fantastic works, albeit Tolkien was not always conscious of this, certainly. Just as Tolkien ate meals without meat and enjoyed them, Tolkien includes multiple protagonists, such as Beren (e.g., e.g., *Silmarillion*, Quenta: Beren" 164), Bombadil, and Goldberry, who abstain from a carnivore diet (e.g., *Fellowship*, "House" 122). Moreover, as the joy of the Hobbits' meals with Goldberry and Bombadil convey,

102. For example, Tolkien also ate cheese, tomatoes, melons, peaches and other kinds of fruit (Scull and Hammond, *J.R.R. . . . Reader's* 320-21); at other times, Tolkien's meal included toast, biscuits, or mushrooms (*Letters* 74, 405n, 288).

quality fellowship during mealtime does not require meat of any kind. Indeed, for the long, difficult journey to Mordor, Frodo and Sam mainly depend *not* on dried meat but on *lembas* bread, as noted elsewhere. Because some Middle-earth protagonists choose a vegetarian diet, Tolkien's texts partially parallel Marsh's promotion of vegetarianism in the primary world (Wulf, *Invention* 342). The fact that Tolkien's antagonists (e.g., Goblins, Orcs, Trolls, and Gollum) are staunch carnivores, meanwhile, indicates that the overconsumption of meat can weaken the morality, ethics, and spiritual state of a being in Tolkien's Middle-earth. Because Morgoth, Sauron, and Saruman's various Orc breeds often live in densely populated areas suffering from industrial pollution, the diets of these creatures parallel Marsh and Russell's belief that industrialization and urbanization increased the slaughter of non-human animals and the eating of their flesh¹⁰³ (Stradling and Thorsheim 14). Somewhat akin to John Ruskin's anxiety about overconsumption (*Fors* 93-94), Tolkien also chides the omnivore Hobbits for their cultural tendency to overindulge while eating, for Tolkien understood that immoderation could affect omnivores as well. Nonetheless, because Tolkien's fantasies and his *Nomenclature* rebuke the rural Hobbits for overusing environmental resources by excessively eating,¹⁰⁴ Tolkien's fantasies differentiate themselves to a degree from the writings by nineteenth- and twentieth-century environmental writers (e.g., Rollo Russell), who thought that urbanites ate immoderately more often than those living in the country.

103. Read in this historical context, Jeffers's hypothesis that the Orcs might harm the environment in response to living in the worst sections of the world makes more sense than it may otherwise read (44). Similarly, Pearce argues that the antagonists and protagonists in Tolkien's works earn these labels partially because of the level of/form of industrialization in his/her/their lands (155-56). While Pearce is right to describe the tone of Tolkien's texts as skeptical toward industry (155-56), Tolkien portrays Gondor as an industrial fortress-city; I discuss this modification of the sentiment expressed by Pearce in the aforementioned passage in more detail in other sections and chapters.

104. This passage derives from multiple sources (e.g., *Hobbit*, "Short" 48; *Fellowship*, "Three" 69; Hammond and Scull, *Lord . . . Readers* 59, 66-67, 754-55).

Ruskin (whose wide-ranging fiction and somewhat holistic scholarship includes such topics as literature, non-human animals, flora, the heavens, architecture, and painting) influenced the social views of many Victorians through his belief that a community's ethical code and an individual's morality and ethics affect an individual's temperament toward and interaction with the environment¹⁰⁵ (Parham 165). Victorians, consequently, contended that a person's "inner goodness" or "vital beauty" enabled or inhibited a person's ability to perceive outward aesthetics (e.g., the wonders of non-human nature) or "typical beauty" (Parham 165). Ruskin, however, also believed in an aesthetic hierarchy where only some inherently possessed the capability of sensing and appreciating the beautiful to the fullest, yet Ruskin held that such an ability—with proper supervision and instruction—could positively evolve and improve with the development of their "secondary imaginations" (Hunt). People could develop more evolved secondary imaginations through the *picturesque tradition*,¹⁰⁶ according to Ruskin, for it led to a "double approach to the world, at once verbal and visual; for the sight [. . .] was but a prelude to insight, and a place or site called forth the energies of both" (Hunt). By evolving more sensitive "secondary imaginations," therefore, people are more likely to improve as environmental guardians.

Environmental insights occur in Tolkien's fantasies because of the guidance of figures like Bombadil and Goldberry, who labor to help the Hobbits to learn to appreciate

105. Butler observes that Ruskin's *The King of the Golden River* attacks the greedy, callous farm-owners (i.e., Schwartz and Hans), who repeatedly neglect and actively harm not only their employees but also feral animals (qtd. in 62-63). By discussing the treatment of workers, humanity's environmental stewardship, and community within the fantasy, *The King of the Golden River* matches some of the topics found in the rest of Ruskin's work (Butler 64-65).

106. The *OED* defines the *picturesque* as, "pleasing or striking in appearance; scenic," as well as "a romantic style of gardening, aiming at irregular and rugged beauty." A type of late 1600s landscape painting trend in Europe helped produce the *picturesque* tradition (Wordsworth, Jaye, and Woof 90).

the environment to a greater degree by respecting and by understanding the non-human environment in more depth. Bombadil and Goldberry's teaching reduces the ignorant callousness of the Four Hobbit Companions, as they learn their roles within the environment of the Old Forest and elsewhere.¹⁰⁷ Indeed, the effect of Bombadil and Goldberry's guidance leads the Hobbits to discover something akin to the supposed "primordial" bond between humans and nature that Stanley Baldwin believed existed¹⁰⁸ (*Fellowship*, "Old" 127-28; Cannadine 160-61). Because of passages like those within the Old Forest section of *The Fellowship of the Ring*, Tolkien's works possess some roots in Ruskin's ideas that looking at nature could result in an environmental epiphany that would then develop "the observer's environmental behavior and that those with sophisticated sympathetic imaginations should mentor those with less developed¹⁰⁹ sensibilities" (Hunt).

107. The Wytham Woods in Berkshire near the University of Oxford (which Tolkien labeled *Hobbiton* in a recently discovered map) (Flood) should remind readers of the Old Forest and the Brandywine River that lies on the western and southern borders of the Old Forest, as well as remind readers of Tolkien's characterization of Bombadil's observational activities. According to Sheail, the Wytham Woods in Berkshire at Oxford consists of an

Estate of about 1,000 acres [. . .] bounded on two sides by the River Thames and comprised 'quite an ordinary representative bit of English midlands', which had been 'only moderately spoiled' by modern farming and forestry. About 220 acres of woodland, limestone grassland, marsh, and stream course were set aside from ordinary estate management and managed as a series of scientific reserves. The area had been long studied by Oxford naturalists, but detailed surveys of the Woods did not begin until 1942, when members of various university departments and students from Britain and overseas began to make intensive field studies, resulting in the publication of about 400 scientific papers by 1975. (Sheail, *Nature* 195)

108. Consequently, this kinship helps to explain why Tolkien's texts share some commonality with the interests of first-wave ecocritics; I elaborate on this idea in the next chapter.

109. Consequently, because Bombadil and Goldberry enable the Hobbits to appreciate the mental image of and the physical sight of the Old Forest, this helps to explain why Tolkien's works act as partial precursors to aspects of the ecophilosophy Deep Ecology, which argues that human *self-realization* and an individual's *identification* with the non-human environment will yield more evolved environmentalism.

As noted previously, I subsequently elaborate on the parallels between Tolkien's texts and contemporary ecophilosophies to demonstrate that Tolkien's fantasies represent precursors to portions of contemporary ecophilosophies, and therefore, more ecocritics should study and value Tolkien's works.

In the view of Ruskin, however, the Victorian era exhibited diminished *vital beauty*, because men like Paxton refused to appreciate the alterations resulting from the four seasons (Parham 165; Hunt), and therefore, they callously ignored nature because of their deluded conviction that they could create *typical beauty* or enhance it through the engineering and maintaining of structures like greenhouses. After describing the overall poor utility of capitalism and the callous selfishness that this economic system can sometimes inspire, Ruskin (according to the analysis of Stein) argued that the countryside exists as *common* and *symbolic* property, and therefore, “ownership of the land is temporary and must remain so. The landscape cannot become capital” in order to avoid things like inter-class strife (334). Ruskin’s *Fors clavigera: Letters to the Workmen and Labourers of Great Britain* alludes to how the appropriation of land by a few wealthy machine-minded, absentee landholders can cause class conflict by noting that, whereas Goblins embrace idleness, happier humans participate in farm work (89-91). Because of the existence of the dubious greenhouses and because of the monopolization of the land by the few, therefore, Ruskin criticized the environmental ethos of his own era. Ruskin believed that his era included, “Too many people [who] were totally inadequate stewards of the earth, simply because they did not attend to how it worked and thus could blithely pollute it with claptrap, technology, industry, urban sprawl, tourist hotels, [. . .] railways,” (Hunt), and overconsumption (Farahbakhsh 182-83).

The various messages of social responsibility within the Tolkien canon include the rejection of negatives like selfishness, callousness, and ignorance in a manner reminiscent of Ruskin’s aforementioned critique of the problems of capitalism and industrial farming. In *The Lord of the Rings*, Lotho Sackville-Baggins exemplifies these

character flaws listed in the previous sentence. By repeatedly expanding his ownership of lands and industries, Lotho harms the morality and quality of life for the Shire Hobbits, as well as the Shire's environmental well-being, as noted by Farmer Cotton (*Return*, "Scouring" 989-90). As "The Scouring of the Shire" chapter depicts, when Lotho and his allies accumulate additional lands, industries, and goods, more and more Hobbits act in an ecosadistic manner. Moreover, this evil time in the Shire occurs at the same time when Lotho becomes more fixated with machines and more willing to send the Hobbits' pipe-weed to foreign markets (*Fellowship*, "Scouring" 989-90). Lotho's poor business practices, therefore, demonstrates his callousness, for the Shire Hobbits lose their cultural staple of quality pipe-weed, experience growing poverty, and endure a scarcity of food (*Fellowship*, "Scouring" 989-90). Tolkien's depiction of the negative results of Lotho's selfishness, callousness, and ignorance parallels Brinser and Shepard's arguments concerning the outcomes of greedy, machine-minded, absentee landlords who own too many lands to manage them effectively (44-46). While the Hobbits' victory over the Ruffians and the subsequent renewal of the Shire illustrates Tolkien's faith in the capability of quality environmentalism by farmers, Tolkien's works still warn of the environmental, social, spiritual, and cultural dangers posed by machines and irrigation projects, in general, and industrialized, big-business farming, in particular. After all, Lotho's failed industries harm the soils, landscapes, flora, and waters of the Shire to such an extent that Farmer Cotton compares the Shire to a "desert" in *The Return of the King* ("Scouring" 989-90), which is the exact diction Brinser and Shepard use to characterize the consequences of poor agricultural *mining*-like practices in the late 1930s (62).

Similarly, Morris hoped his romance writings and other artworks would reduce the callousness of his readers and improve their appreciation for their fellow humans, as well as for the non-human environment surrounding them. As Christine Bolus-Reichet observes, Morris desired to lead readers to believe, “that the world is something worth looking at” (85), and therefore, Morris wrote about eras and settings of beauty (81). Morris hoped to accomplish this goal by improving the aesthetics of people’s everyday lives, which, in turn, would help to accomplish another goal: improve the internal and external perception of workers (Bolus-Reichet 75). The self-esteem and social reputation of many workers needed correction because of the stigmatization created by what Morris regarded as the heresy of the “‘art versus craft’ and ‘fine versus popular art’ distinctions” (Petts 32). Morris’ aversion to the binary of *fine versus popular* represents one reason why he was a prominent member of the Arts and Crafts Movement, for the Arts and Crafts Movement despised the top-down notion that architecture fell below sculptures and paintings; instead, Morris and others believed in the equality of all arts (Crawford 16). By crafting stories containing beauty, by counseling others on how to create more beautiful artworks/crafts, and by exhorting his readers to perceive the skill and inherent worth of their own work and the work of others, Morris hoped to improve the morality and sensitivity of his audiences so that they could be “capable of [. . .] aesthetic experience” (Petts 43). Similarly, Bolus-Reichet declares that,

Morris’ romances, like most romances, establish an aesthetic distance that can only be crossed by the sympathetic imagination—by active rather than passive looking and by active rather than passive reading. The ethos of the romance and Victorian aestheticism share this crucial feature: both have built an ethics upon

the design of the external world, on the conviction that the way we see this world determines the kind of people we are. The attention we pay to the aesthetic dimension of life—including care of self, the design and decoration of space, and the language we use—is therefore crucial in remaking the world. (91)

To improve the general environment, human socializing, the conditions of workers, and the quality of art, therefore, one must first focus on developing human morality and ethics. Morris, consequently, “adopts the romance form not in order to escape from the world, but to reform it” (Bulus-Reichert 74). As I observe elsewhere, because Tolkien consciously crafted fantasies with implied messages for how to rectify local, regional, and global problems in the primary world (qtd. in Garth, *Tolkien* 295), Tolkien’s fantasies prove somewhat similar to Bulus-Reichert’s characterization of Morris’ romances as fantasies that intend to improve the world communally and individually.¹¹⁰ (74).

Meanwhile, one particular passage from John Ruskin’s 1871 text, *Fors clavigera: Letters to the Workmen and Labourers of Great Britain*, exemplifies the morality-based argument that the *vital beauty* and *typical beauty* characterizations imply:

There are three Material things, not only useful, but essential to Life [. . .] These are, Pure Air, Water, and Earth- There are three Immaterial things, not only useful, but essential to Life. No one knows how to live till he has got them also. These are, Admiration, Hope, and Love. Admiration—the power of discerning

110. By reading Tolkien’s texts through this lens, readers will likely agree that Moorcock overgeneralizes when he dismisses Tolkien’s works, because “Moderation [. . .] ruins Tolkien’s fantasy and causes it to fail as a genuine romance, let alone an epic” (6, 7). The poet W.H. Auden’s review of *The Return of the King* answers the arguments of critics like Moorcock best. As Auden declares, “I believe [that] Mr. Tolkien has succeeded more completely than any previous writer in this genre [of fantasy] in using the traditional properties of the Quest, the heroic journey, the Numinous Object, the conflict between Good and Evil while at the same time satisfying our sense of historical and social reality” (45).

and taking delight in what is beautiful in visible Form, and lovely in human Character; and, necessarily, striving to produce what is beautiful in form, and to become what is lovely in character. (92-93)

Ruskin, consequently, displays a concern for gaining an adequate understanding of air, water, soil, and landscape quality, as well as for maintaining biodiversity among various species of fauna and flora. Moreover, Ruskin alludes to the need to curtail all callousness and laziness by working to display aesthetic knowledge and appreciation for sights of wonder in the environment and among human beings. Importantly, Ruskin argues that humans should also work to “produce” (i.e., to create) picturesque artifacts; furthermore, Ruskin links one’s ability to perceive and to admire scenic sights and quality human beings with one’s artistic capability.

Akin to Ruskin’s text, Tolkien’s Middle-earth fantasies also show a vexation with how technology can diminish morality and ethics repeatedly, for it is Fëanor and the Noldorin Elves, who are not only the most exceptional artisans among the Elves but also those responsible for slaughtering their own kin in Valinor and in Beleriand. Moreover, the technologically savvy Noldorin Elves of Eregion are the ones who create the Rings of Power, which Sauron subsequently uses to the environmental detriment of Middle-earth. Likewise, it is the most technologically advanced Men, the Númenóreans, who lay waste to large swaths of Middle-earth and who enslave and sacrifice other humans.¹¹¹

Within *Fors clavigera*, Ruskin also encourages his readers to gain and maintain the second *Immaterial thing*: “Hope—the recognition, by true Foresight, of better things

111. Read chapter two for a more thorough discussion of these topics.

to be reached hereafter, whether by ourselves or others; necessarily issuing in the straightforward and undisappointable effort to advance, according to our proper power, the gaining of them” (93). In this sentence, Ruskin exhorts his readers not to sit idly, but, instead, to try to improve the world as much as we can in our own era. The aforementioned characterization of *Hope* that Ruskin provides strongly parallels the message of Gandalf’s statement to the Captains of the West, as they prepare to march on the Black Gate: “Other evils there are that may come [. . .] Yet it is not our part to master all the tides of the world, but to do what is in us for the succor of those years wherein we are set, uprooting the evil in the fields that we know, so that those who live after may have clean earth to till” (*Return*, “Last” 861). Striving to improve the world to the extent that we are able then is a common theme shared by the works of Ruskin and Tolkien, respectively.

In the next portion of the passage from Ruskin’s *Fors Clavigera*, Ruskin reviews his third quality within the group that he calls “immaterial things,” which he considers “essential to Life”: “Love, both of family and neighbour, faithful, and satisfied” (93). Because Ruskin counsels his readers to show love to their families and neighbors, Ruskin’s message implies a refusal to embrace selfishness. Moreover, one cannot love in a “faithful” way while also acting lazily; instead, one must behave tenderly, and one must continually work to understand one’s family and one’s neighbors more intimately and to help them whenever, however, and wherever possible. I believe that the sentiment within Ruskin’s aforementioned quotation generally conveys the message within Tolkien’s fantasies concerning the alliances of the Free Peoples against the ecocidal forces of the Dark Lords and other evildoers in the First, Second, and Third Ages of Middle-earth.

Ruskin's anti-pollution, eco-friendly arguments can remind readers of Tolkien's fantasies. Ruskin, for example, derisively characterizes the idea that industrialization amounts to progress as ignorantly callous, because industrialization pollutes the air "with foul chemical exhalations" and mutilates the aesthetics of homes and neighborhoods by transforming them into "horrible nests" (93). Such a description parallels Tolkien's condemnation of Saruman and the Ruffians' architectural designs and construction, as well as the pollution-causing industries of the Dark Lords and Saruman, in *The Lord of the Rings (Return, "Scouring" 989-97, "Grey" 999)*. When humans promote industrialization and urbanization, Ruskin writes that this behavior causes the senseless deaths of non-human animals, a reduction in air, rain, and soil quality (114-15), and a decrease in overall human health (93-94). Readers may see some similarity between the Tolkien's Ents' cultivation of the Treethearth and the Hobbits' rebuilding of the Shire after the Battle of Bywater that takes place toward the end of *The Return of the King* with Ruskin's environmental vision. In order to overcome impoverished landscapes and atmospheres, Ruskin encourages his readers to adopt the following beneficial work habits: plant many trees, curb pollution-causing industries, and cultivate crops in a more responsible, unselfish, non-callous fashion (94). Ruskin's *Fors Clavigera*, moreover, condemns the modern, capitalistic economy for several other reasons as well; these reasons also include industrialization's "development" of deadly weaponry, which enables murder and ecocide. Ruskin blasts the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71, for example, because of its obliteration of human lives, as well as the destruction of flora and fauna caused by the fighting. As Ruskin observes, wars poison "Pure Air, Water, and Earth [. . .] changing men, horses, and garden-stuff into noxious gas" (93). In this

section, therefore, Ruskin (like Tolkien decades later) condemns the callousness, ignorance, and futility of many wars, as well as the selfishness of humans who harm non-human nature while violently settling their disputes. Eerily, Ruskin's aforementioned descriptions of industrial warfare "changing men, horses, and garden-stuff into noxious gas" reads as a haunting parallel to not only Tolkien's Dead Marshes but also Tolkien's experience during the extremely deadly Battle of the Somme during the Great War.¹¹²

112. Edmund Blunden's Great War work *The Undertones of War* somewhat parallels Tolkien's fantasies and Ruskin's texts. Blunden recalls that "Still farther ahead was the British wire, a thin *brambly* pretence, nor was the German wire at this point the usual series of iron *thickets*" (122, emphasis added). To emphasize the callousness necessary to unroll countless yards of barbed wire in order to more easily harm/kill the enemy, therefore, Blunden compares the tactic to weeds and weed-like plants. Such plants can quickly monopolize landscapes, prevent other flora from growing, and increase the difficulty for any fauna (including humans) to move around and among its branches. In what Blunden refers to as the Boar's Head Massacre, moreover, he notes that "most died against the uncut wire" (42, 41). The act of laying the wire, therefore, not only demonstrates a callous spirit to the aesthetics of the sight, sound, and touch of the wire and its negative affect on the non-human environment surrounding it but it also displays selfishness because the act is designed to help one side of humanity in a misanthropic quest to slaughter another. Within his "The Zonnebeke Road" poem that appears toward the end of his memoir, Blunden compares "That wretched wire" to "rusty *brambles* or dead *bine*," while also observing the sobering image of mere "Shreds of dead grass and willows, homes and men" (stanza 2, emphasis added). Blunden's haunting passage is effective, in part, because his references to the wire resembling noxious weeds reappears in other Great War works. Paul Fussell, after all, states that the extensive use of barbed wire during the Great War resulted in "*thickets* of mock-organic *rusty* brown that helped give a look of eternal autumn to the front" (48, emphasis added). Consequently, Tolkien's descriptions of the ugly, painful, and obstructive brambles, thistles, and other weeds in Saruman's realm and in Sauron's Mordor have roots in Tolkien's experience with industrialized warfare during the Great War.

Eerie flora, a decimated and muddy landscape (replete with a pungent odor and obstructive flora, which will again remind readers of not only Ruskin's aforementioned descriptions of "noxious" dead men and animals but also the landscape of Tolkien's Dead Marshes and Mordor), and counterproductive barbed wire define another particular scene that Blunden recalls in his memoir:

Over Coldstream Lane [. . .] the yellow cabbage-flowers thickened here and there in sickening brilliance. Giant teasels made a thicket beyond. The ground became torn and vile, the poisonous breath of fresh explosions skulked all about, and the mud which choked the narrow passages stank as one pulled through it, and through the twisted disused wires running mysteriously onward, in such festooning complexity that we even suspected some of them ran into the Germans' line and were used to betray us. (*Undertones* 30-31)

Blunden, therefore, intends for the reader to grasp the diminishment of the land caused by the Great War by again mentioning ugly plants that harm those who meet them and that diminish the ability for humans (and other fauna) to move with ease. Somewhat paralleling how plants like teasels possess thorns to defend themselves and how (ironically) this trait sometimes leads to their removal by humans, Blunden notes that some of the barbed wire unrolled by the British to help protect themselves now appears to aid those seeking to kill the British soldiers. Consequently, Blunden's understatement bemoans the ignorance and callousness caused by various acts of warfare, including the unrolling and hanging of barbed wire.

Tolkien, meanwhile, also felt deep misgivings for industrialization because of its various kinds of pollution, because it created more and worse work for marginalized groups, and because it appeared unnatural. Tolkien's pessimistic view of industrialization appears in striking fashion in his April 30, 1944, letter to his son Christopher where Tolkien condemns industrialization for its noise pollution and blasts "humanity and engineers in special" as "nitwitted and malicious as a rule," since they create diabolical machines (*Letters* 77). Tolkien's skepticism of industries led him to question the need for various machines to a greater degree than most of his peers, although Tolkien would sometimes—with various levels of reluctance—use machines (e.g., planes, trains, cars, tape recorders, typewriters, and telephones) (Scull and Hammond, *J.R.R. . . . Reader's* 253). Nonetheless, Tolkien noted his animosity toward refrigerators¹¹³ and machine-reliant farming in his October 25, 1958, letter to Deborah Webster (*Letters* 288). Tolkien's longing for his childhood years "in 'the Shire' in a pre-mechanical age," moreover, alludes to his sorrow that industrialization harmed not only the countryside, in general, by marring landscapes and by destroying ecosystems but also human morality since industrialization led to more unethical farming practices (*Letters* 288). Akin to the aforementioned example of inter-human callousness brought on, in part, by industrialization, Tolkien bemoans the continuous building of supposed "Labour-saving machinery," because such work "only creates endless and worse labour. And in addition to this fundamental disability of a creature, is added the Fall, which makes our devices

113. The refrigerator's function to preserve food beyond its natural expiration and Tolkien's rejection of the tactic somewhat parallels Tolkien's criticism of the Elves' use of the Rings of Power to "embalm" their favorite environments in order that these environments might not decay at the same rate that they otherwise would (*Letters* 177, 197). While acknowledging the reasons why the Elves try to preserve their favorite lands, Tolkien still characterizes the behavior as wrong overall, as well as doomed (*Letters* 177, 197).

not only fail of their desire but turn to new and horrible evil” (*Letters* 88). While the proponents of industrialization aim to reduce humanity’s workload, Tolkien characterizes this goal as self-deceiving, as well as ignorant of the likely long-term outcome of mechanization. Indeed, Tolkien views examples of industrialization, such as coal factories (i.e. “gas-works”), with such horror that he would rather see the end of human civilization and a return to primordial human society than the continuation of supposed industrial “progress” (*Letters* 96).

The skepticism of and even outright animosity toward more modern forms of technology that Tolkien’s letters display reappears in passages of his fantasies, for Tolkien questions the long-term utility of industrialism, which often harms the aesthetics and well-being of non-human and human nature alike. Tolkien’s fantasies deride the technological “advances” engineered by the Dark Lords Morgoth and Sauron and the fallen Maia Saruman (as I observe in the next chapter), which help to make possible their wars during the First, Second, and Third Ages. Tolkien’s conviction that industrialization actually results in less favorable types of labor and worse working conditions for the masses contributes to his depictions of the Elves and Men whom Morgoth captures and compels to work for him in horrid living conditions during the First Age (e.g., *Children*, “Death of Beleg” 152). Likewise, Tolkien’s pessimism concerning industrial working conditions and industrialized farming contribute to his theories that Sauron enslaved the remaining Entwives and (like other conquered subjects) forced them to work the land near the Sea of Núrnen to provide nourishment for Sauron’s armies (*Letters* 179). Partially because of their industrial exploitation of the earth, Morgoth and Sauron harm the quality of the soil, air, groundwater, and rainfall in the areas where they dwell and

conquer; the fact that their industries contribute to these problems parallels Ruskin and Humboldt's earlier observations of the primary world (Ruskin 93-94; Wulf, *Invention* qtd. in 64-65). Consequently, by blasting the aggressive and devastating wars unleashed by Morgoth, Sauron, and Saruman, Tolkien's fantasies (to some extent) parallel the anti-imperialistic arguments made by Humboldt, Marsh, and other nineteenth-century writers concerned with the environment's well-being and who question the overall utility of industrialization (e.g., Wulf, *Invention* 121, 398). The fact that few non-human animals remain in the Isengard area after Saruman unleashes industrialized warfare on the environment (e.g., *Two*, "Road" 537-38), moreover, parallels Ruskin's sobering analysis of some of the unfortunate results of industrialization (93-94). The problems stemming from Saruman's damming of the Isen, meanwhile, parallels Humboldt and Marsh's criticism of misguided irrigation projects (Wulf, *Invention* 64, 66, 251, 342). Tolkien's texts, in other words, encourage readers to approach industrialization with profound caution and to reject some portions of it, because industrialization can lead to gross environmental degradation in a variety of forms, because industrialization can enable the spread of more and even deadlier warfare, and because tyrannical despots can subjugate even more individuals and communities by industrializing the lands where they rule.

Besides condemning industrialized warfare's propensity for mindless slaughter, Ruskin argues for a philosophy that emphasizes the kinship linking various portions of the landscape: natural (i.e., bodies of water, soils, landscapes, fauna, and flora), human-shaped entities (e.g., pruned trees and hedges), and human-created buildings. Consequently, because of the supposed bonds between human-crafted structures and the non-human environment, Ruskin not only believed humans could wrongly impose certain

buildings on a particular landscape (e.g., *hilly, cultivated, countryside-woody*, and *wild*) (Stein 335) but also thought humans could (through proper instruction and by building with the right spirit) enhance the beauty of the non-human environment (Hunt). An observer, in the opinion of Ruskin, can discern the quality of the architecture resting on a specific landscape based on whether or not it conforms to an alleged, “normal psychological or behavioral responses and, hence, with a set of appropriate architectural responses and specific structural forms¹¹⁴” (Stein 335). Thus, because immorality and poor art supposedly reinforce one another, social instability occurs alongside imperfect architecture, according to Ruskin (Stein 332).

Ruskin’s beliefs concerning architecture and society parallel those held by other nineteenth and early twentieth-century commentators like William Bousfield. Bousfield thought that humans in industrial countries showed a diminishing ability to appreciate beauty and to appreciate the intrinsic value of the items produced by skilled labor, which, in turn, affected many laborers’ work ethic and the quality of their creations. In the opinion of Bousfield in 1882, “the design and quality of manufactured goods deteriorated in an environment of ‘gloom and ugliness’ and maintained that the smoke that had ‘arisen in the creation of our trade . . . must be removed if we are to preserve it’” (Stradling and Thorsheim 15). By reducing pollution and by improving the “design and quality of manufactured goods,” Bousfield believed these modifications would enable developed countries to remain economically strong (Stradling and Thorsheim 15). Morris and the other Arts and Crafts Movement members, furthermore, encouraged architects and other

114. Ruskin arrived at these aforementioned (albeit controversial and *quasi-scientific*) (Stein 335) convictions partially because of his knowledge of and exposure to 1700s landscape gardening practices and writings, as well as because of his country garden tours in rural Britain (Hunt).

artists to fuse the realistic and the stylized by emulating the environment (e.g., flora and fauna) (Crawford 22); such a design upgrade would reduce human ignorance of and callousness toward the non-human environment as well. One general improvement to artistic design and quality was the *Art Nouveau* movement in the late 1800s and early 1900s, which featured trees, coral, flowers, jellyfish, and other environmental images within the arts and crafts (e.g., architecture) (Wulf, *Invention* 366-68). Unfortunately, such eco-inspired designs often proved the exception, and the overall trend of poor architecture continued in many parts of the industrialized world, such as Britain. In 1930, for instance, the *Lincolnshire Standard* characterized the various shanties erected on the Lincolnshire Sandhills as “eyesores and abominations”¹¹⁵ (qtd. in Sheail, *Environmental* 36-37). Architecture in the industrialized era could appear beautiful and allude to the intrinsic value of non-human nature, yet it often proved ugly in final form and in totality and thus often appeared “callous” to observers like Bousfield, Ruskin, and Tolkien.

Urbanization drew Tolkien’s ire as well, because it eliminated various ecosystems, flora, and landscapes; likewise, urbanization also often failed to meet Tolkien’s aesthetic standards for architecture. Besides mourning the loss of many inherently valuable and beautiful Welsh landscapes that environmentally unsound mining operations harmed, Tolkien displays even more significant criticism of “the even more ghastly sea-side resorts” for harming the aesthetic value of—and reducing the biodiversity of—Wales in his October 25, 1958, letter to Deborah Webster (*Letters* 289).

115. Sheail also mentions that horribly constructed homes appeared not only on the Lincolnshire Sandhills during this era but also near the river Adur and Orkney, Scotland (*Environmental* 39, 132).

Indeed, Tolkien despised modern architecture and suburbia. Tolkien, in fact, declares to his son Christopher in an October 6, 1944, letter that “if a ragnarök¹¹⁶ would burn all the slums and gas-works, and shabby garages, and long arc-lit suburbs,” Tolkien would gladly sacrifice the end of “all the works of art,” for he prefers to simply “go back to trees” (96). Because Tolkien’s diction describes 1940s architecture in England as “slums” and “shabby,” Tolkien conspicuously implies that he rejects urbanization, because he views them as unhealthy, ugly, and poorly built. Moreover, by characterizing *suburbs* as “long” and “arc-lit,” Tolkien alludes to the many, many acres of former countryside converted to housing development. Likewise, for a man who loved the stars,¹¹⁷ Tolkien also appears to despise urbanization because of the light-pollution caused by additional houses and streetlights that reduced the clarity of the night sky and the ability to see as many stars with the naked eye. In the industrial age, humanity ignorantly and callously trades the sensory imagery of stars and flora like trees for the ugly sight of poorly designed and built uniform housing and streetlights.

Interestingly, although Tolkien expresses grave misgivings about industrialization, although he mourns the loss of artisanship, and although he despises suburban streetlights in his letters (*Letters* 96), Tolkien apparently disliked these types of lights for their appearance and settings rather than the entire idea of lamps and other human-created lights. After all, lamps light the streets of the most celebrated city among Free Men in the Third Age: Minas Tirith (*Return*, “Minas” 735). As Caras Galadhon in Lothlórien further demonstrates (*Fellowship*, “Mirror” 344-45), Tolkien praises the use of

116. *Ragnarök* means “World-doom” in Old Icelandic (*Letters* 440n).

117. Priscilla Tolkien mentions in “News from the North Pole” that “astronomy [. . .] was of great interest to my father and I can recall how my brother Christopher and I were encouraged to learn about the stars and planets and eclipses of the sun and moon” (par. 4).

lamplight when used effectively in an aesthetically pleasing manner in *The Lord of the Rings*, for the Elves use tree-lamps in Galadriel's realm. Likewise, before Yavanna's beloved Two Trees existed, her spouse Aulë (as well as Varda and Manwë) created the Two Lamps to light the world, prior to Morgoth's destruction of them, as *The Silmarillion* mentions ("Quenta: Beginning" 35).

Since Tolkien also criticized the appearance, construction, and placement of architecture in his own life and within his fantasies, he follows a tradition of environmental commentators like Ruskin. In a parallel to Ruskin's argument that certain types of architecture appear more aptly placed in certain settings (Stein 335), Tolkien portrays the Hobbit holes in the farming communities of the Shire, the Elvish wooden platforms in the woods of Lothlórien, and the stone fortress-city of Minas Tirith resting upon its hill as appropriate for their respective environmental setting. Moreover, Tolkien includes versions of Ruskin's general environmental setting categories (Stein 335): hilly (e.g., Tower Hills), cultivated (e.g., the Shire), countryside-woody (e.g., Woody End in the Shire), and wild (e.g., Fangorn Forest). Unlike the *picturesque* gardening tradition that praised the inclusion of collapsing buildings (Wulf and Gieben-Gamal 182), Tolkien's works convey a sense of loss (as well as dread) at the sight of ruined architecture (e.g., Weathertop). Consequently, Tolkien's texts imply that all structures created by (to use the gardener Paxton's characterization) "the Genius of Man" are ultimately doomed (Wulf and Gieben-Gamal 254-55). Akin to the National Trust's earlier conviction that (like the destruction of forests) unpruned hedges and unkempt homes reduced aesthetic quality (Sheail, *Nature* 57), meanwhile, Tolkien features the home of the treacherous Bill Ferny as "dark" and "ill-kept" and one with an untrimmed hedge

(*Fellowship*, “Knife” 176-77). Moreover, while Tolkien hated suburban architecture’s ugliness, he praised the inclusion of flora and fauna from the sea and the land on the walls of the Elven realm of Doriath (*Silmarillion*, “Quenta: Sindar” 93), as well as the hypothetical carving of environmental scenes amid the Glittering Caves that impressed Gimli (*Two*, “Road” 534). Consequently, Tolkien’s works possess some historical kinship with the eco-inspired *Art Nouveau* movement (Wulf, *Invention* 366-68). Because Tolkien implies that the rise of Sauron’s power corresponds with the progressive drop of skill among the Gondorians to shape the gates of Minas Tirith that Gimli notices (*Return*, “Last” 854), Tolkien’s texts parallel the nineteenth-century conviction in America and Britain that an ethical and aesthetic decline occurs when industrialism, pollution, and imperialism reign supreme, as Stradling and Thorsheim would likely note (29). Tolkien’s Middle-earth fantasies, therefore, display marked kinship with nineteenth- and twentieth-century architectural theories, which suggest that there are appropriate types of buildings for certain terrains, that there are appropriate designs that adorn these structures, and that the era’s atmosphere can affect the workmanship of various constructions.

These alterations in design, therefore, partially came in response to poor artisanship and professionalism. For example, because woodworking (i.e., marquetry) evolved by increasingly using mechanization from 1850-1900 and beyond and because machines cannot entirely produce successful woodworking at every stage, some woodworkers disparaged the use of machines to create wooden furniture as antithetical to the spirit of marquetry (Edwards 429-30). Such debates about quality (i.e., human woodworkers) vs. speed and quantity (i.e., machines producing woodworking) include many other vocations as well. Wulf and Gieben-Gamal, moreover, note that Jekyll’s 1904

text *Old West Surrey* includes her profound sadness at witnessing the speed with which the majority of the countryside's working classes would "throw out their 'solid furniture of pure material and excellent design' in favour of 'cheap pretentious articles, got up with veneer and varnish and shoddy material'" (285-86). While Ruskin and other opponents of mechanization disparage the process partially because it enhances human laziness (since humans then need to work less in order to possess the less expensive machine-built product when compared to traditional marquetry), Jekyll criticizes machine-produced marquetry. In Jekyll's view, marquetry incentivizes people to make self-deceiving purchases since many people equate the inferior machine's product with the work of humans, and therefore buy the less polished work because of the lower price.

Industrialization and urbanization harmed not only the quality of home construction but also other types of crafts. Because the woodworking trade underwent mechanization in the last half of the twentieth century (Edwards 429-30), Tolkien's Middle-earth fantasies appear to condemn this trend, albeit in somewhat oblique ways. Tolkien, for example, praises the quality and longevity of Frodo's furniture that he inherits from Bilbo, who also received many of the pieces from older relatives (e.g., *Fellowship*, "Conspiracy" 98). By writing of the benefits of older furniture, Tolkien's texts parallel the sentiments expressed by the English gardener Jekyll, whom I reference in the previous paragraph (Wulf and Gieben-Gamal 285-86). Similarly, one of the Drúedain's cultural characteristics that Tolkien champions in "The Drúedain" fragment is their tendency to work with wood by hand (*Unfinished* 379). Finally, Tolkien also praises the woodworking skill of the lame Labadal/Sador in *The Children of Húrin* ("Childhood"

41, 48-50). In his masterpiece as well as fragments, therefore, Tolkien writes about the positives of woodworking, in general, and well-made wooden furniture, in particular.

Somewhat similar to Tolkien, Ruskin also focused on the “local” and the “regional” environment (Hunt). This follows an idea akin to the notion that how humans choose to construct buildings and shape the environment can appear more aesthetically correct, because localities and regions must try to cooperate, balance, and complement one another. This striving toward the blending of beautifully equal—yet inherently different—entities and beings in order to produce harmony helps to explain why Ruskin believed that gardens stand as microcosms of the world (and even more so if the gardens are maintained by those less powerful) (Hunt). Indeed, Ruskin believed that not merely the things in gardens proved equal in worth but also the studying necessary to acquire the knowledge of each topic: “what grew in gardens proved [for Ruskin] every bit [as] worthy of close scrutiny as the aspens and wild flowers that solicited his attention on Swiss mountainsides or in Italian valleys” (Hunt). Ignorance and callousness of another subject of knowledge and/or a particular landscape—even if it indirectly derives, in part, from one’s passionate focus on something else—is still condemned by Ruskin, therefore, because it is partially rooted in the self-centered focus on one’s favorite topic or terrain, and consequently, the lazy refusal to learn more about other topics.

Tolkien’s works include local, regional, and global perspectives as well. Akin to Ruskin’s choice to include both regional and local emphases (Hunt), Tolkien creates memorable localities like the Shire and Minas Tirith, while also focusing more generally on the region of northwestern Middle-earth for the majority of his fantasies. Nonetheless, Tolkien’s Middle-earth fantasies also include a global outlook, for Tolkien often

mentions that Morgoth harms the world (indeed, entire solar systems, universes, and galaxies) and that the Valar wish to save as much of Creation as possible from Morgoth and his minions. Tolkien depicts Gandalf (as the representative of the Valar in Middle-earth) as a spirit with a global outlook. For example, Gandalf informs Denethor that “all worthy things that are in peril as the world now stands, those are my care,” which stands in contrast to the regional perspective of Denethor, who only toils on behalf of his Gondorian realm (*Return*, “Minas” 742). Because Tolkien’s fantasies include a global message and because Tolkien’s works influenced people around the world, Tolkien’s texts also parallel the focus of Marsh’s *Man and Nature* and the worldwide impact of his text (Wulf, *Invention* 341-42). Because Tolkien began penning *The Lord of the Rings* in 1937 and continued to work on his masterpiece until 1953 (Hammond and Scull, “*Lord*” . . . *Reader’s* xviii, xxvii, xxxi-xxxiii), the inclusion of the global view in Tolkien’s fantasy follows the pattern of global-oriented environmentalism that, as Cioc, Linner, and Osborn mention, gained momentum in 1945 and the years that followed (400).

The Free Peoples’ struggles against the imperialism of the Dark Lords, against the tyranny of corrupted Maia and other monsters, and even sometimes against the colonizing efforts of other Free People groups somewhat parallel the history of imperialism on earth. Colonialism and other manifestations of immoral callous selfishness also faced condemnation from nineteenth- and twentieth-century environmental observers. Many of the most prominent national governments exhibited bad environmental traits. Humboldt, after all, denounced eighteenth-century and nineteenth-century colonialism (which many European governments embraced at the

time), in general, and the environmental, physical, cultural, and social problems stemming from colonial violence against the indigenous populations more specifically (Wulf, *Invention* 121, 398). Similarly, in the latter half of the nineteenth century, Marsh emphasized that the negatives of colonization included the selfish abduction of the colonies' natural resources (Wulf, *Invention* 340). Pessimism, in fact, increased among English traders in Africa during the first quarter of the twentieth century, for few failed to see the overwhelming problems of imperialism for all involved (Newell 5-6).

Whereas contemporary environmental historians during the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries examine how the pollution caused by industrialization, mining, logging, and farming in Germany adversely affects bodies of water, forests, and ecosystems, in general, late nineteenth-century environmental historians mainly focused on how pollution harms trees (Cioc, Linner, and Osborn 397-98). The aforementioned interest in how pollution damages trees shares some commonality with Tolkien's works. Marsh is one nineteenth-century writer who reflected on how pollution harms trees. Marsh observed and published conservationist works,¹¹⁸ such as *Man and Nature; Or, Physical Geography as Modified by Human Action* (which he began writing in 1860), in which he discusses the various environmental problems created by humans and how to redress these problems in order to sustain Western civilization's development (Wulf, *Invention* 336-37, 340, 341, 350, 392).

118. In his writings, Marsh drew inspiration from Humboldt's texts and from Marsh's own trips to Europe, Africa, the Near East, and the Middle East that he sometimes took during his tenures as the U.S. Ambassador to Turkey and the U.S. Ambassador to Italy (Wulf, *Invention* 336-37, 340, 341). Marsh's work influenced the conservationist Pinchot, as well as the preservationist Muir (350).

Several decades later, Muir (the first president of the Sierra Club) continued and expanded on the work of Humboldt, Marsh, and others. Rather than focusing on how to improve human civilization and its “development” of the environment, Muir (like Humboldt before him) argued that the environment possesses inherent value—not just humans (Wulf, *Invention* 376), and therefore, humans should develop a less selfish spirit toward, a greater respect for, and more sensitivity toward the environment.¹¹⁹ Within the fantasies of Middle-earth, of course, Tolkien features environmental teachers like Bombadil and Goldberry and environmental epiphanies like Frodo’s realization in Lothlórien that trees possess intrinsic beauty and value, as I discuss in the previous chapter.

Because Tolkien depicts Treebeard feeling as though he and the Ents are the only beings in Middle-earth who intimately know about and care deeply for the trees (*Two*, “Treebeard” 455), Tolkien’s portrayal of the Ents is also relevant to the discussion of another unfortunate environmental trend. Some of the worst environmental problems to develop in the 1700s and subsequent centuries actually resulted from human ignorance, arrogance, and callousness toward non-human nature that privileged overtly human-centered activities like logging and (in some cases) farming. One individual who marginalized lands without human inhabitants was the French naturalist Georges-Louis Leclerc, Comte de Buffon. As Wulf mentions,

During the mid-eighteenth century Buffon had painted a picture of primeval forest as a horrendous place full of decaying trees, rotting leaves, parasitic plants,

119. The convictions of two of the main environmental camps of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, consequently, found fertile ground in the writings and actions of the conservationist Marsh (as well as the first U.S. Chief Forester, Gifford Pinchot) and the preservationist Muir (Norton, *Toward* 7), although both Marsh and Muir borrowed from the findings and writings of Humboldt.

stagnant pools and venomous insects. The wilderness, he said, was deformed [. . . .] Beauty was equated with utility and every acre wrested from the wilderness was a victory of civilized man over uncivilized nature. It was ‘cultivated nature’, Buffon had written, that was ‘beautiful!’ (*Invention* 68)

Buffon’s remarks display selfish callousness blended with ignorance when he privileges human impact to such an extent since the application of Buffon’s environmental theories could (and did, in some cases) ruin ecosystems.

While deforestation, even in the 1700s, was a concern in areas near the Indian Ocean (where Tolkien swam as a young child) (Gueroult), knowledge of the depth of the dilemma caused by the excessive felling of trees increased significantly in the 1800s (Prendergast and Adams 251). Conservation practices for logging, for example, occurred in South African regions by the middle of the 1800s (Prendergast and Adams 251-52). The knowledge that trees died from coal pollution, meanwhile, derived from Adolph Stöckhardt’s studies in the 1840s (Cioc, Linner, and Osborn 398). Before any other scientist, however, Humboldt learned that trees greatly assisted humanity, in particular, and the ecosystem, in general, by producing oxygen, by holding the soil in place, by providing shade, and by inhibiting a rise in the temperature (Wulf, *Invention* 64, 66, 251). Consequently, Humboldt listed deforestation¹²⁰ (in addition to industrial air pollution and irrigation) as one of the worst human-caused environmental problems (Wulf, *Invention* 64, 66, 251). Excessive logging can also result in less moisture, fewer water-springs, and much worse flooding, as Humboldt discerned (Wulf, *Invention* qtd. in 64-65). Borrowing from Humboldt’s observations, Marsh’s *Man and Nature* observed that the

120. In particular, Humboldt perceived from his explorations that Peru, Italy, Venezuela, and Russia all experienced environmental decline because of poor logging practices (Wulf, *Invention* 66).

environmental calamities afflicting the globe included not only industrial waste in rivers but also excessive logging, which harms biodiversity, leads to soil deterioration, and increases the potential for flooding (Wulf, *Invention* 341-42). Like the scope of his work *Man and Nature*, the influence of Marsh's work also proved global.¹²¹ Marsh's *Man and Nature* not only helped to stimulate the passage of the Timber Culture Act of 1873 and the 1891 Forest Reserves Act, which exhorted settlers to plant trees in America's Midwest, but also led to better forestry practices in Japan, France, and the British Empire (e.g., South Africa, Australia, and New Zealand) (Wulf, *Invention* 350).

Conservationist and sustainable development advocacy became more prevalent in matters concerning forestry during the opening decades of the twentieth century in Great Britain and the United States as well, and therefore articulated the type of environmental messaging already expressed by Marsh and Pinchot. In other words, the governments of both countries, as well as organizations and individuals in both countries, often pursued conservationism for human-centered reasons. For example, after the Great War and the realization among the British of their immense need for—yet lack of—timber endangered their very existence in times of crisis (Denekamp 19), the British Parliament started the Forestry Commission in 1919; the Forestry Commission, subsequently, created tree farms to meet these human needs¹²² (Sheail, *Environmental* 83). Brinser and Shepard advocate a similar forest program that Pinchot desired and the aforementioned British Forestry

121. Because humanity generally began to examine environmental issues on a worldwide scale in 1945 (Cioc, Linner, and Osborn 400), Marsh's work proved a precursor for more broadly focused environmental studies.

122. The economic- and national security-oriented conservationists advocated that educated human conservationists should possess the ability to alter which trees lived in certain forests and to create forest farms to provide logging jobs and materials, if it resulted in a net-increase in the number of long-term jobs and diminished the chance of fighting doomed wars (Sheail, *Nature* 83).

Commission enacted. According to Brinser and Shepard, “Sustained yield management means harvesting the mature trees in such a way as to protect the younger trees [. . . which] are left to mature [. . .] When a lumberman has a forest, which is permanently productive, he has what amounts to an efficient forest factory [i.e., *silviculture*]” (187). While the British Forestry Commission concentrated on the utility of tree farms for national security purposes in the aforementioned instance, Brinser and Shepard discuss economic utility by characterizing how to create a financially successful tree farm in the long-term.

Nevertheless, some individuals chose to steal natural resources from public lands for private use, which is somewhat reminiscent of passages in Tolkien’s fantasies. A 1934 British law tried to stymie such behavior by making it illegal for most individuals to seize plants from public areas, including ones “growing in any road, lane, roadside waste, roadside bank or hedge” (Sheail, *Nature* 39-40), which led to the adoption of this model by an overwhelming number of English and Welsh county governments by 1940 (40). By working to save flora from individual greed, therefore, these laws worked to try to prevent the development of a selfish, callous spirit akin to Sir Cecil and other sixteenth-century aristocrats, who (as noted previously) ruthlessly seized the lands of the poor just because they wished to possess these areas. Tolkien’s Middle-earth fantasies share some similarities with the aforementioned mid-twentieth century laws. For example, there is a fantastic kinship between selfish and callous individuals who chose to fell public hedges and the Old Forest trees’ attempt to topple the Hobbits’ Hedge. Moreover, Samwise’s wrath at the vision of Ted Sandyman cutting the tree down that grew in the “avenue beyond the Mill that shades the road to Bywater” (*Fellowship*, “Mirror” 353) resembles

the motivation that led to the aforementioned British laws that outlawed behavior like Sandyman's unethical actions.

Tolkien himself, however, articulates a somewhat idiosyncratic view of trees and tree conservation. Tolkien, for example, mentions his fondness for fires, which requires "hewing old brambles and making a fire," in his December 28, 1944, letter to Christopher Tolkien (*Letters* 107). The word choice of "old" emphasizes Tolkien's decision to avoid killing young plants that will more likely die if exposed to some cutting, and thus alludes to Tolkien's idea of "responsible" environmental guardianship by humans. Tolkien's argument that, if one wishes to behave morally, one should protect young trees by using the limbs of (or perhaps all the parts of) mature trees parallels the previously discussed advice of conservationist forestry advocates like Brinser and Shepard (187). Tolkien's actions and statements allude to his desire to make certain that the various kinds of tree species can replenish themselves and avoid a threatened, endangered, or extinct state—which Tolkien's Christian beliefs would consider as a requirement of human environmental guardianship. As far as individual trees, however, Tolkien believed that humans could fell trees and repurpose the wood for a variety of reasons: to provide shelters for themselves, to warm themselves, to create wooden weapons to defend themselves, and to provide themselves with enough treeless land to cultivate crops to feed themselves. Nonetheless, Tolkien displayed intense disgust if humans behaved in a lazy, callous manner when cutting trees down or pruning the limbs of trees. For instance, Tolkien mourns the loss of a tree he regards as a "friend" (*Tolkien* 31-32). Within the "Introductory Note" to "Leaf by Niggle," Tolkien mentions that one of the origins for this short story "was a great-limbed poplar tree that I could see even lying in bed. It was

suddenly lopped and mutilated by its owner, I do not know why. It is cut down now, a less barbarous punishment for any crimes it may have been accused of, such as being large and alive”¹²³ (*Tolkien* 31-32). Tolkien, consequently, implies that, by removing the top of the tree, chopping off the majority of its limbs, or pruning the tree in such a way that it loses the bulk of its leaves, one acts unethically by depriving the tree of its typical shape (and other defining characteristics) for an extended period of time, if not permanently. While killing trees generally rankles Tolkien, in other words, Tolkien’s writings suggest that the act of wantonly or stupidly harming trees (e.g., cutting trees in such a fashion as to render them a parody of their typical appearance) infuriates him even more, which recalls Ruskin’s previously described theories concerning proper human shaping of the environment.

Tolkien’s ire at witnessing examples of poor human environmental “guardianship” borrows from a long history of poor forestry practices on earth and contributes to the creation of many scenes in Tolkien’s fantasies. In the First Age, Tolkien features Morgoth’s involvement with the destruction of the Two Trees in Valinor and the felling of trees by Morgoth’s forces in Beleriand. During the Second Age, the Númenóreans clear-cut trees in Eriador. In fact, the Númenóreans overharvest trees in Númenor itself even prior to the arrival of Sauron, although Aldarion’s typical

123. Later in the text, Tolkien mentions his aforementioned dislike for the desire to lay low a poplar tree. His reference of contempt is toward the callous spirit displayed by Lady Agnew (*Letters* 450n). The editor also remarks that Tolkien differs in whether or not the tree survives, since the 1962 letter notes it lives, while the 1964 foreword to *Tree and Leaf* mentions the felling of the tree (321, 450n).

Tolkien’s letters and fantasies demonstrate that he would agree with Wohlleben’s argument that “We must at least talk about the rights of trees. We must manage our forests sustainably and respectfully, and allow some trees to grow old with dignity, and to die a natural death” (qtd. in Grant).

management of trees in Númenor¹²⁴ parallels the tree farms created by Britain after WWI to compensate for their lack of adequate timber for various purposes (Sheail, *Environmental* 83), which I reference earlier in this chapter. The ecosadistic Sauron, moreover, orders the felling of the trees in Eriador, Númenor, the Gardens of the Entwives, and Minas Ithil in the Second Age alone. During the Third Age, Smaug incinerates many trees (and the general landscape) of Erebor and Dale, while Saruman orders his armies to ransack Fangorn Forest and its surrounding areas (as well as the Shire); Sauron's forces, moreover, harm many trees in Lothlórien and Mirkwood during the War of the Ring. Even within *The New Shadow* fragment, Tolkien includes references to the gleeful cutting of trees by Men like Saelon in the Fourth Age. As the environmental histories of England (where gardeners like Paxton annihilated thousands of trees to improve the area's aesthetics, supposedly), of Tolkien's homeland in present-day South Africa, and of the world, in general, each partially parallel the fate of Middle-earth forests. For instance, Treebeard mournfully concludes that all forests may soon exist only in memory, message that also applies to our world, as C.S. Lewis notes in his review of *The Lord of the Rings* (137).

In addition to contributing to the poor guardianship of forests, industrialization negatives also included poor mining practices during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Detractors of mines criticized the ethics of mine owners by noting that miners gather minerals at a much quicker rate and in greater quantities than what farmers produce from rural agriculture (Brinser and Shepard 49). Scholars like Brinser and

124. For more information on the passages within Tolkien's works that this paragraph references, read the section concerning the spirits, as well as the Númenórean section, within chapter two.

Shepard also deride mining as an unnecessary venture, because minerals “are not life supporting,” unlike agricultural work, which will “nourish and support life” (235-36). In other words, the purpose of mining is to meet human desires rather than needs, and therefore, Brinser and Shepard imply that a degree of selfishness lies at the foundation of mining. Although, as Sheail notes (*Environmental* 227-28), many in Britain (and elsewhere) tried to redress the environmental damage caused by mining by planting trees and by endeavoring to lessen the amount of pollution caused by mining, human sabotage undermined such efforts at times. Moreover, even with successful tree planting in places like former coal mines, old mining land takes centuries to recover even some of the minerals taken from the ground during the mining process; thus, while the surface may appear “renewed,” the subsurface may not actually be replenished.

Tolkien also expresses intense sorrow that exploitative mining occurs within his October 25, 1958, letter to Deborah Webster, which includes his bittersweet reflection on Wales: “I love Wales (what is left of it, [for] mines [. . .] have done their worst)” (*Letters* 289). Nevertheless, Tolkien also recognized the potential economic benefits of mining as well. Like other British *Uitlanders* who immigrated to the Boer republics, Tolkien’s father, Arthur, benefited from precious metal mining operations (Russell 226). Tolkien, as he acknowledged in a March 6-8, 1941, letter to his son Michael, inherited a little money from such mining activities in present-day South Africa (*Letters* 437n); this inherited wealth from Tolkien’s parents later helped to provide for Tolkien’s wife Edith and their first son (John) during WWI (*Letters* 53). Tolkien, therefore, viewed mining with mixed feelings, but he understood that humans could and would exploit this practice for a variety of reasons, such as selfishness.

Consequently, it seems no coincidence that Tolkien discusses the benefits and significant problems caused by mining within his fantasies. While Tolkien praises the artisanship and knowledge of Aulë, the Father of the Dwarves and the teacher of the High Noldorin Elves (both of whom often enjoy delving into the earth for gems and precious metals), Aulë receives a rebuke from Ilúvatar for engineering the Dwarves without first asking Ilúvatar for permission (*Silmarillion*, “Quenta: Aulë 43-44). Similarly, the downfalls of both the Dwarves (e.g., their involvement in the Ruin of Doriath and their excessive mining in Moria) and the Noldorin Elves (e.g., their decisions to slaughter the Teleri Elves in Valinor and to sack the realms of Doriath and the Mouths of the Sirion) often involve excess and rash decisions. The repercussions of finding, designing, hoarding, and coveting the Silmarils, the Rings of Power, and the Arkenstone indicate the mixed blessings of mining (and of creating artifacts from) the earth’s gems and precious metals. Within *The Fall of Gondolin*, moreover, the Orcs seize the subsequent-traitor Meglin when the Elf ventures into the mountains surrounding Gondolin to extract “ore” (*Book . . . 2* 169-70), which, in turn, leads to the annihilation of Gondolin partially because of the information that Meglin provides Morgoth once the Elf is captured by the Dark Lord. Sauron, moreover, served Aulë prior to Sauron’s fall (*Silmarillion*, “Valaquenta” 32), while Saruman (prior to his own fall) represents Aulë’s Maia emissary to Middle-earth, according to Tolkien’s unfinished essay “The Istari” (*Unfinished* 393). Indeed, Tolkien states that, originally, the skills and interests of Melkor/Morgoth more often paralleled Aulë’s own than the skills/interests of any other Vala (*Silmarillion*, “Valaquenta” 27). Because many antagonists and fatally flawed heroes possess links to Aulë (and the actions of those most interested in mining) and because gem-work leads to

much misery in Middle-earth, Tolkien indicates his profound sorrow that the awe-inspiring sight of and joy in the making of gem-shaped artifacts is often surpassed by the evil repercussions of their existence. Since myriads of Elves, Men, and Dwarves die in the quest to reclaim the Silmarils because of the creation of the Rings of Power, Tolkien's fantasies mourn the futility of their conception. Nonetheless, Tolkien's works still celebrate the genius of the invention of these precious artifacts and the bravery of the Free Peoples when they fight the forces of Morgoth and Sauron to reclaim or otherwise preserve these works of craft. Because the Silmarils possess the unmarred and life-supporting light of the Two Trees and because the Rings of Power increase the opportunity to make each People more prosperous and their lands more beautiful, these Middle-earth facts imply that Tolkien is well aware of the positives of mining and smith-work. However, following the creation of the Sun, the Moon, and the stars, the Valar no longer necessarily need the Silmarils, while Sauron's construction of the One Ring dooms the other Rings of Power. Ultimately, Tolkien's fantasies parallel the arguments of environmental commentators like Brinser and Shepard, who caution miners to recall that their activities "are not life supporting" but merely cater to the "desires" of humans; consequently, mining sometimes borders on attempting to gratify selfish human whims (235-36). As his portrayal of Moria implies, Tolkien shares Brinser and Shepard's realization that mining removes material from the earth in a non-renewable fashion that often leaves lasting scars on the landscape (49).

Because Aragorn's decision to beautify Gondor's capital by increasing the number of parks in Minas Tirith occurs after Gondor's defeat of Sauron's imperialism

and his industrial *black* smoke, Tolkien's works share some kinship with the convictions of smoke pollution-reduction activists. As I will subsequently observe, these activists argued that cities must first solve the problems of smoke pollution before these cities establish urban parks to improve the mood and the work ethic of citizens. For example, Gimli (as he gazes at the gate to Minas Tirith in *The Return of the King*) notices the deterioration of Gondorian stonework, which leads readers to wonder why this is the case. The answer, of course, is that the Gondorians' devolving stonework occurred, in part, because, after many years of fighting Sauron's armies and finding themselves menaced by the black cloud of Sauron's industrial pollution, this hostile atmosphere took its toll on the work ethic and the mental well-being of the citizens of Minas Tirith (*Return*, "Last" 854). Moreover, the Orcs, who often live in locations with compromised ecosystems, repeatedly enjoy destroying living beings and created things (e.g., *Two*, "Departure" 409, "Journey" 686-87; *Return*, "Minas" 734-38); thus, the Orcs' ecosadistic behavior also somewhat parallels the aforementioned nightmarish vision that can occur because of terrible industrial pollution, according to smoke pollution activists of the era.

The environmental problems of industrial waste (such as smog and smoke) and deforestation, as well as issues stemming from some agricultural strategies/projects, concerned many nineteenth-century and twentieth-century Britons and Americans even more than other environmental problems. Industrial waste caused many people to worry, because smoke and smog (i.e., smoke and fog combined) hurt many different types of flora, as well as buildings and stone/iron monuments, which led Britain and America, in the late 1800s, to institute some environmental reforms to try to redress some of the aesthetic problems created by smoke (Stradling and Thorsheim 8). Indeed, to the

immense alarm of Londoners, Great Fogs repeatedly occurred from the 1870s through 1914¹²⁵ and again during the Long Weekend/Interwar years (Luckin 32-33, 46). Because of these Great Fogs, in particular, and industrial pollution, in general, “smoke symbolized greed and callousness [and] the sacrifice of beauty and health in pursuit of profit” for Americans and indicated “disorder and decline” for the British at the end of the nineteenth century (Stradling and Thorsheim 6). Londoners even possessed a visual image of this mental shift in the perception of smoke/smog during the 1870s and 1880s when the color of the fogs transformed from a shade of yellow into black (Luckin 47). To continue pursuing industrialization in the same manner, in other words, would prove ignorant and self-deceiving, because the aforementioned selfish and callous trend immoderately privileged short-term human wants over the well-being of the environment. To redress the problems of pollution, to stymie the loss of biodiversity and ecosystems, and to slow the deterioration of human-crafted buildings and monuments, more and more Americans and Britons in the late 1800s favored an increase in industrial regulations.

The negatives caused by working in settings with heavy smoke also contributed to the physical decline (e.g., diseases, odd growths, and weakness) and moral deterioration of the poor, according to the beliefs of many rich and middle-class Americans and Britons in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Stradling and Thorsheim 6-7, 8, 17). Whereas cures and partial improvements to water pollution occurred during the 1850s and afterward, Bill Luckin argues that air pollution continued to appear impossible to resolve for many decades. Consequently, this sense of doom led to “terrifying images

125. Luckin notes that fifty-five such Great Fogs took place in 1871 and another eighty-six in 1886 alone (35). Within such awful episodes of smog, not only humans but flora (e.g., trees) suffer as well, as noted by the Royal Botanical Gardens Director in 1892 (Luckin 39).

of ‘strangulating’ smoke fog” to such an extent that “biological and racial decline interacted with and reinforced one another, generating an astonishingly powerful set of deeply pessimistic environmental discourses” (Luckin 33). Consequently, because the majority of Victorians believed that the working classes suffered in smoky conditions and an insufficient amount of “civilization,” the bourgeois and rich Victorians often thought that smoky conditions inhibited one’s ability to “appreciate nature and art” (Stradling and Thorsheim 10). In other words, many British and American citizens among the upper classes believed that “To be orderly, healthful, and moral, a city also had to be clean and beautiful” (13). By the 1890s, therefore, many Victorians viewed smoke as aesthetically displeasing, bad for the health of humans (as well as for the health of flora and fauna), a poor use of natural resources, and morally wrong, rather than as positive signs for industries and civilization (12). By the end of the nineteenth century, therefore, smoke stood for human selfishness, in general, and ignorant, counterproductive work, in particular, in the U.S. and Britain.

Smoke reduction activists, moreover, reasoned that cities needed more plants and that city-dwellers needed to work with the soil more often. As Stradling and Thorsheim mention, smoke reduction activists in 1880s Britain encouraged the building and expansion of the number of parks (as well as the amount of flora outside of the parks) within cities to help offset the loss of “fresher,” less-polluted air from rural areas (10). Sheail notes that Thomas Coglean Horsfall (a member of the Manchester and Salford Sanitary Association) desired to increase the number of greenspaces in cities to improve the natural knowledge of many British citizens, in particular, as well as to improve the British public, in general (*Environmental* 17). Nonetheless, as Sheail observes, Horsfall

found his efforts frustrated, because “[t]here was little point in establishing gardens and parks if air pollution continued to make town life generally gloomy and destroyed any plant life introduced” (17-18). While more flora, in general, and parks, in particular, would help cities suffering from pollution, a renewal of the urban environment required still more work, since many plants could not even survive the adverse conditions. Likewise, the joy and work ethic of many also suffered from the smoke-dominated environment. Therefore, even with late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century smoke activists becoming more concerned with the task of providing scientific, objective criteria that would demonstrate the urgency of redressing industrial waste, some still referenced subjective motivations for modifying industries by noting how the aesthetics of smoke may affect one’s mood. Therefore, the level of human sensitivity toward pollution still received some consideration by early twentieth-century activists.¹²⁶

Because of the British Victorian societal convictions that I discuss in the previous paragraphs, it seems no coincidence that Tolkien characterizes the surroundings of the evil Orcs as smoky or otherwise corrupted, the lands of the Dark Lords as polluted, and Aragorn’s rehabilitated Minas Tirith as a fortress-city that gained beautiful flora and fauna. The aforementioned historical context also helps to answer Hazell’s observation concerning the oddity of Minas Tirith’s lack of flora (despite the fortress-city’s similarity

126. However, as noted previously, most early twentieth-century American and British pollution activists switched from focusing on the supposed moral ramifications of pollution to proposing improvements to industrial efficiency in order to reduce industrial pollution based on science, which would then enable sustainable development, because of the conviction that sustainable development demanded clean air (Stradling and Thorsheim 21, 22). In other words, arguments against industrial pollution shifted increasingly toward ones appealing to logic (i.e., ones that promote more knowledge about industrial pollution) and away from reasons based in pathos (e.g., ones that condemn human callousness, which permits, promotes, or ignores pollution). Tolkien’s work, however, often appeals to the readers’ emotions in an effort to reform their environmental ethics.

to medieval cities, which often included a significant amount of flora) (92), since the pollution caused by Sauron and his fellow ecosadists in Mordor harms the flora in Gondor in various ways, such as acid rain. As the research of the aforementioned earthly scholars indicates, pollution not only hurts plants, the soil, and the air but also can adversely affect the mental well-being of a populace. Tolkien implies that this environmental degradation also occurs in Gondor, to some extent, for the people of the increasingly "silent" Minas Tirith, who reside in the sober fortress-city that Tolkien describes as "falling year by year into decay" prior to the victorious conclusion to the War of the Ring (*Return*, "Minas" 736).

As Wulf observes, decades before the conservationists and sustainable development advocates gained prominence, Humboldt realized the destructiveness of Buffon's previously mentioned opinion concerning the supposedly evil and worthless wilderness. Moreover, Humboldt understood some of the unfortunate effects of Buffon's problematic idea that humans needed to convert the non-human environment into human-centered landscapes (e.g., farming). Humboldt "warned that humankind needed to know how the forces of nature worked," because humanity "had the power to destroy the environment and the consequences could be catastrophic" (Wulf, *Invention* 68). To remedy this naïveté among his readers, Humboldt borrowed from the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century German Romantic philosopher Friedrich Schelling's "philosophy of nature" concept, which in some ways resembles the teachings of St. Francis of Assisi that I discuss earlier in this chapter. According to Schelling's philosophy, nature is alive rather than inanimate matter (Wulf, *Invention* 150-51), and therefore, the physical

environment deserves more concern rather than further exploitation. With Schelling's philosophy as part of the foundation for his environmental/scientific approach, Humboldt advocated that scientists must strive to learn more about the environment and that they must work hard never to approach nature with a hardened, callous spirit. If a scientist merely observes and groups various non-human beings and parts of nature, the scientist would still likely fail to comprehend the environment, in general, according to Humboldt in a letter to Goethe. Instead, Humboldt (whom Wulf regards as a "visionary" because of Humboldt's belief in the opportunities for compatibility, cooperation, and community between the arts and the sciences) (*Invention* 397) maintained that "Nature must be experienced through feeling" (e.g., through emotions and recollections) (Wulf, *Invention* 41, 61). Far from worthless terrain, therefore, the physical environment helps humans become more humane by deepening and broadening the capacity of our sympathetic imagination.

Much of the spirit of Humboldt's aforementioned conviction that "Nature must be experienced through feeling" (Wulf, *Invention* 41, 61) parallels Tolkien's behavior and his descriptions of characters like Frodo in Tolkien's fantasies. For instance, just as Tolkien loved to walk, to see, to study, and to touch trees,¹²⁷ Frodo develops a sense of awe and wonder at the sight and touch of the trees in Lothlórien (*Fellowship*, "Lothlórien" 342).

Because Tolkien created memorable passages that feature a variety of topographies (such as farmland, forests, mountains, hills, plains, rivers, seas, islands,

127. Scull and Hammond note that Tolkien's friends reported that one of Tolkien's tendencies included touching tree trunks (qtd. in *J.R.R. . . . Reader's* 633), which parallels Frodo's experience/interaction with a tree in Lothlórien, as I note elsewhere.

mines, and caves), Tolkien's appreciation for a variety of landscapes generally matches Muir's admiration for many different types of landscapes. Muir, moreover, shared Humboldt's yearning to help others develop a greater appreciation and respect for, love of, and sensitivity toward non-human nature. Wulf, for example, mentions that "Muir wanted [his readers] to stare in awe at mountain vistas and towering trees" (*Invention* 386). Once individuals developed a sense of wonder for the sights, sounds, scents, tastes, and textures of the non-human environment, Muir believed that many humans would reduce their selfishness and then desire to reestablish their communion with nature. Indeed, Muir yearned for humans to commune with nature and to develop the conviction that the non-human environment affected humans as well, as his declaration, "I'm in the woods [. . .] and they are in [. . .] me," suggests (Wulf, *Invention* qtd. in 383). Because the environment (e.g., the aesthetics of nature) helps to shape human behavior, opinions, and attitudes, Muir implies that more humans should develop their environmental ethics to improve not only the non-human environment but also their individual selves and their communities. One of the foundational necessities to evolving one's environmental ethics, therefore, lies in mirroring Muir's interest in and affection for many diverse landscapes and natural entities (in addition to woodlands), such as rivers, bogs, meadows, mountains, waterfalls, lakes, and flowers (Wulf, *Invention* 373-74, 377-78). I contend that Tolkien's behavior and his works demonstrate that he and his Middle-earth tales resemble Muir's varied environmental affections that he expresses in his works.

To overcome environmental problems (e.g., industrial pollution, excessive logging, and poor agricultural practices), nineteenth-century scientists and environmental activists also encouraged a holistic pursuit and display of knowledge, interests,

appreciation, and readership. As advocated and exemplified by Humboldt's works and his example, writers, in general, and scientists, in particular, should pursue truth in all forms rather than one niche within a particular science, because specialization can breed the roots of selfishness: ignorance, callousness, and laziness. Unlike these overly specialized scientists, Humboldt approached his writings and experiments with the aim to grasp the environment as a "whole," which he called the "web of life"¹²⁸ (Wulf, *Invention* 58, 101-02). Humboldt thought that an environmental text should include such *seemingly* diverse subjects as human migration, moss locations, poetry, and landscape painting (Wulf, *Invention* 278), while Humboldt's *Cosmos* discusses space and his second *Cosmos* volume includes observations about literature, gardens, agriculture, architecture, art, and politics (Wulf, *Invention* 290-93). Humboldt studied flora, mines, and rocks as well; furthermore, he earned a degree in mining and worked as a mining inspector before studying South America's flora, fauna, landscapes, and rivers, as well as the architecture (e.g., monuments) of the Incas from 1709-1804 (Wulf, *Invention* 21-23, 103). Thus, Humboldt contended that "specialists," by lazily neglecting other fields of knowledge, callously ignored the work of others that they deemed less interesting and/or less important than their own in the mistaken belief that comprehending their shard of knowledge in isolation mattered more than grasping the overall environment and how a particular field of study can complement other educational subjects.¹²⁹

128. Wulf argues that, while no longer in vogue, twenty-first century scientists should emulate Humboldt's endeavor to try to understand and to apply all sciences in order to better comprehend nature on a *global* scale (*Invention* 396-98).

129. As noted elsewhere, Humboldt met Jefferson following Humboldt's explorations and observations of South America's environment; interestingly, Jefferson shared many of Humboldt's ideas, strategies, and beliefs. Like Humboldt, Jefferson displayed an interest in horticulture and architecture (e.g., his contribution to the building of the University of Virginia and the construction of its grounds) (Wulf, *Founding* 115, 213). Moreover, Jefferson penned *Notes on the State of Virginia* (which included observations about the state's landscape, flora, and fauna) and kept personal records concerning

Tolkien's behavior demonstrates that he shared the aforementioned conviction that human happiness required routine exposure to, sensitivity toward, and knowledge of non-human nature as a whole; consequently, Tolkien enjoyed the sensory imagery of and studying about a variety of natural entities and creatures, which he often saw, heard, smelled, and/or felt while walking, pruning, and gardening. Kilby¹³⁰ praises Tolkien for his love for, work with, and knowledge of the environment. According to Kilby, his initial meeting with Tolkien at Tolkien's home resulted in Tolkien guiding Kilby to Tolkien's garden where Tolkien relayed "the personal history of nearly every plant, and even the grass. He said he had loved trees since childhood and pointed out the trees he had himself planted" (25), which helps to explain why Tolkien informs W.H. Auden in a 1955 letter that the "maltreatment" of trees wounds Tolkien in a manner akin to how animal cruelty causes the wrath of animal rights activists (*Letters* 220). Tolkien's love of trees proved one reason why he enjoyed walking amid the willow trees beside the river at the Botanic Garden (Scull and Hammond, *J.R.R. . . . Reader's* 633). Tolkien's affection for the environment, of course, included more than just various kinds of trees; Kilby, for instance, characterizes Tolkien as an "avid love[r] of nature," whose writing displays "enormous sensitivity to the glory of water, wood and sky" (77). As far as landscapes are concerned, Tolkien cherished a wide variety of lands, including river shorelines and marshes (Hammond and Scull, *Artist* 197) and (as he expresses in a 1955 letter to W.H. Auden) the river-valleys, mountains, farms, and moorlands that comprise his beloved Marches in Wales (*Letters* 218). In fact, not only does Tolkien note his affection for

meteorology, American Indian languages, natural history, botany, geology, geography, fossils, and math (156, 115, 116). Thus, Jefferson shared Humboldt's holistic approach to knowledge by investing the time necessary to study a diverse set of subjects.

130. Unless otherwise noted, all citations for Clyde S. Kilby are from *Tolkien & "The Silmarillion."*

“little lanes and hedges and rustling trees and the soft rolling contours of a rich champain” in England to his son Christopher in a 1944 letter but also his love for the “dustiness” of South Africa (*Letters* 90-91). Within the aforementioned letter to Christopher, Tolkien also mentions his fond recollection of “the high stony wastes among the moraines and mountain-wreckage,” “the sound of thin chill water,¹³¹” “pathless sand and the unharvested sea” that he associates with present-day South Africa (*Letters* 90-91). Tolkien, therefore, found joy in the sensory imagery of nigh opposite landscapes (i.e., England and South Africa). He praised both green lands, as well as areas without much vegetation; he appreciated the sounds of the ocean tide, the soothing sound of trickling water on a mountainside, and the serene movement of tree leaves. Like Tolkien’s ability to recollect the origins of the plants in his garden that Kilby mentions (25), Tolkien also studied books on birds and advocated that Kilby should as well (26). On his walks, Tolkien examined not only birds and trees but also insects and flowers (Scull and Hammond, *J.R.R. . . . Reader’s* 633). For flowers, Tolkien acknowledges the depth of his interest in botany, especially for new flowers that resemble the ones familiar to him (*Letters* 402-03). Partially in consequence of Tolkien’s general affection for and knowledge of nature, Tolkien painted and drew pictures inspired by the environment.¹³² In terms of scientific and artistic knowledge and interests, in other words, Tolkien pursued an understanding of the environment in terms of both breadth and depth.

131. While Tolkien’s affection for mountains informs passages like the Caradhras section in *The Lord of the Rings*, Tolkien also shared Gimli’s joy at the sound of running water in the Glittering Caves (*Two, “Road”* 534).

132. I obtained the aforementioned information from a variety of artworks by Tolkien (e.g., *Artist* 6, 11, 13, 21, 25, 56, 57, 58, 59, 63, 64, 78, 82, 106, 119, 129, 133, 155, 162, 198; *Pictures* 41n, 42n, 43n, 45n).

Just as scientists should not ignore various scientific subjects, scientists should also try to excel in the arts as well, according to Humboldt. Through such activities as drawing, Humboldt believed scientists (and others) could convey their ideas to additional readers, which would increase the effectiveness of these writers' efforts to help reverse environmental problems. Humboldt's most famous drawing, *Naturgemälde*, features the volcano Chimborazo in the Andes and implicitly argues that nature is interconnected (Wulf, *Invention* 148). A disciple of Humboldt, the German nineteenth- and early twentieth-century scientist Ernst Haeckel,¹³³ echoed his mentor by stating that "art was one of the most important educational tools, as it nurtured the love for nature" (Wulf, *Invention* 371). Haeckel, moreover, routinely created drawings of the environment so well done that some were collected and published as *Art Forms in Nature* from 1899-1904 and influenced the work by various artisans, architects, and artists responsible for creating furniture, buildings, and jewelry. Of these artists impacted by Haeckel's artwork, the previously mentioned *Art Nouveau* movement (which gained prominence through the 1900 World Fair in Paris) displays the most indebtedness to Haeckel's style (Wulf, *Invention* 366-68). This latter group included imagery from nature (including coral, jellyfish, trees, and flowers) within and on their architecture.¹³⁴ Because of their expansive pursuit of knowledge and their comprehension of how art may help a person modify their environmental ethics, Humboldt and Haeckel's writings helped others (including various artists) to appreciate the aesthetics of the environment to a greater degree.

133. Haeckel termed the study of nature *ecology* in 1866 (Wulf, *Invention* 362-63).

134. One example of an architect indebted to Haeckel (and thereby indirectly influenced by Humboldt) is Louis Sullivan, who included images of flora and fauna on his buildings (Wulf, *Invention* 367-69).

Between Tolkien's fantasies and their corresponding artwork, Tolkien's works cover many of the same topics previously discussed by the holistic Humboldt, who not only conducted scientific experiments and penned books but also (as mentioned previously) drew and painted (Wulf, *Invention* 21-23, 103, 278, 290-93). For example, in *The Lord of the Rings*, Tolkien's environmental references share kinship with Humboldt's topics (e.g., Wulf, *Invention* 278, 290-93), for Tolkien's works mention human migrations, moss, poetry, landscape painting, space, gardens, architecture, agriculture, landscapes, flora, fauna, and rivers.¹³⁵ Tolkien's environmental drawings and paintings, meanwhile, feature many different landscapes, bodies of water, natural entities, flora, and non-human animals (i.e., birds, flowers, trees, grasses, rivers, the ocean, mountains, hills, the moon, coves, and/or clouds).¹³⁶

As noted elsewhere, Tolkien sometimes included social commentary within his writings, which reached audiences around the world from a variety of different cultures and classes. While a well-educated philologist and Old English specialist, Professor Tolkien proved capable of writing fantasies that appealed to a wide assortment of individuals and groups, no matter their educational background. Tolkien's writing process and audience, therefore, shares some kinship with the approaches of many scientists, writers, and activists who tried to stymie the various environmental problems by writing works in such a way that non-specialists could understand the work's content

135. While the latter instances probably do not require examples to spur the memory of many readers, the Hobbits' various migrations proves one example of Tolkien's references to this topic, while Gandalf's use of the word "moss" as part of a figurative comparison to Bombadil is an example of how Tolkien also referenced this environmental entity in his work.

136. Like a previous note, I obtained the aforementioned information from multiple artworks by Tolkien (*Artist* 6, 11, 13, 21, 25, 56, 57, 58, 59, 63, 64, 78, 82, 106, 119, 129, 133, 155, 162, 198; *Pictures* 41n, 42n, 43n, 45n).

and by addressing people from many countries without sacrificing their credibility. This writing method paralleled and reinforced their desire to avoid research discrimination based on educational specialization. Following the release of Philip Miller's *Gardeners Dictionary* in 1731, for instance, gardening spread beyond the upper classes to the middle and working classes, because Miller wrote his text in non-esoteric English and explained the development of plants based on observation and experience rather than hearsay and myth (Wulf, *Brother* 34-36). The success of Miller's holistic, global approach is evident since scientists from various fields—as well as pastors, aristocrats, politicians, and others—bought Miller's *Dictionary* (as well as his subsequent abbreviated edition, entitled *Abridgement*) (Wulf, *Brother* 46). Similarly, Humboldt's *Views of Nature* (c. 1807) influenced the lives of and works by the writers Thoreau, Emerson, Jules Verne, Mary Shelly, S.T. Coleridge, William Wordsworth, Robert Southey, and Edgar Allen Poe (Wulf, *Invention* 156-57, 199-201, 294, 296). The diverse and extensive influence of Humboldt's work occurred, in part, because he purposely wrote texts so that the general audience could understand his messages (Wulf, *Invention* 396). Years later, Muir also enjoyed similar success by designing his texts in a way that non-scientists could more readily grasp the content (Wulf, *Invention* 396). Marsh, as I mentioned previously, discussed the ramifications of the earth's problems, and therefore, he wrote with the intention that people from around the world would read his work (Wulf, *Invention* 350). The global audiences of these works and the non-esoteric writing style of these science-oriented authors, therefore, parallel Tolkien's works, since Tolkien's Middle-earth fantasies have long appealed to a global audience and a diverse fan base.

Walking often proved another one of the main contributions for developing a greater sense of respect and sensitivity toward the environment for many scientists and non-scientists. Like the German explorer, scientist, and writer Humboldt, many of those influenced by Humboldt (such as Bolívar, Thoreau, Marsh, Haeckel, and Muir) loved to embark on nature walks as well (Wulf, *Invention* 142, 302, 336, 354, 372, 373). Indeed, Marsh, Haeckel, Humboldt, and Muir looked forward to walking in forests, while Haeckel also especially loved the sound of leaves rustling and birds singing (Wulf, *Invention* 336, 354, 372, 373-74, 377-78). For the British, Sheail dates the spike in the interest in short- and long-term walking in the countryside to the early 1900s (*Nature* 69). Helen Macdonald, in fact, observes in *H is for Hawk* that

Long walks in the English countryside, often at night, were astonishingly popular in the 1930s [. . . . Through these walks,] they were looking for a mystical communion with the land; they walked backwards in time to an imagined past suffused with magical, native glamour: to Merrie England, or to prehistoric England, pre-industrial visions that offered solace and safety to sorely troubled minds. For though railways and roads and a burgeoning market in countryside books had contributed to the movement, at heart it had grown out of the trauma of the Great War, and was flourishing in fear of the next. (103-04)

Walking, therefore, helped individuals and cultures recover from and cope with the anxieties caused by urbanization, commercialism, industrialization, and warfare in England and elsewhere, while many of the leading political and intellectual leaders of South America, Europe, and North America deepened their environmental awareness by

walking, which, in turn, helped them to influence others to follow their eco-friendly examples.

Akin to Thoreau's fondness for walking in the woods and the messages of his works (Wulf, *Invention* 302), Tolkien also loved nature walks and felt a keen passion for the sensory imagery of a multitude of environments—many of which reappear in his works (e.g., Scull and Hammond, *J.R.R. . . . Reader's* 633). Tolkien implies a link between walking and positive environmentalism by also calling the Fellowship of the Ring by the name of “The Nine Walkers” who oppose “the Nine Riders” (*Fellowship, “Ring”* 268). After all, the Fellowship members save Middle-earth only after walking long distances across many different types of terrain to preserve the air, landscapes, flora, fauna, soils, waters, and Peoples of Middle-earth.

Tolkien's love of walking was shared by many of his Victorian, Edwardian, and Georgian peers in Britain; rural retreats (including walking tours) by urbanites, in fact, accelerated the desire and the need for more reserves,¹³⁷ preserves, and parks. In early 1900s London, for example, “the middle classes' urge to escape from the hectic pace of life in London, its poverty and squalor, to a rural weekend retreat, was widespread. It was further encouraged by easier access to the shires via more comfortable and faster trains

137. The mid-nineteenth century environmental writer F. Fraser Darling strongly urged the creation of nature reserves, because these places could increase scientific knowledge, possibly provide a healthier justification for national pride, and provide the opportunity for recreation like the aforementioned walking tours and rural retreats (Sheail, *Nature* 114). The late nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century English botanist A.G. Tansley is another environmental author, whom Sheail considers important. According to Tansley, in addition to offering the chance for increasing scientific knowledge, nature reserves can help all visitors deepen their environmental knowledge, in part, because of the reserve's aesthetics that help to satisfy the supposed primordial-like yearning of humans (including contemporary urbanite visitors) to rediscover the *wild* (Sheail, *Nature* 114). Opportunities for more knowledge, exercise, and appreciation for the non-human environment, therefore, represent some of the reasons why conservationists like Darling and Tansley advocated for the establishment of more nature reserves.

and via the motor-car, which had first been introduced to the English public at the Crystal Palace exhibition of 1896” (Wulf and Gieben-Gamal 276). More and more urbanites, consequently, yearned for less polluted areas, which led to an increasing amount of people traveling to the countryside by means of pollution-causing technology, which, in turn, harmed the very environments they sought to escape to by the same type of machinery and pollution they tried to escape from initially. Nonetheless, in the long-term, myriads of weekend vacationers in the countryside developed greater knowledge of and sensitivity toward the non-human environment because of their trips, which, over time, often caused them to alter their environmental habits to some extent, to join environmental organizations, and to prod their political representatives to pass more eco-friendly legislation.

One reason why preservationists worked to prevent and to reduce behavior that damaged the environment derived from their belief that their efforts on behalf of the countryside helped to preserve the quality of their culture (e.g., the British culture of the 1800s) (Sheail, *Nature* 9). For example, the original founders of Britain’s National Trust (i.e., Canon Rawnsley, Sir Robert Hunter, and Octavia Hill) believed that “The national heritage which they sought to *preserve* was natural rather than man-made, rural rather than urban. Like many of their contemporaries, they believed that the essence of Englishness was to be found in the fields and hedgerows, not in the suburbs and slums” (Cannadine 227). The members of the National Trust and other environmental groups, therefore, followed Stanley Baldwin’s teachings by working to conserve various landscapes for the sake of preserving their aesthetic value, which, in turn, would maintain the mystical ties between the British populace and their environment, as Modern British

historian David Cannadine observes (160-61). Other widespread nineteenth-century convictions in England that partially derive from Baldwin's teaching and the National Trust's example include the belief that non-human landscapes, flora, and fauna embody the definition of "nature," as well as the conviction that humans possess a "primordial" bond with the environment (239, 240). As the significant spike in the National Trust's lands, donations, and memberships during the period between 1920 and 1965 demonstrates, environmental ethics became an increasing concern in Britain (239, 240). The additional lands intended for preserves proved quite needed, for beautiful and sublime landscapes suffered from an excess of human visitors during this time (e.g., Brinser and Shepard 227), which concerned culturally and environmentally minded conservationists and preservationists alike.

The argument between the conservationists and the preservationists on whether to create parks and human-centered reserves (i.e., conservationism) or to focus mainly on establishing preserves (i.e., preservationism) continued for decades. In Britain, the conservationist L.P. Abercrombie contended that national parks should mainly focus on placing parks near urban areas to enable people to enjoy them for recreational usage (*Nature* 74). The National Trust, on the other hand, considered the desire for human enjoyment as less important than simply preserving nature and the inherent natural beauty of the lands and buildings entrusted to it in order to ensure the continuation of the aesthetic values of the aforementioned landscapes, flora, fauna, bodies of water, and human-constructed buildings (*Nature* 74). In 1929, however, the Addison Committee created a pseudo-compromise between the conservationists and the preservationists in Britain. As mentioned by Sheail, "In its report, the Addison Committee recommended

two kinds of park. One would serve as *national reserves*, designated for the preservation of scenery and wildlife, and include such areas as the Lake District, Snowdonia, the Pembrokeshire coast and South Downs. The other would be *regional reserves*, primarily designated for outdoor recreation and accordingly situated near urban centres” (75). The creation of national and regional reserves, therefore, helped to minimize the distance between the preservationists and conservationists in nineteenth- and twentieth-century Britain.

Something akin to meeting the descriptions of the aforementioned *regional reserves* and Abercrombie’s desires is the urban park; however, several other prominent men supported the creation of such parks.¹³⁸ For instance, Thoreau advocated that every urban area should include several hundred acres of forest, so urbanities could relax and play amid nature (Wulf, *Invention* 349), a dream realized through the creation of parks like New York’s Central Park.¹³⁹ In part to help reduce the likelihood of additional human-caused problems by the excessive volume of visitors to a few beautiful lands/waters, Victorian environmental activists encouraged the establishment and maintenance of parks (Brinser and Shepard 227), a movement that gained momentum in the 1890s (Sheail, *Environmental* 16). With the increase in urban and suburban parks during the nineteenth century, British city-dwellers possessed more opportunities for exercise and more opportunities to learn about and to display greater appreciation for the

138. In 1949, Britain founded its National Parks Commission, which worked with local governments to assist in the maintenance and establishment of parks (Sheail, *Nature* 204). The Forest Commission started the first National Forest Parks in Britain at Ardgarthen House, the Forest of Dean, and Snowdonia in 1936, 1939, and 1940 (86).

139. Although sometimes maligned for his greenhouses and his architectural designs, Paxton designed the world’s first public-funded park in Birkenhead, Britain, in 1847, which subsequently influenced the establishment of New York City’s Central Park in 1857 (Wulf and Gieben-Gamal 249n).

non-human environment. The expansion of parks, therefore, increased the possibility for a corresponding reduction in human laziness, ignorance, and callousness in regard to humanity's relationship with the environment, all of which contribute to increased human selfishness.

In the early 1900s, moreover, many British environmental activists pushed for the creation of “garden cities” or “garden suburbs” (Sheail, *Environmental* 19), which (as the *OED* observes) refers to the creation of cities with numerous farms, to public gardens with ample flora, and to parks within (or near) the city.¹⁴⁰ This trend toward promoting more green areas within cities probably partially stems from the increasing global trade in non-human animals and flora, as well as to the loss and deterioration of many landscapes because of industrialization and urbanization. The city of Letchworth began the process of creating the first *garden city* in 1905, a project that drew in excess of sixty thousand prospective inhabitants (Wulf and Gieben-Gamal 288-89). The sheer number of people displaying an interest in living in Letchworth demonstrates the degree of interest in increasing the presence of the non-human environment in cities at the beginning of the twentieth century—an environmental interest also found in Tolkien's fantasies.

As the previous paragraphs detail, for many years prior to the publication of Tolkien's Middle-earth fantasies, history showed that humanity needed to improve as environmental guardians by valuing biodiversity, the well-being of the environment, and nature's aesthetics to a much greater degree rather than fixating on the short-term economic value of a particular action. Humboldt, Marsh, Thoreau, Muir, and others concerned with the health of the non-human world urged their readers to more fully

140. The *OED* lists Chicago as an example of a *garden city*.

appreciate the emotional, ethical, and logical reasons to maintain the earth's landscapes, waters, soils, flora, fauna, and air. While the aforementioned writers (among others) encouraged individuals to farm, fell trees, hunt, and garden in more nature-friendly ways, many of these writers also believed in the positive environmental benefits of work involving the non-human environment, of outdoor recreation, and of relaxing outside in rural areas or in urban greenspaces. Because of the emotional ties that result from environmental activities like nature walks, from the knowledge gained from personally observing nature, and from reading the commentaries of experts like Humboldt, Haeckel, Muir, and Marsh, some individuals (e.g., Thoreau) and governments wanted to establish wilderness preserves, wildlife reserves (e.g., in South Africa), and urban parks (e.g., in Britain).

As partial parallels to the actions of some earthly governments that established sanctuaries, preserves, and parks in an effort to redress some of the negative consequences of industrialization and urbanization, Aragorn creates sanctuaries and generally "greens" Minas Tirith, as well as the fortress-city's surrounding areas (e.g., *Return*, "Steward" 947-48, "Many" 953-58). Somewhat similar to the interpretation of *sanctuary* that limits human contact with a particular fauna, flora, and/or geographical area, Aragorn decrees that no Man should trespass into the lands of Peoples like the Hobbits and the Wild Men (*Return*, "Many" 954, "Appendix A" 1019, "Homeward" 971). Moreover, Aragorn establishes something akin to the types of preserves favored by the National Trust (Cannadine 227) when he declares that the Ents and their tree-herds shall dwell in lands beyond the limits of Fangorn Forest at the time of the War of the Ring (*Return*, "Many" 958). To help offset the many environmental problems caused by

Sauron's wars and his gross mismanagement of the environment, Aragorn orders the weeding of, pruning of, and expansion of Gondor's garden area of Ithilien (e.g., *Return, "Steward"* 947-48). To improve the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual health of the fortress-city's inhabitants and to recover the aesthetic beauty of Minas Tirith, Aragorn promotes a major expansion of green-spaces in the fortress-city (e.g., *Return, "Steward"* 947-49). By doing so, Aragorn's Minas Tirith shows some kinship with Wulf's description of 1760 London as the "City of Gardens," Abercrombie's vision of the benefits of urban parks, the early twentieth-century image of the *garden city*, and the English tradition that more gardens and parks entailed prosperity.¹⁴¹ Akin to how the plans to establish Letchworth as a *garden city* in 1905 resulted in many prospective citizens showing interest in living in the city (Wulf and Gieben-Gamal 288-89), Aragorn's renewed Minas Tirith led to a population boom in the Gondorian fortress-city that had previously experienced years of population decline (*Return, "Steward"* 947). Aragorn's renewed Minas Tirith, consequently, shares quite a few partial similarities with environmental developments in nineteenth- and twentieth-century Britain.

Tolkien's works also parallel some aspects of the pastoral, and therefore, Romanticism as well, as critics like Simonson mention (i). The *OED* defines *pastoral* as, "A literary work portraying rural life or the life of shepherds, esp. in an idealized or romantic form," which helps to explain why Garrard views the pastoral genre as a generally "ignorant" one (33). Mitchell, meanwhile, characterizes the pastoral as a genre designating the countryside as a paradise of "idleness," "hospitality," and "garden[s] of

141. The aforementioned sentence derives from several sources: Wulf, *Invention* 349; Sheail, *Environmental* 19; Wulf and Gieben-Gamal 288-89; and Wulf, *Brother* 132-33.

peace, innocence, simplicity, and community set against the corrupt, hypocritical, backstabbing urban world” (108). Because Tolkien’s works observe how quickly places like the Shire devolve into near-wastelands and detail the immense amount of work it takes the Free Peoples to renew lands devastated by ecosadists and because the existence of fortress-cities like Minas Tirith are necessary in order to defeat ecocidal forces, these facts show that Tolkien’s works are not entirely *pastoral*. While Tolkien’s works certainly celebrate simplicity and community in passages like the Hobbits’ revolt against the Lortho, Saruman, and the Ruffians and their environmentally exploitative “advanced” machinery, this requires violence rather than pacifism (*Return*, “Scouring” 978-97). Moreover, the long peace that the Hobbits enjoy prior to the Battle of Bywater and the War of the Ring era results from the labors of the Rangers, who protect the ignorant Hobbits from the many forms of evil lurking nearby that desire to harm them (e.g., *Fellowship*, “Prologue” 5), and therefore, Tolkien intertwines the Hobbits’ innocence with ignorance.

While Tolkien’s works sometimes feature the need for violence to occur to overcome ecosadists, Tolkien’s works share more in common with georgic tradition because of the manner in which Tolkien depicts fantastic locations and beings like the Shire and the agrarian Hobbits. Anthony Low’s *The Georgic Revolution* states that georgic works can refer to a variety of things. Georgic can mean the following, according to Low: “a mode that stresses the value of intensive and persistent labor against hardships and difficulties; that it differs from pastoral because it emphasizes planting and building instead of killing and destruction; and that it is preeminently the mode suited to the establishment of civilization and the founding of nations” (12). Moreover, Low notes that

the georgic tradition encourages the socio-economic elites to take part in the hard agricultural labors like farming rather than living in lazy luxury (18-19). Interestingly, the Shire Hobbits, rather than embracing their previous ignorance of the world beyond the Shire that the Hobbits exhibited *before* the Scouring of the Shire, many members of the Shire Hobbit community choose to invest the time necessary to read and write about Gondor and other lands after the Battle of Bywater (*Fellowship*, “Prologue” 13-14; *Tolkien*, “Adventures: Preface” 191-94). While an unprecedented era of beauty, food, drinks, and joy follow the overthrow of Lotho, Saruman, and the Ruffians, this first requires that the Shire Hobbit community, as a whole, to volunteer to complete a vast amount of farming, gardening, building, and forestry labor, as they reestablish the Shire (*Return*, “Grey” 999-1001). Importantly, Tolkien’s works depict ecosadists like Lotho, Saruman, and the Ruffians as those who refuse to farm themselves but only seize the harvest sown by the Hobbit masses (e.g., *Return*, “Scouring” 989). Consequently, this means that one of the messages of Tolkien’s works is the need for the powerful to work the lands and not take advantage of the marginalized—which aligns with georgic tradition (Low 12). Although a few Hobbits like Bilbo entertain Elves, Dwarves, and other Peoples, in previous eras, Tolkien repeatedly describes the average Shire Hobbit as a judgmental nativist, who hardly shows hospitality to strangers (and even displays skepticism of Hobbits from other regions of the Shire) (e.g., *Hobbit*, “Last” 270-71; *Fellowship*, “Prologue” 7, “Short” 92). Consequently, Tolkien’s works (including those featuring the Shire and the Hobbits) deviate, to some extent, from the pastoral tradition by championing the benefits of environmental toil, rather than idleness. Furthermore, unlike many pastorals, Tolkien’s fantasies note some of the potential problems of rural

life (including a nativist populace), even while observing some of the beauties of rural areas, which the pastoral tradition celebrates. As such, Tolkien's fantasies fall more within the georgic tradition concerning agricultural work and rural life. Indeed, the many months of work by the Hobbits to rehabilitate their Shire and the Hobbits' belief that they could renew the Shire by working together largely what Lowe means when he says, "When sin has destroyed innocent pastoral, only hard georgic can restore it" and that *hope* is essential to georgic texts (226).

Because Tolkien's fantasies include some realistic characterizations of rural life, because Tolkien's works promote the benefits of hard work in the countryside, because Tolkien's texts describe cycles of divine salvation and condemnation, and because Tolkien's writings feature both poetry and prose, Tolkien's Middle-earth fantasies parallel some earlier notable pastoral English poetry and borrow from multiple pastoral forms. For example, the previously mentioned passage discussing the spring and harvest of 1420 in the Shire—as well as the traditions among the Hobbits to sow and reap crops, raise flowers, drink, and overeat—parallels a section of Robert Herrick's "The Hock-cart, or Harvest Home" poem¹⁴² (c. 1648) (lines 35-55). Tolkien's fantasies, moreover, repeatedly discuss the hazards of weeds, which parallels the *Georgic*, pastoral realism within George Crabbe's "The Village" poem (c. 1783), which observes how such plants

142. The parallels between Tolkien's works and Herrick's poem is most pronounced in several lines:

To the rough sickle and crook'd scythe,
Drink frolic boys, till all be blythe.
Feed and grow fat; and as ye eat,
Be mindful, that the lab'ring neat
(As you) may have their fill of meat
And know, besides, ye must revoke
The patient ox unto the yoke,
And all go back unto the plough [. . .]
But for to make it spring again. (42-49, 55)

can plague humans¹⁴³ (lines 65-78). By repeatedly depicting the Valar (and later the Maia Gandalf) interceding on behalf of the Children of Ilúvatar and saving them from evil spirits amid a fallen world and by showing the Valar punishing and exiling the Children for their misdeeds, Tolkien's fantasies parallel the epic pastoral model of John Milton's *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained* to some extent. Finally, because Tolkien's Middle-earth fantasies not only feature some (albeit qualified) pastoral characteristics and the romance traits of quests and multiple plots but also include some poetry within a work of predominately prose fiction, Tolkien's texts exhibit some kinship with the pastoral romance sub-genre. Tolkien's texts and pastoral works share in common the fact that both canons contain references to the beauties of the non-human countryside, to the problems caused by weeds, and to the mix of righteous aid and judgment from divine powers; moreover, like some pastorals, Tolkien's texts include some romantic characteristics.

Tolkien's fantasies also emphasize the need to feel a sense of wonder when interacting with the non-human world, to note the incredible talents of Fëanor and Celebrimbor (who create the Silmarils and Rings of Power, respectively), to convey a sense of loss at the ending of the Elder Days, and to often observe the importance of

143. Of these lines in Crabbe's georgic poem, several prove especially apt, which reference weeds (i.e., *rank weeds, thistles, poppies, bugloss, mallow, charlock, and wild tare*):

Rank weeds, that every art and care defy,
Reign o'er the land and rob the blighted rye:
There thistles stretch their prickly arms afar,
And to the ragged infant threaten war;
There poppies, nodding, mock the hope of toil,
There the blue bugloss paints the sterile soil;
Hardy and high, above the slender sheaf,
The slimy mallow waves her silky leaf;
O'er the young shoot the charlock throws a shade,
And the wild tare clings round the sickly blade. (67-76)

individual contributions. Consequently, Tolkien's works often parallel Romanticism's privileging of emotion, nature, the past, originality, and individualism, as well as Romanticism's antagonism of industrialization and consumerism. Wordsworth,¹⁴⁴ for example, held the opinion that nature represented the Creator's work (Lacey 73, 116), which (as I discuss earlier in this chapter) parallels not only Tolkien's own views but also the plots within his Middle-earth fantasies. According to Seth T. Reno, since the era of the Romantics, "Loving nature [has been] a profoundly political act that communicates a range of social and ideological positions. To love nature—whether a tree or a field or a bunny—is to enact through emotion an opposition to industrialization [and] consumer capitalism" (28). Consequently, because of Tolkien's skepticism of and even hostility to forms of industrialization and consumerism, Tolkien's works share some kinship with Romantic texts in this regard as well. To reverse the environmental problems caused by industrialization and consumerism, Wordsworth promoted ideas that eventually led to Britain's national parks system that preserved some of England's lakes (Hess 113). This Wordsworthian trait also shows kinship with Tolkien's Middle-earth fantasies, for (as I note in this chapter and in the next chapter) Aragorn preserves multiple places after ascending to the thrones of Gondor and Arnor. Furthermore, similar to the beliefs that Tolkien voiced decades later, Wordsworth and the British Romantics held the opinion

144. Tolkien also interacted with Romantic scholars like Jonathan Wordsworth (a great-great-great-nephew of the Romantic English poet William Wordsworth). One brief 1958 memo note from Tolkien to Jonathan Wordsworth, for example, ends with Tolkien declaring how "delightful" he finds the thought of visiting Wordsworth once more (MS; I gained access to this document when Oklahoma State University Librarian Dr. David Oberhelman emailed it to me as a PDF attachment on May 5, 2017). Similarly, Scull and Hammond mention that Tolkien wrote about his desire to eat with Wordsworth in May of 1972 (*J.R.R. . . . Chronology* 762).

that literature and science complemented one another (Reno 29-30), which means their convictions also generally corresponded with those voiced by scholars like Humboldt.

One additional and important parallel that Wordsworth's Romantic poetry and Tolkien's fantasies share involves reader response. Similar to Tolkien's later statements in his essay¹⁴⁵ "On Fairy-Stories," Wordsworth held the opinion that literature "could reveal truth" (Lacey 73, 116). Likewise, the works by both Tolkien and Wordsworth seek to and trigger emotional responses among readers. Consequently, I believe that Lisa Ottum and Reno's argument that Wordsworth's poetry proves "vital" to environmental studies (because, with the help of references to nature's sensory imagery, Wordsworth's poetry especially provokes positive environmental responses among readers) (10) means that Tolkien's Middle-earth fantasies also appear vital to ecocriticism, as I discuss in the fourth chapter.

Although the works by Tolkien and the Romantics share some commonality, some differences also exist between the two canons.¹⁴⁶ Experience, for example, forms a person's characteristics (including one's environmentalism), according to Romanticism, rather than his/her biological/genetic heritage (Ottum and Reno, "Introduction" 18).

145. Within the "Epilogue" section of his essay *On Fairy-Stories*, Tolkien makes a similar claim about fantasy writing. Tolkien declares, "Probably every writer making a secondary world, a fantasy, every sub-creator, wishes in some measure to be a real maker, or hopes that he is drawing on reality: hopes that the peculiar quality of this secondary world (if not all the details) are derived from Reality, or are flowing into it" (*Tolkien* 87-88).

146. Because Tolkien dismissingly calls William Wordsworth's poetic style "zero-standard" in a January 9-10, 1965, letter to his son Michael (*Letters* 353), this may help to explain one reason why (despite sharing some similarities) Tolkien's fantasies feature some marked environmental differences when compared to the writings of Wordsworth and the other Romantics. Shippey, meanwhile, states that "Tolkien [. . .] probably did not [. . .] personally admire [. . .] Wordsworth [because he] was a tinkerer with medievalism and a linguistic critic of the most ignorant type. *But* [Milton and Wordsworth] were English poets, and the language spoke through them" (221, emphasis added).

However, Tolkien's Middle-earth fantasies suggest that one's environmentalism is partially based on one's biology, in addition to one's environment.¹⁴⁷

According to Seeman, Tolkien's fantasies are examples of "Christian Romanticism" (82). By describing writing as "sub-creative" and by characterizing writing as an act that echoes the work of God the Creator in "On Fairy-Stories," Tolkien's theories parallel Romanticism (81). The Romantics held that the definition for "Imagination" should include the conviction that writers can, through their craft, distantly mirror the actions of God, because writers think about and then write about new worlds and peoples (76). Tolkien adds to this Romantic theory, however, by stating that human desires display a longing for correction, which Christian belief promises; consequently, the Christian salvation story can recover fallen human desires (81). This is why Tolkien argues in "On Fairy-Stories" that "eucatastrophe" is the best moment in fantasy literature, in part, because it echoes Christ's Resurrection and His Second Coming (81).

When we compare the convictions and writings of Samuel Taylor Coleridge with Tolkien's, Tolkien's ideas and works both contradict and parallel the aforementioned Romantic poet. Seeman, for example, mentions that there lacks a critical consensus in regard to the scale of Tolkien's agreement with Coleridge, in part, because some of the scholars misread Tolkien's "On Fairy-Stories" by missing his choice to distinguish "Imagination" from "Fantasy" (e.g., 76). As Seeman states,

Tolkien insists that [Imagination and Fantasy, as described by Coleridge,] be categorically separated, 'imagination' being restricted to its descriptive meaning as image-making, and 'fantasy' elevated to replace the Romantic faculty of the

147. I discuss this topic in a more detailed manner in the next chapter.

creative imagination. In preserving this categorical distinction between fantasy and imagination, then, Tolkien is best characterized as Romantic [. . .] Tolkien is not defining fantasy as a general mental faculty but as a distinct mode of art. In this, perhaps, he is unique to the Romantic tradition. (76)

Not only is fantasy “unique,” according to Tolkien, however, but it is also the premier genre because it requires “secondary belief” necessary to contemplate the existence of a secondary world that does not attempt to reproduce the primary world in a “realistic” text (75).

Tolkien’s conviction that fantasy is the foremost genre also bucks Romantic tradition (Seeman 76-77). Tolkien also contends that no drama could be a true fantasy (79-80), a view that again runs contrary to Romanticism. One of Tolkien’s core beliefs is that an author can achieve “secondary belief” among readers, which, in turn, means that he/she affects the audience in a far more profound way than merely enticing the audience to “willingly suspend their disbelief,” as Coleridge states authors must do.¹⁴⁸ Finally, Tolkien also modifies Romantic theory by arguing that fantasy can incorporate elements of truth/reality in “On Fairy-Stories” (77). Taken together, this helps to understand why, in the opinion of Shippey, Tolkien believed that the Romantics only possessed a weak faith in Elfland, which, in turn, undermines the ability of the Romantics (and other authors) to create “secondary belief” among readers of fantasy (215). Without “secondary

148. By favoring the term “secondary belief” instead of “willing suspension of disbelief,” as Coleridge had done, Tolkien, in his essay “On Fairy-Stories,” wanted to focus on the author’s efforts rather than the “passive reader,” according to Seeman (74). Tolkien, Seeman states, writes “On Fairy-Stories,” in part, to articulate his belief that, while Coleridge’s literary theories work well for other literary genres, fantasy is an exception to this (75). Michael Milburn also points out that Tolkien is *qualifying* Coleridge’s literary theories rather than entirely refuting Coleridge’s views of things like the “Imagination” (55-56).

belief,” readers are less likely to draw inspiration from a work and work to improve the environment, after all.

Although Tolkien qualified some of Coleridge’s literary theory, the works by these authors still share some commonality. Kilby, for instance, notes that parallels exist between the main characters of the masterpieces by Tolkien and Coleridge: Frodo and the Mariner. Not only do both characters suffer but they also both experience melancholy when they return home from a journey that leads them to feel greater appreciation for daily activities like drinking and eating (“Tolkien” 17). Moreover, like Coleridge, Tolkien wrote about difficult landscapes, and he was fascinated and influenced by words and ancient writings (“Coleridge” 18, 16, 17).

Tolkien’s fantasies also share some differences with and similarities to Wordsworth’s poetry. Although Scott Hess faults Wordsworth’s works for usually associating “aesthetic leisure” and solitary, wandering poets of genius with the physical environment (3), I contend that Tolkien’s works often include images of communities (besides just travelers), eating, and completing environmental labors,¹⁴⁹ in addition to mentioning the impact of economics on the environment. Taken together, the aforementioned traits are, according to Hess, essential to environmental literature (e.g., 3, 17, 3). While Tolkien’s desire to create “a mythology for England” for his beloved Britain shares some kinship with the model of an individual, brilliant author teaching naïve readers about nature that Wordsworth’s works often follow (Hess 108-11), Tolkien’s texts also note that multiple authors contribute to *The Red Book* rather than only one authorial genius.

149. To be fair to Wordsworth, however, he penned works like “The Solitary Reaper” that mention agricultural labors like cutting grain (stanza 1).

Moreover, whereas Romantic writers like Wordsworth praise the sight of maimed trees and *nettles*¹⁵⁰ as two of the beauties of deterioration in his works *The Thorn* and *The Ruined Cottage* (Wordsworth, Jaye, and Woof 88), Tolkien's fantasies mourn the existence of wounded trees and the spread of weeds in many, many scenes.¹⁵¹ In other words, by regularly featuring (in addition to the environment's beauties and wonders) the various negatives of the physical environment, Tolkien's works sometimes suggest a different environmental perspective than Wordsworth's seminal declaration that Nature never did betray the heart that loved her.¹⁵²

Partially because of Wordsworth's indebtedness to the *picturesque* tradition, critics like Hess argue that Wordsworth's poetry typically suffers from presenting the non-human environment as a series of "visual landscape[s]" rather than as "lived environments" (66-67); Tolkien's works, however, repeatedly include "lived environments," as well as "visual landscapes." Literary scholars like Hess, moreover, chide Wordsworth and the Romantics for considering city life "unreal" (e.g., 3-8, 9); somewhat similarly, the general tone of and praise for the environmentalism of the average Hobbit, Elvish, and Entish community within Tolkien's Middle-earth fantasies indicates that Tolkien prefers small-scale farming, aesthetically pleasing gardens, and primordial wilderness settings. However, (as I mention in the following chapters) the Blessed Realm, Númenor, Beleriand (e.g., Gondolin), and Middle-earth (e.g., Minas

150. Tolkien includes "nettles" as one of the weeds that infests the Bonfire Glade area (*Fellowship*, "Old" 109-10).

151. Similar to Tolkien's texts, nevertheless, Wordsworth's works include not only pristine nature but also the negative aspects of nature, such as diseases within and pain caused by the physical environment (Ottum and Reno 12-17).

152. In other words, Tolkien's fantasies include darker environmental realities, which Tennyson memorably expressed within his "In Memoriam A.H.H." by declaring, "Nature, red in tooth and claw."

Tirth) all include acclaimed cities/fortress-cities, and therefore, Tolkien's texts do not include the moral binary of the city/country to the same extent that causes some critics to find fault with the Romantics.

Tolkien's texts also share some commonality with works by Tennyson and by Hardy in terms of style, diction, and audience (i.e., urbanites and suburbanites, in general). Tennyson's texts reference environmental issues like the overharvesting of trees, inadequate sewage systems, pollution, poor architecture, and diseases (Parham 162-63). As a result, in terms of environmental content, Tennyson's nineteenth-century works resemble Tolkien's twentieth-century writings. While "The Scouring of the Shire" chapter alone includes references to deforestation, terrible housing construction, and multiple forms of pollution, the narrator alludes to the unsanitary habits of the Orcs in Ithilien in *The Two Towers*, and the *Appendices* reference Middle-earth epidemics (e.g., *Return*, "Appendix A" 1023). Hardy, meanwhile, emphasizes the landscape of the fictional Wessex in his novels; moreover, he created a map for Wessex to gratify members of the various fan-based *Wessex societies* (Wulf and Gieben-Gamal 286-87). Somewhat similarly, Tolkien routinely references the non-human environment in his Middle-earth works, Tolkien's fantasies include various maps of Middle-earth (a move that proved so influential that many subsequent fantasy authors imitated Tolkien's strategy), and many Tolkien fans helped to establish various Tolkien Societies, such as the notable Tolkien Society of America that Dick Plotz founded in 1965.

Tolkien's readers often live in cities and in suburbia, and therefore, they somewhat resemble Hardy's and Tennyson's readers, who also wished for a country life. Tolkien's texts refuse to portray a "stable" life in rural areas in the manner that Tennyson

and Hardy's works often do (Wulf and Gieben-Gamal 286-87). The tales of Middle-earth discuss many war refugees and other migrations of people, famines, epidemics, and various explorations. For example, Gildor's statement in *The Lord of the Rings* that the Hobbits once lived elsewhere—and that Peoples other than the Hobbits will live in the Shire at some point in the future—demonstrates the long-term fluidity of Middle-earth's countryside (*Fellowship*, "Three" 82). Gandalf the White acknowledges that *the Wild* is not static but in repeated flux. While Butterbur declares his desire for no outsiders to be "tearing up the wild country," Gandalf qualifies Butterbur's statement by noting that parts of the so-called "wild country" once possessed great cities and realms of Men (*Return*, "Homeward" 971). Nonetheless, Gandalf acknowledges that, at the end of the Third Age, the lands that once comprised Arnor now appear as "wilderness" areas¹⁵³ (*Return*, "Homeward" 971). Unlike texts by Tennyson and Hardy, therefore, Tolkien's fantasies often portray the non-human environment in flux.

Tolkien's texts, therefore, allude to, parallel, and borrow from many historical and (for Tolkien) some contemporary sources, such as the previously mentioned texts by Hardy, Tennyson, Ruskin, Humboldt, Marsh, Haeckel, Muir, and Thoreau. Tolkien's writings indicate that healthy gardening, forestry, housing, and artisanship depends on humans working with the non-human environment, consciously recalling and valuing the environment, and monitoring each addition or modification or elimination caused by human activity in order to consciously improve the overall well-being of the environment. Whatever, whenever, wherever, and however, the environmental alteration

153. Because Tolkien's texts problematize the use of the term *wilderness*, this helps to explain why his works should interest second-wave environmentalists, as I discuss in the next chapter.

occurs, Tolkien's texts counsel that governments and individuals should seek to preserve the environment, if not improve the environment's condition. If the non-human environment's overall well-being falters because of human activity, then human conduct (and human-like, in the case of Tolkien's fantasies) must revert to earlier environmental habits (or otherwise alter their environmental behaviors) to avoid further damaging the environment. By seeking knowledge on a holistic basis, governments and individuals improve their chances of maintaining or (if human-caused damage occurs) rehabilitating the non-human environment. Human observers, moreover, can discern the well-being of the general environment based on the continuation of biodiversity, the safeguarding of the earth's air, waters, landscapes, and soils, the creation and preservation of artifacts of quality, and the preservation of the quality of life for non-invasive species. For this to occur, Tolkien argues that one must work (albeit without immense reliance on machinery), exercise, and find rest amid non-human nature; likewise, one must value the sensory imagery of the non-human environment without irrationally condemning certain environmental landscapes, entities, and species that one feels less drawn toward.

CHAPTER III

THE GREEN EYES OF TOLKIEN: CULTIVATING ENVIRONMENTAL GUARDIANS

3.1. Guarding “All Worthy Things that Are in Peril”: The Environmental Stances of the Valar and the Maiar, as well as the Corrupted Spirits and their Fellow

Ecosadists

Tolkien’s Middle-earth tales encourage dialogue between and among the unfallen spirits and the Free Peoples so that they might better appreciate the global, regional, and local physical environment, as well as one another’s created artifacts. By teaching and listening to the viewpoints of others, Tolkien’s protagonists reduce their callousness, ignorance, laziness, and deceit—all of which contributes to the core ecosadistic flaw of selfishness. While teaching and listening to others, the Free Peoples work to improve the quality of their environmental labors, as well as broaden and deepen their appreciation for and comprehension of other spirits/Peoples, environmental beings, entities, forms, and created artifacts. Whenever the spirits and the Free Peoples selfishly privilege knowledge in the abstract, seek to toil for only themselves, lazily neglect to work, ridicule strangers, belittle parts of the physical environment, or endeavor to possess/hoard wealth, artifacts, or resources, the environmental ethics of Tolkien’s protagonists devolve in a manner that

can resemble the environmental behaviors and attitudes of Middle-earth's ecosadists: Morgoth, Ungoliant, the Balrogs, Sauron, Saruman, the Orcs, the Goblins, and the Trolls.

3.1.1. The Environmental Guardians of Middle-earth and Beyond: The Valar as Role Models

The Valar display the environmental virtues of selflessness, empathy, industry, knowledge, and honesty when they seek to protect Arda (i.e., the solar system, including the earth) by establishing themselves at Aman, by directly and indirectly making war on the Dark Lords, and by teaching the Children (both in word and in deed) to care for the environment. However, by retreating to and dwelling in a specific area of Arda that they guard and by comprehending and loving certain aspects of the environment *even more* than others, the Valar's example also gives the (albeit false) impression of sanctioning a degree of selfishness that is rooted in callousness and ignorance. This misinterpretation of the Valar's environmental convictions and deeds leads to some deeply troublesome environmental beliefs and practices among the Children of Ilúvatar.

As *The Silmarillion* observes, the Valar's wars with Morgoth partially derive from Ilúvatar's design and from the Valar and the Maiar's arrival to *achieve* and to maintain Ilúvatar's plan for all of creation (e.g., "Ainulindalë" 20-22). The tension between the rebellious Melkor/Morgoth and the other Valar, however, intensifies after Morgoth annihilates the Two Lamps. Morgoth's violence causes the Valar to take measures to try to protect themselves (and at least a portion of Arda) from future attacks by Morgoth by withdrawing to Aman, by creating a fortified citadel kingdom in Valinor, and by cultivating gardens filled with various kinds of flora and fauna ("Quenta: Beginning" 35-

39). Although Tolkien's initial draft of "Myths Transformed" compares the Valar's aforementioned behavior to Morgoth's tyrannical monopolization of lands, Tolkien's later draft of "Myths Transformed" declares that such an interpretation—while seemingly valid—is not true (*Morgoth's* 405, 401). Morgoth and Ungoliant, however, kill the Two Trees—despite the Valar's attempt to prevent such aggression by Morgoth when they established their isolated realm apart from Morgoth-dominated and –corrupted Middle-earth, as *The Silmarillion* mentions ("Quenta: Darkening" 74-76). The unintended consequence of these actions by the Valar, however, is that the Children of Ilúvatar misinterpret their example. Middle-earth's environmental problems, consequently, partially derive from the Children establishing individual realms that become increasingly insular, and therefore less inclined to relieve the suffering of other Peoples in lands beyond their borders.

Although the Valar's retreat to Aman may seem selfish, since it occurs while Morgoth bastardizes the world that Ilúvatar envisioned and that the Valar created, the Valar actually repeatedly exhibit selflessness, hard work, knowledge, honesty, and sympathy for the plights of the Children (and the world's environment, in general) by directly and indirectly resisting Morgoth, Sauron, and (later) Saruman. Before escorting some of the newly awakened Elves to the Blessed Realm, the majority of the Valar elect to fight Morgoth and his servants at Utumno in order to free the Elves of Morgoth's terror, as well as to befriend and to teach the Elves ("Quenta: Aulë" 45-46, "Quenta: Coming . . . Elves" 50-52, "Quenta: Eldamar" 59-62). By taking the advice of Yavanna and others by choosing to fight Morgoth, the Valar opt to sacrifice portions of Middle-earth to save the majority of the lands and the Children ("Quenta: Aulë" 45-46, 41).

Before fighting Morgoth and his forces, however, multiple members of the Valar (e.g., Manwë and Aulë) express deep sorrow that such violence will inevitably harm the environment (“Quenta: Coming . . . Elves” 50-51; *Morgoth’s*, “Later” 161). Nevertheless, by bringing the Elves, whose births occurred in lands already twisted by the rebel Vala Morgoth, the Valar choose to fellowship with fallen beings and (to some extent) blind themselves to the likelihood that some of the Elves will also eventually rebel and depart from Valinor in order to claim (among other reasons) their own realms¹⁵⁴ (“Quenta: Flight” 82-84). Despite the Noldorin rebellion, nonetheless, the Valar still eventually choose to intercede on behalf of the Elves and the Men of Middle-earth and again defeat Morgoth during the War of Wrath¹⁵⁵ (“Quenta: Voyage” 251-52). Tolkien’s “Myths Transformed” elaborates on this war by praising the Valar’s consistent awareness of the overall well-being of Arda:

The last intervention with physical force by the Valar, ending in the breaking of Thangorodrim, may then be viewed as not in fact reluctant or even unduly delayed, but timed with precision. The intervention came before the annihilation of the Eldar and the Edain. Morgoth though locally triumphant had neglected most of Middle-earth during the war [. . .] The war was successful, and ruin was limited to the small (if beautiful) region of Beleriand. (*Morgoth’s* 402-03)

In Tolkien’s fantasies, therefore, the Peoples *and* the physical environment remain on the minds of the Valar consistently, for the Valar neither delay their assault on Morgoth’s

154. Tolkien’s late work on the *Quenta Silmarillion* notes that Morgoth’s lies led some subsequent observers to believe that the Valar invited the Elves because of the Valar’s selfishness (*Morgoth’s*, “Later” 162).

155. During the interim period, Manwë sought to rehabilitate Morgoth, for Morgoth originally possessed enough power and knowledge to redress the environmental problems that he caused, according to post-*Lord of the Rings* drafts of the *Quenta Silmarillion* (*Morgoth’s*, “Later” 273).

fortresses because of selfish laziness or cowardice, nor do they ignorantly guess when to attack like selfish beings with little-to-no regard for the well-being of the Children and the physical environment. Instead, the Valar rebuke the Elves (particularly the Noldorin Exiles) for their transgressions by waiting until the War of Wrath to defeat Morgoth; yet, this war also demonstrates that the Valar sympathize with the woes of the Elves, Edain, and Middle-earth, in general, for Morgoth tries to torture, maim, and kill everything and everyone in Beleriand before the Valar intervene.

Even after the Downfall of Númenor, *The Silmarillion* states that the Valar still aid the Númenórean Exiles and the other Children living in Middle-earth. For example, the Valar send the Istari (i.e., five Maiar spirits) to represent them and to help the Children in their struggle against Sauron.¹⁵⁶ The Valar's example, consequently, teaches that one should intervene (militarily, if necessary) to improve the health of persecuted peoples and lands. Nonetheless, prior to battling environmental exploiters like Morgoth and Sauron, Tolkien's Valar teach that one must first take the time to strategize and discern the most opportune moment to intercede. Likewise, the Valar's environmental knowledge includes their grasp that, in a fallen world, they can only determinedly strive so that their "labour was not all in vain," since Morgoth's demented activities prevent the Valar from entirely attaining their "will and purpose" for Arda (e.g., "Ainulindalë" 22).

The Valar's teaching and environmental guardianship of Arda, moreover, stems from their specialties, as *The Valaquenta* states within *The Silmarillion*. For example, Manwë (winds, clouds, and birds), Varda (stars), Ulmo (water), Aulë (precious metals and mountains), Yavanna (nature and especially trees), Irmo (gardens), and Oromë (trees,

156. I discuss this topic in more detail later in this chapter.

dogs, and horses) each have specific environmental interests and knowledge (“Valaquenta” 26-29; “Quenta: Aulë” 45-46). These specific environmental gifts, however, sometimes lead to miscommunication and tension even among the Valar. In other words, the specialized knowledge of certain portions of Arda (i.e., the solar system, including the earth) and Eä (i.e., the universe/all of Creation) (*Morgoth’s*, “Athrabeth” 337) provides each of the Valar with intuitive comprehension of *portions* of Creation. For areas outside of their specialization, the Valar depend on other Vala spirits to tutor them to improve their knowledge of and sympathetic imagination toward the rest of the environment.¹⁵⁷

The most overt instance of the Valar’s specialized knowledge and interests may occur in a conversation between Aulë, Manwë, and Yavanna. Whereas Yavanna (i.e., Kementári) cherishes and understands “the things that grow and live upon the earth,” her spouse, Aulë, loves the artifacts he creates the most (“Quenta: Aulë” 45). While Yavanna chides Aulë for not permitting her to instruct the Dwarves (whom Aulë creates) to care for flora in *The Silmarillion*, Aulë demonstrates Yavanna’s own need for further instruction (45). Yavanna also requires additional mentoring, for Aulë must inform her that the Children need to *eat* and to *build*, which will result in the Elves, Men, and Dwarves taking from and altering the environment that Yavanna helped to create (45). Consequently, while Aulë partially fails to place sufficient emphasis on the importance of the flora and fauna of Arda, Yavanna’s focus on the requirements for preserving Arda’s

157. This specialized knowledge among the Valar is further aggravated by the fact that some of the Valar felt especially drawn to certain Elves (e.g., Manwë and Varda felt more affinity for the Vanyar Elves, while Aulë and Mandos held the Noldorin Elves most dear), according to Tolkien’s 1950s work on the *Quenta Silmarillion* (*Morgoth’s*, “Later” 176). Consequently, while it is natural to feel closer to certain friends, the Valar could also appear to show favoritism, which could lead the Children to misinterpret the actions and feelings of the Valar.

flora and fauna results in her missing/underestimating key information about the needs and desires of the chief focus of Ilúvatar: the Children (45). I believe that critics (such as Petty) (232-33) err by stating that Yavanna's views of trees and her yearning to protect them from harm—even if the Children use trees to meet their needs rather than for the love of wanton destruction—represent Tolkien's own.¹⁵⁸ Rather than privileging Yavanna's worldview, Aulë and Yavanna's views concerning the Children's use of Arda and its resources complement one another to provide a fuller understanding of ethical environmental practices. Whereas Aulë counsels Yavanna that Ilúvatar demands that the Children may not borrow/take from the environment in a callously selfish manner (i.e., “without respect or without gratitude”), Yavanna observes the need to judge those who wantonly harm the environment (*Silmarillion*, “Quenta: Aulë” 45-46). While Flieger believes that the final conversation between Yavanna and Aulë leaves the question of appropriate environmental behavior unresolved¹⁵⁹ (“Taking” 272-73), I believe the conversation between these Vala spouses reinforces the tension between Aulë's focus on the Children's needs and Yavanna's fears that Morgoth's misanthropy would infect the Children. Such conversations among these members of the Valar highlight an environmental maxim: there exists a constant need to try to ascertain the thresholds between human needs (food, shelter, defense, and fuel), desires, and misanthropy

158. Although I agree with Petty that Tolkien's concern for trees contributes to Yavanna's statements (232), I do not agree with the implication of Petty's work that Tolkien's environmental views largely parallel Yavanna's own.

159. According to Flieger (272), Tolkien shows “ambivalence” between the perspectives of Yavanna and Aulë. In my view, however, Tolkien empathizes with Yavanna's views, but the tone of *The Silmarillion*, in particular, and of the Middle-earth *Legendarium*, in general, demonstrates that Tolkien actually shows that he agrees with Aulë's perspective to an even greater extent.

(wanton violence) so that humans may prosper without irrevocably harming various species, waters, landscapes, soils, and the air—all of which possess intrinsic worth.¹⁶⁰

Even the leader of the Valar, Manwë, lacks a complete understanding of Creation in *The Silmarillion*. While Manwë initially calls Yavanna’s yearning for tree guardians “strange,” upon further reflection, he recalls, “[M]any things therein that though he had heard them he had not heeded before [. . .] and from [the Song of Creation] came forth many wonders that had until then been hidden from him in the hearts of the Ainur” (“Quenta: Aulë” 45, 46). As the Valar’s leader, Manwë not only acknowledges the need for the Ents to care for the flora (i.e., *olvar*), in general, and trees, in particular, but also observes that, because Yavanna privileges trees, she underemphasizes the need for guardians among the fauna (i.e., *kelvar*) (46). Even though Manwë and Yavanna “sang” this melody together during the Music, they do not understand it the same way (46). Manwë must again correct Yavanna for privileging trees when she assumes that the Eagles will reside in the tops of “her” trees; instead, Manwë declares that “only the trees of Aulë will be tall enough. In the mountains the Eagles shall house” (46). The fact that Manwë calls the mountains “the trees of Aulë” means Manwë subtly rebukes Yavanna for her privileging of trees (which she claims as her own, as the phrase “trees of Kementári” indicates) (46). Nonetheless, by also mentioning, “But in the forests shall

160. In her conversations with Manwë and Aulë (*Silmarillion*, “Quenta: Aulë” 45-46), Yavanna rejoices at the thought of nature’s wrath against the Children who overharvest natural resources. Tolkien emphasizes Yavanna’s glee at the mental image of Entish violence by his repeated use of the exclamation point when Yavanna praises the idea of the Ents unleashing militant justice on poor environmental guardians among the Peoples of Middle-earth (45-46). Besides depicting that Aulë rebukes Yavanna because she overemphasizes nature’s needs and desires at the expense of the Children before she speaks with Manwë, Tolkien provides Aulë with the final comment on the topic, which emphasizes the Children’s necessity to borrow from the natural world to survive (45-46). The well-being of the Children and the non-People environment, therefore, depend on the Children’s *respectful, restrained, and thankful* use of the environment surrounding them.

walk the Shepherds of the Trees,” Manwë softens this aforementioned correction by implying that the Eagles and the Ents are equally needed (46). Like the previously discussed talks between Yavanna and Aulë, this conversation between Manwë and Yavanna represents the environmental behavioral model for all characters (and readers) to emulate. The Valar emphasize the need to converse with those whom one appears to disagree with/misunderstand so that everyone involved in the conversations possesses the opportunity to attain further enlightenment—together.

The Valar’s example, therefore, teaches the Free Peoples that, while the physical environment of Middle-earth must make sacrifices to meet the various needs of the Peoples, the Free Peoples must sacrifice some of their desires. Moreover, the Free Peoples must learn to appreciate other Peoples’ environmental expertise and interests by holding a dialogue with them in order to preserve or even improve the well-being of the physical environment. To preserve or improve the environment, the Valar’s example of environmental guardianship also sanctions wars to save the global physical environment from ecocidal forces and to save besieged peoples who are attacked by invading forces of industrialized imperialists. By behaving in this manner at the end of the First Age, the Valar’s example parallels the advice given to the Captains of the West at the end of the Third Age by the lone “Faithful” representative of the Valar among the Istari, Gandalf. As noted elsewhere, Gandalf declares that the righteous should be “uprooting the evil in the fields that we know, so that those who live after may have clean earth to till” (*Return, “Last”* 861).

3.1.2. Melian the Mediocre, Radagast the Semi-Renegade, and Gandalf the Glorious

Tolkien's texts extol the virtues of enjoying, healing, and understanding nature, which the Maiar spirits Melian and Radagast, to varying degrees, demonstrate; consequently, Melian and Radagast resist behaving in an entirely callous and ignorant manner in this regard. Nonetheless, by linking her guardianship of Middle-earth to Thingol and his realm of Doriath, Melian also exhibits a degree of selfishness that is fueled, in part, by laziness and callousness. Although Melian appears more knowledgeable than Radagast, both of these semi-errant spirits fall into the trap of privileging certain environmental species, entities, and/or landscapes, which leads them to underemphasize the preservation of the rest of the environment. While he fails for a much more extended period of time than Melian, Radagast also neglects to help the Peoples and spirits battling the ecocidal forces. Therefore, these Maiar spirits neglect their moral and ethical responsibility to cherish the physical environment and the Peoples enough to continue/begin to work on behalf of the physical environment and the Free Peoples. Instead, when they face the darkest moment and their allies need their aid the most, Melian and Radagast selfishly focus on themselves and shirk their duty and moral obligation to use their knowledge and skills to defend the Peoples and the physical environment.

In *The Silmarillion*, Melian's sensitivity to and appreciation of the world's sensory imagery (especially sights, scents, and sounds), as well as her work ethic, are readily apparent to readers. Consequently, these traits soften readers' views of Melian, for these facts about Melian lessen the impression of Melian as a selfish, lazy, and callous spirit when she abandons Middle-earth, in general, and Doriath, in particular. Melian

chooses to work in gardens where she cultivates flowers and trees for Irmo in Valinor (“Valaquenta” 30). Melian, moreover, opts to continue her environmental labors in Middle-earth where she helps to foster the joyful sound of birdsong and singing (“Quenta: Thingol” 55). In Middle-earth, therefore, Melian is characterized by her constant bird companions (i.e., nightingales), by her affection for the stars, and by her appreciation for the shadows of enormous trees (55). Indeed, Melian’s emblem also illustrates her love of nature; as Scull and Hammond note, stars and flower petals appear upon Melian’s heraldic device (*Artist* 196). As Melian’s choice to retreat to Irmo’s Lórien gardens in Valinor to cope with the murder of Thingol indicates, Melian’s receptivity to and awareness of the emotional, mental, physical, and spiritual power of nature’s sensory imagery continues, even after Thingol’s death (*Silmarillion*, “Quenta: Ruin . . . Doriath” 234).

Nevertheless, Melian falters in her environmental guardianship of Arda in two crucial ways. As her protective “Girdle” implies, Melian focuses on protecting her spouse’s realm. Because Melian bases her environmental guardianship of Doriath on the fact that Thingol lives there, Thingol’s death ends her main motive and her desire to protect the realm’s fauna, flora, landscapes, waters, soils, and Peoples. This occurs when the Nogrod Dwarves kill Thingol, which causes Melian to cease protecting Doriath’s environment and the Sindarin and Nandorin Elves of Doriath (*Silmarillion*, “Quenta: Ruin . . . Doriath” 233-34). Rather than trying to prevent further bloodshed, Melian chooses to merely give some final orders to the Grey-Elf Mablung before forsaking the kingdom and all of Middle-earth just at the time Doriath desperately requires the Girdle of Melian (234). In these instances, Melian behaves in a rather selfish, callous, and lazy

manner by overemphasizing her own individual suffering caused by the murder of her beloved Thingol, which, in turn, leads to far greater collective suffering among the Elves of Doriath.¹⁶¹ Indeed, with the fall of the mighty realm of Doriath, the remaining lands under the control of the Elves and the rest of the Free Peoples live in even greater peril of Morgoth's ecosadism. By privileging her favorite realm and the life of Thingol above the welfare of the rest of Middle-earth and the rest of the Elves (not to mention the rest of the Free Peoples), Melian's lazy and callous selfishness somewhat echoes Yavanna's own mistaken selfish bias that led Yavanna to favor her beloved trees and Ents above all others. This shared fault may help to explain one reason why *The Silmarillion* characterizes Melian as "akin [. . .] to Yavanna herself" ("Quenta: Thingol" 55).

Meanwhile, like the meaning of his high-Elven name, Radagast cares deeply for birds.¹⁶² Gandalf describes Radagast as an "honest" and "worthy wizard" because of several environmental characteristics: Radagast's knowledge of and compassion for some non-human animals and his understanding of some plants¹⁶³ (*Fellowship*, "Council" 255, 250-51). Nevertheless, aside from these positive descriptions, Radagast possesses few qualities of note, although Radagast's negatives fall short of rendering him an evil character or an entirely poor environmental guardian.

Radagast's interaction with Gandalf during *The Fellowship of the Ring* suggests that, when situations appear dire, Radagast flees Gandalf, despite the fact that Gandalf is his friend and his fellow wizard and despite the fact Gandalf could use more of

161. Melian, for example, could help lead the Elves of Doriath to other areas of Middle-earth and away from the vengeful Dwarves. The weakening of the Elves of Doriath, moreover, also weakens the Elves as a whole, since the death of every Elf reduces their chances of fighting Morgoth and his ecosadistic forces.

162. Radagast's Quenya name is *Aiwendil*, which means "Lover of Birds" (*Unfinished*, "Istari" 393, 401, "Index" 417).

163. Trees, however, are notably absent from Radagast's specialties (*Fellowship*, "Council" 250-51).

Radagast's assistance as he (Gandalf) labors to complete the Istari's difficult but divinely ordained task. Consequently, Radagast behaves selfishly, since Radagast callously and lazily refuses to help Gandalf—even though, by refusing to help Gandalf on a consistent basis, Radagast ignorantly jeopardizes the health and general well-being of all of Middle-earth. Rather than alluding to the idea of Radagast riding into battle, Tolkien describes Radagast's departure from Gandalf as rather skittish: “[Radagast] rode off as if the Nine were after him” (*Fellowship*, “Council” 251). The fact that the Elven messengers of Rivendell find Radagast's home vacant (*Fellowship*, “Ring” 267) reads as if Radagast hides to avoid detection from Sauron's servants.¹⁶⁴ Rather than Rateliff's belief that Radagast's Rhosgobel is “ominously abandoned” because Sauron's forces supposedly harm Radagast (*History. . . Hobbit*, “Medwed” 271), *The Lord of the Rings* narrator only states that, when the Rivendell messengers arrive, “Radagast was not there” (*Fellowship*, “Ring” 267). Rateliff implies that Radagast disappears because Sauron's servants imprison or kill him; this reading appears less likely, however, because of the narrator's subsequent statement that “In no region had the messengers discovered any signs or tidings of the Riders or other servants of the Enemy. Even from the Eagles of the Misty Mountains they had learned no fresh news” (*Fellowship*, “Ring” 267). As Rateliff also notes (*History. . . Hobbit*, “Medwed” 274), Radagast possesses close ties with the Eagles; this probably means it is unlikely that the Eagles would miss Radagast's abduction or death at the hands of Sauron's minions, especially since the esteemed warriors and trackers among the Elves and the Rangers find no evidence of Sauron's servants in the

164. Consequently, perhaps Radagast shirks his duty as an Istari wizard by refusing to ride to the aid of Dale and Erebor when Sauron's armies attack in the north during the War of the Ring, and thereby (in the main) fails to help in the way that Gandalf aids the Peoples further to the south in Rohan and in Gondor.

area (*Fellowship*, “Ring” 267). Moreover, Rateliff agrees that guardedness and naïveté count among Radagast’s weaknesses (*History. . . Hobbit*, “Medwed” 271). The somewhat (to borrow Rateliff’s descriptions of Radagast) “careless,” relatively “dim,” and “not overbold” Radagast (271) will probably not rush off to meet Sauron’s Dol Guldur forces without asking Gandalf for assistance or guidance. Therefore, during *The Fellowship of the Ring*, it seems unlikely that Radagast quickly departs from Gandalf (after giving Saruman’s message to Gandalf) to aid in the struggle against Sauron’s forces marching to war in northern Mirkwood because he acts on some secret knowledge, although Rateliff believes otherwise (272). Rather, the sinful, ecosadistic, and selfish mixture of laziness, callousness, ignorance, and cowardice causes Radagast to fail, in part. Radagast could help in more significant ways than he chooses to do, and therefore, when combined with his choice to depart quickly from Gandalf with nothing more than the appearance of a sentiment akin to, *Good luck, Gandalf; hope everything turns out well for you and yours*, Radagast’s selfishness is self-evident. By cowardly neglecting to help the Peoples whom he was sent to protect on a regular basis, by neglecting to learn about and cherish the bulk of the physical environment beloved by his Vala representative Yavanna, and by failing to interact with Gandalf consistently even during the War of the Ring, Radagast fails as an environmental guardian. Radagast serves as an example of the short-sightedness of basing one’s environmental appreciation and knowledge on only what one finds the most personally gratifying without sufficient consideration for the Peoples’ and the physical environment’s well-being.

Because Saruman is the undisputed leader of the five chief Istari, because Radagast arrives with Gandalf to Middle-earth, and because of Radagast’s evident

subservience in powers and learning to Gandalf, these traits could indicate that Radagast is supposed to act as the “West-helper” to Gandalf. If so, Radagast was originally supposed to help Gandalf in a manner similar to how Rómestámo (e.g., the “East-helper”) aids Morinehtar (e.g., the “Darkness-slayer”) in a fragment that Tolkien wrote at the end of his life (*Peoples*, “Last” 384-85). As chief of the Istari, Saruman needs no “helper,” but Morinehtar and Gandalf may. This idea would also help to explain why Gandalf can order Radagast to “Stay a moment” and to help fight Sauron’s forces by speaking to the birds and other animals and by asking them to watch the land and report their findings to Gandalf and Saruman (*Fellowship*, “Council” 251). As the “head” of the Istari, Saruman deserves the news; yet, Gandalf’s use of “help” twice when he seeks aid from Radagast and Gandalf’s request that Radagast report to him what the beasts discover suggests that Radagast may (however haltingly) act as Gandalf’s “West-helper.” If so, this heightens Radagast’s betrayal and the degree to which Radagast disgraces himself because of his selfish laziness and callousness. Indeed, Gandalf, while speaking at the Council of Elrond in *The Fellowship of the Ring*, states that he had not encountered Radagast in *years* (250).

The form of Gandalf’s statements during this recounted exchange allude to Radagast’s selfish waywardness; following his demand that Radagast “stay,” Gandalf tells Radagast, “We shall need your help” (*Fellowship*, “Council” 250). As the *OED* notes, *shall* can mean “owe,” “ought to,” “must,” and “have to,” all of which apply in Radagast’s case, since his duty as an Istari wizard means that he owes his allegiance to those fighting Sauron, and therefore, he ought to help them, while his lower rank will require him to aid Gandalf. After getting Radagast’s attention, Gandalf then quickly declares three imperative statements: “Send out messages to all the beasts and birds that

are your friends. Tell them to bring news of anything that bears on this matter to Saruman and Gandalf. Let messages be sent to Orthanc” (251). Perhaps Gandalf intentionally avoids beginning these sentences with the contentious “You” to sound less confrontational with the backsliding Radagast. However, it also seems likely that Gandalf knows Radagast well enough to realize that he has only the briefest of moments to tell Radagast the most important things before Radagast races away (which he subsequently does), and therefore, Gandalf chooses to avoid the unnecessary noun. Gandalf, moreover, ends his discussion of the scene by noting that Radagast says, “I will do that,” the last word of which (when combined with Radagast’s quick departure) suggests that Radagast means “I will do *this* but *no more* than *that*” (250). It seems that Gandalf would like to continue to chat with Radagast—if not for Radagast running away “as if the Nine were after him” and Gandalf’s weariness from his travels (250). Indeed, Gandalf appears exasperated with Radagast’s minimalistic help and repeated efforts to avoid further assignments, as the statements, “And with that he mounted and would have ridden straight off” and “I could not follow him then and there,” imply (251).

While Rateliff, to some extent, encourages the rehabilitation of Radagast’s image by observing that Tolkien theorized that Radagast came to Middle-earth with Gandalf *and* by mentioning that Radagast and Gandalf each possess excellent relationships with the Eagles and the Valar, I hold a different view than Rateliff, who argues that Tolkien diminishes Radagast merely to elevate Gandalf (*History. . . Hobbit*, “Medwed” 274-75). Our disagreement may occur because Rateliff reads the phrase “only one remained faithful” by mentally adding *at all* to the end of the statement about the Istarī in *Unfinished Tales*. In other words, Radagast fails to remain “faithful,” because he does not

completely fulfill his role as a guardian of Middle-earth (*Unfinished*, “Istari” 389).

Radagast, therefore, neglects to do as he and the other Istari¹⁶⁵ were “bidden”: “[T]o

advise and persuade Men and Elves to good, and to seek to unite in love and

understanding all those whom Sauron . . . would endeavor to dominate and corrupt”

(389). After all, Radagast mainly focuses on herbs and beasts, especially birds,¹⁶⁶ rather

than all of nature; moreover, he appears to fail to work with the other earth guardians (the

lesser Maiar/Sprites, the Huorns, and the Ents).¹⁶⁷ Consequently, Radagast deserves the

165. The actions, faithfulness, and names of the Blue Wizards, who wear “sea-blue” cloaks in “The Istari” essay within *Unfinished Tales* (389), remain convoluted. However, in the 1954 version (*Unfinished*, “Istari” 388), Tolkien mentions that the pair of Blue Wizards, Alatar and Pallando, were sent specifically by Oromë and, for Pallando, perhaps by Mandos and Nienna as well (“Istari” 393, 394). This pair of Wizards journeyed into the east and may have died, succeeded, or fallen into league with Sauron, according to the *Unfinished Tales* (“Istari” 390). Tolkien’s *Letter 211* to Rhona Beare that he wrote on October 14, 1958, presents a much different view of the Blue Wizards; within this letter, Tolkien says that he failed to know the color of garb they wore, although Tolkien also notes that he believes that the two wizards journeyed into the south and east before their apostasy (*Letters* 280).

However, years later in a 1972 text, Tolkien calls the Blue Wizards “Morinehtar” and “Rómestámo” (*Peoples*, “Last” 384-85). In this subsequent version, Tolkien revised his opinion and states that the Blue Wizards partially succeed, since the significantly larger eastern groups fail to overthrow the western Peoples, which probably occurs because the Blue Wizards help to foster rebellion against Sauron. Nevertheless, Tolkien still notes that the Blue Wizards “failed” to learn where Sauron hid after his humbling by Isildur and the Last Alliance (385).

While Rateliff points out Tolkien’s late partial-rehabilitation of the Blue Wizards as evidence of Radagast’s qualities (*History . . . Hobbit*, “Medwed” 274), Tolkien never mentions Radagast’s triumphs in a similar manner, not even within these late writings on the Istari; consequently, it would seem this textual silence would indicate that Tolkien chooses not to rehabilitate Radagast’s character.

166. According to Gandalf’s summary of Radagast’s scope of understanding (*Fellowship*, “Council” 250-51), the emissary of Yavanna appears to know only a significant amount about one flora group (herbs) that the Entwives prize and none that the Ents cherish. Radagast’s focus on non-human animals, especially birds (*Fellowship*, “Council” 250-51), sharply contrasts with the beliefs of his Vala sponsor Yavanna, who argues that the non-human animals can protect themselves—unlike plants, of which Yavanna yearns to see the trees protected more than any other plants (*Silmarillion* “Quenta: Aulë” 45). Therefore, it would seem that Yavanna would wish for her representative, Radagast, to focus more on plants than non-human animals.

167. Although, as Rateliff mentions (*History . . . Hobbit*, “Medwed” 288-89n), Tolkien mentions in his “Istari” fragment that the Istari wizards generally fulfill their task by working in a specific area (e.g., Radagast in Rhovanion and Gandalf in Eriador, Lindon, and the Anduin Vales), these regions still only represent the “main” places of concern for each Wizard (*Unfinished* 398). Gandalf often travels throughout western Middle-earth to learn about the Peoples of the various areas in order to aid those combating Sauron and his allies (397-400). Radagast, therefore, should also seek to understand areas beyond simply Rhovanion, which he seems to fail to do. For instance, he does not know the proper pronunciation of nor the location of the Shire in *The Lord of the Rings* (*Fellowship*, “Council” 251). However, Rateliff indicates that Tolkien casts Radagast as a less ignorant character in earlier and later writings, because Radagast uses the correct name of the land of the Hobbits in these works (*History . . . Hobbit* “Medwed” 271, 288n).

title of “Partial Renegade.” Although Rateliff regards it as only a plausible theory (*History. . . Hobbit*, “Medwed” 272-73), therefore, I believe that there is no question that Radagast undervalues the lives and worth of the Children, whom Radagast is charged to protect. By neglecting the Children, Radagast’s callous disregard for the well-being of the Children alludes to the depths of Radagast’s selfish laziness.

Tolkien mentions (albeit in a note—yet one written in his final years) that Gandalf surpasses Radagast’s knowledge and skills, “[I]t is clear that Gandalf (with greater insight and compassion) had in fact more knowledge of birds and beasts than Radagast, and was regarded by them with more respect and affection” (qtd. in Hammond and Scull, “*Lord*” . . . *Reader’s* 244-45). Despite Radagast’s semi-rebellious decision to refrain from learning about and aiding both Men and Elves in favor of devoting himself to the study of several kinds of animals and plants, Radagast cannot compete with Gandalf’s wisdom even in the area of Radagast’s expertise: fauna and flora. Radagast, therefore, again appears ignorant. Indeed, Hammond and Scull observe that an older Tolkien later described Radagast as semi-cowardly, -lazy, and -nonchalant in his notes (“*Lord*” . . . *Reader’s* 244-45). The aforementioned description of Radagast, therefore, shows that the wizard failed to some extent because of his selfish desire to remain safe from and unconcerned about Middle-earth’s problems whenever possible.

Radagast’s unfaithfulness partially derives from his refusal to take the time to understand, to love, and to help the Children. Although he is the spirit whom Yavanna sends to Middle-earth (*Unfinished*, “Istari” 393), Radagast invests no time in teaching or even knowing about the Hobbits. Indeed, (unlike Gandalf¹⁶⁸) Radagast even fails to know

168. When praising Gandalf’s environmentalism, readers should not dismiss Radagast’s concern for plants and non-human animals, as Sauron and Saruman do (*Fellowship*, “Council” 252; *Morgoth’s*, “Myths” 397;

the location of the agricultural Hobbits and how to pronounce their names (*Fellowship*, “Council” 250). Following the loss of the Entwives (who taught the Hobbits and Men cultivation and agriculture and served Yavanna even more closely than the Ents, according to Tolkien’s *Letters*) (335), the extent to which Radagast neglects his duties is stark. Even if readers reject the authority of Tolkien’s *Letters*, *The Two Towers* includes Treebeard noting that the Entwives taught Men (including Hobbits) how to farm and that the Entwives would love the Shire (“Treebeard” 461, 465). It is likely that, with the loss of the Entwives in northwestern Middle-earth, Yavanna would adopt the Hobbits, who (to an extent) remind Treebeard of the Entwives, as a People she cherished. Despite the fact that Radagast lives in Rhosgobel in nearby Mirkwood¹⁶⁹ (*Fellowship*, “Council” 250; *Unfinished*, “Istari” 390, 401n) (which is in the same region as Fangorn Forest and the lost Gardens of the Entwives), Radagast appears to permit the estrangement between the Entwives and the Ents and then the slow decline of the Ents without intervening in any significant manner. Similarly, Radagast’s visits to Beorn, whom Yavanna would praise (since Beorn cherishes his livestock and crops and slaughters ecosadists like the Wargs and the Orcs), ceased before even the Quest for Erebor occurred (*Hobbit*, “Queer” 109). In my view, Radagast’s behavior toward Beorn, therefore, does not appear like one of “friendship,” as Rateliff asserts (*History . . . Hobbit*, “Medwed” 273). Instead, Radagast appears to do nothing to prevent the annihilation/disappearance/enslavement of the

Unfinished, “Istari” 394). Nevertheless, as mentioned previously, Radagast justly faces rebuke for his narrow-minded scope of interest (*Unfinished*, “Istari” 390; qtd in Hammond and Scull, “*Lord*” . . . *Reader’s* 245).

169. Rather than continuing to travel around northwestern Middle-earth like the “faithful” Gandalf, Radagast chooses to make a permanent dwelling at Rhosgobel—a choice that parallels that of Saruman, who ceases to travel and opts to live at Isengard before his complete fall into evil (e.g., *Unfinished*, “Istari” 390, 392; *Fellowship*, “Council” 250).

Entwives, the long decline of the Ents, knows little about the Hobbits, and ceases to communicate with Beorn regularly, and therefore, Radagast is both selfishly ignorant of and callous toward the fates of the Peoples most beloved by/most likely cherished by his Vala patron Yavanna. Instead, Radagast selfishly focuses on comprehending and befriending just a few plant and non-human animal species that pique his interests.

When, in *The Lord of the Rings*, Saruman unveils himself as a traitor and enlists various birds as his spies, such as the *crebain* from Dunland and Fangorn Forest (*Fellowship*, “Ring” 278-80), the presence of Radagast in Fangorn would greatly benefit the Ents in a variety of ways, including Radagast’s ability to speak with the birds. Quickbeam notes that the birds in Fangorn mutate and begin behaving “unfriendly and greedy” by wasting the fruit of the trees and by attacking the trees themselves (*Two*, “Treebeard” 472). The fact that Quickbeam then mentions how Saruman’s Orcs destroyed the rest of Quickbeam’s beloved rowan trees implies a link between Saruman and the actions of the twisted birds (472), which, in turn, alludes to the sorely missed environmental expertise of Radagast, who could help counteract Saruman’s multiple treacheries—if only he was willing to do so.¹⁷⁰

Radagast consistently fails to encourage Yavanna’s beloved Ents (and the rest of the Peoples) to fight Sauron. Rather than Yavanna’s representative, Radagast, it is Gandalf who must make the decision to leave Merry and Pippin with Treebeard to help lead the Ents to fight Saruman’s forces (*Two*, “White” 488), as well as, subsequently, a group of Sauron’s Orcs on the Wold (*Return*, “Many” 957). Others, consequently, must

170. The fact that Saruman uses his infamous, cunning voice to challenge Radagast’s area of expertise by corrupting some birds without Radagast’s knowledge—to the detriment of the trees beloved by Yavanna and her Ents—might represent a reason for Saruman’s derisive analysis of Radagast as, “Radagast the Bird-tamer! Radagast the Simple! Radagast the Fool!” (*Fellowship*, “Council” 252).

atone for Radagast's laziness and callousness in order to save Middle-earth from Sauron's destruction and domination. Radagast the Brown, in other words, refuses to continue part of his appointed task to help the Elves and Men in favor of learning about and tending to *some* of the wild creatures and plants of Middle-earth, despite Yavanna specifically choosing Radagast as the Maia to represent her and her interests in Middle-earth (*Unfinished*, "Istari" 390, 393). Interestingly, this means that Radagast continues Yavanna's own tendency to favor nature over the Children (*Silmarillion*, "Quenta: Aulë" 46), which helps to explain the conundrum of Radagast's failure, despite Yavanna's selection of Radagast—a theory given by J.R.R. Tolkien that Christopher Tolkien questions (*Unfinished*, "Istari" 393), but one that I find satisfactory. Indeed, Yavanna would certainly condemn Radagast's refusal to teach o(r even talk with) Yavanna's beloved Ents.

Radagast mars his own success as an environmental guardian by not adequately learning about and cherishing many of the plants Yavanna cares for the most and by failing to invest adequate time in comprehending and aiding the Children. Furthermore, Radagast also fails as an environmental guardian by not regularly helping his fellow-wizard Gandalf defend the Free Peoples and Middle-earth itself from the ecosadistic clutches of Sauron and his monstrous forces bent on ecocide.

Gandalf, however, never forgets that Yavanna's beloved fauna and flora possess intrinsic value (e.g., *Silmarillion*, "Quenta: Aulë" 45-46); this is most apparent during a conversation between Gandalf and Denethor in *The Return of the King* when the wizard enters Minas Tirith shortly before Sauron's armies lay siege to the fortress-city. Gandalf

informs Denethor that “all worthy things that are in peril as the world now stands, those are my care. And for my part, I shall not wholly fail of my task, though Gondor should perish, if anything passes through this night that can still grow fair or bear fruit and flower again in the days to come” (“Minas” 742). Gandalf, consequently, cares about and works on behalf of the world’s flowers, trees, and other flora.

Gandalf, therefore, not only remains selflessly *faithful* to the Valar by ceaselessly rejecting laziness and by tirelessly helping and encouraging the Free Peoples to fight Sauron (*Unfinished*, “Istari” 388, 390) but also by valuing the other members and entities of nature as well. Gandalf, for example, mourns the loss of the two trees beside the doors leading into the Mines of Moria in *The Lord of the Rings (Fellowship)*, “Journey” 301). Gandalf is also the individual who helps Aragorn locate the White Tree seedling¹⁷¹ after the War of the Ring (*Return*, “Steward” 950; *Silmarillion*, “Rings” 304). In *The Silmarillion*, Gandalf also displays knowledge of and sensitivity toward nature, as demonstrated by the fact that, when living in Valinor, Gandalf often lives in the gardens of Lórien/Irmo (“Valaquenta” 30-31). Moreover, in *The Fellowship of the Ring*, Gandalf enjoys smoking while looking at a flower garden (“Long-Expected” 25), discussing parts of the environment (such as grasses, trees, and the wind) with even treacherous beings like Gollum (“Shadow” 53), and riding horses (“Council” 256). Furthermore, Gandalf views the care of animals as an indicator of an individual’s or a community’s ethical/moral code (e.g., *Return*, “Minas” 743). Consequently, Gandalf is certainly not selfishly ignorant of or callous toward the physical environment; instead, Gandalf invests

171. Because Aragorn transplants the aforementioned seedling from a rocky area (*Return*, “Steward” 950), Campbell’s anecdotal story concerning Tolkien’s desire to save a beech seedling growing amid concrete in 1966 (qtd. in 252-53) means that Tolkien’s behavior, in this instance, somewhat paralleled Aragorn’s replanting of the White Tree seedling.

the time to enjoy and discuss the sensory imagery of the physical environment and to socialize with non-human animals.

Gandalf's environmental knowledge, work, and sensibilities also include his refusal to "break" horses by beating and intimidating these non-human animals; for example, Gandalf speaks to Shadowfax until the horse permits Gandalf to ride him. Hammond and Scull mention that the (likely) last work for "The Hunt for the Ring," which includes the phrase "official & final," includes Tolkien noting the following about Gandalf's selection of Shadowfax: "Shadowfax is wild wary and unwilling, and walks away whenever Gandalf approaches. It is not till late on [the same day of September] 22[nd] that S'fax will allow Gandalf to come up and speak to him; and not until Sept 23rd that he was tamed and will allow Gandalf to ride off¹⁷²" (qtd. in "*Lord*" . . . *Reader's* 249, 250). While this note is not included in *The Lord of the Rings*, the fact that this appears to represent Tolkien's "official & final" thoughts on the subject of Gandalf's benevolent attitude toward Shadowfax strongly suggests that readers should consider this as part of Gandalf's environmental stance throughout Tolkien's Middle-earth texts.¹⁷³ Furthermore, because horses repeatedly greet Gandalf with joy and because horses arrive at his command (e.g., *Two*, "White" 477, 492), Gandalf's environmental knowledge and sensibilities are again apparent.

172. In *The Tale of Years*, Shadowfax resists Gandalf even longer, with Gandalf needing three days to gain Shadowfax's trust so that Gandalf could ride him (Hammond and Scull, "*Lord*" . . . *Reader's* 250).

173. Gandalf's humane treatment of Shadowfax continues even beyond his need to ride Shadowfax to war and, indeed, even beyond the shores of Middle-earth itself, according to some of Tolkien's minor writings. In a January 19, 1965, letter to Miss A.P. Northey, Tolkien declares that Gandalf takes Shadowfax (as one of the Mearas descending from the horses of the Blessed Realm) back to Valinor (*Letters* 354); Tolkien also includes this information within the jettisoned "Epilogue" to *The Lord of the Rings* that Tolkien eventually (albeit reluctantly) removed (*Sauron* 120, 123). Consequently, Gandalf's treatment of Shadowfax demonstrates why Tolkien calls Gandalf a "faithful" steward of Middle-earth.

According to the initial version of “The Elessar,” Gandalf’s attention to the environment manifests itself once more.¹⁷⁴ In this version of the tale, Gandalf returns the Elessar to Middle-earth, as requested by Yavanna and the rest of the Valar, to encourage the exiled Galadriel and to illustrate that the Valar remain interested in the renewal of Middle-earth (249-50). Gandalf’s environmental labors in this version of the tale also include his instruction to Galadriel, which includes the command that designates whom Galadriel is to give the Elessar by telling her that the heir to the jewel will possess the same name as the stone (*Unfinished*, “History . . . Elessar” 250). By giving the Elessar to Galadriel and by giving Galadriel advice as well, Gandalf not only helps Galadriel to protect and beautify the woods of Lothlórien but also indirectly assists Aragorn, who “greens” Minas Tirith when the Ranger-turned-King gains possession of the Elessar. Gandalf, consequently, often treats non-corrupted, non-human animals (e.g., horses), Men, and Elves in a selflessly kind and knowledgeable manner.

Multiple characters display affection and admiration for Gandalf, which partially derives from his environmental ethics. Galadriel, for example, implies her profound respect for Gandalf’s views on a variety of topics (including nature) by advocating that Gandalf should lead the Council of the Wise (*Fellowship*, “Mirror” 348). Treebeard, moreover, states in *The Two Towers* that he respects Gandalf, because Gandalf represents

174. In the first version of “The Elessar” within the *Unfinished Tales*, Enderhil creates the green stone that appears to viewers like living leaves and sunlight; the stone, moreover, possesses the power to heal even the most “grievous hurts” in Middle-earth, including maimed and traumatized Elves, humans, and non-human animals (248-49).

Christopher Tolkien, in his notes, mentions that passages within the first version of “The Elessar” matches Galadriel’s gift of the Elessar stone to Aragorn in *The Fellowship of the Ring* (*Unfinished*, “History . . . Elessar” 250, 255n; *Fellowship*, “Farewell” 365-66). However, the detailed appearance of the Elessar and the fact that Galadriel’s daughter, Celebrian, and granddaughter, Arwen, each own the stone for a while in *The Fellowship of the Ring* seems to derive from the second legend (*Fellowship*, “Farewell” 365-66; *Unfinished*, “History . . . Elessar” 250-51, 256n).

“the only wizard that really cares about trees” (“Treebeard” 455). Proving the truth of Treebeard’s words (455), Gandalf purposely leaves Merry and Pippin in Fangorn, for he knows that the presence of the Hobbits can goad the Ents into interceding on behalf of the trees, which, in turn, would put an end to Saruman’s unsustainable logging practices (“White” 485, 487-88).

While guarding Middle-earth against Sauron, Gandalf also never forgets the “Little People,” the agrarian Hobbits. Gandalf’s interest in and knowledge of the Hobbits and their agrarian communities sets him apart from the other northwestern Istari members. Saruman, for example, refers to the Hobbits as “fools” in *The Fellowship of the Ring* (“Council” 254). Gandalf, however, knows the history of the Hobbits (which includes their victory over the Orcs at the Battle of Greenfields) (“Prologue” 5), and grasps their ability to band together as a community to overcome times of trouble (such as battling wolves and surviving, despite an insufficient amount of food, during the Long Winter) (*Annotated*, “Quest” 370-71). Within *The Fellowship of the Ring*, Gandalf remarks that his knowledge about *Hobbits* exceeds the understanding of even the Hobbits themselves, especially in reference to their earlier histories (“Shadow” 53). Moreover, Gandalf respects the hardiness and bravery that Hobbits can display when necessary, as demonstrated when Frodo agrees to undertake the quest to destroy the One Ring (“Shadow” 61). In unfinished works intimately related to *The Lord of the Rings*, Gandalf’s knowledge of and love for the Hobbits becomes even clearer. Within “The Hunt for the Ring,” Tolkien states that Gandalf probably only visited the Shire, prior to the War of the Ring era, *only* because of his “love” for Hobbits (*Unfinished* 349). Indeed, Tolkien notes that Gandalf’s affection for all things related to the Shire resulted in him

talking about the Hobbits and their cultivated fields and gardens “to any who would listen” (*Unfinished* 349). Tolkien, in other words, praises Gandalf for understanding not only the Hobbits’ history and culture but also the “inherent worth” of the brave, agrarian Hobbits and their Shire (*Unfinished*, “Istari” 398-99).

Whereas the eco-friendly Gandalf attempts to understand and to help the Peoples, Saruman seeks to exploit and to destroy two of the Peoples least dependent on industries and most associated with the environment. Saruman elects to visit the Shire to learn “all its ways and lands, and *thought* he had learned all that there was to know of it” partially because of his jealousy and suspicion of Gandalf, as referenced in “The Hunt for the Ring” (*Unfinished* 349, emphasis added). The aforementioned pointed word choice (i.e., *thought*) suggests Saruman *does not* know *all that there was to know* about the Shire and the Hobbits. While Saruman visits and keeps spies around the Shire, he focuses on learning about the geography, politics, and most powerful families of the area, because Saruman focuses on power, as Tolkien mentions in the fragment, “The Istari” (*Unfinished* 399). Saruman’s knowledge of the Hobbits centers on pipe-weed, which he begins to use himself and leads him to enter into secretive trade agreements with corrupt/soon-corrupted Hobbits like the Bracegirdles and Lotho Sackville-Baggins (*Unfinished*, “Hunt” 347, 350, 354n; *Two*, “Flotsam” 560; *Return*, “Scouring” 989). Within “The Hunt for the Ring,” Saruman elects to increase the number of spies investigating the Shire in order to learn more about a possible connection between the Shire and the Ring, which, in turn, leads him to focus on the Shire’s “chief persons and families, its roads, and other matters” (*Unfinished* 347).

Meanwhile, Saruman treats Treebeard, the Ents, and Fangorn Forest in a similar manner. According to Treebeard, Saruman, because of his journeys in Fangorn Forest and his conversations with Treebeard, “sp[ie]d out all the ways” of the wood and used this knowledge to destroy many trees in Fangorn Forest (*Two*, “Treebeard” 462). While Saruman learns about the geography of the land, he does not adequately assess the characteristics of the Hobbits and the Ents, as Gandalf repeatedly notes in *The Lord of the Rings* (e.g., *Two*, “White” 487-88; *Return*, “Homeward” 974). In his effort to acquire power, Saruman learns about the geography and some of the traits of the influential members of his (soon-to-be) enemies; however, he fails to know or appreciate the personalities and characteristics of the Ents and the Hobbits that he would gain by studying their lore and their realms’ environments in more detail. Saruman’s oversight that is based, in part, on prejudice not only leads Saruman to undervalue nature and Radagast’s knowledge (*Fellowship*, “Council” 252) but also it contributes to Saruman’s defeat, since he arrogantly dismisses the Ents’ tree-herding skills and their devotion to Fangorn Forest and the Hobbits’ communal spirit and love for their Shire. Ironically, these very eco-friendly traits lead these two Peoples to thwart Saruman’s ignorant and immoral imperialism. Because Gandalf comprehends the innate qualities of the Ents and the Hobbits, he possesses the conviction that they can and will defeat Saruman’s ecocidal designs for Fangorn Forest and the Shire, whereas Saruman’s habitual, selfish arrogance blinds him to reality, for Saruman considers a few visits and reports from others as sufficient to understand two of the Free Peoples. Gandalf, therefore, correctly states in *The Fellowship of the Ring* that “Among the Wise I am the only one that goes in for hobbit-lore: an obscure branch of knowledge, but full of surprises. Soft as butter they can

be, and yet sometimes as tough as old tree-roots. I think it likely that some would resist the Rings far longer than most of the Wise would believe” (“Shadow” 47). Gandalf, unlike Saruman, invests many, many years studying the Hobbits and their histories, because Gandalf *loves* them and their stories (i.e., Gandalf goes in for hobbit-lore). Likewise, Gandalf correctly judges the weaknesses and the strengths of the Hobbits, whereas Saruman perceives the weaknesses of the Hobbits (and of the Ents) and exploits these failings with short-term success but ultimate failure due to his insufficient knowledge of and appreciation for the positive attributes of the Hobbits and the Ents.

Although Hammond and Scull dispute Gandalf’s claim that he alone of the Wise “goes in for hobbit-lore” in a brief aside in which they note that Saruman technically “studied the Hobbits” (“*Lord*” . . . *Reader’s* 83), I believe that Saruman’s interest in and motivations for inquiring about the Hobbits (and the Ents) fails to equal the joyful and thoroughly truthful sentiment expressed by Gandalf when he says that he alone actually “goes in for hobbit-lore.” While Hammond and Scull are correct to observe that Saruman conducts some Hobbit research, Saruman assigns some of these duties to others and could care less about the inherent worth of Hobbits and Hobbit lore, whereas Gandalf not only investigates the Hobbits himself, but he also cherishes the Hobbits. I contend, therefore, that Hammond and Scull miss the figurative meaning of Gandalf’s statement that “I am the only one [of the Wise] that goes in for hobbit-lore” (83). Saruman’s hastiness, in any case, results from his insufficient labor and selfish motives, which leads him to ignorantly oversimplify the cultures of the Hobbits and the Ents. Because of this hastiness by Saruman, this character flaw heightens his callousness toward and selfish delusions concerning these Free Peoples, which, in turn, leads Saruman to try to satisfy his selfish

yearning to dominate others by trying to kill/conquer/enslave/exile the feracultural Ents and the agrarian Hobbits and by destroying the environments of these Peoples' realms.

Because Tolkien's Middle-earth fantasies encourage characters (and readers) to appreciate, to comprehend, and to improve the physical environment, the Maia spirits, Melian and Radagast, succeed to some extent. Nonetheless, because Melian mostly limits her environmental guardianship of Middle-earth to the life of her Elven spouse Thingol and his realm of Doriath, she also exhibits a degree of self-centered laziness and callousness. Because Thingol dies, Melian shows a lack of interest in the well-being of thousands of Elves and Edain; instead, she callously thinks about only her own distress, which leads Melian to abandon Middle-earth for the Blessed Realm so that she could mourn the loss of Thingol. Radagast, meanwhile, often fails as an environmental guardian, because he ignores most of the physical environment of Middle-earth and almost entirely neglects the Children of Ilúvatar, whom the Valar charged Radagast to help. In other words, Melian and Radagast serve as partial foils to Gandalf. As I mention elsewhere, Gandalf's statement to the Captains of the West in *The Lord of the Rings* is essential when considering proper environmental guardianship in Tolkien's texts. In this passage, Gandalf declares the following: "it is not our part to master all the tides of the world, but to do what is in us for the succor of those years wherein we are set, uprooting the evil in the fields that we know, so that those who live after may have clean earth to till. What weather they shall have is not ours to rule" (*Return*, "Last" 861). Because Melian forsakes Middle-earth (despite knowing that the Dwarves and Morgoth's forces alike seek to destroy the Grey-Elven kingdom of Doriath) and because Radagast refuses to help Yavanna's beloved trees and the various Children of Ilúvatar (despite knowing

that Sauron has regained a significant amount of power, both Maia spirits fail as environmental guardians. Neither Melian nor Radagast uphold the spirit of Gandalf's charge that we must all "do what is in us for the succor of those years wherein we are set" (861). Indeed, Melian and Radagast each appear to be content with the idea of permitting "evil in the fields" with little thought of what happens to the Children of future generations (861). Rather, Melian leaves Mablung and other Elves to deal with the "evil" Dwarves—knowing that the Elves will fall and that the Dwarves would desecrate Doriath—and Radagast quickly runs away from Gandalf—leaving Gandalf to carry out the task of "uprooting evil in the fields" (861). Melian and Radagast, therefore, too readily embrace their ability to declare, "What weather they [i.e., later generations] shall have is not ours to rule" (861).

Gandalf, however, proves faithful by working on behalf of the Free Peoples of Middle-earth and the world's physical environment (e.g., gardens, trees, and horses), in general, and by continually teaching environmental lessons, encouraging environmental reform, and resisting ecocide, in particular. Whereas the selfish traits of overspecialization, cowardice, and laziness mar environmental guardianship, Tolkien's fantasies imply that quality environmental guardianship requires one to willingly counsel/inspire those who live and believe in an eco-friendly way, to willingly confront ecocidal forces, and to willingly cherish and comprehend global, regional, and local environments. These eco-friendly characteristics characterize Gandalf and act as an inspirational guide for Tolkien readers to emulate. It is only after Sauron is defeated and the leaders of the Free Peoples of northwestern Middle-earth generally understand how they can improve themselves and the health of their realms that Gandalf begins to model

his statement to the Captains of the West: “What weather they [i.e., later generations] shall have is not ours to rule” (861). Even when Gandalf no longer actively intercedes on behalf of the welfare of the Free Peoples, he still gives them advice (as in the case of the Four Hobbits when they prepare to return to the desecrated Shire) (*Return*, “Homeward” 974). Unlike Melian and Radagast, who leave their friends to face powerful ecosadists at a time that their help is sorely needed, Gandalf knows for certain that his Hobbit “friends” “will need no help [. . .] and I have no longer any fear at all for any of you” (974).

3.1.3. To Destroy or Not to Nourish?: The Environmental Question of the Ecocidal Megalomaniacs—Morgoth, Sauron, the “Orcs,” and Saruman

As the aforementioned characters and scenes suggest, the Valar and the loyal Maiar study (and attempt to heal) the landscapes, bodies of water, soils, flora, and fauna that—as well as the Children whom—the Valar and Maiar feel the most drawn toward. Morgoth, Sauron, and (after his fall) Saruman selfishly pervert these aforementioned characteristics among the spirits by choosing to settle in lands that they then callously destroy, as they develop slave-worked industries to support their violent imperialism that ruins the environments of the People—whether they work for or oppose these corrupted Vala and Maia spirits. Rather than toil themselves like Yavanna and the other ecofriendly spirits, these ecosadistic beings selfishly force others to work the fields and complete other labors; indeed, the only work that Morgoth, Sauron, and Saruman engage in after their corruption proves the opposite of useful, for their work only diminishes the well-being of the Peoples and the physical environment. Morgoth’s epic degradation of the

environment covers all of Middle-earth and beyond, such as the universe, the solar system, landscapes, soils, bodies of water, precious metals, non-human animals, and Peoples.¹⁷⁵ The ecosadistic¹⁷⁶ tendencies of Sauron and Saruman, meanwhile, include their purposeful harming of the general landscapes of Middle-earth and the wanton slaughter of natural entities and members that causes a reduction in biodiversity partially because of their refusal to perceive their interconnectedness with and responsibility to the other beings and entities of Middle-earth. Each of these three evildoers experience a fall from their position of power, in part, because they torture and mutilate the physical environment, as well as the Peoples of Middle-earth. Therefore, rather than creating with the purpose of improving the world, in general (and the beings and environmental entities/forms within the world, in particular), these ecosadists callously choose to pervert their roles as environmental guardians by using their knowledge and strength to mutilate, conquer, or destroy things and Peoples.

In *The Silmarillion*, Morgoth corrupts the landscapes of Middle-earth by altering its valleys, seas, mountains, and other terrains. In the course of battling the Valar and their desire to fulfill Ilúvatar's design for Eä (i.e., the universe), Morgoth reduces mountains and seas and creates mountains where the Valar placed valleys ("Ainulindalë" 22), which, in turn, causes Yavanna to repeatedly counsel the Valar to wage war against Morgoth ("Quenta: Beginning" 41). Morgoth, for example, creates a particular mountain chain (i.e., the Misty Mountains) in an attempt to keep the Vala spirit Oromë from

175. Indeed, according to the musings of Tolkien's later work, Morgoth's twisting of Ilúvatar's design proves so vast that his disruptions of the Music of Creation sometimes even spawn corruptions without Morgoth's conscious planning (*Morgoth's*, "Myths" 405-06).

176. I am indebted to Jeffers's *Arda Inhabited: Environmental Relationships in "The Lord of the Rings"* for referring to Sauron, Saruman, and the Orcs with this appropriate description.

interacting with the first Elves¹⁷⁷ (“Quenta: Coming . . . Elves” 54). According to Tolkien’s final writings of his life, Morgoth’s harming of Middle-earth’s landscapes also extends to the creation of the infamous Orodruin volcano (i.e., Mount Doom) in Mordor (*Peoples*, “Last” 390n). Morgoth destroys his own lands and nearby landscapes as well; for example, pits and industrial “ash and slag” from subterranean furnaces in Angband pollute the nearby land of Ard-galen.¹⁷⁸ Far from an environmental guardian, Morgoth demonstrates himself to be a desecrator of entire ecosystems and landscapes.

Because of his constant malicious activities that harm Middle-earth and beyond, Morgoth’s demented behavior results in the Valar waging war against Morgoth and his forces, which, in turn, leads to the destruction of the lands to the north (and especially to the northwest) of Cuiviénen where the Elves first awaken, as *The Silmarillion* mentions (“Quenta: Sun” 99). Likewise, this war immensely changes the layout of the ocean separating the lands of the Valar from Middle-earth (“Quenta: Coming . . . Elves” 48, 50-51). Manwë, however, again faces the catch-22 of either confronting Morgoth to prevent the fallen Vala from further perverting Middle-earth (and thereby causing widespread devastation) or avoiding the war, and thereby permitting Morgoth to continue to maim Middle-earth and beyond (*Morgoth’s*, “Myths” 400). When Morgoth and his forces fight the Valar and their allies during the War of Wrath at the end of the First Age, *The*

177. When Treebeard mentions that the trees of Fangorn Forest in nearest proximity to the Morgoth-twisted Misty Mountains are the most consistently evil even in the Third Age, Treebeard alludes to the long-term malevolent influence of Morgoth (*Two*, “Treebeard” 457).

Gandalf may also allude to Morgoth’s lingering evil influence on the Misty Mountains when he mentions that the Watcher in the Water derives from the waters beneath the Misty Mountains (*Fellowship*, “Journey” 301, “Bridge” 314). The likelihood that Morgoth’s (and Sauron’s) lasting wickedness helps to create the demented Watcher also seems likely, because the Watcher seizes Frodo the Ringbearer, whose successful quest will result in the defeat of Morgoth’s one-time chief servant, Sauron (*Fellowship*, “Journey” 301).

178. During the Elves’ “Siege of Angband,” Ard-galen still contains some grasses and other plants (“Quenta: Beleriand” 118-20).

Silmarillion states that this war alters valleys, hills, rivers, seas, and almost entirely submerges Beleriand beneath the sea (“Quenta: Voyage” 247). Because of the efforts of the Valar (and their allies among the Maiar, the Elves, and the Edain) to defeat Morgoth, the Valar and their allies prevent Morgoth from fulfilling his purpose to annihilate all of creation, as Tolkien’s post-*The Lord of the Rings* fragment “Myths Transformed” shows (*Morgoth’s* 397).

Plants, precious metals, and animals also falter because of the wicked interloping of Morgoth. Within “Myths Transformed,” Tolkien mentions that Morgoth “stained” plants and non-human animals (*Morgoth’s* 394-395). Morgoth’s hatred of plants extends beyond his participation in the felling of the Two Trees in *The Silmarillion* (“Quenta: Darkening” 76), for Morgoth also hates plants like flowers, because he views such things as “minor” and because Morgoth’s megalomania would cause him to loathe anything resulting from the work of another (*Morgoth’s*, “Myths” 395, 395n; *Silmarillion*, “Beginning” 35-36). Moreover, the few remaining grasses, trees, and other plants in Ard-galen¹⁷⁹ entirely disappear following Morgoth’s decision to unleash yet another war—a war that also features the environmental degradation of Lothlann, Thargelion, Lake Helevorn, and other areas of Beleriand (*Silmarillion*, “Quenta: Beleriand” 150-51, 153; *Shaping*, “Earliest” 298). During the sacking of Gondolin by Morgoth’s forces in *The Fall of Gondolin*, meanwhile, the narrator focuses on the destruction of the city’s beautiful gardens, in general, and its trees, flowers, and grasses, in particular (*Book . . . 2*

179. Because Tolkien observes that the name of Mordor’s *Ered Lithui* means “Ashen Mountains” in “Nomenclature of *The Lord of the Rings*” and because he mentions in his *Index* that *Lithlad Plain* equates to “plain of ashes” (qtd. in Hammond and Scull, “*Lord*” . . . *Reader’s* 457), Sauron creates a wasteland similar to Ard-Galen and the Mountains near Morgoth’s stronghold.

179). Likewise, the narrator mourns the loss of trees and the pollution of the water in the well in the Square of the King, which occurs during Gondolin's fall (*Book . . . 2* 183). Furthermore, the "Great Darkness" that Morgoth causes to seep into Middle-earth during the First Age continues to affect the trees of the Old Forest, Fangorn Forest, and other areas during the Third Age, according to Treebeard (*Two*, "Treebeard" 457). Although Morgoth mars bodies of water¹⁸⁰ and silver to a lesser extent, he heavily corrupts gold, according to Tolkien's "Myths Transformed" (*Morgoth's* 400). Morgoth tarnishes other precious metals by his use of them; in the siege and destruction of Gondolin, for example, Morgoth exploits iron, copper, and bronze by creating siege engines to harm the Elves of Gondolin (*Book . . . 2*, "Fall" 171). Morgoth also feels no remorse when he allows Sauron to torture animals like wolves¹⁸¹ by forcing them to possess evil spirits and transforming them into werewolves, which Sauron then uses to kill and consume Elves and Men. An example of such torture occurs in *The Silmarillion* when Sauron captures Beren, Finrod Felagund, and their companions in an effort to gain information from them ("Quenta: Beren" 171-72, 174). Among Morgoth's "broodlings" mentioned within *The Fall of Gondolin*, Morgoth uses "creatures of blood," such as snakes, wolves,¹⁸² weasels, owls,

180. The characterization of Arda's water as generally less evil continues into the Third Age; for example, all of the Ringwraiths (save the Witch-king) desire to avoid crossing any large bodies of water without a bridge (*Unfinished*, "Hunt" 343). Nevertheless, Dickerson also notes that evil exists in multiple bodies of water in Middle-earth ("Water" 16-17); Dickerson's theory that Morgoth's partial-corruption of the Maia spirit Ossë leads to the tainting of Arda's water makes sense as a partial explanation for the evil in Middle-earth's water ("Water" 23).

In his late 1950s *Silmarillion* drafts, Tolkien features Morgoth cursing the sea and yearning to defeat and to humiliate Ulmo, Ossë, and Uinen, the Valar and Maiar most closely associated with the ocean (*Morgoth's* 199, 286).

181. Although Sauron may not implant evil spirits within swans in the Third Age, Sauron still probably uses the black swans (which the Fellowship members see near the Brown Lands) as spies because of the historical association of evil with the color black in Western cultures (*Fellowship*, "Great" 372); Hammond and Scull support this view ("Lord" . . . *Reader's* 343).

182. Tolkien also mentions that Morgoth corrupted certain dogs by causing them to feel a keen sense of bloodlust and hunger (*Book . . . 2*, "Fall" 167).

falcons, and flies in his service¹⁸³ (*Book . . . 2* 168, 167, 196, 212n). In *The Fall of Gondolin*, Morgoth also engages in animal cruelty by chaining the Eagles to “sharp rocks” and forcibly removing the wings of *many* Eagles in the attempt to learn the ability to fly and fight Manwë above the ground (*Book . . . 2* 193-94). As Tolkien observes in his later work *Myths Transformed*, Morgoth torments and even annihilates natural forms, entities, and beings because of his hope to reduce the world to *nil* (*Morgoth's* 397). Rather than wishing to learn more about the environment and expanding his appreciation for various environmental entities, forms, and beings, Morgoth repeatedly opts to lash out and maim what he did not create or does not fully understand, control, or find particularly interesting.

In his later writings, Tolkien mentions that Morgoth harms the universe (Eä) and the solar system (Arda), in general, and the Sun and the Moon, in particular (*Morgoth's*, “Athrabeth” 337), which helps to explain why Tolkien argues that all of Middle-earth represents *Morgoth's Ring* (*Morgoth's*, “Myths” 400). Morgoth's yearning to “dominate” Eä and Arda (as well as change the original concepts of Ilúvatar, in general) creates evil; Morgoth's actions, therefore, cause mutations within Ilúvatar's strategy by introducing “a tendency to aberration from the design, into all the physical matter of Arda” (*Morgoth's*, “Athrabeth” 334). Morgoth's devious meddling results from him infusing his own corrupt self within all of the entities, forms, and beings of Arda (*Morgoth's*, “Myths” 394-95),

183. The less-inspired, unsophisticated vision of wolves as inherently unnatural appears within “The Tale of Tinúviel” where Tolkien states that Morgoth corrupts and mutates dogs into another species: wolves (qtd. in Rateliff, *History . . . Hobbit*, “The Wolves” 218). As Rateliff observes in *The History of the Hobbit*, Morgoth also harms bats or enables were-bats to exist; such creatures appear to aid the Wargs and Goblins during the Battle of the Five Armies (“End” 716-18, 711-12).

Similarly, as depicted within *Beren and Lúthien*, Tolkien's early drafts of the Beren and Lúthien story include the memorable Prince Tevildo, Prince of Cats. Tolkien characterizes the wicked cat as a being “possessed of an evil sprite” and as an “evil fay in beastlike shape” (49, 69); Tolkien also states that the voices of cats, in general, reveal “only darkness therein and no kindness” (71).

which, in turn, negatively distorts the self-renewing abilities of matter that Ilúvatar blessed his creation with (*Morgoth's*, “Athrabeth” 344). This degradation includes cyclical climate change in which Morgoth’s evil perverts the sun’s rays¹⁸⁴ to strike Arda with too much heat (or not enough) at times (*Morgoth's*, “Myths” 376). On a global level then, Morgoth “stained” Ilúvatar’s creation, because Morgoth loves to destroy¹⁸⁵ (394-95, 397). Instead of an environmental guardian, Morgoth repeatedly acts as an environmental assassin, an ecosadist of epic proportions.

As some of Tolkien’s later works demonstrate, Morgoth corrupts Arda and all within it—including the Peoples. For example, Morgoth’s evil affects the Elves by reducing the Elves’ desire to live and increases the rapidity in which they die, which helps to explain why the Middle-earth-born Eldar “taint” Valinor when they arrive at the Blessed Realm, as “Myths Transformed” mentions (*Morgoth's* 427-28). Within *Athrabeth Finrod Ah Andreth*, moreover, Tolkien reaffirms that Morgoth’s evil influence also leads some Elves to parallel Morgoth’s behavior by yearning for their own kingdoms and by revolting against the Valar (*Morgoth's* 334). Rather than laboring to improve the Free Peoples, Morgoth’s demented “guardianship” perverts the Free Peoples.

184. In later efforts, Tolkien revised his ideas concerning the origin of the Sun and the Moon, arguing that the Two Trees possessed the light of the “unsullied” Sun and Moon before Morgoth harmed them. If Morgoth corrupts the Sun and the Moon, this causes only the Two Trees to possess the memory of the uninhibited light of the sun and the moon; once Morgoth destroys the Two Trees, only the Silmarils contain the original untainted light of the Sun and the Moon (*Morgoth's*, “Myths” 389-90).

185. Morgoth’s affection for harming natural entities will again manifest itself, according to the Second Prophecy of Mandos, when Morgoth escapes the Door of Night to destroy the Sun and the Moon before dying himself during the final battle, Dagor Dagorath (*Unfinished*, “Istari” 395, 402n; *Morgoth's*, “Later” 245), against Túrin and others (*Shaping*, “Quenta” 165, 205, “Earliest 40-41, 73).

Kane argues that Christopher’s decision to remove the Second Prophecy of Mandos from *The Silmarillion* represents one of Christopher’s worst decisions as the editor of *The Silmarillion* (236-38, 252-53).

In addition to landscapes, bodies of water, and soils, Sauron repeatedly harms non-human animals and the various Peoples of Middle-earth, which (as Jeffers observes) (88) reduces biodiversity. However, Sauron focuses more on controlling sentient beings than on natural entities and forms, such as rivers and plants. Consequently, I hold to a somewhat different view than Jeffers, who argues that nothing will slake Sauron's lust for destruction "until the land is utterly laid to waste" (81); instead, I believe that Hood's summary of Sauron as a being who yearns to have his will throughout Middle-earth is closer to the mark (8). Although Sauron's selfishness devolves to such an extent that he callously enjoys annihilating things/beings, according to Tolkien in "Myths Transformed," Sauron mainly desires to control the Peoples of Middle-earth; rather than killing them (as Morgoth does/would), Sauron wishes for the beings in Middle-earth to serve him (*Morgoth's* 397, 394-95, 398). In other words, rather than Sauron, Jeffers actually describes Morgoth in her characterization of the spirit who selfishly and callously dreams of and works toward the destruction of everything in the world (81). As I previously mentioned, Tolkien states that Morgoth desires to reduce the world to nothing, after killing the Elves, Men, and even his own mutilated Orcs (e.g., *Morgoth's*, "Myths" 397). Whereas the Valar and the loyal Maiar serve as environmental guardians who strive to cultivate the flora, to tend to the fauna, to mentor the Peoples, and to maintain the waters, soils, rocks, and air, the evil spirits act much differently. Morgoth and Sauron behave as environmental tyrants bent on imposing their will on everything and everyone, although Morgoth's unbridled mayhem and greater power renders him the more egregious ecosadist.

Although Morgoth is probably the first to contemplate transforming the Children into a mutilated People like the Orcs, Tolkien's "Myths Transformed" suggests that Sauron determines the detailed "subtleties" and continues the breeding of the Orcs (and their cousins, the Goblins and the Trolls) during Morgoth's captivity and feigned repentance in Valinor (*Morgoth's* 420-21). An example of this rebellion includes Sauron's perversion of the Trolls (*Morgoth's* 412), which (as Tolkien notes in the *Appendices to The Lord of the Rings*) reaches a new climax when Sauron's experimentations result in the Olog-hai Trolls (*Return*, "Appendix F" 1105-06). Besides continuing to pervert the Trolls and the other "Orcs" through the Third Age (*Morgoth's*, "Myths" 420, 420n), Sauron twists Men, causing his servants among Men to mutate to such an extent that they enjoy participating in senseless violence (420). An example of this slide into ecosadism includes Sauron's advice to the Númenórean King Ar-Pharazôn to capture, enslave, and kill Middle-earth Men—and members of the Númenórean Faithful who refuse to renounce their allegiance to Ilúvatar and the Valar (*Silmarillion*, "Akallabêth" 274, 280; *Peoples*, "Tar-Elmar" 428).

Sauron's twisted sub-creation activities, which he conducts at the behest of Morgoth (*Morgoth's*, "Myths" 420-21), mars not only animals but also Elves, Men, Maiar, and other beings. Since Tolkien declares in "Myths Transformed" that evil must create from something rather than nothing (394-95, 395n, 409), Ilúvatar permits Morgoth to corrupt Ilúvatar's original design, which could allow Morgoth to produce Orcs from Elves, Men, and animals (411). Within the draft of a letter to Peter Hastings, moreover, Tolkien observes that Morgoth represents "the Prime sub-creative Rebel," because Morgoth could not create only corrupt. With Sauron's assistance, Morgoth's activities

result in the “horribly corrupted” Orcs, which descend from “subjugated and corrupted” Elves in the earliest days on Middle-earth (*Letters* 190, 191). *The Silmarillion* affirms the aforementioned theories of these minor writings, since Morgoth orders his servants to capture and imprison the earliest Elves (and, subsequently, the Avari Elves) to pervert and mutate them, which eventually produces the twisted Orcs (“Coming . . . Elves” 49-50, “Quenta: Sindar” 93-94). This breeding of the Orcs¹⁸⁶ occurs after the Great Journey of the Eldar and results in immense success by the time of the return of the Exiled Noldorin Elves (*Morgoth’s*, “Myths” 417, 420). Instead of teaching the Peoples how to cultivate flora, maintain ecosystems, or understand one another more effectively, Sauron and Morgoth’s counsel leads to hatred and violence. Sauron and Morgoth’s ecosadism, therefore, undermines the environmental guardianship of not only the various groups of Elves, Men, Ents, and Dwarves in Middle-earth but also the environmental guardianship of the Valar and the Maiar who still serve Ilúvatar as well.

As I referenced previously, Tolkien also references how Morgoth’s activities harm not only Elves but also Men. According to Finrod’s theory within *Athrabeth Finrod Ah Andreth*, when Men serve as allies of Morgoth, they simultaneously refuse to acknowledge Ilúvatar’s lordship, which, in turn, causes a reduction in the lifespan of Men as punishment (*Morgoth’s* 334, 344). Under the tutelage of Morgoth, Men quickly descend into barbarity, which Tolkien characterizes as an increasing inclination toward violence, as well as a willingness—even desire—among male and female¹⁸⁷ humans to

186. Although Christopher Tolkien believes that the word choice of “mingled” does not imply sexual relations, the context of J.R.R. Tolkien’s diction will lead many readers to believe that Morgoth perverts certain Noldorin Elves to the point that they perform sexual relations with Orcs (*Book . . . 2*, “Fall” 161, 221).

187. The distinction between “Men-orcs” and “Orc-men” leads me to conclude that human men, human women, male Orcs, and female Orcs all participate in these sexual experiments. Because of the overall

engage in sexual relations with Orcs¹⁸⁸ in “Myths Transformed” (418-19). Tolkien theorizes that Orcs resulted from “the Elf-Man idea gone wrong,” while the Eldar thought Orcs originally derived from Morgoth breeding enslaved and imprisoned Men and Elves by selecting them based on how to enlarge “any corrupt tendencies” among Men¹⁸⁹ and Elves¹⁹⁰ (406).

Tolkien also mentions in “Myths Transformed” that Morgoth corrupts beings other than Elves and Men to create the Orcs (as well as the Goblins and the Trolls), such as the Maiar (*Morgoth’s* 414n). According to this theory, these fallen Maiar¹⁹¹ that willingly devolve into Orcs¹⁹² mirror Morgoth by transforming into increasingly physical beings tied to Middle-earth as they reproduce and continue to harm the world (389-90, 391n, 410). To further muddy the origin of the Orcs, Tolkien also hypothesizes that Morgoth causes animals to look like Elves and Men and teaches them how to speak, and

patriarchal cultures within Tolkien’s texts, *Men-orcs* may derive from male humans and female Orcs, while *Orc-men* may descend from Orc fathers and human mothers (*Morgoth’s*, “Myths” 418-19).

188. Christopher Tolkien suggests that J.R.R. Tolkien’s final belief concerning the origins of the Orcs is that they derived from Men; however, Christopher then amends this remark and removes certainty (*Morgoth’s*, “Myths” 421).

189. More specifically, the Orcs may derive from Men similar to the Drúedain (*Unfinished*, “Drúedain 385n), which could explain why both the Drúedain and the Orcs possess a keen sense of smell (*Unfinished*, “Drúedain” 378, “Tuor” 39).

190. However, Tolkien also forwarded the possibility that “Orcs are not Elvish” (*Morgoth’s*, “Myths” 409), a theory that would run contrary to many of his other writings.

191. Tolkien’s April 25, 1954, letter to Naomi Mitchison mentions that “Orc” means “demon” (*Letters* 177-78). This supports the possibility that some of Tolkien’s Orcs, in fact, did partially originate from fallen Maiar spirits that joined Morgoth’s rebellion against Ilúvatar.

192. David Day extends this idea beyond simply vampires, werewolves, Balrogs, and spiders to other beings as well by including the Ringwraiths’ winged animals, the kraken (i.e., the Watcher in the Water), and the wereworms (105). The wereworms that Day mentions refers to the Wild Wireworms (or Wild worms) living in a desert far to the east that Tolkien mentions in some of his early drafts of *The Hobbit* (Rateliff, “First” 9, 40). Although Day disagrees (105), the Two Watchers of Cirith Ungol may also belong to this group. Tolkien describes the Two Watchers as “spirit[s] of evil vigilance” that possess a “hideous shape,” as well as “eyes” within “black stones” (*Return*, “Tower” 882). By taking into account the long history of Morgoth corrupting Middle-earth by perverting beings and stones by combining them, the Two Watchers could very well represent another group of fallen Maiar. Because the Two Watchers are deeply scared of the starlight within the Phial of Galadriel and the Elvish name of the Vala Varda (*Return*, “Tower” 882, 894; *Fellowship*, “Farewell” 367; *Silmarillion*, “Valaquenta” 26), the Two Watchers’ fears parallel those of Morgoth, who feared and loathed Varda, *Lady of the stars*, more than he despised any other being (*Silmarillion*, “Valaquenta” 26).

thereby creates the Orcs to further corrupt Yavanna's creation (410). In addition to Elves, Men, and animals, Tolkien indicates that the genetic makeup of the Orcs stems from inanimate objects from the ground (e.g., stone) as well. Within *The Fall of Gondolin* fragment, Tolkien writes that the Orcs derive from "subterranean heats and slime," and consequently, possess "granite" hearts and *metal*-like laughter (*Book . . . 2* 161). Similarly, Tolkien describes the sound of the voices of the Goblins as "stony" in *The Hobbit*¹⁹³ ("Over" 56). According to Tolkien's "Myths Transformed" fragment, moreover, Trolls are a member of the most general use of the term "Orc" (*Morgoth's* 414), and some Trolls¹⁹⁴ partially derive from stone (*Return*, "Appendix F" 1106; *Treason* 411; *Morgoth's* 412n). However Morgoth (and Sauron) generated the Orcs,¹⁹⁵ Tolkien mentions in "Myths Transformed" that the Balrogs¹⁹⁶ and Orcs possess a hateful spirit within them because of Morgoth's evil activities (*Morgoth's* 411). The corrupted spirit that Morgoth infuses within the Orcs leads them to fear and to loathe the greatest of all of the Children of Ilúvatar, the Elves, to such an extent that they refuse to parley with any Elf and will even cannibalize their captives (419n). Morgoth, therefore, negatively

193. If interpreted literally rather than only figuratively, Tolkien's labeling of the Orcs as the *Stonefaces* in "Fragment" within "A Secret Vice" might again allude to the earth-origins of some Orcs (*Monsters* 217), an origin story that may derive from Classical literature (e.g., the Greeks). My Second Reader, Dr. Tim Murphy, observes this in a June 2018 email that he sent me ("Re: April").

194. Various types of Trolls exist. Tolkien references multiple kinds of Trolls, in addition to the rather dim-witted Stone-Trolls of the hills that live in a cave in *The Hobbit* ("Roast" 39-40; *Morgoth's*, "Myths" 412; *Letters* 191). Tolkien's fantasies also mention Hill-Trolls, some of whom kill Arador, the grandfather of Aragorn (*Return*, "Appendix A" 1033). Gandalf, moreover, perceives a Cave-Troll approaching the Fellowship in the Mines of Moria (*Fellowship*, "Bridge" 316); Mountain-trolls help Sauron's forces fight the Gondorians (*Return*, "Siege" 810); Tolkien compares King Helm to a Snow-Troll (*Return*, "Appendix A" 1041); finally, Sauron creates the Olog-Hai Trolls by breeding Trolls with other beings (*Return*, "Appendix F" 1106).

195. Tolkien mentions that the Orcs originated from certain fallen individuals instead of an entire People, since such a perversion would surpass Morgoth's power (*Morgoth's*, "Myths" 409).

196. Tolkien notes in a draft within *Morgoth's Ring* that only a mere three or seven Balrogs "ever existed" (80), with only one living beyond the First Age, according to his April 25, 1954, letter to Naomi Mitchison (*Letters* 180).

alters the physical bodies, behaviors, and personalities of Middle-earth beings. Rather than working to “achieve” the creation of the world so that the Children could inhabit it, Morgoth and Sauron twist the Children so that they will help Morgoth’s design to thwart the Valar by pulverizing Middle-earth whenever and wherever possible. Because of their ecosadism, Morgoth and Sauron hinder the righteous spirits’ and Peoples’ ability to realize Ilúvatar’s vision of the world that the Ainur sang before the world’s beginning, as *The Silmarillion* mentions in the “Ainulindalë” (20).

Morgoth, Sauron, and the beings they debase also depict their hatred of the environment through their callous lust to destroy created things as well. Morgoth encourages his servants to desecrate all of the Elvish realms, such as Gondolin (*Silmarillion*, “Quenta: Tuor” 242-43) and Nargothrond, which witnesses the Orcs “ransacking the great halls and chambers, plundering and destroying” (*Children*, “Fall” 178). Similarly, in *The Silmarillion*, Sauron selfishly seizes Minas Tirith in Beleriand from the Noldorin Elf Orodreth two years after the Battle of Sudden Flame; Sauron then transforms “the fair isle of Tol Sirion” by mutilating it into an “accursed” place known as *Tol-in-Gaurhoth, the Isle of Werewolves* (“Quenta: Ruin . . . Beleriand” 155-56).

However, perhaps because of his origins as a Vala, Morgoth admires the craftsmanship of the greatest of all jewels, Fëanor’s Silmarils, because these works of fine artisanship contain the light of the Two Trees. Nevertheless, Morgoth’s awe of the jewels leads him to covet these works of artisanship: “Then Melkor lusted for the Silmarils, and the very memory of their radiance was a gnawing fire in his heart” (“Quenta: Silmarils” 67). Morgoth’s appreciation for the Elvish creations explains one reason why he seizes the treasure from Formenos. Yet, his overwhelming selfish desire

for the Silmarils leads Morgoth to sacrifice many other stolen Elvish artifacts¹⁹⁷ to Ungoliant before breaking his oath to the terrible spider-like spirit in order to preserve the Silmarils and their beauty for himself (“Quenta: Flight” 80-81). Even though he works to annihilate or pollute many areas of Middle-earth and slaughters countless beings, therefore, a small part of Morgoth can still appreciate how Fëanor “achieve[s]” the Silmarils that he took from the world and its light that the Valar originally sang into existence (“Quenta: Silmarils” 67), who labored countless years to “achieve” Ilúvatar’s design (“Ainulindalë” 20). Consequently, even in his fallen, corrupted state, Morgoth cannot escape his attraction to what Ilúvatar first created at the forming of the World, or Æa: the “light” of the “Flame Imperishable¹⁹⁸” (20).

During the Third Age, Sauron continues down this aforementioned path of debasing the artisanship of the Peoples, whom Ilúvatar enabled to live so that they might help to maintain and beautify Middle-earth, as the “Ainulindalë” section within *The Silmarillion* mentions (16-17). For example, Sauron corrupts the appearance of and use of the Towers of the Teeth, the Tower of Cirith Ungol, and Minas Morgul (i.e., formerly Minas Ithil) (e.g., *Return*, “Tower” 880, “Steward” 948, “Appendix A” 1023). Nonetheless, as a former, fallen Maia in the service of Aulë (“the smith and master of all crafts”) and as Sauron’s tutoring of the Elves of Eregion and Sauron’s creation of the One Ring demonstrate (*Silmarillion*, “Valaquenta” 27, 31-32, “Rings” 286-88), Sauron also could appreciate works of craft—even though he callously ruined many.

197. Nonetheless, Morgoth endeavors to deceive and then to argue with Ungoliant in order to try to save additional Elvish artifacts from Ungoliant’s nihilistic desire to destroy everything, although he eventually yields to her demands, in late drafts of the *Quenta Silmarillion* (*Morgoth’s*, “Later” 296).

198. In contrast, Ungoliant wishes to and, in fact, does destroy the greatest of the lights of Arda: the light of the Two Trees, although Morgoth prevents her from also consuming the light of the Silmarils (“Quenta: Darkening” 76, “Quenta: Flight” 78-80).

Partially because of Morgoth and Sauron's misuse of artifacts, the Orcs (and other servants of the Dark Lords) enjoy degrading the works of Gondor and other Free Peoples as well. As Frodo and Sam witness as they march to the Cross-roads, the Orcs take pleasure in defacing an aged Gondorian statue:

The years had gnawed it, and violent hands had maimed it. Its head was gone, and in its place was set in mockery a round rough hewn stone, rudely painted by savage hands in the likeness of a grinning face with one large red eye in the midst of its forehead. Upon its knees and mighty chair, and all about the pedestal, were idle scrawls mixed with the foul symbols that the maggot-folk of Mordor used.

(*Two*, "Journey" 687)

Therefore, like their masters, Morgoth and Sauron, the Orcs display great callousness toward created artifacts, for these Orcs fail to appreciate the skill necessary to create such an artwork and selfishly choose to ruin it.

As Flieger would note ("Taking" 273-74), Treebeard also mentions in *The Two Towers* that the Orcs fell trees to fuel the various industries created by Saruman ("Treebeard" 462). The *motives* for and longevity of this destruction—and the refusal to implement a reforestation project to replace the trees felled and used—are portrayed as evils, for Treebeard observes that Saruman destroys trees to fuel his industrialized warfare so that he might rise to the level of "a Power" (462). Since the Orcs harm various ecosystems in the beautiful lands of Beleriand during the First Age and wantonly destroy the memorable trees of Fangorn Forest thousands of years later during the Third Age of Middle-earth, I hold a somewhat different view than Jeffers. According to Jeffers, the Orcs harm the environment because the Orcs live in the world's worst sections (44).

Because of their internal evil and the evil experiments imposed upon the “Orcs” by Morgoth, Sauron, and Saruman, Tolkien describes the various types of Orcs¹⁹⁹ as unable to value outward beauty in nature,²⁰⁰ although it seems reasonable to believe that the environments in which the various breeds of “Orcs” live reinforces their environmental mischief. The hatred of various landscapes, bodies of water, flora, fauna, and the heavens is a common bond shared between the various “Orcs.” The Goblins resemble their Orcish kin, for the Goblins only find pleasure in killing and causing pain, despise all members, forms, and entities of nature, and live in areas entirely without quality light and air

199. I contend that the Orcs and the Goblins parallel the spirit and actions of Old Man Willow, which means my views differ from the arguments of Flieger. According to Flieger, the Orcs are, roughly, as kind to trees as Hobbits, while Old Man Willow behaves as righteously as Treebeard (266). As noted elsewhere, Legolas, Treebeard, and Borlas all reference the inclination of Orcs to harm other things/persons whenever possible, even when the flora, fauna, landscapes, soils, and waters pose them no threat. Whenever the Orcs refrain from destruction, this only occurs because they lack the means to act on their violent tendencies (*Two*, “Departure” 409, “Treebeard” 462; *Peoples*, “New” 412-14). The cousins of the Orcs, the “bad-hearted” Goblins, similarly like to torture victims and loathe all of the world’s flora and fauna (*Hobbit*, “Over” 59, 58). When Old Man Willow grabs Pippin and Merry, meanwhile, he laughs at the struggling Hobbits and smugly perceives their fear and pain (*Fellowship*, “Old” 115). Only Bombadil’s intervention prevents Old Man Willow from continuing to torment Merry and Pippin, while Sam’s aid keeps Old Man Willow from drowning Frodo (118,115). Bombadil’s subsequent song notes that the Old Forest, which the *rotten*-hearted Old Man Willow dominates, simply despises everything not rooted to the ground, because the various Peoples now rule where the trees once reigned (“House” 127, 128, 127). Old Man Willow then appears similar to the Orcs and Goblins, because they all enjoy tormenting others, laugh at the pain they inflict upon others, and dislike anyone who achieves more success than they do. Therefore, my beliefs diverge from those held by Flieger, who places the Hobbits “on a par” with the Orcs and the Goblins (266, 268).

Partially because of Sam’s threat to cut Old Man Willow with his hatchet, “gnaw” at Old Man Willow, and “burn” the tree until Old Man Willow releases the Hobbits (*Fellowship*, “Old” 115, 116), Bombadil rebukes the Hobbits. Bombadil chides the Hobbits by mentioning that the Old Forest trees despise the individuals who are repeatedly “gnawing, biting, breaking, hacking, [and] burning” them (“House” 127). Nonetheless, the Hobbits are only *responding* to Old Man Willow’s attack on these same Hobbits (who never burned the Old Forest trees that attacked the Hedge), which means the Old Forest trees’ actions actually parallels the Orcs’ behavior when they launch an offensive against the trees of Fangorn Forest, despite the lack of provocation from the Fangorn trees. The spirit in which Old Man Willow assaults the Hobbits (whose quest includes ridding Middle-earth of the ecosadistic Sauron) prove akin to the Orcs’ attitude when they torture and harm plants and the Peoples (usually those antagonistic to Morgoth and Sauron). The motives and attitude of harming others unjustly (e.g., the Hobbits or Fangorn Forest) links the Orcs with Old Man Willow. Consequently, I do not believe Flieger adequately emphasizes the importance of motives and attitude and instead focuses too heavily on results (262-274, 274), which is unfair, since the *Hobbits* cease burning the trees after the Old Forest retreats from its attack, while the Orcs attack the trees of Fangorn Forest by burning and felling them until *forced* to discontinue.

200. Indeed, the Second Prophecy of Mandos implies that the Orcs, who (along with dragons) continue to “grieve the earth,” will face annihilation because of the actions of righteous Men (*Shaping*, “Earliest” 40).

(*Hobbit*, “Over” 59). Indeed, readers of *The Hobbit* learn that the Goblins “hated everybody and everything²⁰¹” (“Over” 59). This inclination to strongly dislike all sentient beings and non-sentient entities contributes to the Goblins’ lack of thankfulness for the benefits that they derive from nature and increases the frequency and severity of these corrupted beings choosing to willfully harm trees, rivers, grasses, non-human animals, and the Children of Ilúvatar.

The “Orcs”²⁰² and other distorted beings inherit their nihilism from Morgoth. The narrator’s comment about the Misty Mountain Goblins in *The Hobbit* demonstrates this, for they excel in crafting “instruments of torture” and “ingenious devices for killing large numbers of people at once, for wheels and engines and explosions always delighted them [. . . and] they hated everybody and everything” (“Over” 59). The infamously selfish and callous Goblins, therefore, destroy the environment on a regular basis in Tolkien’s texts. Along with the dragon Glaurung,²⁰³ the Orcs not only kill the Elves of Lothlann but also

201. Trolls also often behave similarly. For example, the Stone-Trolls cannot live when in the presence of sunlight (*Hobbit*, “Roast” 39; *Return*, “Appendix F” 1106), which subtly indicates their aversion to plants that depend on the Sun to survive. The more evolved Olog-hai Trolls, however, can “endure the Sun” (*Return*, “Appendix F” 1106).

202. Although I am aware that, in some of his later writings, Tolkien considers altering the spelling of “Orcs” to “Orks” and even endorses the change for future publications of Middle-earth texts (*Morgoth’s*, “Myths” 421-22), I opt to write “Orcs.” I choose this spelling since this is how the word appears in Tolkien’s *The Lord of the Rings*, how Tolkien spelled the word most often, and how most readers expect the spelling to appear.

By referring to Tolkien’s *Index*, letters, rough drafts, and fragments of tales, Hammond and Scull observe the complexities of Tolkien’s use, spelling, and capitalization of “Orc” (“*Lord*” . . . *Reader’s* 24-26, xlii, xliii, 375-77).

203. Tolkien’s September 1927 pencil and watercolor work *Glórund Sets Forth to Seek Túrin* helps to depict the magnitude of the destruction of Morgoth’s dragon (Hammond and Scull, *Artist* 50-51). Within the picture, Glórund (i.e., Glaurung) leaves charred trees in his wake. Within this picture, the trees directly on either side of the dragon exist as mere charred stumps, while the next set of trees on either side possess no leaves. Meanwhile, the pair of trees furthest from the dragon possess half of their leaves or more. However, Tolkien draws the final pair of trees on each side of the dragon aflame. This picture portrays the widespread effects of warfare on the environment. The message of how much wanton destruction of the environment occurs during warfare arguably reaches its climax through the image of the burning tree above the entrance to Nargothrond, because Glórund needlessly burns the tree for spite and for the twisted joy of witnessing the death of another living organism. Furthermore, because of the spreading colors of black, orange, green, and yellow in the water beneath the dragon, Glórund also pollutes the water near the sacked

destroy and pollute Lake Helevorn and the lands of Gelion during the Battle of Sudden Flame in the First Age (*Silmarillion*, “Quenta: Ruin . . . Beleriand” 153). The Orcs behave in a similar manner when they pillage Amon Rûdh and Nargothrond, the latter of which Glaurung assists in destroying (*Children*, “Land” 150, “Fall” 178). Within *The Lord of the Rings*, moreover, Legolas reviles the Orcs at the end of the Third Age, because they “delight to slash and beat down growing things that are not even in their way” (“Departure” 409). Treebeard reaffirms Legolas’ sentiment later in *The Two Towers* when the Ent labels the act of felling trees and leaving them “to rot” as “orc-mischief” (“Treebeard” 462). Borlas continues this idea in the Fourth Age fragment *The New Shadow* when he declares that the Orcs “did harm with delight to all things that could suffer it, and they were restrained only by lack of power, not either prudence or mercy” (*Peoples* 414). The specific instances of what Borlas refers to include the rather purposeless picking of unripe fruit and killing of trees without the wood even being used for some purpose other than momentarily gratifying an urge to harm something (*Peoples*, “New” 412, 413). Apparently then, the Orcs destroy trees because of their selfish, callous glee that they feel when they harm the environment.

The Lord of the Rings shows that the evils of Sauron also include his killing and/or enslaving of most (if not all) of the Entwives during the War of the Last Alliance

Nargothrond. Because Tolkien’s artwork focuses on the loss of trees and the degradation of water as the environmental costs of the dragon, Tolkien somewhat parallels his own subsequent plot in *The Return of the King* when Saruman and his servants fell many trees and pollute the waters within the Shire.

Because Glóruind directly faces the viewer in the aforementioned artwork, Glóruind’s clawed legs, his tongue, and the flames he unleashes grasp menacingly in the direction of the viewer; as a result, Tolkien alludes to the widespread impact of Morgoth’s wars and the fact that war can soon involve previously unengaged nations.

While less pronounced than Glaurung’s burning of trees, Tolkien drew a picture of a green-and-red dragon with half of its body and tail coiled around much of the trunk of a tree (*Pictures* 40); this alludes to the dragon’s contempt for other beings and entities in nature and its tendency to dominate.

(*Two*, “Treebeard” 465), which Tolkien’s *Letters* confirm (or at least refrain from refuting) (179, 419). Sauron’s creation of the Brown Lands and his choice to kill, enslave, and/or exile of the Entwives, of course, will also eventually contribute to the Ents’ doom. Treebeard mourns this fact and Gandalf alludes to the Ents’ demise multiple times, including when he leaves Treebeard at Isengard by saying, “The New Age begins . . . and in this age it may well prove that the kingdoms of Men shall outlast you, Fangorn my friend” (*Two*, “Treebeard” 464-66; *Return*, “Many” 958; *Two*, “Road” 537; *Return*, “Many” 957). Sauron’s selfish, delusional desire, therefore, leads Sauron to callously impose his will on Middle-earth and the Peoples of Middle-earth in order to force the Peoples to pronounce that he, Sauron, deserves the title of “God-king” (*Letters* 243-44), which ultimately results in the extermination of species and the reduction of biodiversity.

Sauron repeatedly engages in animal cruelty. As demonstrated when Beren, Finrod Felagund, and their companions are captured in *The Silmarillion*, Sauron tortures animals like wolves by implanting evil spirits within them to engineer werewolves (“Quenta: Beren” 171-72, 174). While Éomer remains vague in his denunciation, the Rohirrim (whose love of horses surpasses all others save the Elves, Gandalf, and perhaps Radagast) despise Sauron’s handling of horses, as noted in *The Two Towers* (“Riders” 426). Because Sauron forces the Southrons to fight, because the Southrons use the Oliphaunts/Mûmaks for war, and because these animals no longer remain in Middle-earth, it appears that the War of the Ring directly contributed to the extinction of the Oliphaunts, and therefore, Sauron’s wars lead to fewer species of non-human animals as well (“Herbs” 646-47). Meanwhile, the awe Samwise displays when he sees the Oliphaunt (and the fact that the Hobbits in the distant Shire still recall the legendary

Oliphant in their lore even before the War of the Ring) (*Tolkien*, “Adventures” 192, 234) alludes to two environmental tragedies. These tragedies are the following: Samwise’s (and the reader’s) sorrow when an animal species ceases to exist, in general, and Sauron’s habitual environmental mismanagement that results from his selfish callousness, in particular. After all, by noting that living Oliphants no longer exist (“Herbs” 646-47), Tolkien’s *The Two Towers* indicates that the world is robbed of the joy Samwise feels at the sight of the magnificent creature.

Sauron,²⁰⁴ through his selfish, callous wars and non-eco-friendly industrial practices, also causes ecocide throughout Middle-earth, which includes drastically harming certain bodies of water, landscapes, and plants. With a plethora of evidence, critics (such as Juhren) note the corresponding environmental degradation caused by Sauron’s warfare (8). During his wars of the Second Age, Sauron destroys Eregion and dramatically harms the environments of Eriador, including many forests (*Unfinished*, “History” 237-39, “History . . . Appendix D” 263). Sauron’s wars against the Elves and Númenórean Exiles of Arnor and Gondor during the era of the Last Alliance, moreover, result in the complete annihilation of the Entwives’ Gardens (*Two*, “Treebeard” 465). Indeed, the devastation proves so bleak that the area remains a somber spectacle thousands of years later at the time of the War of the Ring to such an extent that it earns the name of the *Brown Lands* (*Fellowship*, “Great” 367). In the Second Age of Middle-earth, Sauron’s environmental evils also include his advice to the Númenóreans, who

204. According to Jeffers, “Sauron never leaves the Black Land,” which contributes to his ecocidal tendencies (116). I hold a different view, however, because Sauron’s movements are extensive. In the First Age, he lives in various northern lands like northern Beleriand, while, in the Second Age, he travels through Eriador, as he fights Elves and Men; eventually, Sauron also lives in Númenor. In the Third Age, for many years, Sauron dwells in Dol Guldur in Mirkwood before returning to Mordor. If anything, Sauron’s movements in earlier eras cause him to desire to rule all sentient beings even more.

then follow Sauron's counsel by callously killing the Númenórean White Tree (Nimloth) to spite the Valar (*Silmarillion*, "Akallabêth" 272-73). Moreover, Sauron also causes the slaughtering of every single tree that lived on the Mountain of Númenor (e.g., *Lost*, "Chapter IV" 74) and helps to enable the destruction of the island of Númenor once the Númenóreans agree to follow Sauron's advice and sail to war with the Valar, as Tolkien mentions in many works.

Sauron's environmental recklessness explains why Galdor the Elf declares, at the Council of Elrond in *The Fellowship of the Ring*, that the selfishly callous Sauron obliterates landscapes: "Sauron can torture and destroy the very hills" (259). As noted previously, Sauron's poisoning of various areas results in demented creatures inhabiting the Greenwood and altering the forest into Mirkwood; this mutation especially harms the beings residing in the Dark Mountains of Mirkwood (i.e., the Eryn Duir Mountains) (*Unfinished*, "Disaster" 280n-281n). Furthermore, Sauron again implies his hatred of trees when he chooses to live at Dol Guldur, which the Elves previously called *Amon Lanc* (the "naked hill"), because of its lack of trees at the top of it (280n). Because Sauron's Orcs simply leave felled trees to die on the ground in *The Two Towers* ("Herbs" 637), Sauron's callous disregard for trees is again self-evident; this mentality continues when the forces of Sauron destroy trees and fields, as they approach Minas Tirith (*Return*, "Siege" 803). Curry notes that such efforts form part of Sauron's selfish, callous strategy of subjugating people, since harming the natural environments will expedite the process of defeating and absorbing an enemy before transforming them into a subservient People ("Less" 131); Sauron, of course, probably learned such a tactic from Morgoth (*Morgoth's*, "Athrabeth" 344). Gandalf observes in "The Quest for Erebor" that, if not for

the Quest for Erebor, Sauron (with the aid of Smaug) would have laid to waste all of the lands to the north, including the Elven realms of Rivendell and Lothlórien (*Annotated* 370). Furthermore, because of the reduction of trees in Mordor and the lands near it, this deforestation creates much windier conditions, less rainfall, and consequently, much less groundwater, as Sabin and Unander observe in their discussions about earthly trees (107). Frodo and Sam witness how Sauron's industries, wars, and general environmental neglect produces the scarred Eryn Muil area (as witnessed by the harmful winds and the few, struggling and pathetic-looking trees) (*Two*, "Taming" 591), as well as the barren, debased land of Dagorlad ("Passage" 611). Within Mordor, Frodo and Sam find a "desert" created, in part, by Sauron's forges and mines (*Return*, "Land" 902); this terrible environmental spectacle only increases as the Hobbits travel toward Mount Doom ("Mount" 915). Since fewer trees exist in Mordor because Sauron selfishly and callously focuses on destroying beings and the environment, which, in turn, causes the air, water, and soil pollution that leaves Mordor an environmental wasteland.

Symbolically, Sauron and Saruman's environmental evils also partially result from their extreme selfishness, which alienates them from Middle-earth's other beings and entities. As Jeffers highlights (90), Sauron's use of his Eye and Saruman's use of his White Hand²⁰⁵ demonstrate their refusal to link themselves to their environment via

205. Saruman's use of the bloody hand may refer back to Beren's emblem of the bloody hand and the Silmaril (e.g., *Pictures* 47n, 47). Not only would this display Saruman's attempt to thwart Sauron's quest to reclaim the One Ring but also remind Sauron of his loss to Lúthien in their duel of songs and remind Sauron of Morgoth's failure to keep all three Silmarils because of Beren and Lúthien's actions. Moreover, because Saruman lives in Isengard, a structure built by the Númenórean Exiles, who are some of the descendants of Lúthien and Beren (who defeated Sauron at Tol-in-Gauroth) (i.e., formerly Minas Tirith of Tol Sirion) during the First Age (*Silmarillion*, "Quenta: Ruin . . . Beleriand" 155-56, "Quenta: Beren" 174-75), Saruman would subtly mock Sauron in multiple ways.

Similarly, by ordering his forces to attack the Fellowship and the Rohirrim, Saruman opposes Aragorn and Gondor's allies. Consequently, Saruman's use of the bloody hand may mock Beren and Lúthien's descendants (e.g., Aragorn and Arwen) as well.

symbols, because neither select something native to the physical landscape or from among the non-human animals in the lands of Mordor or Isengard as a symbol, respectively.

Like Sauron,²⁰⁶ Saruman also purposely harms the environment and perverts some of its members, because Saruman refuses to value plants and animals and their inherent beauties—unless he can gain power from such knowledge; these sentiments lead Saruman to undervalue life to such an extent in *The Lord of the Rings* that he encourages his servants to murder sentient beings. Of Saruman’s poor environmental actions, his callous destruction of trees proves the most memorable. Tolkien’s pencil picture of *Orthanc*, which features a treeless landscape scarred with numerous vents for Saruman’s war-making industries (Hammond and Scull, *Artist* 166, 169), provides a visual for the

206. Sauron and Saruman’s connection extends to the origins of their corruption. Sauron’s yearning for “order and coordination,” as well as his desire to avoid “confusion and wasteful friction,” possesses qualities from the era prior to his fall and service to Morgoth; moreover, these traits also highlight why Morgoth could delude Sauron and why Sauron fell once more after the War of Wrath (*Morgoth’s*, “Myths Transformed” 396). Like Sauron, Saruman once served Aulë (*Silmarillion*, “Valaquenta” 31-32; *Unfinished*, “Istari” 393). Partially because of this shared service to Aulë, Sauron perceives a spirit akin to himself in Saruman; indeed, within “Myths Transformed,” Tolkien writes that, prior to his fall, Sauron “had . . . been very like Saruman” (*Morgoth’s* 396), since both exert their will upon others (*Morgoth’s*, “Myths” 396; *Unfinished*, “Istari” 390). When Saruman attempts to persuade Gandalf to join him by rebelling against the Valar and seeking more power for himself, Saruman’s methods parallel Sauron’s own, while Saruman’s arguments echo Sauron’s ideas regarding the need for “order” and for no “wasteful friction,” which Gandalf alludes to when he speaks to Saruman in *The Lord of the Rings* (*Fellowship*, “Council” 253). Saruman attempts to convince Gandalf by arguing, “We must rule. But we must have power, power²⁰⁶ to order things as we will. [. . .] A new Power is rising. [. . .] We may join with that Power. [. . . by] approving the high and ultimate purpose: Knowledge, Rule, *Order*; all things that we have striven in vain to accomplish, *hindered rather than helped* by our weak or idle friends” (252-53, emphasis added). Consequently, Sauron and Saruman privilege knowledge and efficiency but hate laziness and vulnerability. Just as Saruman finds Gandalf’s stubbornness vexing (*Fellowship*, “Council” 253), Tolkien notes in “Myths Transformed” that Sauron fails to comprehend Gandalf, because Gandalf refuses the selfish desire to rule over a domain and the various beings within it (*Morgoth’s* 396, 397). Unlike the self-deluded Saruman, Gandalf perceives the lies of Sauron. To *control* Middle-earth, Sauron and Saruman bless the callously selfish “evils” necessary to create a homogenous one-party rule (*Fellowship*, “Council” 253). My views, therefore, diverge from Jeffers, who claims that Saruman does not engage in a “recognizable quest” (117).

wasteland wrought by Saruman's choices and supports Quickbeam's labeling of Saruman as "The tree-killer" (*Two*, "Flotsam" 554). The creation of this environmental ruin that leaves the land surrounding Isengard mainly devoid of healthy flora and fauna, therefore, results from Saruman's marginalization of plants and non-human animals on behalf of his war industries that he selfishly establishes to try to gain the One Ring and its power (*Fellowship*, "Council" 254; *Two*, "Road" 540). Saruman's disregard for flora and fauna alike manifests itself in multiple ways. For example, Saruman orders the felling of trees, and he refuses to stop the Orcs from slaughtering trees without even using the felled lumber (*Two*, "Treebeard" 462-63, 475, "Road" 540-41). Furthermore, Saruman fails to plan for the Ents to defend Fangorn, and Saruman ridicules Radagast's study of non-human animals (*Two*, "White" 487; *Fellowship*, "Council" 252). The spread of weeds across his lands and his mishandling of water, moreover, illustrate Saruman's poor environmental record during the era of the War of the Ring. Within the Wizard's Vale, Saruman replaces healthy plants with industrial furnaces, "weeds and thorns," and "rank grasses"; furthermore, Saruman leaves parts of the riverbed of the Isen without water to such an extent that he creates "a dreary place," according to Éomer (*Two*, "Road" 537). This sickening appearance continues until the Ents destroy Saruman's non-eco-friendly dams and then allow the Isen to return to its previous course (*Two*, "Flotsam" 557). Saruman's selfish and callous actions within the Shire also result in the annihilation of trees (by means of fire and logging), the spread of weeds, the destruction of the Hobbits' gardens (which echoes Sauron's obliteration of the Entwives' Gardens), and the polluting of the Water and the Brandywine River (*Return*, "Scouring" 980-81, 989, 990). Therefore, the loss of the beautiful flora of Isengard and the Shire and the spread of

weeds in these areas occurs because of Saruman's selfish, callous, and deluded pursuit of mechanization and imperialism.

The dissatisfying aesthetics of Mordor, Isengard, and the Shire (while in the care of Saruman and his Ruffians) links all of these areas. After referencing the "dreary" "desert" of Mordor that Frodo and Sam slowly cross²⁰⁷ (*Return*, "Land" 896, 897, 899), Tolkien describes Lake Núrnen as "sad,"²⁰⁸ while also noting that slaves cultivate the fields nearby (*Return*, "Land" 902). Because Tolkien describes Núrnen's waters as "bitter" in *The Two Towers*, Hammond and Scull believe that this might mean Sauron poisons the waters of the lake (*"Lord" . . . Reader's* 457), a view that I also support. Similarly, *The Two Towers* states that Sauron's Mordor also includes the scarred Morgulduin River ("Journey" 682), an area that strongly resembles the "dreary" Isen riverbed ("Road" 547), as well as the "sad" region of the Wizard's Vale in Isengard, which also includes slave-worked fields with few animals and only thorns and weeds growing nearby (540). After the reader learns of the rampant destruction of trees, the widespread amount of weeds, the pollution of the various rivers, and the destruction of the hedges in the Shire (*Return*, "Scouring" 980-81, 989-90, 993), Farmer Cotton describes the Shire as approaching the appearance of a "desert" (990). Frodo's agreement that Saruman's harming of the Shire resembles a second "Mordor," therefore, appears appropriately apt²⁰⁹ (994). Rather than enjoying the sensory imagery of the physical

207. While crossing Mordor's terrible environment, the Hobbits sometimes fall into thorns and mournfully note the scant availability of water (*Return*, "Land" 896, 897, 899).

208. Tolkien probably intends a subtle linguistic joke in the vein of Black Humor, because "Núrnen" also means "sad water" (*Unfinished*, "Index" 458), which probably implies contamination via pollution.

209. Because of Saruman's vast knowledge of western Middle-earth's history, because of Saruman's destruction of the Shire, because of his killing of the Shire's inhabitants, and because of his attempts to reduce the surviving Hobbits to serfdom-like status, Saruman probably purposes to treat the Hobbits and the Shire the same way Sauron treated the Entwives and their Gardens. Sauron, of course, enslaved (or killed or exiled) the Entwives and annihilated their Gardens. After all, in earlier eras, Saruman travels to the

environment, Sauron and Saruman selfishly, callously, and ignorantly enjoy the act of destruction, for Tolkien affirms this as a trait of Sauron in “Myths Transformed” and writes of Saruman’s perverted rejoicing when he harms the Shire’s environment in *The Return of the King* (*Morgoth’s* 397; *Return*, “Scouring” 995). Finally, the most poignant moment that illustrates how someone can spiral downward from wantonly harming plants and non-human animals to (eventually) even laughing at ordering the deaths of humans occurs when Saruman sarcastically jokes about how he counseled Wormtongue to kill “Chief” Lotho Sackville-Baggins with a knife (*Return*, “Scouring” 996). The aforementioned scene epitomizes the startling degree of selfishness, callousness, and perverted labor necessary to continually embrace and practice ecosadism in a manner akin to ecosadists like Saruman, Sauron, and Morgoth. The actions of these ecosadists directly contrast with Gandalf’s convictions, for Saruman, Sauron, and Morgoth attempt to “master all the tides of the world” in the present and in the future by sowing “evil in the fields” and purposely undermining the ability for “those who live after” to live in a “clean” world (*Return*, “Last” 861).

Like Morgoth and Sauron before him, Saruman’s lack of appreciation for natural entities and for landscapes leads him to cease valuing even the lives of sentient beings. By combining his sins of environmental destruction and murder, Saruman (like Morgoth and Sauron) engages in bioengineering to create Orc-Men by interbreeding Orcs and the Men from Dunland (*Morgoth’s*, “Myths” 418-19; *Two*, “Treebeard” 462; *Unfinished*,

eastern and southern Middle-earth lands where Sauron dominated (*Unfinished*, “Istari” 390, 392, “Palantíri” 404). If readers place the (hypothetically) enslaved Entwives in the slave-tilled areas near Lake Núrn and other lands to the south of Mordor (*Return*, “Land” 902), Saruman could have traveled in both of the possible directions that the fugitive or enslaved Entwives may have traveled (*Return*, “Many” 958; *Letters* 179). If so, Saruman’s evil behavior toward the Hobbits appears even more sinister.

“Hunt” 341, 347-48, 354n). The offspring produced by these experiments cause many deaths and much destruction; for example, they kill Prince Théodred of Rohan and cause widespread environmental ruin in the Shire (*Unfinished*, “Battles” 358; *Return*, “Scouring” 981). Far from mentoring environmental guardians, Saruman further perverts the Children/Peoples to help him achieve his ecocidal designs to conquer Peoples violently and to destroy ecosystems wantonly.

To realize their selfish visions of conquering everything and everyone (no matter the cost), the Dark Lords and Saruman specialize in devious and destructive behaviors involving industrialization, warfare, and bioengineering. Instead of entering into a dialogue with others, these ecosadists fight to unleash ecocide rather than combat it, and therefore torture and slaughter beings rather than nurture them. They prove a foil to “environmental guardians” by ordering the groups without environmental ethics (e.g., the Orcs, the Goblins, the Trolls) to thwart/undermine the labors of those who strive to guard Ilúvatar’s world that the Valar, loyal Maiar, and faithful Peoples seek to preserve/beautify.

3.2. The Environmental Enigmas Who Prove Their Worth, Despite Their Failures:

Evaluating the Environmental Guardianship of Bombadil and Goldberry

Bombadil and Goldberry’s environmental guardianship, while more positive than negative, falters to some extent as well. Somewhat similar to the failings of Melian and Radagast, Bombadil and Goldberry focus too much on themselves and their local realm in the Old Forest, although Bombadil’s interests also include the territory of the Barrow-downs. Moreover, barring life-and-death circumstances for others, Bombadil refrains

from using his knowledge to help improve the world. Indeed, Bombadil refuses to rehabilitate, permanently defeat, or destroy the sadistic, tyrannical, nativist, bloodthirsty, Old Man Willow that endeavors to usurp Bombadil's guardianship of the Old Forest, which places other beings in danger. Nonetheless, despite their lack of physical movement outside of a small area in the Third Age, Bombadil and Goldberry demonstrate that their environmental knowledge extends far beyond the Old Forest. Bombadil, moreover, shows the depth and breadth of his knowledge in his talks and songs about the Old Forest, and therefore, Bombadil's environmental guardianship does not suffer from the type of overspecialization that Radagast's guardianship does. Similarly, whereas Melian flees from the battle with the Dwarves that dramatically harms the environment of her Doriath realm and Radagast disappears when Gandalf needs his aid the most, Bombadil and Goldberry teach various environmental lessons and otherwise encourage the weary, frightened, and discouraged Hobbit Companions. Additionally, Bombadil rescues the Hobbits not once but twice from ecosadistic forces, whose misanthropy threatens Frodo's quest that Bombadil learns more about by listening to Frodo. Bombadil and Goldberry entirely avoid the potential pitfalls of industrialization and bioengineering used by Morgoth, Sauron, and Saruman to conquer and/or destroy ecosystems and Peoples. Instead, their version of environmental guardianship leads them to labor in their garden, their home, and within the wood that Bombadil can control and improve because of his knowledge and power—when he so chooses. Although Bombadil and Goldberry overemphasize the spirit of Gandalf's words to the Captains of the West when the Wizard declares, "it is not our part to master all the tides of the world" and that "what weather [later generations] shall have is not ours to rule," Bombadil and Goldberry *partially* fulfill

another command that Gandalf gives: *we must* “do what is in us for the succor of those years wherein we are set” (*Return*, “Last” 861). By hurling the Barrow-wight into the Void, moreover, Bombadil even fulfills a key tenet of Gandalf’s statement that the righteous must participate in the “uprooting [of] evil in the fields that we know, so that those who live after may have clean earth” (861).

3.2.1. When Bombadil Behaves as a “Most Unsafe Guardian”

Bombadil cannot (or refuses to or finds it unnecessary to) prevent evil from entering his realm, since the Witch-king negatively influences the Old Forest and the Barrow-Downs and Old Man Willow corrupts the Old Forest for many years (e.g., *Unfinished*, “*Hunt*” 348; *Fellowship*, “*Old*” 113-18). Whereas Melian's Girdle generally repels evil (which enables Melian to protect Doriath from evil, ecocidal forces for centuries), Bombadil's Old Forest realm harbors extreme wickedness for years and years. Consequently, Bombadil’s environmental guardianship proves deficient in some key areas. However, because of Bombadil’s knowledge of the Old Forest’s environment, because of his various types of environmental teachings to the Hobbits, and because of his timely aid (which prevents the One Ring from falling into the possession of the servants of evil), Bombadil exhibits many positive environmental characteristics as well. Importantly, whereas Melian flees Doriath when the Elves and the physical environment of Doriath urgently need her aid, Bombadil provides incalculable help when Frodo and the other Hobbits are alone and the most vulnerable, which, in turn, enables Frodo to continue his journey that ultimately leads to the Free Peoples’ victory over Sauron, a destroyer of ecosystems. Despite his failings, therefore, Bombadil proves an

environmental guardian of quality to some degree because of his role as a teacher and as a savior. Firstly, Bombadil subtly teaches the Hobbits about the destructive power of artifacts through his warnings concerning the One Ring that helped to enable Sauron “to torture and destroy the very hills” (*Fellowship*, “Council” 259). By doing so, Bombadil helps the Hobbits better understand the One Ring, which would corrupt even individuals like Galadriel who love the environment, in general, and trees, in particular (“Mirror” 357). Furthermore, because Bombadil saves the Hobbits from the Barrow-wight, Bombadil prevents the realization of the Barrow-wight’s dream of a “*dead sea and withered land*,” which, in turn, would occur if Sauron regains the One Ring and “*the dark lord lifts his hand*” (“Fog” 138). Secondly, Bombadil’s teaching enables the Hobbits to better understand and value the environment. Although he refuses to help the members of the Fellowship and others outside of his realm, *if* Bombadil finds one of the Free Peoples in a desperate situation and *if* they seek his aid, Bombadil *chooses* to intercede rather than desert the endangered individual(s).

Bombadil’s refusal to act proactively prior to the arrival of the Hobbits limits one’s ability to praise Bombadil’s environmental guardianship. Although less altered by the evil of the Dark Lords, Bombadil also falters as one of the spirits imagined by the Music to protect nature that *The Silmarillion* (“Valaquenta” 29; “Quenta: Aulë” 45-46) and *The Book of Lost Tales I* mention (“Coming . . . Valar” 66). Despite knowing that Old Man Willow’s evil ensnares unwary Hobbits and other visitors to the Old Forest,²¹⁰ Bombadil refuses to take any preventative measures (*Fellowship*, “Old” 117-18, “House”

210. Bombadil acknowledges this when he notes that he will not always be nearby to save travelers in the Old Forest, despite also noting that he already knew that the Four Hobbits were probably coming in his direction (*Fellowship*, “Old” 117-18).

123-24, 127-28). Bombadil could kill Old Man Willow; he could cause Old Man Willow to sleep; he could simply stand near Old Man Willow to keep the Hobbits from falling into his clutches; he could walk to find the Hobbits before they encounter Old Man Willow—yet Bombadil selfishly, callously, and lazily opts to choose *none* of these possibilities. Not only is such inactivity lazy, but it also shows callousness, for Bombadil does not care enough about the well-being of others to reform Old Man Willow. Instead, Bombadil’s selfishness leads him to choose the path that means he will work the least, or (to use Goldberry’s diction) Bombadil will do whatever will not prove a “burden” for himself (*Fellowship*, “House” 122). Rather than taking preventative measures to safeguard the Hobbits, he laughs and jumps around when he learns that Merry and Pippin possibly suffer because of Old Man Willow (117). Bombadil’s lightheartedness, therefore, can sometimes approach a cavalier—even callous—attitude toward the discomfort, wounding, and/or potential death of the Children of Ilúvatar.²¹¹

Although Flieger argues that the Old Forest, in general, and Old Man Willow, in particular, are the moral equivalents of the Ents, since Old Man Willow and the Old Forest attack the Hobbits and Treebeard and the Ents fight Saruman and his Orcs, Uruk-Hai, and Orc-Men (“Taking” 262-68), I hold a different view. While the Ents who march on Isengard each choose to fight those who harmed their tree-herds, Old Man Willow imposes his own views on most of the Old Forest trees and attacks the Four Hobbits,

211. In Tolkien's rough drafts to *The Lord of the Rings*, Treebeard specifically informs the Hobbits that the Ents “were like your Tombombadil when we were young,” because “He understands trees . . . but he is . . . no herdsman[, no Ent,]” because he only “laughs and does not interfere. He never made anything go wrong, but he never cured anything, either” (*Treason*, “Treebeard” 416). In addition to the Great Darkness remaining over the Old Forest, Treebeard argues that Bombadil's lack of active tree-herding contributes to the continuation of “rotten-hearted trees” (415-17). Although Bombadil appears less lazy in the final draft of *The Lord of the Rings*, the aforementioned rough draft passage helps to portray how Bombadil’s environmental work ethic, attitude, and beliefs could improve.

despite the fact that none of the Four Hobbits helped create the Bonfire Glade in response to the trees' aggression toward the Hobbits' Hedge.²¹² Because of Bombadil's selfish pseudo-neutrality, Bombadil enables Old Man Willow to twist the original plan of only punishing environmental wrongdoers (as Yavanna wishes) into an effort to maim or destroy any representative of the Children of Ilúvatar—regardless of their moral standing as environmental guardians (*Silmarillion*, “Quenta: Aulë” 45-46). While unintentional perhaps, Bombadil's choice to not make the effort to reform or change Old Man Willow for the long-term is inherently callous, for others (e.g., the Four Hobbits) must suffer the consequences of his choices.

Although Tolkien's *Letters* do not hold the same weight as evidence as his creative works, I believe that Tolkien's *Letters* (despite Tolkien's personal affection for Bombadil) allude to Bombadil's core weakness—selfishness and its main roots: ignorance, callousness, and laziness. In a draft of a September 1954 letter to the Oxford bookshop manager, Peter Hastings (*Letters* 187, 188), Tolkien makes several important arguments about Bombadil:

He is *master* in a peculiar way: he has no [delusional] fear, and no [selfish] desire of possession or domination at all. He merely knows and understands about such things as concern him in his natural little realm. He hardly

212. Of potential relevance to the Bonfire Glade scene (in regard to the accretion of significance for *The Lord of the Rings*), the German author and forester Peter Wohlleben mentions that a network of trees (via their shared root system, i.e., their mycorrhizal networks) will sometimes try to resuscitate fallen trees for hundreds of years (Wohlleben 1-3; qtd. in Grant). The continued inability to renew trees that the Hobbits felled many years before, therefore, may increase the bitterness of the Old Forest Trees, whose anger also stems from the fact that the Hobbits felled trees to begin with.

Unless otherwise noted, all quotations from Wohlleben's works come from his text *The Hidden Life of Trees*.

even judges, and, as far as can be seen, makes no effort to reform or remove even the Willow.

[. . .] Tom [. . .] is then [. . .] the spirit that desires knowledge of other things, their history and nature, *because they are 'other'* and wholly independent of the enquiring mind, a spirit coeval with the rational mind, and entirely unconcerned with 'doing' anything with the knowledge: Zoology and Botany not Cattle-breeding or Agriculture. (*Letters* 192, underlining added)

Although Tolkien did not intend for this possibility (as his aforementioned letter makes clear), because Tolkien declares that Bombadil only fully comprehends the weather, flora, fauna, landscapes, waters, and soils of the Old Forest region and because this environmental area is Bombadil's "natural little realm," Tolkien's aforementioned letter actually reinforces the limits of Bombadil's self-centered environmental knowledge and appreciation. After all, Bombadil mainly expresses concern for "his" land, for Bombadil (in the main) deeply knows and cares about *his* lands. As a result, Tolkien's 1954 letter emphasizes the limits of 'head' knowledge without applying this knowledge in an active way. One may argue, therefore, that Bombadil's lack of interest in and knowledge of the world outside of the Old Forest area is a mixture of laziness, ignorance, and callousness.

Because Tolkien notes that Bombadil refuses to try to guide or to force Old Man Willow to improve his temperament and, indeed, because Bombadil often neglects to guard or help *anything* (despite his profound environmental knowledge of the Old Forest and its surrounding areas) Bombadil behaves somewhat lazily as well. Bombadil's refusal to try to alter Old Man Willow enables Old Man Willow to gain an evil and pervasive influence in the Old Forest, and thus, Bombadil neglects to lift the Great Darkness (e.g.,

Two, “Treebeard” 457), and, in fact, allows it to further permeate and sicken the Old Forest. Bombadil's version of “science,” consequently, fails to attain the objective of not harming Ilúvatar’s Children while seeking to understand and improve the natural world’s well-being. In other words, in a manner somewhat similar to Radagast, Bombadil displays insufficient interest in the welfare of the Children, even while he learns more about what preserves/improves the physical environment’s well-being.

While I agree with McIntosh’s belief that the depth of Bombadil’s knowledge about everything in the Old Forest region parallels the description in the *Ainulindalë* concerning the more powerful Ainur’s interest in the Vision of the Creation of the world (which McIntosh appropriately describes as, “this desire for the otherness of things”) (63-64), the Ainur attempt to improve the world. Bombadil, however, mainly studies the Old Forest region. I do not believe that it is entirely correct to praise Bombadil’s studious behavior, as McIntosh does (63). According to McIntosh (65-66), by following the Music with the Vision, Ilúvatar reduces the chances that the Ainur will fall into the type of trap that Morgoth falls into, since Morgoth’s yearning to possess his mental imaginings that the Music conjures serves as inspiration for Morgoth when he rebels. In my view, we should partially apply McIntosh’s analysis of Morgoth’s fall to a review of Bombadil’s behavior, because Bombadil often refuses to rehabilitate the Old Forest region, which, in turn, causes the area to remain far different than the way that Ilúvatar, Yavanna, and others envisioned the environment of Middle-earth. Therefore, it appears that, in order to avoid Morgoth’s sin of wanting to own what he studies and envisions, Bombadil *errs* in the *opposite* extreme. Unlike the singing Ainur in the *Ainulindalë*, Bombadil, despite his love of singing, does not usually seek to improve the world with his own ideas and is,

instead, typically content with *only* learning more about Creation. It is knowledge without application that Bombadil pursues; consequently, Bombadil's environmental guardianship remains incomplete and potentially dangerous, as the Four Hobbits discover.

In scientific terminology, therefore, Bombadil's behavior that condones the continuation of Old Man Willow's unreformed, tyrannical behavior, I contend, somewhat parallels how Tolkien describes the Eregion Elves and certain Catholic scientists in a September 1954 letter draft to Peter Hastings. According to Tolkien, the Eregion Elves create the problematic Ruling Rings that Sauron often corrupts (*Letters* 190). In this same letter, moreover, Tolkien states that the "Catholics engaged in certain kinds of physical research (e.g. those producing, if only as by-products, poisonous gases and explosives): things not necessarily evil, but which, things being as they are [. . .] are pretty certain to serve evil ends" (*Letters* 190). According to Tolkien, the Eregion Elves and such Catholic scientists are certainly not entirely "wicked or foolish" individuals (190), yet Tolkien implies that these Elves and Catholics are morally compromised and naïve.

Although Tolkien (in his *Letters*) claims Bombadil "hardly even judges, and as far as can be seen makes no effort to reform or remove even the Willow" (192), Bombadil's behavior eventually displays both judgment and mild disciplining of the Willow. In *The Fellowship of the Ring*, Bombadil describes Old Man Willow as "dangerous" because of his "rotten" heart and his extreme "cunning" ("House" 128). Bombadil's characterization of the demented tree leads readers to not only consider Old Man Willow's desire to save the trees but also Old Man Willow's amoral methods of trying to kill harmless travelers because of his fear of future tree felling and because of his desire for revenge for

perceived wrongs. Bombadil, therefore, certainly *judges* Old Man Willow, yet Bombadil's rehabilitation efforts are too minimal.

Bombadil's threats against Old Man Willow nonetheless, should be taken seriously. Bombadil declares he can (and will) harm Old Man Willow if the tree refuses to "behave himself" ("Old" 117). Bombadil threatens Old Man Willow when he declares to Frodo and Sam: "I'll freeze his marrow cold. . . . I'll sing his roots off. I'll sing a wind up and blow leaf and branch away" (117). Bombadil intimidates the tree with the specter of (at best) harm, or (at worst, for Old Man Willow) death. Although contrary to some of the arguments put forward by Deidre Dawson, who argues that Bombadil "teaches" instead of "commands" (163), I contend that Bombadil *demands* that Old Man Willow act in a certain way, prompting Old Man Willow to follow Bombadil's *command*. Bombadil demonstrates his willingness to harm Old Man Willow by not merely speaking and singing to the irritable tree; Bombadil decides to "brea[k] off" one of Old Man Willow's branches, which he then uses to "*sm[i]te* the side of the willow with it" ("Old" 118, emphasis added). Because "smite" means "to strike or hit; to beat or buffet," Bombadil's action implies more violence than merely brushing, caressing, cajoling, grazing, or tapping.²¹³ As Dickerson and Evans would note, however, Bombadil permits *thirsty* Old Man Willow to live (133); thus, Bombadil refrains from harming Old Man Willow to a much greater extent than if he set the tree on fire, as Sam suggests is the proper action (*Fellowship*, "Old" 115-16). Consequently, Bombadil carries out a token of his threat and a small preview of his strength to force Old Man Willow to, at first, cower

213. If we consider the first poem of the Hobbit legends within *The Adventures of Tom Bombadil* as additional evidence, this type of behavior is *common* for Bombadil, because he resorts to such threatening tactics to free himself from Old Man Willow and the badgers (stanzas 7-15).

and then relinquish Merry and Pippin.²¹⁴ Overall, I characterize Bombadil as an environmental guardian but one with some definitive flaws, for Bombadil is sometimes prone to laziness, callousness, and ignorance regarding his environmental responsibilities. While Bombadil could work towards the goal of “uprooting evil” for the benefit of others, as Gandalf encourages the Captains of the West to do in *The Return of the King*, Bombadil appears to selfishly look for ways to avoid working to help others whenever possible.

3.2.2. “Wake and Hear Me Calling”: Bombadil’s Qualities as an Environmental Guardian by Teaching and Saving Others

Despite the Great Darkness of Morgoth twisting the Old Forest and hampering Bombadil’s own vision and handling of the Old Forest, Bombadil still manages to present many (if sometimes conflicting) positive environmental positions. For example, Tolkien mentions that Frodo the Ring-bearer unburdens himself more to Bombadil than to anyone else because of Bombadil’s cross-examination and demeanor (“House” 130). Although he receives messages from Farmer Maggot and the Elves under Gildor’s leadership, Bombadil asks question-after-question of the Hobbits in order to learn more about their quest to destroy the One Ring and its capability of obliterating entire ecosystems and Peoples, which increases the level of trust that the Hobbits feel for Bombadil (130). Importantly, Bombadil’s eyes “glint” when Frodo references the Ringwraiths before Bombadil displays his contempt for the One Ring (as well as for the One Ring’s maker,

214. Because Bombadil’s negligence results in the discomfort of the Hobbits when Old Man Willow captures them and because Bombadil’s mild display of power causes the immensely strong and devious Old Man Willow to quickly acquiescence, I conclude that David Sander’s opinion that Bombadil is the polar opposite of “dangerous” oversimplifies Bombadil’s character (36).

Sauron, and his slaves, the Ringwraiths) by placing his “gleaming” eye in the middle of the Ring’s circle in a parody of the Eye of Sauron (130). The related word, “Glint,” of course, is how Tolkien describes Bombadil’s eyes after he overthrows the Barrow-wight, a servant of the Witch-king, the leader of the Ringwraiths (“House” 130, “Fog” 140). Since Bombadil’s eyes “glint” after he defeats the Barrow-wight, Bombadil’s antics with the Ring indicate that Bombadil resists the evil of Sauron and his allies; after all, Bombadil’s eyes are “gleaming” when he repeatedly mocks Sauron’s power by treating the One Ring with contempt. Moreover, Bombadil’s presence and personality help Frodo to verbalize his knowledge of and fears concerning the Ring, which helps Frodo resist the lure of this ecocidal weapon of Sauron during later trials.

When discussing Bombadil’s selfless and wise resistance to the power and self-aggrandizing, delusional visions of Sauron’s One Ring, readers should observe the major differences between Bombadil’s response to the One Ring (and Frodo’s subsequent reaction) and Frodo’s previous interaction with Gandalf. When Gandalf requests that Frodo allow Gandalf to hold the Ring for a time, Frodo must will himself to comply, and several pages later Frodo selfishly grips the Ring when he imagines that others may try to take it from him (“Shadow” 48, 51). The Ring’s mastery over Frodo increases when the Hobbit places the Ring in his pocket, even though he plans to hurl the Ring into the fire (59). Gandalf’s urgent, steadfast rejection of keeping the Ring strongly contrasts with Bombadil’s behavior toward the Ring (“Shadow” 60, “House” 130-31). However, Frodo, on the other hand, complies with Bombadil’s request to show Bombadil the Ring and then his demand for Frodo to remove the Ring from his finger²¹⁵ (“House” 130-31).

215. Gandalf’s aforementioned request that Frodo give him the Ring and Gandalf’s refusal to force Frodo means Gandalf obeys the Valar’s wishes by not “seek[ing] to rule the will of Men or Elves by open display

Bombadil then offers Frodo an example of throwing the Ring so that none can see it and then returning the Ring to Frodo without the Hobbit actually asking that Bombadil do so. Because of Bombadil's actions, Frodo witnesses someone's *ability* to resist the Ring and then to watch it disappear; moreover, by watching Bombadil release the Ring, Frodo realizes that it is possible for someone can willingly resist the temptation of the Ring. Bombadil's chiding of Frodo, moreover, contains Bombadil's moralizing, for Bombadil calls attention to how the Ring lessens the quality of Frodo's being when Bombadil declares, "Your hand's more fair without [the Ring]" (131). By saying this to Frodo, Bombadil implies a figurative meaning that refers to the ethical and spiritual perils of wearing the One Ring rather than only the physical appearance of the Ring on Frodo's finger. Frodo's resistance toward the One Ring also increases, because Bombadil can easily see him even when Frodo wears the Ring, because Bombadil condemns the Ring as something ill to wear, and because Bombadil rebukes Frodo for wearing the Ring as a detriment to the fulfillment of his quest (130-31). Whereas (despite Gandalf's earlier warnings) only the sudden appearance of Gildor and the Elves prevents Frodo from placing the Ring on his finger when the Black Riders stalk the Hobbits through the Shire ("Three" 77), Frodo—after his interaction with Bombadil—refuses the One Ring's temptation fairly quickly and strikes the Barrow-wight's hand ("Fog" 138). Bombadil's

of power, but coming in shapes weak and humble [. . .] to advise and persuade Men and Elves to good" (*Unfinished*, "Istari" 388, 390). Unlike Gandalf, as depicted throughout *The Lord of the Rings* and "The Istari" (*Unfinished* 390), Saruman would use his voice and profound knowledge "to have his own will by force." When Bombadil (who rules the Old Forest) uses his knowledge and power to influence Frodo into giving him the Ring, Bombadil displays a distant kinship with Saruman, the de facto ruler of Isengard. However, because of Bombadil's eccentric appearance, because of his refusal to keep or use the evil Ring, and because he helps the Hobbits on multiple occasions, Bombadil certainly refuses to fall to temptation like Saruman; instead, Bombadil ultimately possesses more in common with the Valar's description pertaining to the proper conduct of the Istari (*Unfinished*, "Istari" 388).

example that someone can resist the allure of the One Ring and that another being may possess the skill to perceive Frodo even when he wears the Ring leads Frodo to refuse the will of the Ring and to doubt the capability of escaping the Barrow-wight's presence undetected, even while wearing the One Ring. Consequently, Bombadil's hyperbolic spurning of the selfish lures of the One Ring and its power to create destructive delusions of grandeur, I believe, reinforces Frodo's own resistance to the Ring that previously helped Sauron to lay waste to lands like Eregion and the Gardens of the Entwives and enslave or kill various Peoples.

Because of Bombadil's influence, the Four Hobbits' knowledge of, appreciation of, and behavior toward nature improves, which again alludes to Bombadil's qualities as an environmental guardian. Bombadil uses multiple methods to teach the love of treading the earth to the Four Hobbits. While Pippin and Merry suffer within Old Man Willow, Frodo and Sam stand in wonder, as they watch the singing Bombadil enjoying the sensory imagery of the Old Forest, while "hopping and dancing along the path. . . . and charging through grass and rushes like a cow going down to drink" before and after he forces Old Man Willow to release Merry and Pippin ("Old" 117-18). After the Hobbits face the terror of the Barrow-wights, moreover, Bombadil tells the Hobbits to "Run naked on the grass" to revive the Hobbits' spirits ("Fog" 140), which the Hobbits do: "The Hobbits ran about for a while on the grass, as he told them. Then they lay basking in the sun with the delight of those that have been wafted suddenly from bitter winter to a friendly clime, or of people that, after being long ill and bedridden, wake one day to find that they are unexpectedly well and the day is again full of promise" (141). Bombadil,

therefore, physically and verbally teaches the Hobbits of the need for, the joy of, and the positive results of enjoying a nature trek.

Tolkien emphasizes that Bombadil attempts to influence the Hobbits by talking about many aspects of the forest, including trees. In his songs about the Old Forest, Bombadil begins by recounting “tales of bees and flowers, the ways of trees, and the strange creatures of the Forest” (“House” 127). Like Beorn in *The Hobbit* (“Queer” 106-07), one of the reasons why Bombadil prizes bees and flowers is because the bees provide Bombadil with one of his foods: “honeycomb” (“Old” 118). In any case, Bombadil urges the Hobbits to value the Old Forest to a greater extent by singing about the creatures, the flowers, and the trees that call the Old Forest area *home*:

As [the Hobbits] listened, they *began to understand the lives of the Forest, apart from themselves*, indeed to feel *themselves* as the *strangers* where *all other things* were at *home*. Moving constantly in and out of his talk was Old Man Willow . . . Tom's words laid bare the *hearts of trees* and *their thoughts*, which were often dark and strange, and filled with a *hatred of things that go free* upon the earth, *gnawing, biting, breaking, hacking, burning: destroyers and usurpers*. It was not called the Old Forest without reason, for it was indeed ancient, *a survivor of vast forgotten woods*; and in it there lived yet, ageing no quicker than the hills, the fathers of the fathers of trees, remembering *times when they were lords* [. . .]

Suddenly Tom's talk left the *woods* and went leaping up the young *stream*, over bubbling *waterfalls*, over *pebbles* and worn *rocks*, and among small *flowers* in close *grass* and wet *crannies*, wandering at last up on to the *Downs*. They heard

of the Great Barrows, and the green *mounds*, and the *stone*-rings upon the *hills* and in the *hollows* among the hills.” (“House” 127-28, emphasis added)

Bombadil’s messages, therefore, allow the Hobbits to comprehend the lives and needs of beings and things other than themselves and increase their knowledge of and sympathy for the environment (e.g., the Old Forest’s flora, fauna, landscapes, entities, waters, and soils), which, in turn, decreases their environmental selfishness, which, in turn, causes them to reduce their environmental laziness, callousness, and ignorance.

As noted earlier, Bombadil subtly rebukes the Hobbits for their problematic personal and cultural relationships toward trees²¹⁶ (“House” 127), which helps to improve the Hobbits’ environmental ethics. Some weeks after Bombadil’s songs, Frodo starts to climb a tree in Lothlórien and becomes “so keenly aware of the feel and texture of a tree’s skin and of the life within it [. . . that] He felt a delight in wood and the touch of it, neither as forester nor as carpenter; it was the delight of the living tree itself” (*Fellowship*, “Lothlórien” 342). Rather than callously mocking the sentient Old Forest trees by singing of the desire to see the sun instead of trees and hoping for the end of the Wood, as Frodo does prior to meeting Bombadil (“Old” 110), Frodo displays awe of, respect for, and affection for the tree’s very being in the Golden Wood.²¹⁷ Similarly, Frodo and the other Hobbits experience a “really painful shock” when the Four return home to find the Shire’s environment severely damaged, for the Hobbits see weed-

216. Because some of the Hobbits felled too many Old Forest trees when they expanded the Shire by creating Buckland many years before the War of the Ring, the Old Forest trees (under the influence of Old Man Willow) assaulted the Hobbits’ Hedge; this, in turn, led the Hobbits to butcher trees near the Hedge (*Fellowship*, “Old” 108). Callously and wastefully, the Hobbits just burned the remains of these trees rather than using the fallen limbs for fences and other constructive activities. In other words, not only do the Buckland Hobbits of this era fell too many trees but they also display a disregard for the ecosystem by not using the fallen timber to build things that they will later require, which ensures the subsequent felling of yet more trees—an act that will further damage the ecosystem.

217. Frodo’s reaction, of course, also occurs because of Galadriel and the Elves’ influences.

infested gardens and decrepit houses at the expense of “An avenue of trees” (*Return*, “Scouring” 980-81). Bombadil's influence, moreover, may have partially (if indirectly) contributed to the Hobbits choosing to migrate in the opposite direction of the Old Forest.²¹⁸ Partially because of Bombadil's teaching, therefore, I argue that the Hobbits' environmental attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors toward trees positively evolve.

Besides teaching the Hobbits to share his love of walking in the Old Forest and to comprehend the Old Forest more intimately, Bombadil's environmental ethos includes a sympathetic concern for the welfare of non-human animals, which he also models for the Hobbits. Indeed, Bombadil chooses to feed and to water the Hobbits' horses before supping with the Hobbits (“House” 122). Bombadil again displays an eco-centered, knowledgeable attitude when he notes that horses converse with and calm one another (“Fog” 141). Bombadil implies that horses possess inherent worth when he states that the horses surpass the self-preservation skills of the Hobbits and should not suffer for their choice to avoid danger by abandoning the Hobbits after the Hobbits chose to naively walk into the Barrow-wight's trap (“Fog” 141).

This is not to suggest, however, that Bombadil cares less about the welfare of Men than the environment when he perceives the situation is critical. For instance, Bombadil nourishes and shelters Merry's temporarily lost ponies when they appear at his home. However, Bombadil sends Merry's ponies to Barliman Butterbur, because

218. This occurs thirty-three years after the defeat of Sauron when Aragorn gives the area from the Far Downs to the Tower Hills (known as The Westmarch) to the Shire Hobbits (*Return*, “Appendix B” 1072). While Aragorn nominally grants the area to the Hobbits, the Hobbits live virtually independent of Gondor's rule; therefore, the most powerful voices among the Hobbits of the Shire of the time (Pippin, Merry, and Samwise) likely assist in selecting the direction of further expansion. Whether or not readers agree with this aforementioned idea, however, Bombadil certainly alters the views of the Hobbits by leading Pippin, Merry, and Frodo to cherish trees more than before they first entered the Old Forest.

Bombadil is more concerned with Butterbur's mental well-being and financial stability than with providing Merry's (now-healthy) horses a luxurious life in his Old Forest realm ("Knife" 175). Bombadil, in other words, could selfishly ignore the needs of the ponies and/or Butterbur; Bombadil could callously refuse to care about the suffering of the ponies and Butterbur or feel regret for their difficulties—but still lazily refuse to intercede. Yet, Bombadil seeks to meet the needs of both the horses and Butterbur. By taking an active interest in the well-being of Butterbur, Bombadil displays a marginal increase in laboring on behalf of and caring about the welfare of those beyond what he calls "his country" (i.e., the Old Forest and the Barrow-downs) ("Fog" 143). If Bombadil chose to remain interested in helping others beyond what Gandalf calls Bombadil's "little land" ("Council" 259), Bombadil's quality as an environmental guardian would increase, for Gandalf's characterization rebukes Bombadil for not helping the wider world because of his self-imposed limits.

For his overall manner of living to continue, however, Bombadil requires the success of the Fellowship, according to the Council of Elrond ("Council" 258-59). Although Bombadil will not journey to the Council or help beyond his self-created realm, this does not mean that Bombadil does not care about Frodo's task. After all, Bombadil chooses to save the Hobbits from Old Man Willow and the Barrow-wight, the latter of which would have given Sauron the One Ring. Gandalf alludes to how Bombadil's aid proved to be of the utmost importance when Gandalf informs Frodo at Rivendell that the Barrow-wight scene represented "perhaps the most dangerous moment of all" (*Fellowship*, "Many" 213). Besides saving the original four members of the Fellowship twice, Bombadil gives the Hobbits a vision of Aragorn and subtly chides them for their

ignorance concerning the activities of the Rangers that save the Shire from harm (“Fog” 142-43). Just because the Hobbits do not readily grasp the significance of Bombadil's song and the vision it creates does not mean that Bombadil's intentions do not include persuading the Hobbits to trust Aragorn/Strider,²¹⁹ an act necessary to save Bombadil (and many others) from future destruction by Sauron and his forces.

Because of Bombadil's paths, home, pruning, garden, and motivation for aiding the Hobbits, my opinions differ from some of the arguments concerning Bombadil within Tolkien criticism. John M. Bowers provides a typical reading of Bombadil's relationship with nature by declaring, “[Bombadil] is master of his domain but not its owner” (23). To make this argument, Bowers relies on Tolkien's statement within his 1954 letter that Bombadil only seeks knowledge for the sake of knowledge (23; *Letters* 192). Dickerson and Evans also use Tolkien's aforementioned letter as evidence that Bombadil possesses “no desire of possession or domination at all” (22). These scholars (and even Tolkien himself), I believe, do not place sufficient emphasis on the fact that Galadriel and Celeborn decline the title of “King or Queen” of Lothlórien and yet—in effect—rule the realm (e.g., *Unfinished*, “History . . . Amroth” 245). I believe Goldberry's description of Bombadil as the non-owning “Master” of the Old Forest parallels Galadriel and Celeborn's practice of rejecting royal titles but continuing to behave like rulers (*Fellowship*, “House” 122). Goldberry, furthermore, acknowledges that Bombadil

219. Because Hammond and Scull note that the boundary that Bombadil refuses to discuss with the Hobbits refers to the ancient boundaries between the former-Dúnedain realms of Cardolan and Arthedain (“*Lord*” . . . *Reader's* 148; *Fellowship*, “Fog” 143), Bombadil's reticence might partially stem from a sense of tact. Bombadil may desire to avoid callously discussing the demise of the northern Dúnedain, because he knows that Aragorn, the last heir to the throne of this race of Men (whom Bombadil just sang about), stands nearby and will listen to Bombadil's conversation with the Hobbits (“Fog” 142-43, “Strider” 160-61).

refrains from regarding himself as the owner, because such a description would “burden” Bombadil, which emphasizes not the freedom of the non-human animals and various flora in the Old Forest but Bombadil’s focus on himself, in general, and on his desire to avoid working hard, in particular (*Fellowship*, “House” 122).

Bombadil’s environmental behaviors, therefore, often focus on his needs and desires. Bombadil (and Goldberry) further differentiates his domain from the trees of the Old Forest (and provides reason for doing so) by creating spaces near his home for vegetable gardens with crops like beans, by establishing gardens of flowers, and (similar to the Hobbits’ Hedge) by maintaining “a *clipped hedge*” (“House” 126, emphasis added). Since Gandalf believes that Bombadil “is withdrawn into a little land, within bounds that he has set, though none can see them [. . .] and he will not step beyond them” (*Fellowship*, “Council” 259), it seems that Bombadil willingly creates boundaries for *his domain*. In other words, Bombadil does not “discard his power,” as some critics contend (e.g., Campbell 157).

Goldberry’s steadfast denial that Bombadil owns the Old Forest, however, indicates that she believes that such a claim would prove selfish and callous (“House” 122). Nevertheless, because Goldberry also notes that, if Bombadil decides that the Old Forest *belongs to him*, “that would indeed be a burden” (122), Bombadil (perhaps with the encouragement of Goldberry) declines this responsibility because of the significant amount of work involved, which means Bombadil’s refusal includes a degree of self-centered laziness as well. I assert that Bombadil’s environmental shortcomings stem from his selfish inclination to focus on his and Goldberry’s needs and desires, which include

Bombadil's desire to avoid potentially strenuous or prolonged labors like rehabilitating the Old Forest.

One of the greatest examples of power, meanwhile, happens when one's subjects immediately cower when faced with the possibility of discipline; such an event occurs when Bombadil orders the greatest of all of the trees in the Old Forest—Old Man Willow—to release the Hobbits. Shippey, consequently, proves accurate when he declares, “[W]hat [Bombadil] *does* is dominate” (106). Once the Hobbits near Goldberry and Bombadil's home, they perceive that someone (i.e., Bombadil, since he specifically tells the Hobbits later that “He made paths before the Big People”) (“House” 129) adorns the path with stones, prunes the trees that now lie “behind” them, and trims the grass near Bombadil's house (“Old” 119). These activities demonstrate some of Bombadil's environmental labors and aesthetic sensibilities. Bombadil does as he sees fit; however, Bombadil's selfishness is replaced by concern for others when they are confronted with extreme evil in his realm.

The impression that Bombadil chooses to prune as he wishes becomes even more pronounced by the statement that the area leading up to Bombadil's home where the Hobbits walk includes “a long smooth hillside of turf” (“Old” 119), which implies an absence of trees. So, in Bombadil's Old Forest kingdom, Bombadil lives where trees have been cleared. Even the question of whether or not Bombadil clips the grass near his home loses the last vestiges of doubt when Pippin sees “*shaven* grass” when he searches for Old Man Willow by gazing through a window of Bombadil's home (“House” 126, emphasis added). Clearly then, Bombadil keeps the trees of the Old Forest contained by

cutting the grasses (which will also trim tree seedlings²²⁰). Old Man Willow's desire to expand the Old Forest, as well as Old Man Willow's resentment of anything that restrains such growth, likely contributes to why Bombadil's home lies near a "grassy knoll" and why the Old Forest lies "behind" Bombadil's home. In other words, Bombadil works to prevent the trees from infringing on what Bombadil views as *his* domain (which also helps to explain why he invites the Hobbits to *his* "home") by distinguishing his home area from the many places in the Old Forest that Old Man Willow dominates ("Old" 119, 118). By behaving in this manner, Bombadil's inward focus on himself, his lands, and his home demonstrates how a thoroughly corrupted Bombadil would selfishly embrace the type of tyrannical possessiveness and unjust violence by one of the worst environmental guardians in Middle-earth: Old Man Willow.

Several additional points emphasize Bombadil's boundaries and Old Man Willow's impish rebellion against Bombadil's authority. From the songs of Bombadil, readers know that Old Man Willow's potent "thirsty spirit drew power out of the earth and spread like fine root-threads in the ground, and invisible twig-fingers in the air, till it had under its dominion nearly all the trees of the Forest from the Hedge to the Downs" ("House" 128). Pippin hears these "twig-fingers" beating on the glass of a window and wall of Bombadil's home during the first night that the Hobbits stay with Bombadil and Goldberry ("House" 125). These "invisible twig-fingers" suggest Old Man Willow's presence because of the same word choice (i.e., "twig-fingers") and because ("House"

220. Wohlleben includes an aside that somewhat resembles this passage concerning the location of Bombadil and Goldberry's home and Old Man Willow's yearning to expand the borders of the Old Forest in Tolkien's *The Fellowship of the Ring*. While discussing the lawns of his forest lodge and home, Wohlleben states that "There are always oak, beech, and birch seedlings popping up in the grass. If I didn't cut them off regularly, within five years I'd have a stand of young trees about 6 feet tall, and our little piece of paradise would disappear behind their foliage" (235-36).

125, 128)—when Pippin awakens and looks out of the western window (“House” 126)—he sees no willow tree at all. These facts should lead readers to believe that Old Man Willow causes the phantom knocking at the window from afar or that the impish tree uses the “grey shaven grass” and other “grey” flora to channel his spirit away from the physical Willow tree he typically inhabits to knock on the window. As mentioned earlier, Bombadil further marks his territory by laying stones around the path close to his home; this provides a signal to the trees of the Old Forest that they must not cross this border, a sentiment again reinforced by the threshold to Bombadil's home. It is important to observe what the Hobbits must cross to enter the dwelling of Bombadil and Goldberry: “The four hobbits stepped over the *wide stone* threshold” (“House” 121, emphasis added). Even the spectral branches of Old Man Willow—the most potent tree of the Old Forest—will not cross into the home of Bombadil.

3.2.3. “Marvellous and Yet Not Strange”: Goldberry’s Role as an Environmental Guardian through Teaching and Appreciating the Environment

Goldberry, meanwhile, expresses her love of the natural world by singing about reeds, lilies, water, heather, hills, rain, clouds, mist, stars, pools, the wind, the Moon, the Sun, and the sky (“Old” 120, “House” 123, 129, 130, “Fog” 133). Moreover, Goldberry enjoys the sight and scent of waterlilies, as well as the sound, scent, sight, and touch of rain (“Old” 117-18, “House” 126-27). Goldberry also likely engages in environmental labors by working in the vegetable and flower gardens around her home (126-27). In

other words, Goldberry exhibits a sensitivity to and appreciation for the physical environment's sensory imagery and appears to engage in some environmental work.²²¹

Similar to Bombadil, Goldberry also teaches the Hobbits some environmental lessons that help to diminish the Hobbits' environmental ignorance and callousness. When Frodo asks if Bombadil owns the Old Forest, Goldberry provides a different perspective than the Hobbits' cultural standard: "all things growing or living in the land belong each to themselves" rather than the property of a People (or a spirit²²²) ("House" 122). Moreover, Goldberry teaches the Hobbits about and increase their appreciation for the sensory imagery of rain and of rivers, which provides them with a more conscious awareness of how far rain can travel from the time it falls until it reaches the oceans, a journey that will include the rain landing on hills and entering rivers (127). Likewise, Goldberry's songs teach the Hobbits about "waters wider than any they had known" (130). Such songs help to prepare Frodo to agree to cross the Sea to Elvenhome at the end of *The Lord of the Rings*, despite the fact that most Hobbits feared the ocean (*Fellowship*, "Prologue" 6-7) and despite the fact that Frodo had never sailed the seas before (*Return*, "Grey" 1007). Goldberry, therefore, shows her qualities as an environmental guardian by not only rejoicing at the beauties of the physical environment but also by teaching others and counseling them about the value of the environment as well. Nevertheless, Goldberry's seemingly permanent residence in the Old Forest limits her opportunities to mentor others.

221. If Goldberry's songs cause or affect the duration of or the volume of rainfall that the Hobbits witness (*Fellowship*, "House" 127), this would, of course, represent a supernatural example of her environmental knowledge and labor.

222. While I question the reality of Bombadil as the non-owner of the Old Forest, Goldberry still presents a different theoretical concept of environmental ownership to the Hobbits.

Despite the analysis of multiple scholars (and Tolkien himself), Bombadil's environmental labors demonstrate that he possesses the Old Forest; he does more than just “observe.” Rather than a problem, however, Bombadil’s occasional intervention proves one of his invaluable positives as an environmental guardian, for it demonstrates that he is certainly not altogether lazy or callous, and therefore, Bombadil is only somewhat selfish at times. Bombadil and Goldberry, after all, share their environmental wisdom with the insufficiently educated Hobbits. Moreover, Bombadil and Goldberry save and/or encourage the Four Hobbits. Because Bombadil and Goldberry help the Hobbits reach Rivendell, Bombadil and Goldberry’s timely aid contributes to the Free Peoples’ eventual victory over Sauron, which, in turn, preserves many places in Middle-earth from Sauron’s domination.

3.3. Guardians Cultivating Keepsakes: The Environmental Philosophies of the Elves

Akin to the other Free Peoples, the Elves also shape their environments because of their hierarchical relationship with nature, which readers witness when they examine the Elvish practice of and attitude toward building, cultivating, pruning, and harvesting. Unlike those who damage the environment, the Elves deeply appreciate the physical environment and understand the physical environment in a profound manner. The Elves engage in a variety of environmental labors to improve or to maintain the environment’s well-being. However, the Elves sometimes handicap their short- and long-term success as environmental guardians because of their callous selfishness.

The Elves exhibit enormous differences among themselves in terms of building and cultivating, as discussed in texts like *The Silmarillion*. Whereas the Teleri skillfully learn how to build wooden ships drawn by swans²²³ (“Quenta: Eldamar” 61), the Vanyar and Noldor, “raised a high green hill: Túna” and their city of Tirion in Valinor (59). The Noldor²²⁴ also “carved out” the haven of Alqualondë for the Teleri (“Quenta: Flight” 86), while Fëanor and his family build their own dwelling (“Quenta: Silmarils” 71). Therefore, the High Elves exhibit their knowledge of how to build cities/havens and invest the time and energy necessary to do so.²²⁵

In terms of building, the Elves shape the environment, because they wish to gain comfort and joy, and because they choose to follow the example of the Valar (albeit according to their Elvish abilities, and therefore on a lesser scale when compared to the Valar), and because the Elves aim to counter Morgoth’s marring of Arda. Galadriel, a Noldorin Elf, again illustrates that the Elves possess a hierarchical bond with their environment in *The Silmarillion*; for example, Tolkien notes that Galadriel “yearned . . . to rule there [in Middle-earth] a realm at her own will” (“Quenta: Flight” 84). Galadriel reaffirms this self-centered commitment when she spurns the notion of the Valar forgiving her previous rebellion and allowing her to return; instead, Galadriel wishes to establish her own Middle-earth realm with her husband Celeborn²²⁶ (“Quenta: Voyage”

223. Although, of the three Elven kindreds, the Teleri are most associated with loving the sea, some Noldorin Elves like Fëanor and his wife Nerdanel loved to walk in hilly areas and by the sea, according to Tolkien’s 1950s drafts of the *Quenta Silmarillion* (*Morgoth’s* 272, 199).

224. For more information on how the Noldorin city of Gondolin in Beleriand (as well as its model: the Valar’s walls of Pelóri and their realm of Valinor) compares to Minas Tirith, read the final section of this chapter concerning the Gondorians and their fortress-city Minas Tirith.

225. Because the High Elves build cities and havens, I believe this should stymie Rateliff’s doubt that the Rivendell Elves would actually build roads (*History* . . . *Hobbit*, “End” 812n).

226. One of Tolkien’s notes within the 1967 *The Road Goes Ever On* includes a similar passage: “After the overthrow of *Morgoth* at the end of the First Age a ban was set upon [Galadriel’s] return, and she had

254). According to the tale of “The Elessar,” Galadriel's indomitably proud spirit and her selfish thirst for power continue. In this version of the tale, Galadriel, rather than return to the Deathless Lands, asks Celebrimbor to make another jewel akin to the earlier Elessar that now resides in Valinor in the West. Her reasoning mixes environmental knowledge with environmental sensitivity and selfishness, for Galadriel yearns for nature to exist without Morgoth's corrupting influence; yet, she refuses to return to Valinor due to her selfishness, which leads her to declare, “Here [in Middle-earth] I am mightier”

(*Unfinished* 250). Galadriel, in other words, desires authority over other Elves and over the physical environment in a defined area of her own selection. Similarly, Gil-galad in Lindon (*Silmarillion* “Rings” 285-86), Celebrimbor in Eregion (286), Elrond in Rivendell (288), and Thranduil in Greenwood the Great (later Mirkwood) each create their own realms in order to rule certain territories (299). Therefore, although the Elves invest much time, energy, and labor to appreciate, comprehend, maintain, and sometimes even improve the environment's well-being, the Elves also display some selfish impulses concerning their interactions with the environment.

The Noldorin Elves represent the mightiest of the Elvish craftsmen; one of the Noldorin, Celebrimbor (i.e., the second-greatest Elvish craftsmen of all-time), created the Three Elven Rings of Power in order “to preserve all things unstained” (*Fellowship*, “Council” 247). Elrond, moreover, states that Celebrimbor's goal for the Rings of Power has, “in some measure,” been reached (247, 262), and therefore, partially²²⁷ fulfilled the purpose of the Rings to “ward off the decays of time and postpone the weariness of the

replied proudly that she had no wish to do so. She passed over the Mountains of *Eredluin* with her husband *Celeborn* (one of the *Sindar*) and went to *Eregion*” (68).

227. Since Morgoth corrupts all of Arda (including the Free Peoples), the Elves' preservation efforts cannot fully succeed.

world” (*Silmarillion* “Rings” 288). Nevertheless, the decision to create and to wield these Rings stems, at least in part, from the somewhat selfish desire to enable the Elves to remain in power and to fend off their predestined decline. By the time of the War of the Ring, the Elven Rings are held by Gandalf, the keeper of Narya (the Ring of Fire), by Galadriel, the wielder of Nenya (the Ring of Water), and by Elrond, the possessor of Vilya (the Ring of Air²²⁸).²²⁹ The Elves, consequently, partially succeed in their attempt to keep their beloved environments from devolving. To accomplish this goal, the Elves display vast amounts of knowledge²³⁰ and many hours of work. However, the root of this work also includes a possessive, selfish desire.

Multiple works of Elvish artisanship help to create the wholesome atmosphere of Rivendell. One source that creates the positive ambiance of Rivendell is the Elessar stone. Because Galadriel gives the Elessar to her daughter, Celebrían, who wears it before passing it on to her (and Elrond's) daughter Arwen (*Unfinished*, “Elessar” 249, 251), the healing power of the Elessar stone contributes to Rivendell’s wholesome atmosphere.

Readers, moreover, should particularly associate Rivendell's rehabilitative air with that of

228. *The Silmarillion* notes that the three Silmarils are in the *air* with Eärendil the Mariner (“Quenta: Voyage” 250), consumed by the earth's *fire* (along with Fëanor's son Maedhros) (253-54), and lost to the sea's *waters* because of the actions of Maglor, son of Fëanor (254), respectively. Interestingly, the Rings of Power are named after Air, Fire, and Water. Moreover, while Fëanor, the “Spirit of Fire” (“Quenta: Fëanor” 63), and his sons heavily influence the ruin of the Noldorin Exiles in response to the evils of Morgoth, *The Lord of the Rings* details how Gandalf successfully works to defeat Sauron at the end of the Third Age while wearing the Ring of Fire. Consequently, because *Elven* artifacts named after *fire* help to defeat evil, Ilúvatar's Third Theme again seizes a part of Morgoth's discord and, despite many tragedies and sacrifices, ultimately weaves a victorious chord over dark forces (*Silmarillion*, “Ainulindalë” 16-17).

229. The sources for this sentence include the following: *Return*, “Grey” 1005, “Appendix B” 1059-1060; *Unfinished*, “Istari 389; *Fellowship*, “Mirror” 356; *Silmarillion*, “Rings” 288.

230. Christopher Tolkien observes in *Beren and Lúthien* that his father (in an “Appendix F” draft for the *Appendices*, which concludes *The Lord of the Rings*) characterizes the Noldorin in the following manner:

Now the [. . .] Noldor [name] signifies *Those who Know*; for of the three kindreds of the Eldar from their beginning the Noldor were ever distinguished, both by their knowledge of the things that are and were in this world, and by their desire to know more. (32-33, italics added)

The Noldorin Elf Nerdanel’s profound “desire for knowledge,” moreover, contributed to Fëanor’s decision to marry Nerdanel, according to 1950s drafts of Tolkien’s *Quenta Silmarillion* (*Morgoth’s* 272, 199).

a place of shelter for war refugees, since (immediately after the reference to the annihilation of Eregion by Sauron's forces) *The Silmarillion* notes that “In that time the stronghold and refuge of Imladris, that Men called Rivendell, was founded . . . and long it endured” (“Rings” 288). Consequently, in *The Lord of the Rings*, it makes sense that the Hobbits find rest in Rivendell after fleeing from the Ringwraiths, for the Eldar Elves typically display not only an appreciation for the physical environment but also compassion for those among the other Free Peoples who require some assistance after suffering an attack by ecocidal forces.

Elrond's Ring of Power of Air, the greatest of the Elven Rings (*Return*, “Grey” 1005), likely provides the main reason for the healing powers and restful aura of Rivendell, however. *The Lord of the Rings* describes the aura of Rivendell as a place where “merely to be there was a cure for weariness, fear, and sadness” and that “such was the virtue of the land of Rivendell that soon all fear and anxiety was lifted from [the Hobbits'] minds. The future, good or ill, was not forgotten, but ceased to have any power over the present. Health and hope grew strong in them, and they were content with each good day as it came, taking pleasure in every meal, and in every word and song” (*Fellowship*, “Many” 219, “Ring” 267). Readers, therefore, should grasp that Elrond uses his Ring to aid in the recovery of others fleeing the chief servants of Sauron on the eve of the War of the Ring.²³¹ The particulars of this assistance become clearer when Tolkien

231. The fact that Frodo hears, “The sound of running and falling water” in Rivendell and that it “was loud” (*Fellowship*, “Many” 220) probably alludes to the awakening of the Elves. This seems possible, since the legends of the Elves mention that “[T]he first sound that was heard by the Elves was the sound of water flowing, and the sound of water falling over stone” (*Silmarillion*, “Coming . . . Elves” 49). The connection of the Rivendell waters to the genetic memory of the waters near Cuiviénen deepens when one compares it to the narrator's observation that “In Rivendell there was memory of ancient things; in Lórien the ancient things still lived on in the waking world” (*Fellowship*, “Lothlórien” 340).

The fact that Elrond's Ring of Power greatly contributes to the wholesome atmosphere of Rivendell and in improving the health of survivors of warfare manifests itself in the story of Celebrian,

mentions that the “warm” air, the relaxing sound of water, and the charming smell of flowers and trees in the air before Pippin declares, “[I]t seems impossible, somehow, to feel gloomy or depressed in this place” (“Many” 220). The aura that the Hobbits find in Rivendell, of course, matches the experience of Bilbo in *The Hobbit*, who declares, “A little sleep does a great cure in the house of Elrond” after helping complete the Quest for Erebor (“Last” 268), which reinforces the notion that Elrond's Ring creates an atmosphere of healing for the war-weary. The aforementioned works of Elvish artisanship, therefore, represent important Elvish environmental labors that demonstrate their knowledge of and appreciation for the physical environments of their homelands. These works of craft help to produce wondrous sensory imagery and contribute to the improvement of the well-being of the whole environment by helping the mental and emotional states of the Children, as well as the physical appearance and longevity of the physical environment.

While wielding the Ring of Air, Elrond actively orders the environment to protect his beautiful realm in *The Fellowship of the Ring*, which demonstrates his hierarchical bond with nature in the Rivendell area, as he works to save Rivendell’s environment, the Rivendell Elves, and other Peoples who seek sanctuary in Elrond’s realm. One example of this occurs when he “commanded” the flood that swept away the Ringwraiths, since (as Gandalf informs the recovering Frodo), “The river of this valley is under his power, and it will rise in anger when he has great need to bar the Ford” (“Many” 218).

Therefore, while the Elves create and wield the Rings of Power because they wish to

wife of Elrond, since, although her body healed, her spirit lost all joy, which forces her to leave for the Undying Lands (*Return*, “Appendix A” 1019). Because Elrond's wife refuses to try to find happiness by living for a time in other Elven lands, this reinforces the notion that the aura of Elrond's Last Homely House trumps even the atmospheres of the other Elven Realms in Lindon, Lothlórien, and Mirkwood.

remain in power, Elrond and Galadriel also wear these Rings, for the Rings help to save other Peoples and to protect the landscapes, bodies of water, soils, flora, and fauna within their realms. For example, non-human animals also respond to the Vilya-protected environment of Rivendell, such as Bill Ferny's former pony, Bill. Bill changes from a decrepit, "bony, underfed, and dispirited animal" when departing from Bree to something altogether different: "The stay in Rivendell had worked a great wonder of change on [Bill]: he was glossy and seemed to have the vigour of youth" ("Knife" 175, "Ring" 273). Contrary to the callous, sadistic actions of the Orcs, therefore, the Elves appreciate and show great sensitivity to many aspects of the physical environment (including fauna) by creating and by using artifacts like their Rings of Power.

The Elves believe that it is essential to protect trees and other flora. Aided by Galadriel's Ring, the Elves of Lothlórien protect and nourish the *Mallorn* tree/*Mellyrn* trees and the *elanor* and *niphedil* flowers, as observed in *The Fellowship of the Ring* ("Lothlórien" 333, 341). The Elves of Mirkwood seem to follow this same model with beech trees in *The Hobbit*, for these are the trees that they hold dearest and Tolkien's *The Elvenking's Gate* illustration features beeches on either side of the path leading to the cave-fortress ("Flies" 152, "Barrels" 156; *Art . . . Hobbit* 87-88). Although less prominent than the other Elven-realms perhaps, readers of *The Hobbit* also find pine trees, beeches, and oaks mentioned in Rivendell ("Short" 45). The love of trees among the Eldar Elves,²³² of course, often hearkens back to their cultural, steadfast love of the fallen White Tree Telperion in the Blessed Realm and the seedling of Telperion that stands in

232. Within the poem "Autumn," the Elves celebrate the beauty of elm trees; in this poem, the Elves also display their affection for various birds, precious jewels, and the beauty of trees during the fall season (*Vinyar Tengwar* 40 32).

Tol Eressëa (i.e., Elvenhome) (*Silmarillion*, “Quenta: Eldamar” 58-59). The Elves also display environmental knowledge while working to improve the well-being of the Middle-earth environment by teaching the trees and Ents how to speak, as Treebeard mentions in *The Two Towers* (“Treebeard” 464). Consequently, the Elves again place themselves in a hierarchical relationship with nature, because, through this compassionate environmental labor, they perform the role of the teacher. One reason that the Elves yearn to teach the Ents and the trees is to enhance their ability to reduce Morgoth’s corruption of Arda; in other words, by learning and then using a common language, this can help the Ents, Elves, and trees work together to defeat the various evils still lurking in the forest. Consequently, environmental work, appreciation, and knowledge again define the Elves’ guardianship of nature; nonetheless, the Elves invest the most time and energy in learning about and cherishing certain privileged plants (e.g., mellyrn trees) and landscapes (e.g., Lothlórien) that seem the most beautiful to Elvish eyes.

Like Elrond’s Rivendell that includes multiple gardens (“Many” 219, 223), Galadriel and the Elves of Lothlórien also build (albeit treeless) gardens and carve out stairs from the landscape, as *The Fellowship of the Ring* references (“Mirror” 352). The Lothlórien Elves also seem to maintain an immaculate hedge on the perimeter of the *enclosed garden*²³³ (352). The Rivendell and Lothlórien Elves’ interest in gardening, however, contrasts with how *The Hobbit* characterizes the somewhat idle Elves of Mirkwood, who refuse to “bother much with . . . tilling the earth” (“Flies” 153). Although

233. The Rivendell and Lothlórien Elves’ love of gardening may partially derive from the Eldar’s memories of the gardens in Valinor created by the Valar during the era of *The Silmarillion* (“Quenta: Beginning” 37, “Quenta: Fëanor” 64).

many Elves devote themselves to a variety of environmental labors (e.g., gardening and pruning), in other words, the Mirkwood Elves appear lazier in this regard.

The healing nature of Lothlórien demonstrates the importance of cultivating the environment; the healing of the remaining Fellowship members in Lothlórien mainly occurs because of their interaction with the water and the trees of the land. This makes sense, for Galadriel's Ring of Power is the Ring of Water. Moreover, the Fellowship members should (and do) feel invigorated in Lothlórien, because the Rings were created to "ward off the decays of time and postpone the weariness of the world" (*Silmarillion*, "Rings" 288). In the river of Nimrodel, for example, Frodo "felt [. . .] the stain of travel and all weariness [. . .] washed from his limbs" (*Fellowship*, "Lothlórien" 330). The river water's quality is so pure, in other words, that it reduces the burden of Gandalf's death and the strain of carrying/guarding the One Ring for Frodo; such influence derives (at least in part) from Galadriel's possession of the Ring of Power of Water. Similarly, the Fellowship members encounter, "No blemish or sickness or deformity [. . .] in anything that grew upon the earth. On the land of Lórien there was no stain" (341). Thus, because of the repeated emphasis on the perfect qualities of the "earth" and "land," the story again suggests that Galadriel's Ring of Power alters the environment so that it appears like "the ancient realm as it was long ago²³⁴" (341). Moreover, to recuperate their lost strength and to cope with their sorrow and weariness, the Fellowship members, while remaining in the Golden Wood, "did little but eat and drink and rest, and walk among the trees; and it was enough" ("Mirror" 349). This statement implies that the travelers *need* to behold and to

234. This ability to keep the woods appearing like the Elder Days also probably derives, in part, from the fact that Galadriel long possessed the Elessar, which would make things appear "in the grace of their youth," as "The Elessar" fragment mentions (*Unfinished* 249).

contemplate the trees' beauty in order to heal about as much as they need to eat, drink, and sleep in order to recover from their journey. Therefore, because Galadriel possesses power over water, because she loves trees (especially the *Mellyrn*), and because trees require water, Galadriel's Lothlórien realm stimulates and expands a visitor's love of plants—especially their affection for trees. This transformation occurs for the Ringbearer when Frodo—like “never before”—becomes “so suddenly and so keenly aware of the feel and texture of a tree's skin and of the life within it. He felt a delight in wood and the touch of it, neither as forester nor as carpenter; it was the delight of the living tree itself” (“Lothlórien” 342). Therefore, in these “two domains the bliss and beauty of the Elves remained still undiminished while that Age endured” because of Elrond and Galadriel's environmental efforts and because of their Rings of Power, as *The Silmarillion* notes (“Rings” 298). This means that the Elves build/cultivate beautiful and healthy gardens, trees, and streams, despite the environmental wounds caused by Morgoth and/or Sauron. By doing so, the Elves demonstrate an appreciation for the sensory imagery of the physical environment and a significant amount of environmental knowledge, as they work to maintain and/or improve the well-being of the environments of their lands. As Frodo's experience in Lothlórien demonstrates, the Elves not only teach visitors to their realms more about the environment, but they also help foster a greater appreciation for and sensitivity toward nature among their visitors. Nonetheless, the Elves *sometimes* display self-centeredness in their environmental guardianship by focusing on the welfare of *their* realms rather than the environmental fates of other realms.

The Elves, however, exert their power over the landscapes, waters, fauna, flora, and soils of their realms through other types of environmental work as well.²³⁵ For example, the Elves also leave their ecological footprint by shaping gems and stones (such as the precious jewels that adorn the Three, respectively), by establishing cave-fortresses, by creating tree-houses, by nourishing trees, and by forging roads. The Noldorin Elves, as *The Silmarillion* observes, often mine for and shape earth-gems, which they began doing after stumbling across various gems while “quarrying in the hills after stone (for they delighted in the building of high towers)” (“Quenta: Eldamar” 60). Thus, although the narrator mentions that the Noldorin Elves “freely” offered the gems to other inhabitants of Valinor (60), and therefore, they cannot always compare with the Dwarves, whose failings often include particular forms of selfishness: greed and callousness. These Elves still take raw materials from the ground, and consequently, again demonstrate that the Elves shape the earth. Noldorin Elves in the Second Age continue to desire raw materials from the earth; for example, the Noldorin Eregion Elves settle and create their city of Ost-in-Edhil, because Moria’s *mithril* causes them to yearn to shape this material (*Silmarillion*, “Rings” 286; *Return*, “Appendix B” 1057). However, the work, knowledge, and aesthetic awareness to form these great artisan creations not only partially derives from the Elves’ selfish desire to preserve their kingdoms but also spawns selfishness in other Peoples. While the Elves of Eregion create “many” Rings of Power, Sauron provides the Nine Rings to nine kings of Men (who subsequently mutate into the Ringwraiths) and the Dwarves with the Seven (which adversely influence the Dwarves by

235. By “other types of environmental work,” I mean the following: shipbuilding, the establishing of Valinorian cities, the creation of and maintenance of realms, the cultivation of gardens, the awakening and fostering language among and between trees and Ents, and the creation of the Rings for the preservation of their kingdoms.

making the Dwarves greedier and angrier). These Noldorin Elves are, therefore, indirectly but partially responsible for the environmental degradation caused by the Nine and for the Dwarves' subsequent exploitative mining efforts and violent outbursts.²³⁶ Fine artisanship, therefore, can indirectly lead to environmental ruin, as the Noldorin Elves' history shows.

As noted previously, the Noldorin Elves (e.g., the *Deep-Elves*) (*Silmarillion*, "Quenta: Coming . . . Elves" 53; *Hobbit*, "Flies" 151) greatly enjoy building towers and cities and completing other crafts. Indeed, even during the War of the Ring at the end of the Third Age, Legolas can still hear the voices of the "stones lament" the loss of the Eregion Elves when he walks through parts of the Second Age Elven realm of Eregion. According to Legolas, the stones chant "*deep they delved us, fair they wrought us, high they builded us; but they are gone*" (*Fellowship*, "Ring" 276). The word choices of "deep," "delved," "wrought," "high," and "builded" [sic] reinforce the message that the Noldorin Elves labor to shape their environment to create the "fair" vision of nature that *they* envision.

The Elves also actively mold the environment for their own needs by creating cave-fortresses in Middle-earth. The Dwarves of Belegost "delved deep in the earth" to

236. The sources for this statement are the following: *Return*, "Appendix A" 1051; *Silmarillion*, "Rings" 288-89, 287; *Unfinished "History"* 236-37.

While Seymour is right to point out that the Dwarves often shape precious metals and jewels rather than simply idly collecting them, it is somewhat odd that she also declares that the "Dwarves are not depicted as collecting gold in large quantities for the sake of having lots of gold" (43). As Tolkien mentions in the *Appendices* to *The Lord of the Rings*,

The only power over [the Dwarves] that the Rings [of Power] wielded was to inflame their hearts with a greed of gold and precious things, so that if they lacked them all other good things seemed profitless, and they were filled with wrath and desire for vengeance on all who deprived them [. . .]

It was therefore perhaps partly by the malice of the Ring that Thráin after some years became restless and discontented. The lust for gold was ever in his mind. (*Return*, "Appendix A" 1051)

Therefore, due in part to Sauron's corrupting influence, the Dwarves sometimes fail as environmental guardians and neighbors because of a selfish tendency to behave callously.

help create the Elves' Menegroth in Doriath, which includes various images drawn from the physical environment, as *The Silmarillion* mentions ("Quenta: Sindar" 92-93). Meanwhile, the Dwarves of the Blue Mountains help Finrod Felagund (the "Hewer of Caves") craft Nargothrond, which Finrod models after Menegroth ("Quenta: Return" 114-15), which, in turn, means that Finrod also carves shapes of flowers, trees, birds, and other things inspired by the physical environment into the walls of Nargothrond ("Quenta: Sindar" 92-93). Indeed, in the December 1959 excursus "The Dwarvish origin of the name Felagund" in *The Peoples of Middle-earth* (351), Tolkien states that the Dwarves gave Finrod the name *Felagund* because of the Elf-Lord's great "skill in lighter stone-carving. He cut many of the adornments of the pillars and walls in Nargothrond" (352). In addition to these First Age dwellings made by these High-Elven lords, the Sindar Elf Thranduil also later establishes a cave-fortress²³⁷ over a stream within a wood (i.e., Greenwood the Great/Mirkwood/The Wood of Greenleaves) during the Second Age (*Hobbit*, "Flies" 152, "Barrels" 159; *Return*, "Appendix B" 1067). Consequently, Thranduil (like Finrod Felagund before him) forges his subterranean fortress in the manner of the First Age Elven King, Thingol, of the Realm of Doriath (e.g., *Unfinished*, "History: Appendix B" 259). From these examples, readers can see that the Elves alter their environments for self-preservation and (as Finrod's cave-carvings demonstrate) as an expression of the Eldar's sense of appreciation for aspects of the environment (e.g., coral).

237. Hammond and Scull note that Gimli's statements that the Dwarves help to delve the subterranean palace in Mirkwood for the Wood-Elves is "the only mention that Dwarves helped to make the Elvenking's halls" ("*Lord*" . . . *Reader's* 420). However, a minor work in the *Unfinished Tales* presents an alternative history that contradicts Gimli's statement; it, instead, declares that the Elves created Thranduil's subterranean halls (*Unfinished*, "History: Appendix B" 259).

Besides cave-fortresses, the Elves also leave an (albeit minimal) ecological footprint by sometimes building their homes in trees in Lothlórien (*Fellowship*, “Lothlórien” 332) and (sometimes) in the Woodland Realm in Mirkwood (*Hobbit*, “Flies” 152). According to a fragment by Tolkien, this Elven practice of living in trees exists either because the Silvan²³⁸ Elves make it a custom (*Unfinished*, “History . . . Amroth” 240), because an Elven-realm's geography makes this possible (245), and/or because the Elves reside in trees during “uneasy” eras (245-46). Because of such construction work, the Elves not only enable themselves to live amid the trees they love but also to protect themselves from enemies. By striving to endure themselves, the Elves also improve their chances of preserving the environment of their realms from enemy raids.

The Elves, consequently, alter their environments to try to match their visions of beauty and to protect themselves. The Elves try to preserve or improve their own well-being and the well-being of the environment not only when they shape gems and stones, carve-out cave-fortresses, create treehouse-like platforms (flets), nourish trees, and foster speech among the trees and among the Ents but also when they build roads, bridges, and stairs. As Thranduil adamantly declares to Thorin, the Elves of the Woodland Realm establish a “road” in their realm (*Hobbit*, “Barrels” 157). Besides Tolkien’s texts, Tolkien’s artworks demonstrate that the Elves create roads. Tolkien’s various artworks

238. “Silvan Elves” refers to the Elves who began the Great Journey but were the first group to stop, ending their journey at the Misty Mountains due to their fear of the immense size of the mountains. Consequently, these Elves strongly resemble the Avari Elves, who never began the Great Journey, as well as the Nandorin Elves, who eventually lived in Eriador and Ossiriand (*Unfinished*, “History: Appendix A” 256). The Silvan Elves lived in Mirkwood and Lothlórien, although, after the annihilation of Eregion, some of the Noldor, who formerly lived in Eregion, fled to the Golden Wood and lived there afterward as well (*Unfinished*, “History: Appendix A” 256-57).

that depict the *Entrance to the Elvenking's Halls* all include bridges, as does *Gate of the Elvenking's Halls*, which also features stones outlining the Elven road (*Art . . . Hobbit* 78-81, 86, 82). Like his *Nargothrond* drawings (84-85), the latter of which features a bridge (85), some of these versions also include stairs that lead to the Elvenking's halls (81, 86). The artworks *Elfking's Gate* and *The Elvenking's Gate*, meanwhile, feature a bridge and stairs that bring visitors to the doors of the Elvenking; these drawings seem to indicate that the Elves cut down some trees to clear a path leading to the Elvenking's halls (87-88). *Elrond's house and the bridge at Rivendell*, *Rivendell*, *Rivendell Looking East*, and (the more polished) *Rivendell* all contain bridges, while the latter two also include stairs (43, 46, 45, 48). Because of the bridges (48), this certainly looks like a *road* in Rivendell.²³⁹

Like many of the other Elvish environmental labors, the Elves (in addition to developing various types of roads (and other types of construction) in order to rehabilitate Middle-earth and to redress a portion of Morgoth's corruptions) choose to establish things like roads because of their self-centered yearning to maintain their own power in Middle-earth. Nonetheless, in the case of their flets, roads, bridges, and stairs, the Elves appear to try to alter the environment as little as possible.²⁴⁰

While the subterranean fortress-kingdoms of the Elves serve as a defense, these realms (e.g., Menegroth and Nargothrond) also include environmental images inscribed

239. Tolkien's works, consequently, provide answers to Rateliff's rhetorical question concerning which Elves would maintain and restore the bridge that Thorin's Company must cross on their journey to Rivendell. Although Rateliff declares that "[I]t is hard to picture the elves of Rivendell working at road-mending, since throughout the legendarium the elves are never associated with road-making" (*History . . . Hobbit*, "End" 812n), I hold a different view than Rateliff's reading.

240. While Tolkien's characterizations of the Lothlórien Elves' *flets* demonstrates this Elvish minimalism (*Fellowship*, "Lothlórien" 333-34), Tolkien's aforementioned artwork concerning the Elvish roads and bridges probably provides the best evidence for this trait of Elvish construction.

on the walls, as I discuss elsewhere. In regard to their shaping of gems, however, the Elves who love such artisanship resemble the Dwarves. Consequently, while these Elves display an appreciation for the environment's natural resources, they also demonstrate that they strongly desire to modify environmental resources. This means one could argue that Elvish environmentalism blends *a degree* of environmental callousness (e.g., the Noldorin Elves sometimes find a non-crafted gem's appearance unsatisfying²⁴¹) with environmental appreciation (e.g., the Noldorin Elves' love of gems can drive these Elvish artisans to use shaped stones to create artifacts).

The Elven environmental model also includes forms of pruning and extermination, since the Elves attempt to exterminate certain species living in/journeying through their realm (albeit usually the fallen species previously mutated by Morgoth, Sauron, and Ungoliant²⁴²). Moreover, the Elves prune in terms of individual beings/plants by harvesting some of the flora and fauna found in their lands as well; finally, the Elves also willingly sacrifice their lands for the betterment of Middle-earth (in general); consequently, they cause landscape and ecosystem pruning to occur. The Mirkwood Elves, for example, affect their environment by felling trees to sit on them during feasts and to use them as a means to hold torches in *The Hobbit*²⁴³ ("Flies" 138). Besides

241. Jeffers's argument that the physical environment appears in a "not yet" stage for the Dwarves (qtd. in 54), therefore, can actually extend to the Elves. While Jeffers argues that this must be at least partially negative, the righteous spirits and Peoples are supposed to redress the environmental evils of Morgoth and his followers, in particular, and to beautify Middle-earth, in particular, as I discuss elsewhere. Nevertheless, Jeffers and other critics are right to point out the Dwarves' fondness for mining and for generally shaping the environment can devolve into gross exploitation like Moria. The Elves, meanwhile, can also become selfish by creating things like the Rings of Power by trying to prevent or slow change. Thus, the weakness among many Elves is that the environment's future is "not yet," for the Elves prefer the past

242. To use a more contemporary label, the Elves attempt to destroy the genetically modified organisms engineered/spawned by Morgoth, Sauron, and Ungoliant. Many of these species are corrupted spirits or descend from corrupted lesser Maiar spirits.

243. The Mirkwood Elves also affect their environments in minor ways by seasonally collecting "berries and red leaves" or "woodland flowers" for Thranduil's crown (*Hobbit*, "Barrels" 155).

harvesting a select amount of trees and hunting game in general (“Flies” 138, 152, “Barrels” 157), the Mirkwood Elves change their environment when they seek to destroy every member of the Great Spider species in their realm (“Flies” 153). Although the Mirkwood Elves may appear to behave callously toward the felled trees that they sit on while feasting and to the Great Spiders that they hunt, the Elves hunt the Spiders to try to improve the well-being of the general ecosystem of Mirkwood. Moreover, rather than use the wood for chairs after altering the stump’s shape, the Elves choose to sit on tree stumps. The Elves’ environmental knowledge, work, and recreation, consequently, sometimes lead to the sacrificing of flora and fauna (e.g., invasive species) in order to preserve or nurture the overall ecosystem and to preserve their own well-being.

The Woodland Elves’ actions, as they try to kill each of the Giant Spiders in their realm, resemble some of the behavior of the Elves of Rivendell in *The Fellowship of the Ring*. Elrond's sons, Elladan and Elrohir (“Many” 221), and the Elves of Lothlórien endeavor to slaughter any Orcs who come across their paths. For instance, readers witness this when Haldir makes an uncompromising vow to Frodo: “None of the Orcs will ever return out of Lórien” (“Lothlórien” 336). The Woodland Elves, furthermore, are not alone in hunting, because, according to *The Silmarillion*, Elves in Valinor (such as Celegorm, son of Fëanor, and Aredhel, daughter of Fingolfin) also hunt (“Quenta: Eldamar” 60), an activity they likely learned from the Vala Oromë, who often hunts on his white horse Nahar (“Coming . . . Elves” 49, 53). Part of environmental guardianship, therefore, entails the curtailing of certain aggressive species.

Tolkien’s tales partially avoid the quandary of killing some aggressive, violent species in areas where the Free Peoples dwell—although some environmentalists will

state that this is an anti-environmental activity. However, in Tolkien's Middle-earth tales, the dragons (e.g., Smaug), Balrogs, werewolves, Orcs, Goblins, and Trolls, as well as Ungoliant and her spider spawn (e.g., Shelob and the Great Spiders) can be destroyed if these beings attack the Free Peoples, in part, because the Free Peoples are defending themselves for vital reasons. Moreover, these foes of the Free Peoples are not only unrepentant ecosadists but also fallen spirits, descended from fallen lesser spirits (e.g., Shelob), or (in the case of the Orcs, Goblins, and Trolls) possibly descended from fallen spirits, as I discuss elsewhere. The fact that so many of the villains in Tolkien's fantasies share some kinship with demons (albeit to varying degrees) distances these works from the charge of anti-environmentalism, for the Middle-earth tales borrow from Tolkien's Christianity, as I discuss in chapter two. Just as the Valar fight Morgoth when the renegade Vala spirit corrupts Middle-earth but give him the opportunity to repent (though Morgoth ultimately refuses to do so), the Free Peoples—when they act righteously—fight ecosadists like the Orcs, yet the Elves and others refrain from torturing Orc prisoners in their possession, despite the lack of repentance among the Orcs.

The Elves, at times, opt to take the fruits of their land and give them to non-Elves, as noted in *The Lord of the Rings*. Some examples of this include the "blessing" of Galadriel and her gift of a Mallorn²⁴⁴ seed and fertilized earth to Sam²⁴⁵ (*Fellowship*, "Farewell" 366), which Sam uses to repair the damage inflicted upon the Shire by Saruman and his forces in *The Return of the King* ("Grey" 999-1000). Because only one

244. J.A. Schulp believes that the *Mallorn* derives from the primary world's Mahonia, while *Elanor* and *niphredel* flowers were possibly inspired by winter aconites and white snowdrops (133).

245. Tolkien increases the overtness of Galadriel's intervention in the Shire by writing in the "Nomenclature of *The Lord of the Rings*" that "by the favour of Galadriel," some of Sam's children have golden hair (qtd. in Hammond and Scull, "*Lord*" . . . *Reader's* 760).

greenbelt with trees and one garden exists within Minas Tirith at the time of the War of the Ring (“Pyre” 837), Legolas decides that he and his Mirkwood kin “shall bring [Aragorn] birds that sing and trees that do not die” so that Minas Tirith will exhibit more energy and beauty (“Last” 854, “Steward” 947). In addition to the possibility that the High Elf Gildor uses birds to send messages regarding Frodo’s location and Gandalf’s absence to Elrond, Aragorn, and Bombadil (Hammond and Scull, “*Lord*” . . . *Reader’s* 168), the High Elves sometimes use certain plants and non-human animals as gifts for others. The Elves of Elvenhome, for instance, give a white tree to Prince Aldarion and a pair of grey birds to Erendis when the Númenórean couple wed in the incomplete *Aldarion and Erendis* novella (*Unfinished*, 189), while Elrond provides Gandalf with a horse that the Misty Mountain Goblins presumably eat in *The Hobbit* (“Over” 58). Consequently, both High Elves and Dark Elves use their natural resources for themselves and (because their position ranks them as the premier species of the environmental hierarchy of their areas) for others whom they deem worthy. Somewhat similarly, the Elves, at the direction of the Valar, also choose if and when to rarely provide mortals with the secretly made bread²⁴⁶ called *lembas* that Yavanna first created²⁴⁷ (*Peoples*, “Lembas” 403n, 403-04).

Besides recalling that the Elves give others non-human animals and forms of nourishment as part of their environmental guardianship, readers should also recall

246. Hammond and Scull mention that “*Corn* in British English usage means ‘grain’, not ‘maize’ (Indian corn) which was little known in England prior to the Second World War” (“*Lord*” . . . *Reader’s* 22); this corresponds with the *Gnomish Lexicon*, which defines *Corn* as “loaf” or “loaf of bread” (*Parma* . . . XI 26).

247. According to a note within the short work “Of Lembas,” mortals rarely eat *lembas* bread, at the direction of the Valar, because, “if mortals eat often of this bread, they become weary of their mortality, desiring to abide among the Elves, and longing for the fields of Aman” (*Peoples* 403n). Because of this information, it supports my belief that Frodo and Sam yearned for Elvenhome not only because each wore the One Ring but also because each consumed vast quantities of *lembas* on their trek to Mount Doom.

Finrod Felagund's discussion with the mortal woman, Andreth, that references how the Elves view the deaths of non-human animals, plants, flowers, and humans (*Morgoth's*, "Athrabeth"308). Within *Athrabeth Finrod Ah Andreth*, Finrod tells Andreth that the Elves

love in their measure and kind: the beasts and birds who are our friends, the trees, and even the fair flowers²⁴⁸ that pass more swiftly than Men. Their passing we regret; but believe it to be a part of their nature, as much as are their shapes or their hues.

But for you [Men], who are our nearer kin, our regret is far greater.

(*Morgoth's* 308)

While the Noldorin Elves feel deep affection for the natural world and profound sadness when it is harmed, the Elves' greater sorrow for the death of humanity implies that the Noldorin Elves privilege the needs and desires of humans over non-human animals and plants, which echoes how Ilúvatar created the world (e.g., *Silmarillion*, "Quenta: Aulë" 45-46). Because of the Elves' environmental (and general) knowledge and labors, therefore, the Elves' environmental gifts generally prove selfless and compassionate.

Since the Elves resolve to sacrifice the beauty of their own kingdoms in order to vanquish Sauron and to improve Middle-earth as a whole,²⁴⁹ this sacrifice represents a notable way that the Elves demonstrate their selflessness and compassion as environmental guardians. However, as the aforementioned sentence implies, the Elves do not do so from selfish and callous impulses. Instead, while some of the Elves wish they

248. Flowers, in early aborted drafts, arise from the ground where the Noldorin Elves walk (*Shaping*, "Prose" 6).

249. This act represents the most significant example of the Elves choosing to place themselves at the top of their local environmental hierarchy.

could behave selfishly and callously, the Elves realize that they would be delusional to believe that they can escape Sauron, and therefore, they choose to strive to help the other Peoples defeat Sauron, even though this means that the Elves and their lands will suffer as a result.²⁵⁰ Thus (despite Elrond's statement in *The Fellowship of the Ring* that “many fair things will fade and be forgotten” that the Elves long enjoyed and fought to maintain), Glorfindel agrees that the Elves “are willing to endure this” so that “the power of Sauron may be broken, and the fear of his dominion be taken away for ever” (“Council” 262). Galadriel agrees with Elrond and Glorfindel, for she also informs Frodo that, if he fails to destroy the One Ring, it will expose the Elven lands to Sauron, but Frodo’s success will only cause Elven power to be “diminished” and cause Lothlórien to “fade” to such an extent that soon “Time will sweep it away”²⁵¹ (“Mirror” 356). Nevertheless, the two greatest Elven leaders remaining in Middle-earth agree to forfeit their own powers and realms to aid the rest of Middle-earth. Galadriel emphasizes the agony and necessity of this choice when she informs Frodo that “The love of the Elves for their land and their works is deeper than the deeps of the Sea, and their regret is undying and cannot wholly be assuaged. Yet they will cast all away rather than submit to

250. Moreover, this also means that the Elves’ worldview parallels Gandalf’s global outlook, as expressed by Gandalf’s desire to save as much of Middle-earth as possible, rather than merely one kingdom (*Return*, “Minas” 742).

251. Because of the destruction of the One Ring and the loss of power among the Three Elven Rings of Power, the narrator states that “the Tales of the Eldar in Middle-earth draw to their close,” since “Those were the Fading Years, and in them the last flowering of the Elves east of the Sea came to its winter” (*Silmarillion*, “Rings” 299). We also know this will occur because of Galadriel’s announcement that she will “diminish” after refusing to seize the One Ring (*Fellowship*, “Mirror” 357), as well as because of Elrond’s foreboding that the Three will lose their potency with the destruction of the One (“Council” 262). Elrond’s prediction of what will occur with the ending of the One Ring echoes the fact that Sauron forged the One Ring so that all the other Rings of Power were not only entirely “subject” to the One but also would “last only so long as [the One Ring] too should last” (*Silmarillion*, “Rings” 287). Elrond’s aforementioned belief bears fruition when the narrator pronounces that “the Days of the Rings were passed,” which causes “many Elves of the High Kindred,” including the Elven Ring Bearers Elrond and Galadriel, to “no longer stay in Middle-earth” (*Return*, “Grey” 1006).

Sauron” (356). Galadriel's aforementioned quotation stresses several phrases, such as “their land” and “their works,” which places the Elves in a hierarchical relationship with nature. While these phrases may make the Elves appear somewhat selfish, the Elves actually sacrifice many of their realms and much of their power by willingly fighting Sauron, which, in turn, means that the Elves’ giving attitude and behavior partially counteracts this impression. After all, the Elves make these sacrifices for the betterment of Middle-earth and all of the Free Peoples.

However, just before Frodo offers her the One Ring in *The Fellowship of the Ring*, Galadriel muses about her “wish” that Sauron's Ring “had never been wrought, or had remained for ever lost”; this statement exposes some of the motivation behind the Elves’ willingness to sacrifice their realms and power (“Mirror” 356). This leads one to assume that Galadriel and the Elves would not have chosen to aid those fighting Sauron’s forces abroad were it not for the rediscovery of the One Ring; instead, if the Ring had remained lost, the Elves would have only resisted Sauron’s forces that had directly threatened the realms of the Elves. This alternative scenario within Galadriel’s aside not only features the Elves’ hierarchical relationship with nature (since the Elves hypothetically yearn for the continuation of their own thriving lands while the environments of Mordor, Ithilien, Harad, Far Harad, Khand, Nurn, and Rhûn suffer under the policies of Sauron) but also portrays the Elves’ selfish temptation to behave callously and lazily by not helping the other Free Peoples fight Sauron’s forces. While the Elves may desire their druthers, nevertheless, all of the Elves in northwestern Middle-earth

agree to aid in the quest to undo the Ring, which, simultaneously, causes the decline of their own lands at the end of the Third Age.²⁵²

The Elves' environmental labors after the destruction of the One Ring, however, remains overly self-motivated. While Galadriel provides Sam with the seed and Elven-blessed earth to renew the war-damaged Shire (*Fellowship*, "Farewell" 366; *Return*, "Grey" 999-1000), she often refrains from further redressing the environmental problems caused by Sauron after the destruction of the One Ring, albeit with the notable exception of her active role in destroying Dol Guldur (*Return*, "Appendix B" 1069). Because of Dol Guldur's position in southern Mirkwood, however, it may have long before existed as part of the realm under her control, as referenced in some of Tolkien's fragments (*Unfinished*, "History" 236, "Elessar" 252). Galadriel, nonetheless, probably leads the Elves of Lothlórien against Dol Guldur and southern Mirkwood mainly because the dark fortress previously unleashed three attacks on Galadriel's realm, which causes "grievous harm" to the woods bordering her kingdom (*Return*, "Appendix B" 1069). Galadriel may also lead the Elvish attack because of Celeborn's designs to expand the breadth of his kingdom into southern Mirkwood/The Wood of Greenleaves (*Return*, "Appendix B" 1069). In other words, Galadriel's assistance in destroying Dol Guldur and reducing the possibility of future environmental destruction from Mirkwood enables the Elves to avenge their previous injuries and to advance the self-focused imperialistic aspirations of Celeborn.

252. Besides Elrond and Galadriel's help and the aid of the Elves of Rivendell and the Golden Wood, Círdan the Shipwright's representative, Galdor, offers no objections on behalf of the Elves of the Grey Havens and Legolas of the Woodland Realm serves as a member of the Fellowship of the Ring (*Fellowship*, "Council" 234, "Ring" 268).

Because of the success of Galadriel's gift in the Shire and because of her dismantling of Dol Guldur, the possibility exists for her to continue to heal the lands damaged by Sauron's forces, such as the Old Forest and Fangorn Forest. After all, Treebeard fervently desires for Galadriel and Celeborn to accompany him to Fangorn Forest toward the end of *The Return of the King* ("Many" 959). Although Treebeard opts to only gaze in Galadriel and Celeborn's direction and give "great reverence" to the two Elven leaders (959), the possibility exists that Treebeard desires their counsel and aid in curing the "very black patches" of trees with "*bad* hearts" in Fangorn Forest that Treebeard told Pippin and Merry about after meeting the Hobbits (*Two*, "Treebeard" 457). Whether or not the Ents yearn for the aid of these Eldar Elves, the immense knowledge of Galadriel could aid in the renewal of many lands. However, prior to her departure from Middle-earth, she limits her participation to destroying the fortress of Dol Guldur where her foes gathered and to helping with the Shire's renewal, seemingly to help cope with the loss of the Golden Wood. While Lothlórien must soon fade, the Hobbits will continue to thrive for some time, and therefore, the Mallorn tree (i.e., Galadriel's favorite flora) would remain cherished in another People's land. Following the War of the Ring, Galadriel chooses to increase environmental healing when it concerns her in a more direct fashion. Although Galadriel's help proves invaluable to the Fellowship, Galadriel's weariness from the problems of Middle-earth and the task of protecting Lothlórien may create a moderate degree of selfishness caused by a degree of callousness and/or laziness, for Galadriel could use her vast environmental knowledge to help Middle-earth in other ways. However, as discussed elsewhere, the Elves' destiny in Middle-earth is that Men shall replace them, which (to some degree) reduces the

impression that Galadriel and many of the Elves behave selfishly and callously when they leave Middle-earth. Moreover, Tolkien's "Myths Transformed" states that Elves in Middle-earth experienced their "vitality [. . .] begin to ebb, and [then their] desire for physical life and joy in [their physical bodies] would pass ever more swiftly away. Then an Elf would begin (as they say now, for these things did not fully appear in the Elder Days) to²⁵³ 'fade'" (*Morgoth's* 427). Rather than selfish callousness or laziness, therefore, Galadriel's fatigue may best explain why Galadriel and other High Elves do not help Middle-earth's recovery to an even greater extent after the fall of Sauron.

One example of the need for Galadriel's environmental knowledge, leadership, influence, and labors, occurs when the Fellowship arrives at Lothlórien in *The Fellowship of the Ring*. On multiple occasions, Galadriel urges her (mainly) Silvan Elven subjects to take note of Gimli's words, Gimli's demeanor, and the difference between how he behaves and the Lothlórien Elves' dated expectations of Dwarves (i.e., Celeborn mentions that "It is long indeed since we saw one of Durin's folk in Caras Galadhon") ("Farewell" 366-67, "Mirror" 346). Besides teaching the Elves (e.g., Celeborn) to behave less callously toward the Dwarves and to hold fewer ignorant prejudices about the Dwarves, Galadriel teaches the Silvan Elves to appreciate the environmental entities cherished by the Dwarves and the Noldorin Elves. After rebuking Celeborn for his ill-treatment of Gimli,²⁵⁴ Galadriel declares: "Dark is the water of Kheled-zâram, and cold

253. The destruction of the One Ring and the loss of power among the Three Elven Rings of Power also accelerates Galadriel's (and Elrond's) sense of wariness.

254. Moreover, Galadriel's defense of the Dwarves of Khazad-dûm, the Dwarves' yearning to reclaim their homeland, and Galadriel's declaration that the Elves would attempt to reclaim/defend their homeland all indirectly allude to the fact that Galadriel's Ring of Power that she uses to defend Lothlórien is made of *mithril* that the Dwarves of Khazad-dûm mined (e.g., *Return*, "Grey" 1005; *Fellowship*, "Journey" 309). The work of the Dwarves, consequently, is certainly not wholly terrible and actually helps to protect these same Elves (as well as their beloved realm) who deride Gimli and the Dwarves.

are the springs of Kibil-nâla, and fair were the many-pillared halls of Khazad-dûm in Elder Days” (“Mirror” 347). In this aforementioned statement, therefore, Galadriel praises the sublime qualities of the water and architecture of Khazad-dûm. It is no coincidence that Galadriel subsequently mentions Nargothrond where her brother Finrod once ruled (348). By doing so, Galadriel reminds Celeborn (who just publicly shamed Gimli by condemning the Dwarves for unleashing the Balrog) and the other Elves of the Golden Wood that the Noldorin Elves and the Dwarves helped delve Nargothrond, although it was destroyed by Glaurung and pillaged by Orcs (347). Likewise, since Galadriel also notes that she and Celeborn did not dwell in Beleriand when Gondolin fell (348), this aside will cause the Elves to recall that dragons, Orcs, and *Balrogs* destroyed Gondolin, the greatest Elven city in Beleriand, because of the information Morgoth gained from the Elven miner Meglin and because of the wealth and beauty of Gondolin. In other words, Galadriel subtly works to pierce the Elves’ delusion that the Dwarves represent *the* race whose selfishness leads to the destruction of the environment; indeed, historically, the Elves share much of this blame as well. For successful environmental guardianship, Galadriel shows that individuals and communities must accept accountability and that interracial cooperation must occur and must improve, if possible, in order to maintain the environmental well-being.

Unlike her husband, the Dark Elf Celeborn, Galadriel values the Dwarves’ environmental interests and knowledge because of Galadriel’s inherent qualities as a Noldorin Elf and because of her experiences in the Blessed Realm. According to an important Tolkien fragment, “The History of Galadriel and Celeborn,” “Galadriel was a Noldo, and she had a natural sympathy with [Dwarvish] minds and their passionate love

of crafts of hand, a sympathy much greater than that found among many of the Eldar” (*Unfinished* 235). Galadriel, consequently, values the Dwarves for their fighting skills against Morgoth’s corrupted Orcs, in part, because she desires to have the Dwarves as allies who could help to rehabilitate Middle-earth (235). In other words, the other non-Noldorin Elves’ environmental sensibilities resist the labor necessary to shape the environment to produce works of artisanship, because “the Dwarves were ‘the Children of Aulë’, and Galadriel, like others of the Noldor, had been a pupil of Aulë and Yavanna in Valinor (235), whereas the Sindarin, Nandorin, Silvan, and Avari Elves never enjoyed this privilege.

Somewhat akin to Celeborn’s “rash” words to Gimli and Celeborn’s wish that he had refused to permit the Fellowship to enter Lothlórien in *The Fellowship of the Ring*²⁵⁵

255. Because Celeborn fought Sauron to save Celeborn’s realm of Eregion and the Rings of Power forged by Celebrimbor (*Unfinished*, “History” 237-38; *Silmarillion*, “Rings” 288), it seems likely that Celeborn thinks that the loss of Gandalf in Moria suggests that Gandalf’s Ring of Fire is lost. If so, this helps to explain the irritation that Celeborn displays in *The Fellowship of the Ring*. Readers witness Celeborn’s frustration when he commands Haldir to explain why he had not informed Celeborn about Gandalf’s death, when he urgently asks the Fellowship to tell how Gandalf died (i.e., *now*), when he bitterly criticizes Gimli and all the Dwarves, and when he wishes he had never allowed the Fellowship to enter Lothlórien (*Fellowship*, “Mirror” 346-47). While readers later discover that Gandalf does not lose the Ring of Fire, Celeborn’s despair and irritable words in this scene probably stems, in part, from his memories of how much the Eregion Elves suffered when they tried to preserve the Three Elven Rings of Power and save them from Sauron. Since Gandalf falls in Moria, which possesses many Orcs and other servants of Sauron, Celeborn probably fears that Sauron will acquire the Ring of Fire—or that the Balrog will attempt to use it to cause his “shadow and flame” to evolve to become all the more terrible (347). Galadriel, as a Ringbearer and as Celeborn’s spouse, probably realizes why Celeborn is furious and grasps the cause for Celeborn’s apparent frustration (i.e., Gandalf has apparently died without giving his Ring to another Keeper), which can help to explain why she says to Celeborn: “however it may be with the guide, the followers are blameless” (347). After all, Galadriel (as she subsequently notes to Frodo and Sam) cannot discuss the Three Rings publicly (355). This fact can help to explain another reason why (i.e., besides Galadriel’s intention to suggest that the Fellowship members are not responsible for Gandalf’s death) Galadriel states that the remaining Fellowship members prove “blameless” (347), for Galadriel’s phrase could obliquely refer to the hypothetical loss of the Ring of Fire. Galadriel’s statement counters Celeborn’s theory that “Gandalf fell from wisdom into folly” (347). Celeborn’s anger and poor behavior as a host, moreover, derive from “the trouble of [his] heart” (347); consequently, I believe that, by recalling Tolkien’s Middle-earth *Legendarium*, Celeborn’s (albeit incorrect) belief that an Elvish Ring of Power is lost with the now-presumed-dead Gandalf helps to explain why Celeborn the Wise acts so callously, prior to Galadriel’s admonishment. Thus, the aforementioned theory can *partially* solve the conundrum of Tolkien describing Celeborn as “the wisest,” despite Celeborn’s hasty and rude behavior, which Hammond and Scull reference (“*Lord*” . . . *Reader’s* 314).

(“Mirror” 347), readers of *The Silmarillion* perceive the failings of the Nandorin Green-Elves. The Green-Elves exhibit several environmental negatives, for they callously condemn the Edain for hunting and for felling trees, because they label the Edain their “unfriends” and because they threaten any Edain who remain in Ossiriand with harm (and eventually with death as well) (“Quenta: Coming . . . Men” 140-42). The Green-Elves declare Men their “unfriends” and offer nothing but “unfriendship” to the Edain,²⁵⁶ who journey west because of their mistaken hope that they might escape Morgoth and his servants (140-42). The Green-Elves’ profound love of nature, therefore, causes them to judge the Edain’s environmental views too quickly. Rather than embracing the environmental labor of teaching the Edain more environmental knowledge, the Green-Elves lazily refuse this task, and instead, they callously choose to threaten to kill or wound the Men.

Nevertheless, the Dark Elves also exhibit some environmental positives. For example, the Sindar wood-elf, Nellas, teaches the human Túrin (when Túrin is a young child) “the ways and the wild things of Doriath,²⁵⁷” as well as her love for the woods²⁵⁸

Of course, as Hammond and Scull note (313-14), Celeborn’s frustration also derives from his disgust that Balin’s quest caused the Balrog to reemerge, as well as from his centuries-long rage that some Dwarves destroyed the realm of Doriath.

256. By using the term “unfriends,” the Green-Elves suggest that they despise the Men and worry about their behavior in a manner similar to how Galadriel felt about her Elven nemesis, Fëanor (*Unfinished*, “History” 230).

257. Nevertheless, Nellas also demonstrates some of the negative tendencies of the Dark Elves, for she disliked living within stone delvings like Menegroth (*Children*, “Doriath” 80). Therefore, Nellas undervalues stone; this trait reoccurs with other Silvan Elves like Legolas (*Two*, “Road” 535); however, Legolas develops a sense of awe of the Glittering Caves (*Return*, “Many” 956). Dark Elves of the Third Age like Legolas, therefore, can still learn to value stones beyond merely appreciating their usefulness as resources to use for defensive purposes. Perhaps, by hearing Galadriel praise the Dwarves and by speaking with and listening to Gimli’s affection for stones and caverns (*Fellowship*, “Mirror” 347; *Two*, “Road” 534-35; *Return*, “Many” 956), the Noldorin Elves of Eregion then seem less “strange” to the Silvan Legolas (*Fellowship*, “Ring” 277).

258. Read the subsequent section discussing Men for more information concerning Túrin’s appreciation for the woods.

(*Children*, “Doriath” 80). Furthermore, the Green-elves of Ossiriand (and Nandorin Elves, in general) possess a deep love of water and of trees (*Silmarillion*, “Quenta: Coming . . . Elves” 54, 53) and (to a greater extent than even the other Elves) a deep understanding of Middle-earth’s flora and fauna²⁵⁹ (54).

As the Valar would approve, the Elves shape the physical environments of their lands, which they intimately comprehend and cherish, by building, cultivating, pruning, teaching, encouraging, and giving to others. Quality Elvish guardianship, moreover, often

259. The Elves also display their relationship with nature through some of their names for individual Elves, weapons, realms, capitals, landscapes, and bodies of water. For example, Tolkien’s unfinished *Index* states that Gil-Galad’s spear, Aeglos, means “icicle”; *Imladris* also derives its name from nature (i.e., *Imlad* translates as a “narrow valley with steep sides but a flat habitable bottom” (qtd. in Hammond and Scull, “*Lord*” . . . *Reader’s* 231, 234). Moreover, as Tolkien mentions in his fantasy novels and in his unfinished *Index*, the Elves name a river after the Elf-maiden *Nimrodel* (e.g., 302). Tolkien’s *Index* also equates “Amroth’s Mound” with *Cerin Amroth* (qtd. in 309). Although he later pondered altering the definition in *Unfinished Tales* (“History . . . Appendix A” 257), within his *Index*, Tolkien considers ““City of Trees”” as the meaning for *Caras Galadon* and states that “a ‘circular earthwall with dike’” represents the definition for *caras* (Hammond and Scull, “*Lord*” . . . *Reader’s* 311). The “Index” of the *Unfinished Tales*, moreover, translates the First Age Elven realm of *Dorthonion* as “Land of Pines” (429), translates *Celebrimbor* as “Hand of Silver” (which, of course, means that the Noldorin Elf’s name derives from one of Middle-earth’s precious metals) (426), and translates a nickname for the Silvan Elves—*Tawarwaith*—as “The forest people” (467). Furthermore, according to Rateliff’s analysis, *Thranduil* means “(One who lives in) a (fortified) cave in the woods” (*History* . . . *Hobbit*, “Name” 417). “Greenleaf,” meanwhile, equates to *Legolas*, while *Galdor* (the name of the Elf from the Grey Havens at the Council of Elrond in *The Lord of the Rings*) means “tree” (Hammond and Scull, “*Lord*” . . . *Reader’s* 223-24). By using names inspired by the physical environment, the Elves express their understanding of and appreciation for nature. Successful environmental guardianship, therefore, requires the incorporation of the environment into a People’s names for themselves, their artifacts, their homes, and their realms.

The emblems of the Elves also include pictures drawn from nature. While Finwë, Fëanor, and Fingolfin’s heraldic devices allude to the sun, Thingol’s includes stars and the moon (*Pictures* 47, 47n). Similar to Thingol’s emblem, Gil-galad’s insignia includes stars, which makes sense, because his name equates to ““Star of Radiance”” (*Pictures* 47, 47n). Meanwhile, both of Lúthien’s symbols prominently feature flowers, as does Idril’s cornflower insignia (*Pictures* 47, 47n). The nature-inspired emblems of Gondolin’s twelve houses in *The Fall of Gondolin* include not only Turgon’s crest with the sun and the moon but also the White Wing, the Mole,²⁵⁹ the Swallow, the Tower of Snow, the Tree, and the Golden Flower (*Book* . . . 2 174). Although less pronounced in terms of names, many of the other emblems of the Gondolin houses include precious metals and other environmental elements. For example, the Heavenly Arch (e.g. rubies, emeralds, amber, topaz, sapphires, amethysts, and chrysoptase), the Fountain (i.e., because of its association with water), and the Harp (e.g., the emblem contains gold and silver) (174-75) feature environmental beings, forms, and/or entities. Because many of the Elves’ insignias feature things found in the physical environment, the Elves again demonstrate their knowledge of and love for nature. For the Peoples to successfully guard the environment, Tolkien’s works suggest that the Peoples must care enough about the environment to include environmental entities, forms, and beings in their artwork and symbols.

includes fighting ecosadists but never torturing them, as well as refusing to conduct bioengineering experiments. Nonetheless, partially because of their fierce love for their realms and/or artifacts, the Elves' environmental guardianship is sometimes harmed by selfishness and callousness, while the Silvan and Nandorin Elves' nativist streak (as well as their reluctance to listen to others' counsel) harms their environmental guardianship. On the contrary, the Noldorin Elves' ability and willingness to listen to and discern the qualities of other Peoples (e.g., the Edain and the Dwarves) functions as some of their redeeming values as environmental guardians, despite their over-eagerness to march to war, in general, and to resort to violence in order to regain/save their created artifacts, in particular.

3.4. Starlight to Mineshaft: The Peaks and Abysses of Dwarvish Environmentalism

The (adopted) Dwarves, meanwhile, prove the most environmentally inconsistent of the Children of Ilúvatar.²⁶⁰ The Dwarves' prowess in mining, gem-shaping, and stone-shaping demonstrates their vast environmental knowledge concerning these activities, as well as their strong work ethic. While some of the Dwarves help other Peoples by completing their mining and their eco-themed stonework labors for them, the Dwarves sometimes fail to work toward maintaining/improving the environment's well-being. Because of the Dwarves' willingness to change the environment based on their visions of

260. Hammond and Scull dispute the idea that the Dwarves are one of the races among Ilúvatar's Children. Nevertheless, I do not share their belief that it is questionable whether or not the Dwarves are among the Children, for Dwarvish legends conclude that Ilúvatar will adopt the Dwarves at the renewing of the world ("Lord" . . . *Reader's* 327; e.g., *Silmarillion*, "Quenta: Aulë" 44). Moreover, Ilúvatar quickly provides the Dwarves with individual voices and wills (after Aulë begins to request for forgiveness after creating them without Ilúvatar's blessing), chooses to awaken the Dwarves after the Elves arise, and calls the Dwarves "the children of my adoption" (e.g., *Silmarillion*, "Quenta: Aulë" 44). Consequently, while not originally one of the groups counted as Ilúvatar's "Children," Tolkien makes it clear that the Dwarves will also rank among the Children of Ilúvatar.

beauty and because of the Dwarves' typical expectation of monetary compensation for their labors, these traits sometimes devolve into reckless, counterproductive, and callously selfish work that results in environmental destruction.

Although I will subsequently question the extent that readers should accept Yavanna's prophecy concerning Dwarvish environmentalism in *The Silmarillion*, the problematic nature of the Dwarves' approach to nature stems from their origins (which figures like Yavanna and Legolas reference) and the sacking of Menegroth, the mining of Moria, and the accumulation of wealth in Erebor further demonstrate. However, I believe Yavanna's view and the aforementioned reading of Aulë's statement require some modification. I hold this conviction, because the Dwarves (like Aulë) appreciate the sensory imagery of the physical environment (especially certain aspects of nature) much more than what Yavanna's declaration conveys. Yavanna's words, of course, heavily imply that the Dwarves are doomed to callous environmental attitudes, beliefs, and actions, because they will not care as much about things that Yavanna declares "my love": flora and fauna, in general, and trees, in particular ("Quenta: Aulë" 45). The interaction between Aulë—the creator of the Dwarves—and his spouse Yavanna, suggests that subterranean areas will capture the environmental focus of the Dwarves and that the Dwarves will possess the intrinsic desire to modify the environment, since Yavanna took no part in their making ("Quenta: Aulë" 45). Moreover, Aulë makes the legitimate claim that the Dwarves must take and use some resources from the physical environment to survive; for example, "they will have need of wood" (46). Because Aulë's observation appears entirely devoid of emotion, readers may (albeit wrongly) conclude that Aulë and the Dwarves are doomed to environmental callousness, and

therefore, they cannot display emotional responses to nature. Readers, nonetheless, must also recall that *The Silmarillion* states that Aulë grieves, because (while the Valar must fight Morgoth in order to end Morgoth's destruction of the physical environment and his slaughtering/enslaving of the Children) Aulë recognizes that such a war will irrevocably harm the world ("Quenta: Coming . . . Elves" 51). In other words, in addition to echoing Aulë's sentiment that the Dwarves must use some of Middle-earth's natural resources to meet their needs, the Dwarves can parallel their Vala Father's environmental appreciation and desire to preserve Middle-earth, as noted by critics like Seymour (45).

The Dwarves display some of their environmental knowledge through the quality of their work in matters concerning personal defense, sustenance, and their sense of aesthetics. The Petty-Dwarves, for example, use natural resources for weapons (e.g., ore), food²⁶¹ (e.g., roots), and storage containers in *The Children of Húrin* ("Mîm" 121, 123, 137) and in the drafts of the aforementioned work that appear in the *Unfinished Tales* ("Narn" 150-51). Furthermore, the Petty-Dwarves also seem to create paths that lead to Amon Rûdh and shape its stone walls to create vents and steps, as well as to make it easier for walkers²⁶² (*Children*, "Mîm" 128-29, 137, 138; *Unfinished*, "Narn" 150-51).

The Dwarvish delvings of Nargothrond, Menegroth, and Amon Rûdh not only show the Dwarves' joy when they carve stone, but also that the delvings fulfill the necessary task of providing a means to deter enemies from attacking. By doing so, the

261. In the Third Age, the Dwarves in Thorin's Company display a similar willingness to use natural resources as a means for sustenance, such as when several Dwarves unsuccessfully hunt white deer (*Hobbit*, "Flies" 133).

262. The manner in which the Petty-Dwarves alter their environment (such as the creation of steps, so that they could dwell within Amon Rûdh more easily) parallels some of the Ents' actions. Interestingly, like the close association of the Ents and Fangorn Forest, the Petty-Dwarves are often associated with the "high moorlands that rose between the Vales of Sirion and Narog" (e.g., *Unfinished*, "Narn" 148n).

Dwarves embrace environmental work that improves the overall environment's well-being, demonstrates their knowledge of such environmental labors, displays their cultural standards of environmental appreciation, and helps others avoid the delusion that peace and safety can continue without effort and sacrifices. The Belegost Dwarves forge Menegroth within the Elven realm of Doriath for Thingol because of their joy in such work (and because of their monetary and educational compensation for their labors) and because of the need for Thingol's realm to protect itself from Morgoth's impending destructive return to Middle-earth, as noted in *The Silmarillion* ("Quenta: Sindar" 92-93). Similarly, the Dwarves again aid one of the Eldar lords, Finrod Felagund, by creating the fortress Nargothrond within the Caverns of Narog ("Quenta: Return" 114), which, as Mîm the Petty-Dwarf notes in *The Children of Húrin*, the Petty-Dwarves shaped long before the Elven Exiles returned to Middle-earth²⁶³ ("Mîm" 121). The Dwarves and Petty-Dwarves, consequently, each forge defensive delvings, because they enjoy the process of such creations, while the Great Dwarves also delve because they receive financial compensation when they embark on these efforts for the Eldar Elves. The Dwarves' love of mining and their aim to work to earn money, however, could (and would) sometimes devolve into examples of callous exploration for the sake of selfish greed, as I will discuss later in this section.

Mîm's refusal to tell Túrin the name of (or give many details about) the "earth-bread" because of the poor environmental record of humans represents the mixing of environmental knowledge with callousness and ignorance. According to Mîm, the Petty-Dwarves refuse to "teach Men to find [earth-bread], for Men are greedy and thriftless,

263. The Petty-Dwarves also create the Bar-en-Nibin-noeg within Sharbhund, or Amon Rûdh (*Children*, "Mîm" 129, 127).

and would not spare till all the plants had perished; whereas now they pass them by as they go blundering in the wild. . . . More than gold in the hungry winter, for [the earth-bread] may be hoarded like the nuts of a squirrel” (*Children*, “Mîm” 134-35; *Unfinished*, “Narn” 103). Mîm, moreover, proudly remarks that the Petty-Dwarves understand the location and uses of the “earth bread,” whereas the Avari and Sindarin Elves remain ignorant of this useful and savory root, while the Noldorin Elves (in the perspective of the Petty-Dwarf) live so lazily and arrogantly that they refuse “to delve” whatsoever²⁶⁴ (*Children*, “Mîm” 134; *Unfinished*, “Narn” 103). Although Mîm’s characterization of the Noldorin Elves represents a delusion based on prejudice, the fact that Túrin (who lived for many years in Doriath—the greatest Sindarin Elven Middle-earth kingdom) knows nothing of these edible roots, prior to his interaction with the Petty-Dwarves, speaks to the depth of the Petty-Dwarves’ environmental knowledge. While the Petty-Dwarves know the location of (and some of the uses of) the flora they call “earth-bread,” they choose to preserve it, because it helps the Petty-Dwarves; however, Mîm’s reference to the environmental misbehavior of Men possesses some merit, as I note elsewhere. While the few remaining Petty-Dwarves may harvest several individual roots, Mîm argues that, because of the selfishness, callousness, and ignorance of Men, Men would harvest the entire species of flora out of existence. However, by not telling others about this unique root, the Petty-Dwarves choose to allow for the possibility that some Men could die of starvation in the winter; furthermore, the Petty-Dwarves ignore the opportunity to teach

264. Their strong dislike of the Noldorin Elves distinguishes the Petty-Dwarves from the Great Dwarves of the First and Second Ages, because the latter enjoys/enjoyed the friendship of the Noldor.

The Great Dwarves of the First and Second Ages cherish the Noldor above all other Elves because of their skill in crafting jewels and because of the Noldor’s esteem for the creator of the Dwarves: Aulë (*Silmarillion*, “Sindar” 92-93).

some Men (including the influential Túrin) some environmental knowledge regarding responsibility. In other words, the Petty-Dwarves' yearning to conserve natural resources from the majority of exploitative Men (while also providing some roots for themselves, Túrin, and Túrin's band of outlaws) represents a blending of environmental knowledge, altruism, callousness, and selfishness.

Although the Dwarves' predestined doom includes a tendency to undervalue Middle-earth's flora and to treat it callously, as Yavanna foretold in *The Silmarillion* (Quenta: Aulë" 45-46), the Dwarves usually avoid harming trees in the manner of the selfishly callous and ignorant Orcs. For instance, to better hide their dwelling, the Petty-Dwarves allow rowan, birch, and thorn-trees to live on and near their home within Amon Rûdh; the Petty-Dwarves also possess no objection to the flowers *aeglos* and *seregon* that blossom near their home on Amon Rûdh, and therefore, they allow the flora to continue growing (*Children*, "Mîm" 127-130; *Unfinished*, "Narn" 99-100, 148n). Similarly, in Khazad-dûm (i.e., Moria), these Second Age Dwarves permit the Eregion Elves to place two trees outside the hidden entrance to the Dwarven realm²⁶⁵ (*Fellowship*, "Journey" 295). Indeed, the Third Age "Misty Mountains" song of the Erebor Dwarves in *The Hobbit* demonstrates an interest in various aspects of the environment (such as trees, daylight, winds, the moon, caves, waterfalls, and mountains) ("Unexpected" 14-16).

Moreover, Gimli (while speaking to Legolas in *The Two Towers*) justifies Dwarvish environmental shaping by stating that the Dwarves would only slightly modify the Glittering Caves ("Road" 535). In fact, Gimli declares that mining these caverns would mar them and that such an act is as immoral and as unethical as butchering trees

265. By doing so, the Dwarves enable the Eregion Elves to establish a tribute to the memory of the Two Trees of Valinor (*Silmarillion*, "Quenta: Beginning" 38).

for firewood in the spring (535). The Dwarves, therefore, permit the growth of trees (as noted previously), *and* they condemn those whose selfishness leads them to callously and ignorantly fell “groves of blossoming trees” for mere “firewood,” which would (in addition to harming the ecosystem’s well-being) rob others of enjoying the benefits of trees (535). Thus, Gimli argues that the Dwarves will (and must) abstain from unrestricted mining opportunities; in other words, Dwarves of quality sacrifice the monetary value of such a venture in favor of a more ethical, conservationist approach that better preserves the aesthetic beauty and the well-being of the Caverns. Besides Gimli’s discussion with Legolas, Gimli also alludes to his appreciation of trees when he tells Galadriel and the Lothlórien Elves that their realm and their trees prove “more fair”²⁶⁶ than even his ancestral home in Khazad-dûm (*Fellowship*, “Mirror” 347). Yavanna’s prediction of the Dwarves as a race of near-damnable environmental exploiters, therefore, requires a degree of qualification. Consequently, *when* the Dwarves embrace the aforementioned environmental ethics espoused by Gimli and practiced by the Dwarves of his Glittering Caves realm after the War of the Ring, *I then* agree with the characterization of the Dwarves’ environmental practices provided by Seymour. According to Seymour, “The Dwarvish connection to mining and stonemasonry represents a celebration of the natural world, and an alternative ideal of beauty which privileges practicality along with aesthetics” (30). Furthermore, *when* Gimli and the Dwarves consciously strive to modify the appearance of the environment so that it remains a *sustainable landscape* rather than laboring to fundamentally alter the Caves in

266. Gimli’s statement, of course, also derives from his desire to match Galadriel’s courteous words; however, readers should assume (based on the context of Gimli’s declaration and the overall plot of the story) that Gimli’s words reflect his true feelings as well.

a manner akin to the massive mines of Moria, only then do I generally agree with another belief voiced by Seymour. According to Seymour, “the Dwarvish approach to the natural world could be considered a [type of] geological appropriation of the [sustainable] agricultural lifestyle by the Hobbits²⁶⁷” (44).

Several other passages indicate that the Dwarves demonstrate a degree of environmental appreciation. For instance, the Dwarves display an interest in natural forms (such as hills) that dates back to the first Dwarf, Durin, who gave names to hills and to other natural forms (e.g., landscapes) as well (Hammond and Scull, “*Lord*” . . . *Reader’s* 286). Their affection for stars, meanwhile, leads the Dwarves to create the seven stars of the *Crown of Durin*,²⁶⁸ which alludes to the first stars that the original Dwarves saw in the sky (299). This affection for environmental forms, moreover, leads the Dwarves of Moria to name the *Dimril Stair* after a tributary river that feeds the Mirrormere,²⁶⁹ as Tolkien notes in his unfinished *Index* (qtd. in 302). More importantly, Gimli illustrates the Dwarvish love of water and of stars when he seeks solace, following Gandalf’s death in Moria, by looking into the Mirrormere’s waters (an experience that Gimli successfully urges Frodo to share with him) and again when he expresses wonder at the sound of the water within the Glittering Caves (*Fellowship*, “Lothlórien” 324-25; *Two*, “Road” 534). Gimli also demonstrates that the Dwarves generally condemn the long-term destruction of aboveground landscapes, since Gimli also finds himself

267. By describing Hobbit culture as “sustainable,” I am referring to the Hobbits’ environmental ethics after the Scouring of the Shire when the Hobbits rehabilitate their homeland to the point that it provides bountiful crops for the Hobbits. The poor environmental guardianship traits of the evil Hobbits (such as Lotho Sackville-Baggins), who pillage the soil in order to try obtain more profit, somewhat resemble the unregulated mining practices of some corrupted Dwarves.

268. Patrick Wynne argues that the Corona Borealis constellation may stand as the inspiration for Durin’s Crown (qtd. in Quiñonez and Raggett 13).

269. Within “Nomenclature of *The Lord of the Rings*,” Tolkien mentions that *glass-lake* is the equivalent of *Mirrormere* (qtd. in Hammond and Scull, “*Lord*” . . . *Reader’s* 774).

saddened by the environmental ruin of the Brown Lands (*Fellowship*, “Lothlórien” 332, “Great” 372). Gimli’s affection for subterranean wonders, however, demonstrates his ability to appreciate a form of nature even more. For example, Gimli calls the Helm’s Deep Caverns (i.e., the “Glittering Caves of Aglarond”) “beautiful” and worthy of “an endless pilgrimage” (*Two*, “Road” 535). Gimli feels drawn to the Glittering Caves of Aglarond, because of their immense size, the constant sound of dripping water, the precious metals and gems in the walls of the caverns, and the memorable stalagmites (533-35). Consequently, the Dwarves display appreciation for multiple environmental entities.

Like the Great Dwarves of the First Age who create the cavern-fortresses of Menegroth and Nargothrond, the Dwarves of the Second and the Third Ages also work with stones and gems, in part, because of their love of the process and the spectacle of such creations; unfortunately, these traits sometimes devolve into callous and ignorant forms of selfish environmental exploitation. Although the Dwarves of Belegost try to reason with their cousins of Nogrod,²⁷⁰ *The Silmarillion* mentions that the Dwarves of Nogrod disregard their cousins’ advice by opting to kill Thingol and then to destroy Menegroth in Doriath in order to obtain the beautiful Nauglamír necklace and the Silmaril that they covet²⁷¹ (“Quenta: Ruin . . . Doriath” 232-34). Consequently, the

270. In earlier versions of this tale, the Belegost Dwarves also help to destroy Doriath; however, in later notes, Tolkien only references the Nogrod Dwarves as the wicked Dwarves who pillage Doriath and kill many Elves (*War . . . Jewels*, “Tale” 352-53).

271. It is important to note, however, that Christopher constructs this series of scenes that comprise “The Ruin of Doriath” chapter. In addition to a 1963 letter by J.R.R. Tolkien (which mentions that the Green-Elves and the Ents help Beren to avenge the obliteration of Doriath’s realm), Christopher’s drafting of this chapter is largely based on his father’s early tale of “The Nauglafring.” In this tale, the Dwarves kill Tinwelint (i.e., Thingol), destroy the Elven kingdom, and seize the Necklace and the Silmaril, as well as the rest of the wealth of the realm, before Beren and the Elves subsequently destroy the Dwarves and retake the Nauglafring necklace with the Silmaril (e.g., *Book . . . 2* 229-41; *War . . . Jewels*, “Tale” 354-56).

Nogrod Dwarves' sacking of Menegroth represents the type of destructive behavior that fulfills Yavanna's prophecy that the Dwarves would care more for the things that they create—at the expense of the rest of the environment²⁷² (“Quenta: Aulë” 45).

The negative consequences of the Dwarves' passion for mining and for gems (i.e., their overharvesting/monopolizing of natural resources) accounts for some of the most memorable passages within Tolkien's Second Age and Third Age Middle-earth texts as well. The Balrog's sinister emergence (which occurs because of the insatiable desire of the Dwarves of Moria for more *mithril*) and the appearance of Smaug (because of the massive accumulation of wealth by the Erebor Dwarves) imply that the Dwarves' selfish exploitation of the earth for natural resources causes many problems (e.g., *Return*, “Appendix A” 1046-48). The Dwarves' choice to mine endlessly and to accumulate wealth ceaselessly, in other words, creates and further enables environmental degradation, even while the abundant labor and money provide the delusion of safety. When Thorin finally realizes that, by ransoming the Arkenstone, Bilbo hoped to preserve the lives of his Dwarvish comrades so that they might enjoy their regained Erebor homeland by avoiding a disastrous war, Thorin describes Bilbo's act as, “Some courage and some wisdom, blended in measure. If more of us valued food and cheer and song above hoarded gold, it would be a merrier world” (*Hobbit*, “Return” 259). Thus, although dying, Thorin also illustrates the ability for a Dwarf to disavow his avarice, which had previously led Thorin to welcome an avoidable war against Elves and Men in an ignorant, callous manner.

272. As I discuss elsewhere, I am aware that Tolkien did not finish this scene; however, I believe that it is self-evident that the Dwarves take part in the destruction of Doriath, for this is how Tolkien depicts the Ruin of Doriath in his early rough drafts and in his *Letters*.

By characterizing the Dwarves as a group that often struggles with selfishness, I disagree with Seymour's belief that the "Dwarves are not depicted as collecting gold in large quantities for the sake of having lots of gold" (43). After all, the Dwarves often behave selfishly. Thorin's statement indicates this when he says, "*If more of us valued food and cheer and song above hoarded gold*" (259, emphasis added). Thorin's declaration implies the need for Dwarves to abandon their selfishness by alluding to the fact that too many Dwarves care more about wealth than fellowship by seeking to accumulate more and more precious metals and jewels. Likewise, my reading differs from Seymour's assertion that the Dwarves do not behave selfishly and callously but actually act rightly when they refuse to give any money to the Men of Lake-Town (44). My reading differs from Seymour's for several reasons. Seymour's reading underappreciates the fact that the destruction of Dale occurs because Erebor's great wealth lures Smaug to the area, the fact that some of the wealth in Erebor belongs to the descendants of Dale, the fact that Bard (the heir of Dale and a resident of Lake-Town) liberates Erebor's wealth by killing Smaug, and the fact that Smaug obliterates Lake-Town because the Men of Lake-Town assisted the Dwarves and Bilbo in their quest to retake Erebor, as *The Hobbit* mentions (e.g., *Hobbit*, "Gathering" 237). Indeed, by initially denying the justness of the Men's claims and by planning to kill anyone who lays any type of claim to the massive amount of treasure, Thorin and the Dwarves highly resemble their ancestors of the First Age. According to Tolkien's 1950s work on the *Quenta Silmarillion* (e.g., *War . . . Jewels*, "Later" 171), the Dwarves "gathered [wealth] rather to hoard than to use" (204). In her effort to rehabilitate the image of the Dwarves from overly harsh scholastic criticism (e.g., 30, 31-32), therefore, I believe that Seymour

overgeneralizes when she discusses the Dwarves' environmental qualities by trying to move the critical opinion too far in the other direction by underemphasizing the Dwarves' negatives.

While less destructive in terms of scale, the Dwarves provide evidence that justifies Yavanna's fears that Dwarves would prove insufficient environmental guardians because of the manner of their use of trees to meet their desires after their epic war with the Orcs. Following the Battle of Azanulbizar that concludes the War of the Dwarves and the Orcs, the Dwarves chop down many trees to burn their dead, since they could not (according to their cultural beliefs) properly entomb the fallen Dwarves in stone (*Return*, "Appendix A" 1050). This behavior again *partially* fulfills Yavanna's ancient prophecy that, by the axes of the Dwarves, "Many a tree shall feel the bite of their iron without pity" (*Silmarillion*, "Quenta: Aulë" 45). Because of the large-scale funeral burnings, therefore, the Dwarves ensure that more things (i.e., trees) in the environment die; indeed, the destruction proves so epic that the landscape "remained bare ever after" (*Return*, "Appendix A" 1050). The Dwarves' felling of many trees to burn the dead Dwarvish bodies, therefore, appears callously selfish. Nevertheless, while the Dwarves choose to lay waste to many trees, Tolkien mentions that the felling of trees to burn them with the dead Dwarves "seemed grievous to the Dwarves, for it was against their use" (1050n). The Dwarves, consequently, display a sense of remorse (albeit without repentance) for the large-scale felling of trees to satisfy their cultural ban on burying their dead (1050n). While Yavanna is correct to declare that "Many a tree shall feel the bite of [Dwarvish] iron," therefore, Yavanna overgeneralizes in her summary of the Dwarves' environmental

temperament when she states that the Dwarves shall cut down myriads of trees “without pity” (*Silmarillion*, “Quenta: Aulë” 45).

However, despite their various shortcomings as environmental guardians, the Dwarves exhibit greater environmental appreciation than some of the Elves for non-subterranean aspects of nature. Within *The Silmarillion*, Thingol, the High Elf who rules the most magnificent Sindarin realm in Doriath, elects to pay the Belegost Dwarves with “many fair pearls” for their work in creating Menegroth; Thingol acquires these pearls from Círdan, who gathers these pearls from the Balar waters (“Quenta: Sindar” 92, emphasis added). Some of the most famous and wisest of the Elves, therefore, use natural resources as *currency* to gain what they need and desire; the Dwarves of this time, meanwhile, “willingly” delve the fortress of Menegroth because of their joy in delving and because of their love of pearls (“Quenta: Sindar” 92). While the Teleri Elves (who love the sea) readily trade pearls, the Dwarves consider the pearls “dear” and “prized . . . above a mountain of wealth” (“Quenta: Sindar” 92). Although the Dwarves can exhibit a lack of awe for non-subterranean natural resources, this disinterest stems, in part, from the Dwarves’ ignorance of the existence of such natural resources (“Quenta: Sindar” 92). In other words, Thingol and his Elves show less appreciation for pearls than the Dwarves, who value the pearls’ beauty enough to work on a lengthy and challenging environmental project for Thingol and the Doriath Elves in order to obtain more beautiful pearls.

The Dwarves of Belegost appreciate not only pearls but also the environmental teachings of Melian the Maia as a reward for their delving work in Menegroth, as *The Silmarillion* mentions (“Quenta: Sindar” 92). The fact that the Dwarves “were eager” for the counsel of Melian matters because Melian tended the flowers and the trees in Irmo’s

gardens in Valinor in earlier eras (“Quenta: Sindar” 92; “Valaquenta” 30) and because Melian possesses kinship with Yavanna (“Quenta: Thingol” 55). Perhaps the Dwarves learn how to carve images of flora and fauna out of stone as a result of Melian’s tutoring, since Melian helps the Elves and the Dwarves shape the walls and the pillars in Menegroth (“Quenta: Sindar” 93). Because the Dwarves of Khazad-dûm (i.e., Moria) crafted pillars to look like trees (*Fellowship*, “Bridge” 320), this behavior suggests the possibility that the descendants of the Dwarves of Beleriand who traveled to Khazad-dûm retaught the lessons of Melian to their cousins, a sentiment that Hammond and Scull appear to agree with (“*Lord*” . . . *Reader’s* 294). Therefore, the Dwarves may continue to use Melian’s lessons centuries and centuries later; Gimli’s hypothetical references to “wings,” “clouds,” and “weeds and corals in a grotto of the sea,” as he talks about the appearance of the Helm’s Deep Caverns, suggest this possibility (*Two*, “Road” 534). While the Dwarves could certainly learn how to craft the wings of birds by observing these animals and while the Dwarves could carve-out images of clouds because of their Middle-earth journeys, Gimli’s reference to coral and seaweed from a race that “hated the sound of the sea and feared to look upon it” appears quite strange (*Silmarillion*, “Quenta: Sindar” 93). Plausibly, Melian taught some of the First Age Dwarves how to carve the likenesses of sea-creatures and sea-plants as part of their payment for delving Menegroth (92). After all, unlike many of the Dwarves who opt to remain neutral during the War of the Last Alliance, Gimli’s ancestors choose to fight with the Elves, Gondorians, and Arnorians against the eco-sadist Sauron, as *The Rings of Power and the Third Age* references (*Silmarillion* 294, 288-89). We find, therefore, multiple examples of Gimli’s kin displaying an appreciation for the environment and an interest in improving the well-

being of the overall environment that does not necessarily imply hoarding, which is a trait that stems, in part, from Sauron's corruption. In other words, because the Dwarves receive some instruction from one of the Maiar who served Yavanna, this may stymie (to some extent) the Dwarves' tendency to underappreciate the physical environment that Yavanna foretold in *The Silmarillion* ("Quenta: Aulë" 45-46) by increasing their environmental knowledge. In any case, by resisting Sauron, Gimli and his Dwarvish relatives refuse to suffer the delusion that Sauron will bypass them if they do not help the other Free Peoples of Middle-earth; instead, these Dwarves labor to defeat Sauron's callously selfish imperialism.²⁷³ Yet, the inconsistency of the Dwarves' environmentalism continues, as demonstrated by their love of pearls but their general cultural aversion to the sensory imagery of the ocean.

Of the Free Peoples, the Dwarves are the most prone to fail as environmental guardians. The Dwarves' insufficient environmental ethics often proves ironical, since their expertise in mining, gem-shaping, and stonework repeatedly contributes to their willingness to exploit the environment for aesthetic and monetary reasons, which, in turn, harms the well-being of the physical environment of Middle-earth. Furthermore, similar to the Noldorin Elves, Dwarvish environmental guardianship also falters because of their over-eagerness to fight to regain/save their created artifacts. However, the Dwarves *love* certain environmental entities and forms, such as rocks, water, caverns, pearls, and the stars; this affection somewhat rehabilitates the Dwarves' environmental guardianship. The Dwarves of northwestern Middle-earth also often fight ecosadists and help other

273. Similarly, during Sauron's earlier confrontations with and his destruction of Eregion, the Dwarves of Khazad-dûm aid the Elves of Eregion in a variety of ways (e.g., the Dwarves help some of the Eregion Elves escape to Lothlórien) (e.g., *Unfinished*, "History" 237, 244).

Peoples defend themselves and their realms, which also redeems Dwarvish environmental guardianship to some extent.

3.5. My Country, My Trees, My Rules: Entish Environmental View Vs. the Ecocidal Tyranny of Old Man Willow

Although they are the protagonists created to guard the trees and other flora of Middle-earth, the Ents sometimes behave selfishly, which is caused by various degrees of callousness, ignorance, and laziness. The names and nicknames of the Ents, their maintenance of a realm, their regulation of visitation to Fangorn Forest and its trees,²⁷⁴ their training and teaching, and the Ents' pruning, dwellings, and food each indicate that the Ents are authority figures. Far from behaving like the reckless, dictatorial, egomaniacal, bloodthirsty Old Man Willow, the Ents routinely display immense caution in their activities, knowing that their choices can alter the environment. Nonetheless, although the Ents exhibit some refreshingly positive environmental views and experience a partial-renewal during and after the War of the Ring, the Ents still practice/believe in some of the same environmental oversimplifications as Yavanna, the Vala whose song helped to awaken the Ents and predestine their values and temperament.

The Ents' hierarchical role as the guardians of plants (especially trees) stems from the origins of Middle-earth, according to *The Silmarillion*. Through their efforts to "achieve" the vision within Ilúvatar's Great Music and to resist Morgoth's evil tampering with the world's creation ("Ainulindalë" 20, 15-17), the Valar demonstrate how they

274. Although Tolkien basically reuses the bulk of the same drawing for Taur-nu-Fuin, Mirkwood, and Fangorn Forest, each of these forest images not only feature trees but also smaller plants and fungi beneath the trees (*Pictures* 37n).

“endeavored ever, in despite of Melkor, to rule the Earth and to prepare it for the coming of the Firstborn [Elves]” (22). Nevertheless, once the Children awaken, Aulë (with the agreement of Manwë) informs Yavanna that the Children will possess “dominion” over the land, as Ilúvatar intended, which means the Children “shall use all that they find in Arda: though not, by the purpose of Eru [Ilúvatar], without respect or without gratitude” (“Quenta: Aulë” 45). To protect all plants (or *olvar* as Yavanna calls “all things that have roots”) (45), Yavanna requests protectors of plants, which the Great Music included²⁷⁵ (45). Manwë agrees to the request and deems that the Ents, (i.e., the Shepherds of the Trees) will unleash “their just anger” on any who willfully harm trees (46). As the protective guardians of the trees envisioned since the first imaginings of the world within the minds of some of the Valar, therefore, the Ents work as the sensitive caretakers of the trees, which places the Shepherds of the Trees in a position of authority in their dealings with their tree-herds.

Entish names (e.g., the generic titles of “Shepherds of the trees” and “tree-herders,” as well as the particular names of Ents, such as “Fangorn” and “Quickbeam”) help to demonstrate that the Ents’ environmental task of protecting and nurturing trees and other entities is hierarchical in nature. According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, “shepherd” means, “A man who guards, tends, and herds a flock of sheep (grazing at large); usually one so employed for hire; or one of a pastoral people who herd (his own) sheep, goats, etc.” The important supplemental parenthetical aside “(his own)” implies

275. This *Silmarillion* passage supports Galadriel's dissenting theory concerning the origins of the Ents. In drafts within *The War of the Jewels* and in Tolkien's September 20, 1963, letter to Col. Worskett, Tolkien observes that Galadriel's views diverge from traditional Elvish beliefs, which describe the Ents as a species set apart and not one of the Children found in the Musical Themes of Ilúvatar. Galadriel, however, believes that the Ents transformed into trees because of their innate affection for trees or because Yavanna persuaded Manwë to include souls within some trees (*Jewels*, “Ents . . . Eagles” 341; *Letters* 335).

ownership, which means a hierarchical relationship. Furthermore, the *Oxford English Dictionary* defines a “herd” as, “A company of domestic animals of one kind, kept together under the charge of one or more persons.” Consequently, again, we find a hierarchical relationship with the herd, in the Ents’ case the trees, “under the charge” of the Ent “herdsman”; Treebeard, as *The Two Towers* demonstrates, makes this implication when he assigns the possessive pronoun “his” in relation to the Ent Skinbark and “his tree-herds” located to the west of Isengard (“Treebeard” 463). Because “Fangorn” is the ancient Elvish name for “Treebeard” and because Treebeard is the last of the oldest Ents who fully functions and follows Yavanna's call to defend the trees (“White Rider” 488, “Treebeard” 463), the fact that the forest derives its name from Treebeard’s name implies that the Ent is the forest’s leader. Gandalf, moreover, supports this reading of Treebeard as the head of the hierarchy by using the definite article before describing “Fangorn” as “the guardian of the forest” in which he, Legolas, Gimli, and Aragorn speak (“White Rider” 488). Gandalf’s statement echoes Treebeard's own description of himself as, “*The Ent, I am*”; together, these descriptions of Treebeard reinforce the hierarchical nature of the Ents’ environmental relationship with *their* trees (“Treebeard” 453). Because Hazell observes that *Quickbeam*²⁷⁶ represents another name for *rowan tree* (80), Quickbeam’s very name also reflects the type of trees he maintains, cherishes, and guards (*Two*, “Treebeard,” 471-72). Consequently, a degree of possessiveness among the Ents exists, because the trees and forest cannot possess their own names; instead, the Ents sometimes

276. Quickbeam mentions that his other name, “Bregalad” (an Elvish name, according to Treebeard), means “Quickbeam” in the Common Speech used by the Hobbits (*Two*, “Treebeard” 471; *Return*, “Appendix F” 1102-04). “Mountain-ash,” meanwhile, is another name for the rowan tree, according to Hammond and Scull (“*Lord*” . . . *Reader’s* 388).

Tolkien discusses in his “Nomenclature of *The Lord of the Rings*” that “Quickbeam” can refer to ash and rowan trees (qtd. in Hammond and Scull, “*Lord*” . . . *Reader’s* 762).

adopt the identity of the trees as their own, which leads the Ents to share a name with the trees that they love the most.²⁷⁷ Tolkien's Ents, therefore, possess a hierarchical relationship with nature (which contradicts Tolkien's letters that characterize the Ents as "unpossessive" in spirit) (*Letters* 212n) even when one examines the etymology of the words of the Ents' titles and names. Consequently, while the Ents certainly work to understand, to appreciate, and to protect many of the trees, the Ents also display a degree of self-centeredness in their relationship with trees.

The Ents shape their environment by deciding when and where their guardianship of trees begins and ends. Treebeard (in one of the stories within the "The History of Galadriel and Celeborn" section of the *Unfinished Tales*) provides additional evidence concerning the Ents' hierarchical relationship with nature when he informs the then-Elven King of Lórien that, though the Elves could come to Fangorn Forest if they wished, "I know mine, and you know yours" ("History . . . Appendix C" 261). Because of this declaration by Treebeard, readers witness one way that the Ents build is by selecting where to protect *their* trees, which leads me to hold a different view concerning the Ents' environmentalism than those expressed by Jeffers and by Tolkien's letter, as I discuss elsewhere. My analysis again differs from Jeffers's reading, for Jeffers believes that the "Ents feel a responsibility for places beyond Fangorn because of the impact those places have upon their original place" (29). Aside from the aforementioned quotation from Treebeard in the *Unfinished Tales*, which features Treebeard leaving responsibility for the land and the trees of Lórien with the Elven-king rather than requesting for Ents to

277. However, by sharing the name of the tree (or, in Treebeard's/Fangorn's case, the name of the forest) that he cherishes the most, this may also reinforce/deepen the Ents' empathy for this tree species.

shepherd the trees of the Elven realm,²⁷⁸ other forms of evidence lead me to view Entish environmentalism differently than Jeffers's aforementioned characterization. Firstly, Jeffers's depiction of Fangorn as the "original place" of the Ents is not entirely true (29), since the Ents once walked in Beleriand during the First Age²⁷⁹ (*Two*, "Treebeard" 458). Therefore, the areas where the Ents used to shepherd trees covered a far greater distance than the size of Fangorn Forest during the era of the War of the Ring. Although Jeffers states that the Ents "feel a responsibility" beyond Fangorn Forest, the Ents allow a massive reduction of their forest, since Fangorn only amounted to "the East End" of a forest that once stretched to the Mountains of Lune (458, 459). Indeed, even Fangorn Forest suffered significant reduction long before Saruman's fall into ecoterrorism, since Nimrodel and Amroth (then-King of Lórien) discovered Nimrodel "under the eaves of Fangorn, which in those [early] days [in the Second Age] drew *much nearer* to Lórien" (*Unfinished*, "History . . . Amroth" 241, emphasis added). As mentioned within *The Lord of the Rings*, the Ents' habitually lethargic responses to the reduction of their woods stem somewhat from the fatalist, pacifist view that Treebeard offers to Pippin and Merry after the Ent first meets the Hobbits: "the withering of all woods may be drawing near. There

278. One of the later rough drafts of Treebeard's conversation with Merry and Pippin sheds additional light on the Ents' hierarchical relationship with nature and their conscious choice to stop shepherding and to leave an area's trees to the guardianship of others (*Treason*, "Treebeard" 416). According to Treebeard, "it is a *long, long* time since the Ents *walked away from* the banks of the Baranduin" (416, emphasis added). The phrase "walked away from" emphasizes the Ents' choice to leave the area's trees without adequate guidance and care; the fact that the amount of time that has elapsed deserves a double "long" shows the depth of the ramifications of the Ents' role as guardians, albeit in the negative. Furthermore, Treebeard explicitly states in this draft that the Old Forest increased in evil because of the lack of Ents. Because of the Ents' absence from the Old Forest, "[N]o one [exists] to care" for the trees in the area for thousands of years (416). Treebeard, moreover, notes that the Ents still elect to leave the Old Forest region, despite knowing that the Old Forest had long been "a very bad region" due to "some old sorcery in the Dark Days" that distinguishes this sick, "queer" land from the healthy and pure ancient woods that remind Treebeard of Lothlórien (415). By leaving the Old Forest to fester, the Ents appear somewhat callous and lazy since they selfishly refuse to labor in the Old Forest area, despite knowing of the corruption that plagues the land.

279. Treebeard, at the time of his conversations with the Hobbits in *The Two Towers*, already lived at least seven thousand years, according to Tolkien's September 20, 1963, letter to Col. Worskett (*Letters* 334).

is *naught* that an old Ent can do to hold back that storm: he must *weather* it or *crack*” (*Two*, “Treebeard” 461, emphasis added).

Although Treebeard subsequently decides to fight Saruman in *The Two Towers*, other Ents retreat further into Fangorn (463). Treebeard, however, appears to strike a balance between these retreating Ents’ behavior and the hypothetical notion that the Ents should immensely expand the acreage where they tree-herd. Although Treebeard and the Ents choose to enlarge their realm to include the Watchwood of Isengard (“Voice” 573), Treebeard responds rather coolly to Aragorn’s suggestions that the Ents could expand their forest realm further to the west and that the Ents should journey eastward to try to find the Entwives (*Return*, “Many” 958-59). Treebeard’s overall disinterest in lands outside of his general domain helps to explain his general indifference to Saruman’s traveling to countries beyond Treebeard’s own, which, in turn, also demonstrates that Treebeard fails to fulfill his promise to Gandalf to watch Saruman *and* explains why Merry sees Treebeard offering Gandalf “a long look, almost a cunning look²⁸⁰” (958,

280. Tolkien references this type of look from Treebeard multiple times. When Pippin first asks Treebeard to identify himself, the narrator states that “A queer look came into [Treebeard’s] eyes, a kind of wariness” (*Two*, “Treebeard” 453). This look again occurs soon afterward when Treebeard hears the names of Merry and Pippin. After hearing their names and considering the possibility of adding “Hobbits” to the ancient “lists” of Middle earth beings, Treebeard declares, “‘For I am not going to tell you *my* name, not yet at any rate.’ A queer half-knowing, half-humorous look came with a green flicker in his eyes” (454). By comparing these passages, we find that Treebeard treats the release of Saruman as a bit of a joke, which explains why he compares his defeated enemy, Saruman, to a snake with no teeth (*Return*, “Many” 958), as well as a touch of scheming. This reading helps to explain Treebeard’s pension for “wariness,” as well as his “cunning” (*Two*, “Treebeard” 457; *Return*, “Many” 957). In addition to his dislike of refusing the liberty of anyone or anything (*Return*, “Many” 958), Treebeard also probably releases Saruman, because he does not like “worrying about the future,” which he considers the proper preoccupation of wizards (*Two*, “Treebeard” 461). When Treebeard anticipates Gandalf’s censure for letting Saruman leave (*Return*, “Many” 957-58), Treebeard basically argues that he and Gandalf disagree on some values and perspectives and should agree to disagree, which echoes Treebeard’s earlier comments about the “Great Wars” and wizards to Merry and Pippin (*Two*, “Treebeard” 461). However, because Gandalf knows of Saruman’s stockpile of Shire pipe-weed after Aragorn informs him of this information (“Flotsam” 560), Gandalf perceives the likelihood that Saruman remains mischievous, and therefore, conned Treebeard (*Return*, “Many” 958). Gandalf, however, refrains from elaborating, because he knows that openly theorizing will alarm the Hobbits and fall on the largely deaf ears of Treebeard, who tries to avoid thinking about future possibilities (*Two*, “Treebeard” 461).

957). Treebeard, nevertheless, does force Saruman to relinquish the key to Orthanc; once this is accomplished, however, Treebeard knows that Saruman can no longer harm the Ents from this immensely strategic place of strength. Consequently, Treebeard releases Saruman partially because Saruman can no longer cause problems within the realm under Treebeard and (as King Aragorn verifies) the Ents' command (958). Through their environmental labors, therefore, the Ents maintain a hierarchical relationship with nature, since the Ents choose when to migrate, when to retract the lands under their vigilance, and (albeit much more rarely) when and where to expand their protection of trees.

By the time of *The Lord of the Rings*, the Ents display a far more active role in the environment than Bombadil,²⁸¹ since the Ents display a hierarchical relationship with their tree-herds by working to regulate visitation by outsiders in a non-violent (i.e., non-callous) manner, when possible. Consequently, my analysis contrasts with arguments by critics like Ike Reeder, who believes that the Ents refuse to “contro[l] and interpre[t]” the trees of Fangorn Forest (111), and Flieger, who compares Old Man Willow to Treebeard²⁸² (264, 266, 268). While speaking to Merry and Pippin, Treebeard declares that, to overcome the “very dangerous parts in this country [of Fangorn]” (and especially the “very black patches”), he and the other Ents “keep off strangers²⁸³ and the foolhardy; and we train and we teach, we walk and we weed” (*Two*, “Treebeard” 456, 457). Consequently, the Ents compassionately refuse to attempt to kill non-Orcs with glee like

281. For a more detailed discussion of this topic, read the previous section within this chapter that focuses on Bombadil.

282. I will discuss these opposing views in more detail later in this section.

283. Because the Ents make their walking rounds to “keep off strangers and the foolhardy” and because the Ents take the visitors of Fangorn Forest (whom the Ents deem unfit for their wood) somewhere “outside” the boundaries of Fangorn Forest, the Ents' actions mean that they possess another interesting parallel with the Hobbits (*Two*, “Treebeard” 457, 455-56). Somewhat similar to the Ents' aforementioned custom, the Shire Hobbits employ Bounders to patrol the Shire's borders to try to monitor and to control the behavior of strangers (*Fellowship*, “Prologue” 10).

Old Man Willow; instead, the Ents willingly and selflessly elect to teach what they know about trees to others. The Ents also choose when they will journey to speak to certain trees (e.g., the willows that Treebeard mentions) (*Two*, “Treebeard” 457). While Treebeard recollects that the Ents differed from the Entwives, since the Entwives behaved in a dictatorial manner with the plants they most loved, Treebeard also notes that the Ents choose which trees (i.e. *the great trees*) they talk to (*Two*, “Treebeard” 464); likewise, the Ents try to regulate whom the trees encounter (457). Therefore, because of their appreciation for the physical environment (especially trees), the Ents invest myriads of years engaging in devoted fieldwork, as they travel around Fangorn Forest, in part, to learn more about trees in an effort to guard their tree-herds better.

Because certain Ents select which specific trees that they will care for the most,²⁸⁴ the Ents display their position of power by deciding which Entings they train for which trees, when to teach the Entings, and how to “train” young Entings.²⁸⁵ The association of particular Ents with certain trees echoes a problematic sentiment that Treebeard references as an indirect source for the many problems stemming from the loss of the Entwives. Treebeard mentions in *The Two Towers* that the Entwives loved the fruit trees (and other “lesser” trees), grasses, meadows (i.e., “meads”), and herbs the most, while the Ents grew fondest of hills, large trees, and forests (464). The fact that the Ents and the Entwives choose which types of plants to pay the closest attention to not only enables the estrangement between them to widen but also demonstrates that the Ents and the

284. The Ents’ similar appearance to the tree(s) that they care for and their intense affection for this/these tree(s) (e.g. Quickbeam and his rowan trees) reinforce why each of the Ents care for, guard, and resemble (a) certain tree(s) (*Two*, “Treebeard” 468-69, 471-72).

285. However, following the disappearance of the Entwives, this tutoring of Entings eventually ceased since no more Entings could even be born (*Two*, “Treebeard” 457, 464-66, 469).

Entwives select what they will (and will not) mainly protect and nourish.²⁸⁶ This focus on herding only certain types of plants appears to generally dwindle even further (for certain Ents) in the Third Age to specific types of trees. Readers witness this devolution in Skinbark's decision to retreat to the company of some birch trees, because he cherishes them more than any other type of tree (463). Skinbark's behavior represents a potentially debilitating philosophy, as Treebeard seems to acknowledge when he mentions his hope that he can convince enough of the younger Ents to fight the ecosadistic Saruman (463-64). Skinbark, nonetheless, apparently teaches Quickbeam and other younger Ents that it is permissible to especially cherish a particular kind of tree (i.e., for Skinbark, this means birch trees); however, Quickbeam loves rowan trees the most, even though Quickbeam is one of "Skinbark's people" (471-72). Quickbeam privileges rowan trees, because he pays special attention to them when he sings and when he dances (471-72). In other words, the Entwives and the Ents exhibit problematic traits, because their interests selfishly lead them to focus on particular species to the detriment of others, which means that the Entwives and the Ents regress into callousness by underappreciating other species of flora that fail to pique their interest. Rather than the *Shepherds of the Trees* envisioned by Ilúvatar and championed by Yavanna, therefore, many of the Ents lapse into the *Shepherds of Some Trees in a Section of One Forest*. It is because of this possessiveness (as well as other shortcomings) among the Ents that I disagree with Denekamp's characterization of the Ents as "ideal" environmental guardians (7-8).

286. Whereas the Valar converse with one another regularly to broaden their knowledge by agreeing to listen to the instruction of other Valar spirits who know more about subjects/beings outside the other Vala's interests/specialized knowledge, the Ents and the Entwives see one another and speak with one another infrequently, as I discuss elsewhere.

This increasing tendency among the Ents to care much more about certain types of trees than even all of the large trees generally conflicts with the perspective of Treebeard, who appears to cherish many types of tall trees. By presenting such an argument, I hold a different perspective than critics like Foster, who describes Treebeard as (probably) an Ent who resembles an “evergreen tree” (172). This is not to suggest, however, that Foster’s theory possesses no merit. When Treebeard prepares the first Entdraughts that he gives Merry and Pippin, the pair of evergreen trees that stand at the opening of Wellinghall acknowledge Treebeard’s presence before, subsequently, glowing when he brews the Entdraughts (*Two*, “Treebeard” 459). While Treebeard marches toward the Entmoot, the Hobbits (as they perch atop Treebeard) see—in addition to silver birches—beautiful evergreen trees that the narrator refers to multiple times (468). Because Merry and Pippin had never seen these types of evergreens and because these trees form a “hedge,” readers conclude that the Ents may not only preserve an endangered evergreen species but also that the Ents choose (i.e., shape) the location of these trees so that they surround the area where the Entmoot periodically meets. However, Merry and Pippin find that Treebeard looks somewhat like an oak tree and a beech tree as well (468-69). In contrast, the agrarian Hobbits have no problem in identifying the other Ents, classifying them as akin to the rowan, birch, chestnut, linden, and fir trees, respectively (469). The Hobbits’ difficulty in characterizing Treebeard extends to his conversations with trees (e.g., willows) (457). Treebeard’s song about the lost forests in the now-submerged lands of Beleriand enhances the trouble in narrowing down which trees he holds dearest, since he bemoans the fact that four different forests with four different types of trees no longer exist:

In the willow-meads of Tasarinan I walked in the Spring.

Ah! the sight and the smell of the Spring in Nan-tasarion!

And I said that was good.

I wandered in Summer in the elm-woods of Ossiriand.

Ah! the light and the music in the Summer by the Seven Rivers

Of Ossir!

And I thought that was best.

To the beeches of Neldoreth I came in the Autumn.

Ah! the gold and the red and the sighing of leaves in the

Autumn in Aur-na-neldor!

It was more than my desire.

To the pine-trees upon the highland of Dorthonion I climbed in

The Winter.

Ah! the wind and the whiteness and the black branches of

Winter upon Orod-na-Thôn!

My voice went up and sang in the sky.

And now all those lands lie under the wave,

And I walk in Ambaróna, in Tauremorna, in Aldalómë,²⁸⁷

In my own land, in the country of Fangorn,

Where the roots are long,

And the years lie thicker than the leaves

In Tauremornalómë. (Two, “Treebeard” 458, underlining added)

287. Each of these names mean “Fangorn Forest” (Hammond and Scull, “Lord” . . . *Reader’s* 384-85).

While naysayers can argue that Treebeard creates a tree hierarchy when he describes the willows as “good,” the elms as “best,” the beeches as even more amazing, and the pines as so beautiful as to be worthy of a song (458), one can also suggest that Treebeard merely varies his diction to describe his joy when he sees the trees. Furthermore, Treebeard’s aforementioned characterizations of the various trees could mean that his favorite large tree and forest happens to be the one he sees before him at the time, and/or it could mean that Treebeard sings glowingly about the pines because of the cumulative effect of witnessing the beauties of all of the forests in Beleriand.²⁸⁸ In any case, the fact that Treebeard’s/Fangorn’s name is the same as the name of the forest that he cherishes implies that Treebeard loves all of the trees (and other portions of the wood) that make-up Fangorn Forest²⁸⁹; consequently, it makes sense that Treebeard’s appearance resembles a variety of trees found in Fangorn Forest.

However, just as Treebeard stands as an example to many of the other Ents to emulate in a variety of ways (e.g., loving and caring for many species of trees rather than only one/a few) in *The Two Towers*, so, too, do Leaflock and Skinbark’s examples allude to some of Treebeard’s shortcomings. Leaflock’s propensity for resting amid “the deep grass of the meadows” during the summer months could show an affection for two things

288. Treebeard’s conversations with trees other than evergreens (such as his talks with the willow trees) (*Two*, “Treebeard” 458) also demonstrate Treebeard’s knowledge of, appreciation for, and protection of multiple kinds of trees, which suggests that this is why his appearance seems akin to different kinds of trees. Furthermore, Galadriel prophesies that she may one day visit with Treebeard again amid the willows in Beleriand (i.e., Tasarinan) that he so adores (and mentions in his song) in the far future (*Return*, “Many” 959). One could speculate, therefore, that Treebeard partially resembles a willow-Ent. Likewise, since Merry and Pippin also think that Treebeard resembles oaks and since Treebeard mentions that his tree “friends” include those originating as “acorns,” Treebeard exhibits some commonality with oak trees, too (*Two*, “Treebeard” 469, 463). The same could be said of beech trees as well, since Merry and Pippin think Treebeard looks like a beech (469) and because Treebeard sings about beech trees (458).

289. However, as I discuss elsewhere, Treebeard’s/Fangorn’s preoccupation with Fangorn Forest creates several problems; for example, because Treebeard mainly cares about Fangorn Forest, he (like the other Ents) fails to attend to the other forests in northwestern Middle-earth and beyond.

that the Entwives cherished most (i.e., grasses and meads) (“Treebeard” 463, 464, emphasis added). Skinbark, meanwhile, already (albeit unsuccessfully) fought the Orcs without much aid from the Ents outside of his particular clan, since Treebeard only mentions the casualties suffered by Skinbark’s “folk and his tree-herds” (463). Just as Leaflock’s love of the grasses and meadows differs from Treebeard, so, too, does Skinbark’s earlier example of fighting the Orcs, which (together with the coming of the Hobbits and their tales of the War of the Ring) finally spurs Treebeard to more actively defend the trees of Fangorn Forest (460-64). Consequently, my analysis of Skinbark contrasts with the views articulated by Olsen, who characterizes Skinbark’s retreat as “apathetic isolationism” (47); despite this characterization, however, Skinbark only retreats *after* the Orcs attack Skinbark and his tree-herds, which does not mean that Skinbark displays emotionless callousness and laziness like Olsen’s comment suggests (47). While more delayed and not identical with Leaflock’s interests, Treebeard and the Ents choose to create “a garden filled with orchards and trees” within the Treagarth of Orthanc (*Return*, “Many” 957). With the distinction between “orchards” and “trees,” the Ents appear to plant fruit trees, as well as non-fruit trees. The *OED* supports such a reading, because it defines “orchard” as “originally” meaning “a garden (freq. enclosed), esp. for herbs and fruit trees,” while the more contemporary definition equates to “an area of land, freq. enclosed, given over to the cultivation of fruit trees.” By combining these definitions with the landscape of the Treagarth, the Ents (led by Treebeard) create the Treagarth in such a manner as to include several key parts the Entwives cherished: gardens, fruit, fruit trees, and herbs (*Return*, “Many” 957; *Two*, “Treebeard” 464-65). Thus, the general renaissance of the Ents’ environmentalism (and Treebeard’s, in

particular) includes their renewed interest in more aspects of nature in and near Fangorn Forest.

Treebeard (as noted elsewhere) also mentions in *The Two Towers* that the Ents also decide whom they will “teach” about trees, in general, and about Fangorn Forest, in particular (“Treebeard” 457). The ramifications of such decisions by the Ents can profoundly affect Ents, Huorns, and the trees of Fangorn Forest alike, as demonstrated by the repercussions of Treebeard’s decision to teach Saruman (as well as the Hobbits) about the Ents and their wood. Treebeard notes that he often permitted Saruman to travel within Fangorn Forest—and taught Saruman “many things that he would never have found out by himself” (462). Treebeard also acknowledges that he continued to teach Saruman even though Saruman *never* reciprocated—and even when Treebeard noticed the wizard’s demeanor suspiciously altering to that of a person trying to deceive (462). Because Treebeard repeatedly permits Saruman to visit Fangorn Forest and because Treebeard elects to teach Saruman various things about/related to Fangorn Forest, Treebeard sadly realizes that his decisions enabled Saruman to capitalize on his knowledge of Fangorn Forest. Because of Treebeard’s tutoring, in other words, Saruman could then better grasp where and when to send his ecosadistic Orcs and Orc-Men to fell trees²⁹⁰ (462).

Treebeard’s initial reluctance to divulge much information to Merry and Pippin implies that Treebeard comprehends that, by instructing a friend-turned-enemy, he brought harm to himself, to the trees of Fangorn Forest, to the Huorns of Fangorn Forest, and to his

290. Treebeard’s reference to Saruman “spying out all the ways, and discovering my secrets” suggests that Saruman learned the migratory patterns of the Ents, as they shepherded the trees (462). Saruman may have even perceived that Skinbark displayed a more passive nature than Treebeard (and therefore, constituted a threat less grave if violently confronted), and consequently, it seems that Saruman ordered his servants to fell the trees in Skinbark’s areas first—planning to leave Treebeard and the other Ents for later liquidation (462, 463).

fellow Ents (453). However, the freedom with which the Hobbits talk about themselves and the Shire leads Treebeard to reciprocate and begin teaching the Hobbits about the Ents, the Entwives, and Fangorn Forest (454-66, 467, 469, 471, 473-75). This basic instruction that Treebeard provides to the Hobbits reinforces the development of Treebeard's trust in the Hobbits; this alteration in Treebeard's behavior and his attitude provides one of the reasons why Treebeard subsequently decides that the Ents must fight Saruman and his forces (463-64). The decision on whether or not to teach others about the Ents, the Entwives, and Fangorn Forest means that the Ents can control not only their own fates but also those of their trees, for enemies and allies can use such knowledge for good or ill. In other words, Treebeard learns the painful cost of environmental ignorance when he sees the cost of teaching an ecocidal knowledge that the latter can use for ecocidal purposes. On the other hand, Treebeard witnesses how tutoring allies can help him in a variety of ways as well.

Since the Ents serve as shepherds and tree-herders who "weed," this word choice (i.e., "weed") suggests that the Ents may work to remove (in addition to other flora) entire trees and/or portions of trees to improve the area within the forest to prevent the "spread" of "bad" trees (*Two*, "Treebeard" 457). Treebeard's statements to Merry and Pippin include justifications for pruning the trees of Fangorn Forest: "There are Ents and Ents, you know; or there are Ents and things that look like Ents but ain't" (454). Subsequently, Treebeard elaborates on these ideas when he mentions that the *Entish* trees with "*bad* hearts" can "spread" their influence to other parts of the forest, which the Ents, as *shepherds*, attempt to counteract as they "weed" (457). To complete such tasks successfully, the Ents need environmental knowledge, sensitivity, and a willingness to

work. By combining Treebeard's comment that "Few enough of us are left now" with his statement that "There used to be some very dangerous parts in this country," it appears that the Ents (if given enough time and sufficient numbers) would remove all of the evil trees from Fangorn, even the "very black patches"²⁹¹ (457). Therefore, although Denekamp believes that the "Ents have no forestry plan [. . .] and ask that trees be left to themselves" and that Ents just seek to "preserve" trees (8, 7), the Ents actually work to improve Fangorn Forest rather than simply saving all trees in their entirety, no matter their condition.

Moreover, because the Ents choose the extent of their domain and because the Ents decide whether to (and for how long to) make war on an enemy of trees (and thereby "weed" such enemies), my analysis differs from Jeffers's reading concerning Entish responsibility for "distant" lands.²⁹² At the time of the War of the Ring, the Ents refrain

291. One of the later rough drafts of Treebeard's conversation with Merry and Pippin within *The Treason of Isengard* sheds more light on the Ents' pruning tactics. Although Treebeard acknowledges the Ents once, long before, acted similar to "Tombombadil," the Ents now engage in a significantly more active role in the environment than Bombadil, who, unlike Treebeard and the Ents, "does not interfere," because "he never cured anything," and therefore, "He is no herdsman" (416). In this rough draft, Treebeard explains that the difference between the Ents' and Bombadil's tactics means "all the difference between . . . sitting down [like Bombadil] and studying sheep till you know what they feel about grass, and being a shepherd [like the Ents]" (416). In any case, because of the pruning methods of the Ents, Treebeard and his fellow Ents certainly interact with their trees from a hierarchical, protective perspective; these characterizations remain even in the final version of *The Lord of the Rings*.

In a note, Christopher Tolkien states his belief that J.R.R. Tolkien removed the aforementioned section involving Treebeard's discussion of the Ents and Bombadil, because it could confuse how the Ents and the Entwives differed or because this portion of the rough draft created the controversy between the Ents and the Entwives (419-20n). However, the essential differences between the normally non-reforming, observing behavior of Bombadil and the molding tactics of the shepherding Ents remain within the published version of *The Lord of the Rings*.

292. The slow, ponderous process that characterizes the Ents' decision on whether or not to fight Saruman (despite many months in which the wizard has destroyed trees) actually parallels the long process of their creation that *The Silmarillion* mentions ("Quenta: Aulë" 45-46). The Ents come into being after Yavanna later reminds Manwë of the fact that plants like trees need protectors (who will stop other sentient beings from felling trees randomly and/or ruining the landscape) and that such creatures existed within the Music of Creation that created Beleriand and Middle-earth. In terms of the narrative, this tardiness concerning the Ents' creation forecasts the behavior and speech of the Ents: long and ponderous. While the length of time that it takes for Yavanna to realize her dream/song concerning the creation of the Shepherds of the Trees may predict the Ents' slow process that leads to their decision to make war on Saruman, it certainly

from intervening anywhere further from Fangorn Forest than Isengard (*Two*, “Treebeard” 473-74), Helm’s Deep (“Road” 536-37), and the Wold (*Return*, “Many” 957). Unless Orcs, Orc-Men, and Uruk-hai are among those directly threatening Fangorn Forest and the lands nearby, the Ents take significantly less interest in places further away, which, in turn, indirectly enables the escalation of the attack on the Shire. After all, despite Treebeard’s love of trees, he willingly permits Saruman—the infamous “tree-killer” (as Quickbeam labels Saruman) (*Two*, “Flotsam” 554) and the “accursed tree-slayer” (as Treebeard describes the fallen wizard) (*Return*, “Many” 957)—to leave without an escort,²⁹³ despite Treebeard’s promise to keep Saruman “safe, safe from doing any more harm” (*Return*, “Many” 958; *Two*, “Voice” 572). Treebeard’s decision, unfortunately, causes more environmental ruin in the Hobbits’ Shire, although Treebeard grows to cherish the Hobbits (as demonstrated when he joyfully adds Hobbits to the “lists” and when he declares to Gandalf that the Hobbits stand as his “friends,” whom he will “miss” (*Two*, “Treebeard” 453, 460, “Voice” 572). While Treebeard certainly has no conscious intention of aiding Saruman’s environmental destruction of Middle-earth, Treebeard’s long residency in Fangorn lessens his understanding of Saruman’s capabilities and leads to Treebeard’s self-centered fixation with Fangorn Forest and the Watchwood to the detriment of other lands and woods.

The Ents also work to fulfill their predestined role as environmental authorities by killing ecosadistic Orcs, by removing the machinery responsible for environmental

guarantees that they will eventually declare war on Saruman, since failing to do so would defy the nature instilled in them.

293. Treebeard also allows the evil Wormtongue, who later kills a sleeping Lotho Sackville-Baggins (*Return*, “Scouring” 996), to travel with Saruman. Treebeard’s decisions to allow these ecosadistic figures to leave Orthanc, consequently, affects the Hobbits in a profoundly negative way.

destruction, and by taking the time to study before choosing what/whom to spare (i.e., Entish “weeding”), as Tolkien repeatedly discusses in *The Lord of the Rings*. To complete this “shaping” in the negative, the Ents prune their environment by curtailing or removing the populations of certain species that they deem an environmental threat within the Fangorn Forest ecosystem. While describing his preferences in the wars of Middle-earth, Treebeard states that “I am not altogether on anybody's *side*, because nobody is altogether on my *side*, if you understand me: nobody cares for the woods as I care for them. [. . .] there are some things, of course, whose side I am altogether *not* on; I am against them altogether: these—*burárum*' (he again made a deep rumble of disgust)—these Orcs, and their masters.” (*Two*, “Treebeard” 461). Treebeard’s hatred of Orcs stems from what he decries as “orc-mischief,” which involves the callous and ignorant act of “just cut[ting] down” trees “to rot,” which, in turn, not only foolishly kills the trees for no reason but also harms the overall environment’s well-being (462). The desire among the Ents to destroy Morgoth’s “horribly corrupted” Orcs (*Letters* 190, 191), meanwhile, partially derives from the fact that the Ents follow the Vala Oromë.²⁹⁴ The Ents’ association with Oromë helps to explain why the tree-killing Saruman awakens the Ents’ fury (*Two*, “Flotsam” 554), and why the Ents despise the Morgoth-mutilated Orcs, since Oromë looks “dreadful” when angry, immensely “loves” trees, and hunts with the purpose of slaying all beings whom Morgoth corrupted (*Silmarillion*, “Valaquenta” 29). Nonetheless, despite their position as *the Shepherds of the Trees*, some Ents (e.g., Skinbark) refuse to resist Saruman through offensive warfare; instead, these Ents apparently select the path of retreating for a possible final stand among the trees they

294. In a note at the top of one of his letters, Tolkien characterizes the Ents as “devoted to Oromë,” while the Entwives held/hold themselves loyal to Yavanna (*Letters* 335, 334).

“love best” (*Two*, “Treebeard” 463). Similarly, when Treebeard and some of the other Ents choose to march to war against Saruman’s forces, these Ents allow the surviving Men who served the “tree-murderer” Saruman to depart from the Ents’ realm without a guard (“Flotsam” 553). This means that the Ents exercise the power to grant a pardon for those who practiced (or allied with those responsible for) unsustainable logging practices meant to continue pre-emptive, avoidable, and ecocidal warfare.

The Ents’ willingness to alter nature to help themselves accomplish their preordained quest to defend trees manifests itself in another overt instance when the Ents divert the water into Isengard to destroy Saruman’s machinery, furnaces, and general war industries. However, in terms of the River Isen, the ecological alteration proves short-term, since (as Merry states), after ruining Saruman's industries, the Ents immediately “stopped the inflow in the night, and sent the Isen back into its old course” (557).

Just as the Ents fight Saruman after the wizard harms Fangorn Forest at the end of the Third Age, *The Silmarillion* notes that the Ents also fight the Dwarves who harm trees in the First Age as well, for the Ents weed and remove these ecocidal Dwarves. For example, the Nogrod Dwarves who sack Menegroth within the Elven Realm of the Forest of Doriath discover the might of the Ents and their tree-herds—to the utter ruin of the Dwarves²⁹⁵ (“Quenta: Ruin . . . Doriath” 232-34). Consequently, the Ents choose whether to exercise their position of power by meting out justice to those who selfishly and

295. After penning *The Lord of the Rings*, Tolkien writes in a letter that he would later include the Ents in the battle to avenge the death of Thingol and the sack of Doriath, which would estrange the Dwarves from the Ents (*Letters* 334). While I am aware that Guy Kay and Christopher Tolkien made the problematic decision to construct *portions* of the chapter “Of the Ruin of Doriath” of which “there is no authority whatever in [J.R.R. Tolkien's] own writings” (*Jewels*, “Tale” 356, 354, 356), the pertinent information concerning the Ents’ aid in fighting the ecocidal Nogrod Dwarves also appears in J.R.R. Tolkien's letter. Therefore, the general depiction of the Dwarves’ ruinous activities in Doriath and the Ents’ subsequent wrath is true to J.R.R. Tolkien’s vision of the scene.

callously harm trees because of a twisted sense of joy, and therefore, the Ents again display themselves as authority figures rather than simply equals with the trees.

The Ents' method of "weeding" for the sake of maintaining the trees that they shepherd and for the sake of regaining peace in their land recalls the desires and methods of the Entwives. Because the Entwives (as Olsen notes) (47) yearned for "order" and desired to "rule" their plants to achieve "peace" and because the Ents use the Huorns and Fangorn Forest to destroy the Orcs and Uruk-Hai to restore Entish rule and order in Fangorn in order to help create peace in northwestern Middle-earth, the Ents can resemble the Entwives at times. Moreover, because the Entwives were especially devoted to Yavanna (who advocated that the Valar declare war on Morgoth to save the natural world) and because the Ents occasionally resort to warfare as a means to save their trees, the Ents grow to resemble the Entwives' main characteristics (i.e., the desire for rule, order, and peace to cherish their chosen plants). Consequently, in order to eventually provide their tree-herds with peaceful, safe, and nurturing surroundings, the Ents' environmental labor must sometimes consist of acts of violence to preserve trees; to do so responsibly, the Ents engage in long Entmoots to gain as much knowledge as they can to avoid ignorantly killing a non-ecosadist.

The Ents, nevertheless, appear quite different from Old Man Willow in my view, which means my analysis differs from Flieger's opinion (464-68). The Ents differ from Old Man Willow because of the Ents' compassionate treatment of visitors, because of their empathetic conversations with trees and other Ents, because of their kind-hearted training and teaching, and because of their informed pruning. Old Man Willow, on the

other hand, tries to kill the Four Hobbits (despite the fact that none of them try to harm trees before Old Man Willow grabs them), callously hates everything with two legs *because they can walk and could fell trees*, and selfishly imposes *his* will on the rest of the Old Forest (*Fellowship*, “Old” 114-16, “House” 127-28). As Campbell also observes (265), however, Treebeard and the Ents attempt to keep lost and daredevil visitors to Fangorn Forest from encountering malevolent tree-spirits that resemble Old Man Willow. The Ents endeavor to accomplish this by carefully using their environmental knowledge to rehabilitate these trees in some fashion. The Ents accomplish this by (seemingly) “weeding” out of existence the non-repentant, defiant trees (*Two*, “Treebeard” 457) and by choosing sympathy over callousness (i.e., they permit each Ent to voice his opinion at the Entmoot and the Ents converse with the trees, instead of only speaking at the trees in the manner of the Entwives) (467-73, 457).

My views also differ from Flieger’s beliefs (i.e., finding Old Man Willow roughly comparable to the Ents) (264-68), because the frightening experiences that the Four Hobbits endure in the Old Forest proves typical for Old Forest visitors for many years. The Hobbits’ experience is usual for visitors, for Hobbit lore, Merry, and Bombadil each confirm this to be the case in *The Fellowship of the Ring* (“Conspiracy” 105-06, “Old” 107-08, “House” 124, 127-28). Old Man Willow’s selfishly callous behavior, therefore, strongly contrasts with the actions of the Ents, who endeavor to remove evil from the Old Forest, in part, to save other beings from harm. Merry mentions that the trees of the Old Forest purposely surround Hobbit visitors in a menacing fashion and generally move around to confuse travelers (“Old” 108, 109); similarly, the Old Forest trees callously grab, trip, and toss their branches at the Four Hobbits, as the Hobbits journey toward Bree

(108). Frodo experiences the latter after he callously responds in like manner by jokingly singing about forests inherently possessing an end, which causes an Old Forest tree to hurl a branch at him (110). Instead of behaving exactly like the Ents, whom Treebeard describes as beings who “speak” with trees (*Two*, “Treebeard” 464), Old Man Willow selfishly dominates the trees of the Old Forest to create his own perpetual, personal “dominion,” according to Bombadil (*Fellowship*, “House” 128). Old Man Willow callously prunes without “weeding” with the purpose of rehabilitation or of removing “bad-hearted” trees; instead, he means to scare, maim, or kill Hobbit “strangers,” the “foolhardy,” and others (c.f. *Fellowship*, “Old” 108-119, “House” 127-28; *Two*, “Treebeard” 457). Old Man Willow neither trains nor teaches others but perverts other trees to expand his own power and to try to realize his delusional dream of reclaiming lands where forests once grew ages before but now belong to the Hobbits, who peacefully acquired the area from the Men of Arnor (*Fellowship*, “House” 127-28, “Prologue” 4-5, “At” 146; *Silmarillion*, “Akallabêth” 280). The Ents, on the other hand, train other Ents to understand how to care for the trees of Fangorn Forest in a benevolent manner, and they will even teach non-Ents about Fangorn Forest—decisions which could both harm and save their beloved Fangorn Forest (*Two*, “Treebeard” 457-75). Unlike Old Man Willow, the Ents largely downplay the idea of expanding their borders and power, even when encouraged to do so by their neighbors (*Return*, “Many” 958). While Old Man Willow callously captures Merry and Pippin by enclosing them within himself in a wooden cage, as he mocks the Hobbits with his malicious laughter (*Fellowship*, “Old” 114-18), Treebeard presents a different view concerning the necessity of warfare. Pippin, for example, notes that Treebeard appears “sad,” for the Ents understand the strong

(albeit ultimately incorrect) likelihood that their war with Saruman will result in their deaths (*Two*, “Treebeard” 475). Treebeard, moreover, seems “sad but not unhappy” that the Ents choose to fight Saruman for several reasons. Treebeard and the Ents opt to fight, because the Ents take their time deliberating before marching to war, which stands in sharp contrast to Old Man Willow’s dictatorial behavior in the Old Forest. Furthermore, as Campbell also mentions (261-64), the Ents again differentiate themselves from the misanthropic Old Man Willow by helping the Free Peoples, because the Ents understand that they will eventually die out. The Ents understand that they will go extinct, since they cannot find the Entwives and because the Ents selflessly march to war so that they “*may help the other peoples before we pass away*” (*Two*, “Treebeard” 475, emphasis added). Knowledge, compassion, and selflessness, in other words, separate the Ents from Old Man Willow, in general, and in matters regarding the environment, in particular.

Treebeard’s dislike of seeing plants, animals, spirits, and Peoples without their freedom in *The Lord of the Rings* means that the Ents sharply contrast with the selfishly callous Old Man Willow. While Treebeard initially enjoys the thought of “watching” Saruman and keeping Saruman and Wormtongue within their “chosen” sanctuary of Orthanc (*Two*, “Voice” 572, “Flotsam” 559), Treebeard decides to release Saruman and Wormtongue once Saruman strongly desires to leave Orthanc (*Return*, “Many” 958). Treebeard permits Saruman and Wormtongue to depart, in part, because of Treebeard’s strong sense of empathy: “[A]bove all I hate the caging of live things, and I will not keep even such creatures as these caged beyond great need” (958).

Old Man Willow, meanwhile, gleefully captures and tortures three of the Four Hobbits in *The Fellowship of the Ring*. Because Old Man Willow controls the vast

majority of the sentient trees in the Old Forest, it seems likely that he can (in some fashion) hear and comprehend the statements of the Hobbits. If my theory is correct, some of the Hobbits' statements in the Old Forest during their (albeit unwitting) trek toward Old Man Willow are especially important. After feeling claustrophobic, Pippin yells, "Oi! Oi! [. . .] Just let me pass through, will you!" ("Old" 109). Merry, moreover, suggests that the Hobbits will tease the trees with a song once they reach the end of the Old Forest (110), mentions his desire to explore the Old Forest, and declares that the Withywindle Valley ranks as the "centre from which all the queerness comes" (111). Although he behaves foolishly and without tact, Frodo endeavors to encourage his friends by singing a song about the ending of a forest that includes references to "the setting sun," "the day's end," and "despair not" (110). The twisted Old Man Willow appears to use these declarations by the Hobbits as inspiration for how he plans to torture/kill them. Because the "singing" Old Man Willow causes Frodo to sleep before trying to drown him "late" in the day on an afternoon with "golden [. . .] sunshine" (114-15, 113), it seems that the tree-spirit wishes to mock Frodo's references to the sun in the Hobbit's song and to make sure that he does not have to hear the Hobbit mention the ending of trees ever again. Furthermore, after Sam saves Frodo (115-16), Old Man Willow appears to torture Merry and Pippin in front of Frodo to demonstrate the Hobbits' inability to rescue their friends without harming them in order to mock the phrase "despair not" in Frodo's earlier song. Rather than a scene where the Hobbits laugh once they reach the end of the Old Forest, Old Man Willow laughs at the Hobbits, whom he harms. Moreover, to create another dark echo, Old Man Willow seems to purposely choose Pippin to entirely enclose within his trunk (115-16), because it is Pippin who desperately yearns just to "pass

through” (“Old” 109). Furthermore, Old Man Willow arguably tortures Merry the worst not only because Merry lives in Buckland—and is therefore related to or friends with the descendants of the Buckland Hobbits who cut down many Old Forest trees before creating the Bonfire Glade—but also because Merry expresses interest in knowing more about the Forest. Old Man Willow uses the opportunity to teach Merry by malevolently alluding to Merry’s labeling of the Withywindle as the “centre” of the Old Forest’s eccentricity and Merry’s joking about the Forest’s size by squeezing the small Hobbit in his mid-section (which recalls the image of an axe slicing a tree in half) all while laughing at the Hobbits (115-16). The fact that Sam²⁹⁶ hears a “clear” “noise like the snick of a lock when a door quietly closes fast” when Old Man Willow seizes Pippin and Merry (115) suggests that Old Man Willow maliciously alludes to the sound of the gate’s lock beneath the Hedge that “clicked” in an “ominous” manner as the Hobbits entered the Old Forest (108). It seems that Old Man Willow intends to ridicule the Hobbits by seizing Merry and Pippin with the same type of sound that helps inhibit the growth of the Old Forest to the west.²⁹⁷

296. Because Sam seems to remain quiet throughout the Hobbits’ Old Forest journey prior to their arrival at the Withywindle and the location of Old Man Willow (108-14), this may explain one reason why Old Man Willow does not harm Sam. If so, when Sam intends to and then begins to set Old Man Willow aflame (115-16), the rage of Old Man Willow and his enslaved Old Forest tree-subjects may stem not only from Old Man Willow’s anger and pain that he is on fire but also from his frustration and bitter sorrow that he (according to Old Man Willow’s standards) misjudged Sam as the lone Hobbit of decency among the group.

297. Interestingly, in a March 2018 *Smithsonian Magazine* article, Richard Grant states that “There is now a substantial body of scientific evidence that [. . .] shows instead that trees of the same species are communal, and will often form alliances with trees of other species. Forest trees have evolved to live in cooperative, interdependent relationships, maintained by communication and a collective intelligence similar to an insect colony” (Grant). Moreover, according to Wohlleben, “every forest that is not too damaged [is] connected to each other through underground fungal [mycorrhizal] networks. Trees share water and nutrients through the networks, and also use them to communicate. They send distress signals about drought and disease, for example, or insect attacks, and other trees alter their behavior when they receive these messages” (qtd. in Grant). Wohlleben notes that some observers label this process the *wood-wide web* (10-11; qtd. in Grant). This *wood-wide web* exists, albeit in a dark, fantastic way, in the Old Forest, because Tolkien’s Old Forest (like Fangorn Forest) is actually sentient.

Although Treebeard and Old Man Willow share a commonality in their ability to err, one of Treebeard's major errors—teaching Saruman about Fangorn Forest—occurs because Treebeard trusted Saruman as the leader of the White Council. Treebeard's error, however, is something he shares with some of the greatest minds of the Third Age: Gandalf and Galadriel (*Two*, "Treebeard" 462). Furthermore, Treebeard's mistaken decision to release the fallen wizard partially happens because of Saruman's cunning voice (*Return*, "Many" 958). This error does not cause problems for Treebeard's own areas but rather for the Shire. Old Man Willow, on the other hand, causes the trees of the Old Forest to preemptively assault the Hobbits' Hedge, despite the fact that the Hobbits remain in Buckland, which (ultimately) leads to the felling of Old Forest trees by the "hundreds" (*Fellowship*, "Old" 108). Old Man Willow's decision to assault the Hobbits demonstrates that the tree's selfishness causes Old Man Willow to behave in a callous manner. After all, the Witch-King would possess little love for the forest that his Cardolan enemies once used, long before, as a means to evade the Witch-King's forces (*Return*, "Appendix A" 1016). Moreover, the Ringwraiths, collectively, would hate the

The notion that Old Man Willow and the Old Forest trees can communicate with one another, consequently, possesses some scientific merit. Monica Gagliano contends "that some plants may also emit and detect sounds, and in particular, a crackling noise in the roots at a frequency of 220 hertz, inaudible to humans." (Grant), which means that trees may, indeed, "hear" sounds like a gate shutting. Furthermore, trees can release gaseous signals if an animal or another predator attacks them (Grant). Likewise, trees can sense if animals like insects begin to feed on them, and subsequently, unveil pheromones to lead predators (e.g., wasps) of the thing (e.g., caterpillars) harming the tree, or a tree can alter the taste of their leaves by altering the chemical composition of their leaves (Grant). Trees communicate with one another through their oils (i.e., phytoncides) as well (Li 89). Wohlleben adds that (in addition to messages carried by scent) trees can communicate through visual signs like tree blossoms and electrical messages through their roots (12).

Consequently, Tolkien's portrayal of the Old Forest trees' communication is not entirely fantastic. Indeed, Tolkien describes Old Man Willow's "leaves" as ones that "seemed to hiss above [the Hobbits'] heads with a sound of pain and anger" when Sam and Frodo begin to burn the Willow-man, which then causes "the branches of all the other trees round about" to issue an outburst of wrath through "a clamour of leaves" (*Fellowship*, "Old" 116).

For additional contemporary parallels to Tolkien's fantasies, read chapter four.

Old Forest, for its existence enables the Four Hobbits to escape them (like the Cardolan Dúnedain of old²⁹⁸). Whereas Treebeard and the Ents display some compassion for innocent and ignorant visitors to their land and try to help the Free Peoples, selfish Old Man Willow persecutes visitors to the Old Forest. The Willow-Man's selfish callousness, however, proves delusional, for his evil actions risk the possibility that the Old Forest will be destroyed, in part, because of his "cunning" songs (e.g., "Old" 114-18, "House" 128).²⁹⁹ However, Treebeard's aversion to punishing evildoers by imprisoning them (because he views such an act as callous) proves ignorant as well, for, when Treebeard releases Saruman (i.e., the wizard whom Treebeard ignorantly describes as impotent), the liberation of Saruman enables the acceleration of the Shire's destruction. Old Man Willow, on the other hand, creates enemies by callously imprisoning, torturing, and

298. Perhaps the Ringwraiths mentally add that "Sauron would deal with [the Old Forest] later," as well as the Hobbits of the Shire, whom the Black Riders directly vow to punish (*Fellowship*, "Knife" 173).

299. Old Man Willow does not resemble the Ents but the most unrepentant among a hypothetical group of corrupted Elves or Entwives. Tolkien, within his September 25, 1954, letter to Naomi Mitchison (*Letters* 196, 197), mentions a problematic Elvish tendency to descend into the category of "embalmers." Elves "embalm" by trying to stall environmental alterations, in part, because of their doom to dwindle in power, and therefore, some of the Elves create the Rings of Power to try to bar the ruining of their beloved realms, as Tolkien mentions in his letter to Milton Waldman (*Letters* 152, 143). Because Bombadil mentions the "pride" of the Old Forest and its nostalgia for the days when forests covered Eriador and the trees appeared as "lords" and because Old Man Willow repeatedly attempts to harm anything that *may* threaten the Old Forest, Old Man Willow and his Old Forest exhibit a more pronounced version of the problematic Elvish "embalming" trait. As noted elsewhere, since Tolkien theorized that the Orcs may have descended from the Elves, the fact that the callously selfish Orcs share some commonality with the sadistic behavior of Old Man Willow helps to show the links between these beings and also demonstrates some of the problems with Flieger's comparison of the Hobbits with the Orcs Willow (264-68).

In any case, according to Treebeard, the Entwives "did not desire to speak with [their plants]; but they wished them to hear and obey what was said to them. The Entwives ordered them to grow according to their wishes, and bear leaf and fruit to their liking" (*Two*, "Treebeard" 464). Old Man Willow seizes on this type of dictatorial mood and mutates it. Because of the dwindling amount of acreage of trees in northwest Middle-earth and the departure of all of the Ents from the Old Forest area long ago, however, Old Man Willow's motivation for violence seems to partially occur because he and the other trees of the Old Forest feel "forgotten" (i.e., unappreciated) (*Fellowship*, "House" 127). While condemning the violence committed by and threatened by Old Man Willow, readers understand that Old Man Willow's motives include his desire to preserve himself and the other Old Forest trees from further destruction and obscurity.

threatening innocent travelers because of his fear that they may harm his forest at some point.

Whereas Old Man Willow's selfishness leads him to callously impose his personality on the Old Forest by infusing himself into almost all of the trees of the Old Forest³⁰⁰ (*Fellowship*, "House" 127-28), the Ents display appreciation for diversity by rejoicing that the trees of Fangorn Forest exhibit varying personalities (*Two*, "Treebeard" 457-72). Because of Old Man Willow's attempt to expand the realm of the Old Forest trees (which he uses as puppets) and because of his willingness to kill other plants (e.g., the Hedge) and Hobbits in order to do so, Old Man Willow resembles Saruman after his fall. Although Treebeard ponders whether he would ceaselessly retreat while defying his enemies like Saruman, Gandalf strongly contradicts this statement ("Voice" 572). According to Gandalf, Treebeard immensely differs from Saruman, because "[Y]ou [Treebeard] have not [selfishly] plotted to cover all the world with your trees and choke all other things" (572). Gandalf's comparison, however, greatly parallels the behavior, goals, and attitude of Old Man Willow. Instead of the Ents acting like Old Man Willow, who despises and tries to kill the Hobbits simply because they enter the Old Forest and make some wisecracks about the wood (*Fellowship*, "Old" 114-16, 109-10, "House" 127-28), the Ents appear to share some commonality with the Hobbits of Buckland. The Ents appear somewhat akin to the Buckland Hobbits, in part, because the Ents will (apparently) also destroy renegade trees that mean to slaughter non-violent visitors and evildoers alike³⁰¹ (*Fellowship*, "Old" 108; *Two*, "Treebeard" 457). For the trees that

300. To use a film comparison, Old Man Willow's behavior parallels that of Agent Smith in the second and third films of *The Matrix Trilogy* in which Smith transforms various beings into duplicates of himself.

301. The Hobbits fell the sentient Old Forest trees for vital reasons, for the Hedge offers the Hobbits some defense against intruders. The Ents, meanwhile, "weed" trees for vital reasons (i.e., saving unwary,

refrain from attempting to kill visitors with the ease of Orcs felling trees, the Ents encourage their growth, as witnessed by the interactions between the old willows and Treebeard (*Two*, “Treebeard” 457). The Ents’ weeding, therefore, actually somewhat resembles the behavior of the Hobbits, who refrain from wiping out all of the trees of the Old Forest, beyond Bonfire Glade, once the Old Forest trees retreat and, begrudgingly, allow the Hedge to live in Buckland (*Fellowship*, “Old” 108). Like Campbell (261-67), therefore, I believe that Flieger’s essay requires qualifying counterarguments, because the Ents differ from Old Man Willow in many ways. Instead of substantially resembling the Ents, Old Man Willow parallels some of the characteristics of Saruman, the most infamous, ecosadistic traitor of the Third Age of Middle-earth.

Treebeard and the Ents also leave a slight ecological footprint because of their living quarters. Although Tolkien leaves it open to interpretation to some extent, the Ents seem to carve out stairs; Tolkien describes the stairs that the Hobbits climb before encountering Treebeard as “natural perhaps” before noting that “If the stair had been made it was for *bigger feet and longer legs*” (*Two*, “Treebeard” 451, emphasis added). As an Ent, Treebeard’s feet and legs are far, far greater than the Hobbits. Similar to the (likely) carven stairs, Treebeard also probably creates his shelter: “Beyond [the two evergreen trees beside the opening] was a wide level space, *as though* the floor of a great hall had been *cut* in the side of the hill”; this “hall” also features a partially “hollowed” area (459, emphasis added). The fact that Tolkien qualifies his descriptions of the stairs

innocent visitors from evil trees and Huorns) as well. Because the Old Forest trees are controlled by the evil Old Man Willow and because Fangorn Forest also includes wicked trees, the Hobbits and Ents also clear fallen tree spirits for spiritual reasons as well (e.g., the trees no longer place themselves beneath the guardianship of the righteous spirits and Free Peoples).

and the hall to the point that visitors wonder if the Ents created these structures alludes to the Ents' environmental consideration and knowledge. While the Ents know how to blend their light construction activities into the environment, therefore, the Ents behave in this manner because they (similar to other Peoples like the Silvan Elves) desire to alter the environment as little as possible.³⁰²

At the same time, the Ents display more interest in the flora, bodies of water, and landscapes beyond Fangorn Forest, which means that the Ents display less callousness toward other lands and that they attempt to strive to learn more about other aspects of the physical environment and more about other Peoples. For example, the Ents also reduce their ignorance of the world by learning more about the Hobbits (*Two*, "Treebeard" 452-69). This matters in regard to the Ents' creation of gardens with herbs and fruit trees, that the Entwives adore/loved, for the agrarian Hobbits remind Treebeard of the Entwives. Treebeard repeatedly mentions that the Hobbits and their Shire remind him of the Entwives and their Gardens to Merry and Pippin on the first day that the Hobbits and the Ent meet and during the times they take leave from one another) (*Two*, "Treebeard" 461, "Voice" 572; *Return*, "Many" 959). The appearance of the Hobbits helps the Ents to place more value on the environmental perspectives of the other Free Peoples of Middle-earth, since Treebeard muses, as he speaks to Merry and Pippin that "I don't know about *sides*. I go my own way; but your way may go along with mine for a while" (*Two*, "Treebeard" 455). Subsequently, Treebeard returns to this idea when he declares, "I am

302. Tolkien's aforementioned decision to hint that the Ents create stairs and halls probably implies that the Ents' large size, extremely long lives, and ingrained habits contribute to the creation of paths and "hollowed" places. In other words, an Ent's "stair" and "hall" come into being because of his habitual walks and other duties as tree-herders in a manner akin to how paths develop after people/animals routinely travel across a specific area and how continual water movement will create smooth rocks (*Two*, "Treebeard" 459).

not altogether on anybody's *side*, because nobody is altogether on my *side*. . . . I take more kindly to Elves than to others . . . And there are some things, of course, whose side I am altogether *not* on . . . these Orcs, and their masters" (461). Between the two remarks, Treebeard both notes a degree of commonality between himself and the Hobbits, as well as their common environmental disagreement with Sauron, Saruman, and the Orcs. Treebeard later synthesizes his feelings (and his appreciation for the common purposes of all of the Free Peoples) when he slams the table and declares: "I will stop [Saruman and his tree-cutting minions] . . . And you [Hobbits] shall [i.e., must] come with me. You may be able to help me. You will be helping your own friends that way, too; for if Saruman is not checked Rohan and Gondor will have an enemy behind as well as in front. Our roads go together—to Isengard!" (463). In addition to referencing the suddenness of his friendship with Merry and Pippin, when Treebeard reflects that he might be "growing backwards toward youth" ("Voice" 572), Treebeard appears to embrace a renewed appreciation for what the lost Entwives valued. By creating the Treegarh, the Ents create a monument not only in memory of the Ents' losses and victories but also in memory to some of what the Entwives cherished. Therefore, after learning more about other environmental guardians and interacting with them, Treebeard and the Ents do not prioritize the differences between their less-pronounced shaping of Middle-earth and the practices of the more horticulturally- and agrarian-minded beings of Middle-earth (i.e., the Entwives, the Elves, the Hobbits, and some Men) to the same degree; instead, they emphasize their commonality with others.

Nevertheless, Olsen criticizes the Ents (and Treebeard, in particular) by characterizing them as a group blinded by their own ignorant prejudices, and who even

glorify in their continued existence and look at the Entwives in a selfishly smug manner—even during the War of the Ring era. The Ents, in the opinion of Olsen, dislike the well-known Elvish song about the Ents and Entwives, which, in turn, means that the Ents fail to learn that their self-centered interests contributed to their quarrels with the Entwives (44).

Rather than focusing on the fact that Treebeard sings an Elvish song to the Hobbits as Olsen does, I believe we should instead consider why. Treebeard mentions that the Ents possess “no songs” concerning the loss of the Entwives (*Two*, “Treebeard” 465); similar to a war memorial that lists the names of the dead, Treebeard states, “we made no songs [. . .] being content to chant their beautiful names when we thought of the Entwives” (465). One need only recall the deep pathos of the sight of the American Vietnam War Memorial to grasp the mental images conjured by the recitation of the names of the dead; such imagery can produce deep sorrow or help a suffering individual/group cope with the loss of their/his/her loved one(s). Rather than callousness, in other words, the Ents’ music regarding the disappearance of the Entwives is quite the opposite.³⁰³ The Hobbits’ relatively short attention span (based on Entish standards) also factors into why Treebeard decides to sing the Elvish song about the Entwives. Treebeard already calls the Hobbits “hasty” when the trusting Hobbits provide Treebeard with their names and the names of their kind³⁰⁴ (454); furthermore, Treebeard learns from Merry

303. Moreover, this Entish tradition of chanting the names of the enslaved, exiled, and/or dead Entwives resembles the subsequent tradition among Hobbit historians to memorize the Roll of names of the dead Hobbits slain during the Battle of Bywater against the Ruffians (*Return*, “Scouring” 992).

Because Merry and Pippin become two of the main heroes of the Battle of Bywater and gained much social influence in the Shire after the War of the Ring, perhaps these Hobbits helped to infuse some of the Ents’ culture into this Hobbit tradition.

304. Treebeard probably cautions the Hobbits’ trust in the integrity of strangers because of Saruman’s betrayal and subsequent destruction of Fangorn Forest, which occurs, in part, because of the knowledge Saruman gained from his previous conversations with Treebeard, as discussed elsewhere.

and Pippin that they traveled through the Elvish lands of Lothlórien and Rivendell (456, 460). This helps to explain *why* Treebeard opts to sing a “brief” song made by the Elves (466). Moreover, Treebeard’s pride can also feel slightly wounded when he hears that Celeborn “warn[ed]” the Hobbits not to enter Fangorn (456), which may provide another reason as to why Treebeard considers the Elvish song as partially faulty (i.e., the song is overly “quickworded”). Celeborn’s warning against Fangorn, in other words, seems too harsh without the additional comments about the forest from the Ent caretakers.

Treebeard’s behavior, when he sees Galadriel and Celeborn after the War of the Ring’s conclusion, nonetheless, demonstrates his, overall, deep respect for these Elves when he bows before them and yearns for them to visit Fangorn Forest (*Return*, “Many” 957, 959). While the Ents do not sing Entish songs about the Entwives, they chant their names; Treebeard, therefore, chooses to sing the Hobbits a song that he believes the “hasty” Hobbits can appreciate—and one that will at least provide a general idea of the problems and sorrows of the Ents and the Entwives (*Two*, “Treebeard” 454). Callousness, ignorance, laziness, and other manifestations of selfishness do not contribute to Treebeard’s decision to sing an Elvish song about the Entwives. Instead, I contend that Treebeard’s decision to sing an Elvish song demonstrates his ability to empathize, for Treebeard recites a song that he believes the Hobbits will find aesthetically pleasing, as they learn about the Entwives and their various environmental interests.

My views also differ from Olsen’s characterization of the Ents as selfish beings who behave in a callous and ignorant manner when they speak of and think about the Entwives.³⁰⁵ After all, Treebeard mentions the lack of Entings twice, once before his

305. Although the Entwives display some environmental weaknesses, I do not consider the Entwives’ environmental guardianship to be callous, lazy, or ignorant, in general; consequently, my view differs from

rendition of the Elvish song and again after singing the song that makes him momentarily confuse the Hobbits for “young Entings” (*Two*, “Treebeard” 464, 466-67). The fact that Treebeard states “singing that song put me in mind of old times; almost thought that I was talking to young” Entings means Treebeard would sometimes sing the Elvish song regarding the loss of the Entwives to young, male Ents before the last of the Entings matured (*Two*, “Treebeard” 467). Because Treebeard mentions that the Ents still “chant” laments/dirges of the names of the dead/enslaved/exiled Entwives and because of the implication that Treebeard sang the “fair” Elvish song to the Entings concerning the loss of the Entwives, my analysis leads me to conclude the opposite of Olsen (465, 466). According to Olsen, Treebeard recites a biased song that favors the Ents’ beliefs and belittles the environmental views of the Entwives (45). Nevertheless, just as the Ents memorize their statements to the Entwives in the Elvish song “and hum it now and again” (*Two*, “Treebeard” 465), the Ents also recall and hum the responses and convictions of the Entwives. Consequently, the Ents are *not* selfishly praising their environmental biases, because they suffer from the ignorant self-delusion that they possess no blame in their estrangement from the Entwives; moreover, the Ents are not callously dismissing the aspects of nature that the Entwives cherish/cherished. Finally, by memorizing the Entwives’ responses, the Ents do not lazily fail to learn what the Entwives love/loved. The pathos of these aforementioned scenes and quotations strongly indicate that

Olsen’s analysis. Olsen declares that the Entwives can “easily” swerve to behaving like Saruman, since both desire “order” and “rule” (47). While the Entwives may exhibit some selfishness by imposing their aesthetic values on nature by privileging certain flora, Saruman seeks order and rule in the abstract. Furthermore, whereas Saruman yearns for individual power and resorts to ecocide and murder to achieve this goal, the Entwives nurture multiple types of flora and wish to live in peace with other communities of various Peoples—some of whom they instruct in the ways of agriculture. Therefore, the hard-working and environmentally conscious Entwives and the callous, ecosadistic Saruman generally differ in their environmental actions and goals.

Treebeard mourns that the Ents cannot now rectify the mistakes that they committed in the past during their relationship with their partners, who also cared for and labored on behalf of the environment where they dwelled, albeit in a different manner than the Ents.

My interpretation also differs from Olsen's reading of the aforementioned topics regarding the demeanors of Treebeard and the Ents because of several keywords.

Although Olsen believes that Treebeard's description of the Elvish song as "lighthearted" must mean that Treebeard disparages the song (44), the fact that a melancholy song cannot adequately portray the depth of regret that the Ents feel for the loss of the Entwives actually reinforces the degree that the Ents yearn for the return of the Entwives. The Ents wish that the Entwives would return partially because the Ents desire to redress some of the Ents' past wrongs. In other words, the Ents (based on Treebeard's words and behavior) wish they could apologize for their selfishness and callousness, which led them to neglect the portions of nature that the Entwives cherished and to lazily refuse to visit the Entwives and their Gardens more often and appreciate the sensory imagery of and the work necessary to maintain these Gardens. Olsen, however, declares that Treebeard exhibits "a pro-Ent bias," since Treebeard notes that "the Ents could say more on their side, if they had the time" (44). However, Olsen does not include an important qualifier in between the aforementioned phrase and Treebeard's appraisal of the Elves' typical songs as "lighthearted, quickworded and soon over" by stating, "I daresay it [the Elvish song] is *fair* enough" (*Two*, "Treebeard" 466). Since Treebeard then follows this statement with "the Ents could say more on their side, if they had the time," this means that we should interpret *fair* in terms of judgment (466), not only the meaning of beauty, as Olsen implies (44). Moreover, because of the Hobbits' inclination to favor speediness,

Treebeard provides the basic beliefs of both the Ents and the Entwives at the time of the disappearance/murder/enslavement of the Entwives. Although Olsen argues that “Treebeard, in fact, rather regrets the impartiality of the song’s treatment of the debate between Ent and Entwife” (44), Treebeard’s qualifier concerning his desire to develop the Entish rationale, I believe, is typical of someone trying to explain why he/she made mistakes, even as he/she notes that his/her actions were indeed *mistakes*.

Furthermore, although Olsen does not include this information, Treebeard already directly compared the Shire and the Hobbits to the Entwives and their Gardens prior to singing the Elvish song about the Entwives (*Two*, “Treebeard” 461). One reason Treebeard would wish to explain the convictions of the Ents to the People who most resemble the Entwives is that the Hobbits—like the Entwives before them—could profit from appreciating “wild” trees to a greater degree. Although Treebeard declares, “I am not altogether on anybody’s *side*, because nobody is altogether on my *side*,” when he meets the Hobbits (461), Treebeard also characterizes Pippin and Merry as his close “friends” shortly before the Hobbits leave for Gondor (“Voice” 572). Therefore, the agricultural Hobbits are *not* rivals to the Ents, and therefore, the agricultural Entwives would also not be rivals but complimentary “friends” of the Third Age Ents, who happened to sometimes disagree with their allies. The close connection of the Hobbits with the Entwives helps to explain why Treebeard repeatedly asks the Hobbits to look for the Entwives and to “send me word” if they find or hear about any Entwives (e.g. 572). I, therefore, disagree with Olsen’s conviction that Treebeard “completely misses the pathos in the [Elvish] song’s depiction of the two perfectly complementary and yet sadly disconnected perspectives” (45). Furthermore, according to Olsen, Treebeard “sees the

words given to the Entwife [in the Elvish song] not as the counterpart, but as the rival to his own point of view. Through his own investment in the debate, he fails to see the larger and melancholy picture of misunderstanding and loss that the song paints” (45). Nonetheless, Olsen’s analysis notwithstanding, Treebeard considers the Entwife-like Hobbits “friends,” works to educate the Hobbits about various environmental matters, and labors to increase the Hobbits’ concern for the “wild” trees of the wilderness (*Two*, “Voice” 572). Treebeard and the Ents, finally, decide to list the Hobbits *directly* after the Ents in the “Long List” that, hitherto, made no mention of the Hobbits (572). In other words, even on the “Long List,” the Ents imply a comparison between the agricultural Hobbits and their lost companions: the agrarian-minded Entwives and Entmaidens. Even though the budding friendship between Treebeard and the Hobbits means that the leader of the Ents suggests that he and the Ents feel more appreciation for the labor and devotion necessary for quality agriculture and gardening than they once did, however, the Ents’ realization that parallels exist between the Entwives and the Hobbits is, naturally, bittersweet.

Because I do not believe that the Ents selfishly, callously, ignorantly, and lazily dismiss the environmental interests of the Entwives by the time of the War of Ring, my analysis contrasts with Olsen’s beliefs concerning the attitudes of Treebeard and the Ents as well. According to Olsen, Treebeard uses “smug” diction when he describes the Entwives as lovers of “lesser trees” (*Two*, “Treebeard” 464). *Lesser* can (and does in this context) also mean the *size* of trees—not necessarily (and certainly not *merely*) its value, as Olsen suggests (44). While Olsen only finds Treebeard’s “smugness” in this aforementioned example (44), Treebeard’s observation that, while the Ents remain alive,

the Entwives and their Gardens no longer exist in this portion of Middle-earth (or perhaps at all) (*Two*, “Treebeard” 465) demonstrates sorrowful irony. Even though “Many men learned the crafts of the Entwives and honoured them greatly” and considered the Ents mere “legends” (465), Treebeard’s observation alludes to the fact that none of the Men could save the Entwives from Sauron’s forces. This *is not* selfish and callous Entish joy at seeing the fall of the Entwives but brutal truth. After all, Treebeard states that the Ents’ “sorrow was very great” and “For *many* years we used to go out every now *and* again *and* look for the Entwives, walking far *and* wide *and* calling them by their beautiful names” (465, emphasis added). The use of “many” and the repetition of “and” each reinforce the sadness and bitterness felt by the Ents following the loss of the Entwives and their Gardens. Besides, if the Ents displayed such a degree of callousness that they mock the Entwives (as Olsen believes), the Ents would not journey long distances for many years while trying to find the Entwives. Furthermore, Treebeard mentions the fact that the agricultural Entwives taught Men *after* the agricultural Hobbits describe themselves as smaller Men (465, 454). Treebeard, therefore, wishes to convey the sorrow of the loss of the Entwives to the Hobbits by enabling the Hobbits to better empathize with the plight of the Ents, since—if not for the Entwives—the Hobbits and other Men would not have gained agricultural proficiency as quickly. Treebeard, consequently, increases the Hobbits’ knowledge of and appreciation for the Entwives and their work. In my view, “smugness” mischaracterizes Treebeard’s words, tone, and demeanor.

I also do not believe that Treebeard displays the selfish, callous, and ignorant attitude of “smugness” when he sings about the Entwives because of his multiple references to the eventual demise of the Ents. Rather than viewing the Ents’

environmental interests and abilities as inherently better than those of the Entwives, Treebeard declares, “[I]f Sauron of old destroyed the gardens [of the Entwives], the Enemy today seems likely to wither all the woods” (*Two*, “Treebeard” 465). Likewise, in discussing “the last march of the Ents” and contemplating what he believes as the likely end of the Ents when they choose to march against Isengard, Treebeard specifically mentions his yearning to see the Entwives—especially Fimbrelthil—again (475). One of Treebeard’s final statements includes his lack of hope that the Ents can find the Entwives: “Forests may grow. Woods may spread. But not Ents. There are no Entings” (*Return*, “Many” 958). Rather than “smugness,” Treebeard repeatedly displays *sadness* and *resignation* that the disappearance of the Entwives dooms the Ents, though he remains *resolved* to continue tending the trees of Fangorn Forest. The fact that Tolkien divides Treebeard’s aforementioned statement into four short sentences emphasizes the Ent’s profound mourning for the lost Entwives, emphasizes the fact that precious few Ents remain alive, and emphasizes that the Ents will probably never again find and breed with the Entwives. Moreover, I believe that the short, halting sentence structuring of the aforementioned brief passage of four sentences reads as though Treebeard nears the Entish equivalent of tears, as he struggles to maintain his composure. Although Olsen describes the Elvish song concerning the Ents and the Entwives as “a cautionary tale, not a lament” (48), my analysis leads me to a different conclusion. Indeed, Legolas declares that “[E]very Elf in Wilderland has sung songs of the old Onodrim and their long *sorrow*” (*Two*, “White” 488, emphasis added). Instead, it seems that the Ents wish to redress their past mistakes with their former companions, the Entwives. Furthermore, Treebeard teaches the agricultural Hobbits to not only love growing crops (a sentiment

that the lost Entwives once imparted to the Hobbits' ancestors) but also value wild trees. In other words, Treebeard may understand, to some extent, that the time of the Ents will end and that other Free Peoples in Middle-earth (such as the Hobbits) must learn to appreciate wild trees even more than in previous eras in order to help offset the Ents' eventual extinction.

As the names and nicknames of the Ents imply, the Ents live and labor as the supervisors of their tree-herds, because the Ents decide where to grow their trees, how to guard their trees, who visits and learns about the trees of Fangorn Forest, and how/what/when to prune and weed. While working on behalf of the trees, the Ents endeavor to cherish, to protect, and to comprehend the trees to the best of their abilities, which usually contrasts with the selfish actions and attitude of the callously delusional Old Man Willow. Nevertheless, because the Ents sometimes err by failing to invest a sufficient amount of time learning about other lands and other Peoples and by restricting their tree-herding to the trees of Fangorn Forest in the Third Age, the Ents sometimes appear somewhat lazy, selfish, and callous, since they refuse to try to cultivate and rehabilitate trees in non-Entish lands.³⁰⁶ In other words, overspecialization mars Entish guardianship. The Ents, however, entirely avoid many things that can contribute to inadequate environmental guardianship in Middle-earth: created artifacts, industrialization, preemptive warfare, and bioengineering. When given the opportunity to defend the physical environment and other Peoples from potent ecosadists, many of the Ents (eventually) endeavor to defeat evildoers bent on ecocide, rather than to allow their

306. While it is true that the Ents represent a stark contrast to an industrialized, urban civilization, I disagree with Denekamp's characterization of the Ents as a People "completely outside of civilization" (9). After all, the Ents demonstrate that they share a language, a culture, a community, and live in a certain region, as they guard their trees and teach others about the intrinsic value of "wild" nature.

environmental guardianship be permanently tarnished by cowardly, lazily, and callously refusing to fight ecosadists.

3.6. Concerning Hobbits: Redeeming the Guardians of The Shire

The Hobbits *generally* display a hierarchical—yet eco-friendly—relationship with nature because of their methods of construction, cultivation, and pruning. Because of their choice to mold the environment of the Shire³⁰⁷ to match their idea of beauty and functionality (*Fellowship*, “Prologue” 4), the Hobbits most resemble the Entwives and, to a lesser extent, the Elves. The beginning of the “Prologue” of *The Fellowship of the Ring* adds to this impression, for this work states that the Hobbits “love peace and quiet and good tilled earth: a well-ordered and well-farmed countryside was their favourite haunt” (1). The Hobbits’ environmental shaping includes the cultivation and maintenance of vineyards, fields of corn and other crops, and woods³⁰⁸ (5). The Hobbits generally act as positive environmental caretakers partially because nature will yield greater product for the Hobbits and because they enjoy witnessing/interacting with nature’s sensory imagery.³⁰⁹ Moreover, the Hobbits provide a degree of ease for themselves, while maintaining the overall health of the environment, by only accepting a limited number of machines, such as “a forge-bellows, a water-mill, or a hand-loom” (1). Despite affecting

307. The Hobbits gained the Shire through the efforts of the Hobbit leaders Marcho and Blanco Fallohide and by the generosity of the King of Arnor. The King of Arnor, while allowing the Hobbits to migrate to and live within his realm, required several duties. As noted within “The Prologue,” the Hobbits were ordered to “keep the Great Bridge in repair, and all other bridges and roads, speed the king’s messengers, and acknowledge his lordship” (*Fellowship* 4).

308. The Arnorian kings, of course, had already helped to shape the Shire’s environment when they altered the environment in this part of Eriador by cultivating the land for crops and by designating various areas for forests (*Fellowship*, “Prologue” 4-5).

309. For example, Tolkien’s *One Morning Early in the Quiet of the World* artwork features Bilbo enjoying his pipe-weed while smoking, which demonstrates the reciprocal nature of the Hobbits’ care of the environment (*Art . . . Hobbit* 20).

the environment and adopting environmental practices to provide themselves “comfort” (*Hobbit*, “Unexpected” 3), however, one must emphasize that the Hobbits often maintain “a close friendship with the earth” (*Fellowship*, “Prologue” 1).

The Hobbits also actively alter their land through various types of construction, such as irrigation and architecture. For example, the Hobbits dredge marshlands.³¹⁰ Within Tolkien’s unfinished *Index*, he notes that the Marish represents the eastern portion of the Eastfarthing quarter of the Shire situated on “reclaimed marshland” (Hammond and Scull, “*Lord*” . . . *Reader’s* 28). Moreover, some of the Hobbits still delve into the earth to create inhabitable Hobbit-holes³¹¹ at the ending of the Third Age (*Hobbit*, “Unexpected” 3; *Fellowship*, “Prologue” 6). However, by the War of the Ring era, middle-class Hobbits (especially the Hobbits of the lineage of the Stoors and/or the Fallohides) largely ceased living in such holes and chose to erect brick, wood, and stone houses in the fashion of the *Big People*, Men (*Fellowship*, “Prologue” 3, 6). These

310. In my February 9, 2018, interview with my Grandfather, Bill Korver, he noted that, when he farmed from the 1930s—1960s, he and other Orange City, Iowa, farmers preserved marshes and other “swamp-like” land in order to provide shelter for animals like pheasants and foxes. The fact that the Hobbits drain the Marish, therefore, represents a problematic decision, since the altered ecosystem could harm some animals.

311. Christopher Tolkien mentions that Elendil and the Númenórean Exiles took Idril’s emblem to Gondor, after the Downfall, and that its circular shape had influenced Númenórean designs (*Pictures* 47, 47n); furthermore, Hammond and Scull mention a note in which Tolkien states that the Elves may have often created circular emblems (*Artist* 191). While the female Half-Elves/Elves (Lúthien and Idril) have circular emblems, some of the male Elves/Half-Elves (Thingol, Finwë, Fëanor, Fingolfin, Eärendil, and Finarphin/Finarfin) have squares; yet, circular designs also exist within these emblems (*Pictures* 47, 47n; Hammond and Scull, *Artist* 195). Consequently, because the influence of a circular design comes to Middle-earth (e.g., even the Maia Melian enjoys a circular emblem) (*Pictures* 47, 47n) and then returns to Middle-earth, it seems possible that this circular eccentricity may have creatively contributed to Tolkien’s depiction of the Hobbits’ well-known love for circular windows and doors (i.e., the emblem of Hobbit architecture). After all, “The Prologue” mentions that the Hobbits learned the skills of various “crafts,” including constructing homes, from the Elves or the Dúnedain (i.e., the Númenórean Exiles) (*Fellowship* 6-7), albeit Tolkien argues that the Hobbits demonstrate their eccentricity by placing round windows in their homes rather than creating round traditional emblems (*Fellowship* 7; *Pictures* 47, 47n). One should also note, nonetheless, that Hammond and Scull observe that Tolkien created most of his Elvish emblems (c. 1960-61) after writing *The Lord of the Rings* (*Artist* 191). Thus, the roots of the Hobbit peculiarity of round windows could result from Tolkien’s tendency to continue reworking his mythology.

Hobbits (often tradesman) used turf (i.e., grass and soil), as well as straw, for the roofs of their homes (7). The July-August 1937 pencil and watercolor painting *The Hill: Hobbiton-across-the-Water* by Tolkien also depicts the ways the Hobbits altered the landscape of the Shire through construction activities. In addition to Hobbit holes, above-ground homes, and a mill, the artwork demonstrates that the Hobbits construct other things that affect the physical environment. Within the painting, Tolkien observes that the Hobbits build bridges, lanes, road signs, fences, and gates (reprinted in Hammond and Scull, *Artist* 106).

The Hobbits also embrace eco-friendly labor practices through various types of cultivation. For example, the Hobbits cultivate living fences, i.e., hedgerows. The Hobbits cultivated the Hedge/High Hay “many generations” before the War of the Ring era (*Fellowship*, “Conspiracy” 97). Furthermore, as *The Fellowship of the Ring* mentions, the Hobbits tend to flower gardens of snap-dragons, sunflowers, and nasturtians,³¹² while they cultivate fields for crops like pipe-weed (“Long-Expected” 25, “Prologue” 7-8). In addition to designating certain areas for flower gardens, the Hobbits, as *The Hill: Hobbiton-across-the-Water* artwork shows, prune trees and hedgerows (reprinted in Hammond and Scull, *Artist* 106). By merely looking at the picture, viewers will note not only a beautiful, charming sight and the existence of multiple kinds of trees but also the presence of many shrubs that will help prevent erosion in the Hobbits’ Shire.

Furthermore, the (albeit Bree) Hobbits promote greater knowledge of and appreciation for the physical environment among the Men of Bree. Unlike any other Men

312. Hammond and Scull observe that, while Tolkien succeeded in maintaining this spelling in what he describes as a series of arguments with a “proof-reader” in his August 7, 1954, letter to Katharine Farrer (*Letters* 183), the *OED* considers the spelling a “corrupt” version of *nasturtium* (“Lord” . . . *Reader’s* 63).

in Middle-earth, the Men of Bree use botanical names. These names include: *Goatleaf*, *Heathertoes*, *Appledore*, [and] *Thistlewool* (*Fellowship*, “At” 152). Therefore, I support Hazell’s suggestion that this trait results from the influence of their Hobbit neighbors in Bree, for Hobbits enjoy naming their children after plants, especially flowers (7). Indeed, according to Sam, “half the maidchildren in the Shire are called by such names” (*Return*, “Grey” 1003). For instance, Sam marries *Rose Cotton* and the two produce many children, including *Elanor* (1001, 1003).

By teaching the Men of Bree to value the environment, the Hobbits mentor these Men in a manner somewhat akin to how the Entwives once tutored Men in agricultural matters. As in the case of the Hobbits, the Entwives also labored for many hours to create the environment to express their sense of beauty and functionality. However, because both groups work (or, in the likely case of the Entwives, worked) to create and maintain agricultural ecosystems (rather than felling trees to satisfy an urge to destroy, and thereby creating environmental wastelands), Tolkien cautiously embraces both groups. Because the Hobbits’ approach to nature reminds Treebeard of the lost Entwives (*Two*, “Treebeard” 461), the Entwives reaffirm the positives and negatives within Hobbit society. Treebeard tells Merry and Pippin that,

the Entwives gave their minds to lesser trees, and to the meads in the sunshine beyond the feet of the forests; and they saw the sloe in the thicket, and the wild apple and the cherry blossoming in spring, and the green herbs in the waterlands in summer, and the seeding grasses in the autumn fields. They did not desire to speak with these things; but they wished them to hear and obey what was said to them. The Entwives ordered them to grow according to their wishes, and bear leaf

and fruit to their liking; for the Entwives desired order, and plenty, and peace (by which they meant that things should remain where they had set them). So the Entwives made gardens to live in. But we Ents went on wandering and we only came to the gardens now and again. Then when the Darkness came in the North, the Entwives crossed the Great River, and made new gardens, and tilled new fields, and we saw them more seldom. After the Darkness was overthrown the land of the Entwives blossomed richly, and their fields were full of corn. Many men learned the crafts of the Entwives and honoured them greatly; but we were only a legend to them, a secret in the heart of the forest. (*Two*, “Treebeard” 464-65)

Because Treebeard states that “[T]he Entwives gave their minds to lesser trees, and to the meads,” and notes that they enjoyed the sight of and the process of cultivating herbs, grasses, and fruit trees (464), Treebeard implies that the Entwives invested countless hours acquiring knowledge about—and laboring in their Gardens to nurture the health of—these species. Moreover, the Entwives clearly appreciate the sensory imagery of the aforementioned flora with this being the case even more at certain times of the year (e.g., the summer herbs and the fall grasses). Furthermore, Treebeard mentions that the Entwives labored to create a second set of gardens and fields after Morgoth (or Sauron) returned, for the northern “Darkness” threatened the original croplands and orchards of the Entwives (465). Finally, Treebeard also observes that the Entwives’ environmental work also included teaching Men how to cultivate orchards and crops (465).

To complete their various cultivation projects, the Hobbits also fell trees when the Hobbit community deems the task necessary, which causes some environmentally

troublesome actions to occur. The Hobbits of Buckland, for example, opt to burn a section of trees to clear all of the trees from the area within the Old Forest that stood too close to the Hedge that the Hobbits planted (*Fellowship*, “Old” 108). Based on the unsavory description of the treeless and weed-infested Bonfire Glade, Tolkien implies that the Hobbits chopped down too many trees in retaliation to the Old Forest’s aggression; moreover, the location of the fire suggests Hobbit recklessness, since the fire could spread to other areas of the forest, as Campbell mentions (267). Nevertheless, Tolkien’s work repeatedly observes that the Hobbits responded to the Old Forest trees’ attack on the Hobbits’ Hedge and that the Hobbits ceased felling trees once they believed that the trees would no longer try to destroy the Hedge. In other words, whereas the Orcs destroy whatever, whenever, wherever, whomever, and however, the Hobbits of Buckland fell some of the sentient Old Forest trees in order to defend themselves and to preserve the well-being of their Hedge (Campbell 267). Furthermore, if Campbell’s theory is correct, the Hobbits may show less kindness toward the Old Forest trees because of their skewed knowledge/ignorance of the Old Forest based on their fear of the wood and its evil reputation in Hobbit legends (267n). In any case, some of the Hobbits appear to enjoy the spectacle of burning the trees in front of the remaining Old Forest trees when they create the Bonfire Glade, rather than, as Campbell also observes (267), using the wood for various types of projects (e.g., building fences). Consequently, by felling the trees—and then just burning the felled trees—and by felling more trees than was necessary, the selfish Buckland Hobbits exhibit the environmental negatives of callousness, ignorance, and shoddy workmanship. Based on the responses of the majority of Hobbits to the general destruction of the Shire (including the wanton slaughter of

trees) by Saruman, the Ruffians, and renegade Hobbits like Sandyman, nevertheless, the Bonfire Glade incident (which happened decades before the events of *The Lord of the Rings*) seems out-of-character for most Hobbits.

Thankfully, the troubling spectacle of some Hobbits smugly enjoying the act of clear-cutting trees is rare, as “The Scouring of the Shire” chapter of *The Return of the King* indicates. Within this chapter, readers witness the Hobbit community’s sorrow and anger that Saruman, the Ruffians, and a few renegade Hobbits decimated the Shire’s environment. From “The Scouring of the Shire” chapter, readers know that the sorrow of the Four returning Hobbits represents the general view of Hobbits rather than some sort of sentimental outlier. Farmer Cotton, for example, supports the Four Hobbit Companions’ condemnation of immoderate and unnecessary (i.e., selfish, callous, and ignorant) pruning, harvesting, and building when he derides “Sharkey” for his policies of “hack, burn, and ruin; and . . . killing. There’s no longer even any bad sense in it. They cut down trees and let ‘em lie, they burn houses and build no more” (*Return*, “Scouring” 989). The lack of moderation and the failure to privilege the needs and desires of the Hobbit community and the Shire’s ecosystem over the whims of corrupt individuals reaches one of its climaxes when Cotton blasts Sharkey/Saruman for contaminating the Shire’s water. Cotton declares that the Sandyman mill in Hobbiton pollutes intentionally: “[T]hey pour out filth a purpose; they’ve fouled all the lower Water, and it’s getting down into Brandywine. If they want to make the Shire into a desert, they’re going the right way about it” (990). However, because the Hobbits (as a whole) band together to fight Saruman’s Men, whom Lotho Sackville-Baggins brought into the Shire, after the arrival of the Four Hobbit Companions, this communal rebellion against ecosadism

demonstrates that Hobbits like Sandyman and Lotho represent eccentric oddities rather than a norm within Hobbit society. Therefore, the Hobbits generally possess a relationship with nature very different from the Orcs, whom Legolas derides as a People who “delight to slash and beat down growing things that are not even in their way” (*Two*, “Departure” 409). Unlike the Orcs or even Lotho and Sandyman, most Hobbits care for the environment, which helps to explain why they display “admiration and respect” for Sam, Pippin, and Merry after overthrowing the Ruffians and renewing the Shire (*Return*, “Grey” 1002), and why they elect Sam as Mayor *seven* times (“Appendix B” 1072).

My views concerning the comparison of the Hobbits to the Orcs, therefore, differ with those held by Flieger, who finds similarities between the ecosadistic Orcs and the Hobbits (“Taking” 264). Nonetheless, I believe that readers should emphasize the reasons why the Hobbits and the Orcs fell trees, reference the number of trees chopped down by the Hobbits and the Orcs, and note how these Peoples use the felled trees. Consequently, my analysis also differs from one of Hammond and Scull’s assertions concerning the Old Forest section of *The Fellowship of the Ring*. In their aforementioned aside, Hammond and Scull contend that the Old Forest trees *did not* assault the Hedge, because “the trees were naturally propagating” (qtd. in “*Lord*” . . . *Reader’s* 121). Hammond and Scull believe their view is supported by Tolkien’s June 30, 1972, *Daily Telegraph* letter, even though this letter only notes that Tolkien states that the forests in his Middle-earth texts are characterized as self-conscious woods, for “The Old Forest was hostile to two legged creatures because of the memory of many injuries” (qtd. in 121). In no way does this mean, however, that the fantastic trees of the Old Forest merely surround the Hedge through the usual process of seed-and-growth. Such a reading largely undervalues

Bombadil's characterization of Old Man Willow, undervalues the experiences of the Hobbits in the Old Forest, and undervalues the oral histories of the Hobbits of Buckland that Merry mentions (*Fellowship*, "Old" 115-18, 108, "House" 127-28). Moreover, Tolkien's own statement that "I take the part of trees as against all their enemies" is an overgeneralization (*Letters* 419) because of the presentation of Old Man Willow and the Old Forest. Furthermore, I contend that Hammond and Scull (as well as Flieger and other critics) incorrectly assume that the Hobbits are, in fact, "enemies" of trees. The agricultural Hobbits are neither simply "friends" of (nor just "enemies" of) trees, for they cultivate *and* fell trees, depending on the era, the perceived need, and the circumstance. After all, not only Bombadil (*Fellowship*, "House" 126) but also the Ents, the Shepherds of the Trees, maintain hedges, which can comprise of trees, such as evergreens (*Two*, "Treebeard" 468). Surely, the fact that the Hobbits choose to protect their Hedge (albeit sometimes in a less-than eco-friendly manner, certainly) does not mean that the Hobbits are as ecosadistic as the Orcs.

Nevertheless, Flieger, Hammond, Scull, and other critics are right to state that the Hobbits err in their treatment of the Old Forest to some degree. One reason that explains the Hobbits' environmental inconsistency is the fact that the Hobbits prefer certain areas to others. While the Hobbits of Stoor like land near rivers (or flatlands), those of Fallohide descent prefer forest areas, and the Harfoot Hobbits find mountain foothill lands the best (*Fellowship*, "Prologue" 3). However, nearly all of the Hobbits dislike and/or feel frightened by the ocean (7).

"The Prologue" to *The Lord of the Rings* notes that the Hobbits, like the Elves, also hunt and defend their private property. While the Hobbits of Fallohide lineage

“prefe[r] hunting to tilling,” the Hobbits typically refrained from killing animals for mere “sport”³¹³ (*Fellowship*, “Prologue” 3, 6). Nevertheless, the fact that the Hobbits toss stones at animals (i.e., those not owned by the Hobbits) that come onto their property also compromises the quality of the Hobbits’ environmentalism (6).

Non-adult Hobbits, however, show even less restraint. Within *The Hobbit*, the narrator implies that Bilbo experienced moral growth, for he increasingly displayed a pro-environmental attitude. According to the narrator, “As a boy [Bilbo] used to practise [sic] throwing stones at things, until rabbits and squirrels, and even birds, got out of his way as quick as lightning if they saw him stoop”; however, as an adult, Bilbo only threw things at inanimate objects (“Flies” 144). Consequently, Bilbo progresses from harming non-domesticated animals to throwing stones only at non-living entities. *The Lord of the Rings* also shows that younger Hobbits display negative environmental-guardianship qualities, for Gandalf declares that Pippin sometimes filched eggs from bird nests (*Return*, “Minas” 737). As Hammond and Scull observe, Pippin’s behavior is called “birds-nesting” and equates to someone seizing eggs out of nests so that they can create a “collection” of bird eggs (“*Lord*” . . . *Reader’s* 516). A weakness within Hobbit society in the Shire, therefore, stems from overindulging young, male Hobbits in their “tweens,” who selfishly desire to commit some callous acts of violence.

313. Despite the problems within Hobbit society, Tolkien declares, in a September 1963 draft of a letter to Mrs. Eileen Elgar, that he remains “very fond” of Hobbits (*Letters* 329). One reason Tolkien praises the Hobbits is because the Hobbits refuse to participate in “blood-sports” or do anything “cruel” to wild animals, for they possess a great degree of “feeling for” these creatures—a sentiment that few humans possess (*Letters* 197n). If Tolkien’s statement within this letter is compatible with his Middle-earth fantasies, perhaps Bilbo’s behavior of hurling rocks at animals in *The Hobbit* may mean that he tosses rocks in the direction of animals without hitting them, that he throws stones without great force but with accuracy, and/or that he wounds the animals without permanently maiming or killing them. However, because Bilbo’s accurate stone-throwing results in killing a Great Spider (*Hobbit*, “Flies” 144), such a generous reading seems somewhat questionable.

Despite their reluctance to kill animals for no reason other than thrills, adult Hobbits will kill an invading species for vital purposes. Examples of this type of hunting occurred during “the Battle of Greenfields, S.R. 1147 . . . [when] Bandobras Took routed an invasion of Orcs”; similarly, during colder winters in the Shire, the Hobbits kill “the wolves [. . . that] come ravening out of the North” (*Fellowship*, “Prologue” 5, 6). The Hobbits, consequently, embrace a hierarchical relationship with nature (albeit typically one in which they self-impose the restrictions of moderation and necessity in an effort to stymie the wanton, callous slaughter of living beings), which enables them to curb or eradicate invasive species populations in the realm of the Shire.

Two troubling areas where moderation almost entirely breaks down in the Hobbits’ culture is food and exercise. Although Jeffers tries to excuse such behavior,³¹⁴ the richest Hobbits (such as Bilbo and Frodo) are notoriously obese because of their *choice* to overeat and to insufficiently exercise³¹⁵ to such an extent that the Rivendell Elves mock Bilbo’s “fat” and his habitual overeating in *The Hobbit* (“Short” 48). Pippin, moreover, also notes that Frodo needs to lose weight when they begin their journey from Bag-End in *The Fellowship of the Ring* (“Three” 69). While the Hobbits’ typical, unhealthy reticence to exercise parallels their stubbornly adamant inclination to remain ignorant and callously oblivious of the world outside the Shire, the Hobbits’ culturally condoned practice of gluttony foreshadows how the Ring tempts the Hobbits’ relative

314. Jeffers attempts to re-visualize the consumptive practices of the Hobbits—who gorge themselves on food, drink, and pipe-weed—by arguing that they do so “out of delight and love for their surroundings” (36).

315. I do not believe that Tolkien’s tales intentionally mock those who suffer various physical and nutritional ailments because of genetics or disease. Instead, Tolkien’s works, in my view, act as a goad to encourage readers who (like many Hobbits) have chosen to overeat and to exercise insufficiently because of laziness and/or ignorance, which leads them to refuse to alter their behavior to live healthier lives.

Gollum with images of a carnivorous smorgasbord (*Two*, “Passage” 619). Because of their general gluttony and lack of exercise, the Hobbits use more natural resources than necessary, and the Hobbits fail to stay sufficiently fit while working outdoors and enjoying the sensory imagery of the physical environment, and therefore, the Hobbits’ environmental guardianship suffers to some degree.

Occasionally, readers actually encounter Hobbits who divorce themselves from the Hobbit culture that promotes community and (in many matters) moderation. These renegade Hobbits align more with Flieger’s characterization of Hobbits as (in terms of tree-felling) only better looking, more polished Orcs (264). Ted Sandyman is one of these selfish, callous, lazy, and ignorant Hobbit renegades, whom Samwise observes when he peers into the Mirror of Galadriel. While examining the images in the Mirror, Sam witnesses the son of the local miller, Ted Sandyman, “a-cutting down trees as he shouldn’t. They didn’t ought to be felled: it’s that avenue beyond the Mill that shades the road to Bywater. I wish I could get at Ted, and I’d fell him” (*Fellowship*, “Shadow” 43, “Mirror” 353). By recalling this discussion of the now tree-less areas in the Shire, Sam’s anger about Sandyman’s tree-felling lies in the practice *and* in the spirit with which Sandyman chops down trees. Tolkien’s fantasies indicate that a particularly heinous act is felling trees unnecessarily, which harms the well-being of the community, as well as the overall ecosystem. Sam indicates that Sandyman’s logging harms the well-being of the physical environment of the Shire and the well-being of the Hobbits when he mentions that the loss of the trees eliminates the cooling effect of the trees’ shade for those who make the trek to Bywater. Tolkien reaffirms the depth to which Sandyman fails to follow

Hobbit moderation when Sam³¹⁶ immediately imagines “trees cut down and all” after Butterbur warns the returning Hobbits of the evil tidings that he has recently heard from the Shire (*Return*, “Homeward” 973). Furthermore, the narrator states that the “first really painful shock” for the Hobbits occurs when they see weed-infested gardens and the loss of “An avenue of trees,” which Sandyman, Lotho, and other Hobbit reprobates helped uproot so that they could build ugly and inefficient houses of poor quality (“Scouring” 980-81). Even when Sandyman’s selfishness does not cause him to callously fell trees, he still fails as an environmental guardian because of his laziness and ignorance, as seen when the Four Hobbit Companions return to the Shire only to find Sandyman sitting rather than working to repair the massive environmental disaster in the Shire (993). Indeed, Sandyman praises the spectacle of ecocide (993).

Meanwhile, pollution in the Shire’s bodies of water (e.g., the Water and the Brandywine) and the Shire’s air pollution partially occurs because of the selfishness of Lotho “Pimple” Sackville-Baggins and the ecosadistic traits that contribute to Lotho’s self-centeredness: callousness, laziness, and ignorant delusions of grandeur. Farmer Cotton reports that Lotho’s environmental sins include the selfish yearning “to own everything himself, and then order other folk about” (*Return*, “Scouring” 989). To try to achieve these goals, the delusional Lotho ignorantly destroyed the old mill in favor of building a larger one in order “to grind more and faster,” despite the futility of such work, since “there was no more for the new mill to do than for the old” (989-90). In addition to

316. In a letter draft to Mrs. Eileen Elgar, Tolkien calls Sam the typical Hobbit in terms of both his positives and his negatives (*Letters* 329); consequently, Sam’s statements represent the general Hobbit sentiment concerning trees. Because Tolkien recalls the linguistic link between *Gamgee* and *Cotton* (qtd. in Hammond and Scull, “*Lord*” . . . *Reader’s* 55-56), Farmer Cotton’s condemnation of the Shire’s environmental degradation in *The Return of the King* (as I discuss elsewhere) represents the average Shire Hobbit’s view for his generation.

Lotho's greedy actions and wanton disregard for the community, Tolkien's inclusion of "sack" and "bag" in Lotho's last name underscores Lotho's insatiable lust for power and wealth, which further underscores the fact that Lotho fails to subscribe to the Hobbit mores of financial, agricultural, and industrial moderation. Likewise, Lotho refuses to follow the Hobbits' cultural expectation to place the well-being of the community first. Tolkien's "Nomenclature of *The Lord of the Rings*, after all, mentions that *Sackville-Baggins*, as a single name, should create humor because of the synonyms of "sack" and "bag" mean, roughly, the same thing³¹⁷ (qtd. in "*Lord*" . . . *Reader's* 53, 753, 762, 765). Meanwhile, because *Loth* means "unwilling, reluctant," Tolkien again emphasizes Lotho's greediness and callousness, since Lotho refuses to abide by more eco-friendly and socially approved norms among Hobbits. In other words, because a few ignorant Hobbits ignore their cultural norms of moderation, necessity, and community during the War of the Ring, this creates the opportunity for Saruman to orchestrate the environmental degradation of the Shire. Lotho's selfishness, therefore, leads him to callously contribute to the destruction of the Shire's environment, in part, because of his ignorant pursuit of improving the Shire's industries in his attempt to realize his delusional dream of becoming the ruler of the Shire.

The terrible fate of the Entwives, meanwhile, helps to explain why the Shire is not a long-term environmental model, for—like the Entwives before them—the Hobbits' lack of a formal military endangers them. Because of their insufficient strength, numbers, and/or defensive strategy against invaders, the land of the Entwives suffers irreparable

317. In the paragraph where he explains why he regards himself "a *Hobbit*," in his October 25, 1958, letter to Deborah Webster, Tolkien notes that he possesses, "[A] very simple sense of humour (which even my appreciative critics find tiresome)" (*Letters* 288, 289). Tolkien's punning with character and place names is an example of his eccentric humor that Tolkien describes as Hobbit-like in this letter.

harm, and the Entwives themselves may no longer exist (*Two*, “Treebeard” 465). While speaking to Merry and Pippin, Treebeard mournfully recounts the disappearance/killing/enslavement/exiling of his former partners, the Entwives: “[H]ere we [Ents] still are while all the gardens of the Entwives are wasted: Men call them the Brown Lands now [. . . .] We crossed over Anduin and came to their land; but we found a desert: it was all burned and uprooted, for war had passed over it. But the Entwives were not there [. . . .] nowhere that we went could we find them” (464-65). To excel as environmental guardians, Tolkien’s works, therefore, also teach that a People must prepare to defend their lands from aggressors to try to prevent the type of long-term damage to the well-being of the environment of their realm that the Entwives and their Gardens suffer/suffered. Treebeard’s description of the Brown Lands area as a “desert” of only “burned” ground and wilderness “uprooted” illustrates its immense difference from the war-devastated region of Eregion³¹⁸ and describes what the Hobbits already witnessed as they floated down the Great River from Lothlórien. As the narrator observes:

On the eastern bank to their left they saw long formless slopes stretching up and away toward the sky; brown and withered they looked, as if fire had passed over them, leaving no living blade of green: an unfriendly waste without even a broken tree or a bold stone to relieve the emptiness. They had come to the Brown Lands

318. The long-term harm to the area where the Entwives maintained their gardens provides a counterweight to the continued health of the region of Eregion (despite the elimination of the Elven kingdom), which provides a semblance of hope for an environment devastated by warfare. The Brown Lands, consequently, demonstrate Tolkien’s ability to include a balanced view, since (despite the passage of thousands of years) the act of destroying the Gardens of the Entwives continues to cripple the environment of the Brown Lands.

Because Galadriel probably lived in Eregion before its destruction (*Unfinished*, “Elessar” 251), Galadriel’s possession of the Elessar in Eregion may assist in the long-term quality of its lands—despite the fall of the High-Elven realm. The power of the Elessar to heal lands harmed by warfare, consequently, may partially explain why Eregion’s environment displays remarkable healing, despite Sauron’s vengeful destruction of Celebrimbor’s realm in retaliation for the hiding of the Three Elven Rings of Power.

that lay, vast and desolate, between Southern Mirkwood and the hills of the Eryn Mui. What pestilence or war or evil deed of the Enemy had so blasted all that region even Aragorn could not tell. . . . The Brown Lands rose into bleak wolds, over which flowed a chill air from the East. On the other side the meads had become rolling downs of withered grass amidst a land of fen and tussock. Frodo shivered, thinking of the lawns and fountains of Lothlórien. There was little speech and no laughter in any of the boats. (*Fellowship*, “Great” 370, 372)

Although Aragorn cannot recollect exactly how the Brown Lands began, Treebeard states that Sauron destroyed the Gardens of the Entwives during his war with the Númenóreans³¹⁹ (*Two*, “Treebeard” 465). Because the Hobbits share not only a love of cultivation but also a relative disinterest in war preparation with their ancestors’ mentors, the Entwives, the description of the Brown Lands alludes to the horrible consequences of inadequately preparing for violent aggressors. Consequently, through his portrayals of the Brown Lands and the ruining of the Shire’s environment, Tolkien features the environmental problems caused by a People who lazily or ignorantly fail to maintain secure borders.

Sauron’s transformation of the Entwives’ Gardens into a “desert” should remind readers of Farmer Cotton’s conviction that, because of Saruman’s orders to fell myriads of trees, “burn” houses and fields, and pollute the water in the Shire, the Hobbits’ beloved land will transform “into a desert” (*Two*, “Treebeard” 465; *Fellowship*, “Great” 370; *Return*, “Scouring” 990-91). Because Sauron obliterated the Entwives’ Gardens in a

319. Tolkien characterizes the Brown Lands as a “desert” “without even a broken tree”; this environmental disaster occurs by some egregious “evil deed” by Sauron during his war with the Númenórean Exiles to keep them and their Elvish allies from eating off of the land, as they marched to fight Sauron’s forces (*Two*, “Treebeard” 465; *Fellowship*, “Great” 370; *Letters* 179).

similar fashion, it seems no coincidence that Frodo sadly describes the Shire's scarred environment as the labor of "Mordor [. . .] Just one of its works, [for] Saruman was doing its work all the time, even when he thought he was working for himself" (*Return, "Scouring"* 994). Without the intervention of the returning Four Hobbit Companions, therefore, the Shire would have deteriorated into a second Brown Lands because of the work of Saruman and his allies. Moreover, even without the meddling of Saruman, the Shire would certainly have mutated into the Northern Brown Lands if Sauron won the War of the Ring in retribution for the Four Hobbits conspiring against Sauron by refusing to give the Ringwraiths the One Ring and by trying to destroy the Ring. Sauron and his Ringwraiths would have also desired to destroy the Shire because the Black Riders found many Hobbits (e.g., Farmer Maggot) (*Fellowship, "Short"* 92), uncooperative and annoying enough to visualize future punishment from the Dark Lord: "Let the little people blow! Sauron would deal with them later" (*Fellowship, "Knife"* 173). Clearly then, if Sauron and/or Saruman succeeded during the War of the Ring, the Shire would have no longer existed as a fertile country; the Hobbits, meanwhile, would have either faced annihilation, exile, and/or, enslavement.³²⁰ Therefore, if the rumors that the Entwives went south and east prove true and that the Entwives work/worked as servants in "the great slave-worked fields away south in [. . . Mordor] by the dark sad waters of Lake Núrnen" (*Return, "Land"* 902), the pacifist and agrarian Hobbits' fate³²¹ would be similar to that of the Entwives, the Hobbits' fellow agriculturalists of a bygone age.

320. If Sauron planned to enslave the Hobbits after winning the War of the Ring, this would realize the fears that Gandalf expresses to Frodo, as the wizard told the Hobbit the Ring's history in *The Fellowship of the Ring* ("Shadow" 48).

321. If Gandalf, Aragorn, and the other Captains of the West had accepted Sauron's terms of peace, much of northwestern Middle-earth would have descended to the status of Mordor's subjects; with his strongest enemies conquered, Sauron would have then overwhelmed the remaining lands further north (e.g., the

Tolkien reinforces the likelihood that Sauron would destroy the Hobbits' Shire in a manner akin to the Entwives' Gardens by the fact that Sauron's spirit within the One Ring perceives that Sam yearns for environmental beauty and health everywhere. When tempting Sam, the One Ring perceives the inner environmental desires of Sam (and thereby the wishes of the average Hobbit, as noted elsewhere), which includes Sam's longing for environmental renewal. However, the One Ring attempts to deceive Sam by probing the weaknesses of many Hobbits, whose greatest failings arguably prove their ignorance of others and their inability to gauge their own abilities correctly, accomplishments, and safety. Sam's distorted vision of himself as "Samwise the Strong, Hero of the Age," which Sauron's Ring causes Sam to imagine, alludes to Sam's urgent desire to cultivate orchards and gardens and to see the environment prosper, in general. This longing for environmental prosperity proves so strong in Sam that he sees a vision in which the wasteland that is Mordor transforms into a land of fruitful trees and flower gardens (*Return*, "Tower" 880-81). Sam, however, refuses the tempting image presented to him by the One Ring. Sam's self-awareness and knowledge of his abilities (and those of other Hobbits) lead him to the correct conclusion that he and all other Hobbits lack the environmental knowledge and power to rehabilitate the ruined land of Mordor.³²² If Sauron had defeated the Free Peoples, he would have used such Hobbit common sense

Shire) (*Return*, "Black" 871-72). This would have fulfilled the promise of the departing Ringwraiths that the Shire Hobbits would soon feel the brunt of Sauron's reckoning for defying his will (*Fellowship*, "Knife" 173). If this theory is accurate, this would parallel one of the hypothetical fates of the Entwives (i.e., Sauron enslaved the Entwives in order to force them to work his agricultural fields and to be responsible for feeding his armies and other slaves).

322. Sam shows that he comprehends that the Hobbits only possess limited knowledge when he requests that Galadriel punish those responsible for harming the Shire's physical environment and its few perverted Hobbit inhabitants by taking and using the One Ring (*Fellowship*, "Mirror" 357). However, at this time, Sam fails to perceive that, if Galadriel took possession of the One Ring, she would devolve into ruthless behavior herself, as she herself implies (357-58).

(i.e., the Hobbits alone cannot rehabilitate the lands ruined by Sauron) in the darkest manner possible by forcing some of them to sow the Shire's fields with salt, fell every tree and bush, and uproot all of the flowers or be tortured to death. Sauron would have forced the Hobbits to commit ecocide or die in order to cause the Hobbits to despair and then ethically devolve into ecosadists like the Orcs.

The ability for Hobbits to degenerate to ecosadists is demonstrated by not only the examples of Lotho and Sandyman but also Gollum as well. Similar to Sauron's effect on the behavior of the Orcs, Trolls, and other monstrous species, Sauron's influence (via the One Ring) also enhances the environmental evils of Gollum; however, despite bearing the Ring for centuries, Gollum still possesses some positive environmental behaviors and interests because of his Hobbit origins.³²³ Even before Gollum gained the One Ring, trees, flowers, and hills interested him less than swimming underwater³²⁴ and prying into roots and mounds (*Fellowship*, "Shadow" 52, 51). Gollum's riddles in *The Hobbit*, meanwhile, illustrate his knowledge of the environment, for his riddles concern

323. In *The Fellowship of the Ring*, Gandalf informs Frodo of his belief that Gollum represents a forbear of the Stoor Hobbits, who loved water and lived near rivers (*Fellowship*, "Shadow" 51). Tolkien later extended this comment by mentioning that "Gollum was according to Gandalf one of a riverside hobbit people," in what Hammond and Scull call a "late unpublished manuscript" (*Lord* . . . *Reader's* 447). Furthermore, from the time of *The Hobbit*, Tolkien's text implies that Gollum once resembled a Hobbit, since (like a Hobbit) Gollum competed with "other funny creatures sitting in their holes" in games of riddles prior to his expulsion for murder ("Riddles" 68). Tolkien, subsequently, confirms Gollum's connection with the boat-loving Stoors by mentioning that Gollum first obtained the One Ring near the Gladden Fields, close to where he used to live with other Stoor Hobbits beside the Great River (*Fellowship*, "Shadow" 51, "Council" 247; *Unfinished*, "Hunt" 337, 339). Of the riverside Stoor Hobbits in the Gladden Fields area, however, only Gollum remained alive (*Fellowship*, "Shadow" 51; *Letters* 289-90, 290n; *Unfinished*, "Hunt" 353n). This information, of course, also aligns with "The Prologue" of *The Lord of the Rings*, which observes that the Stoor Hobbits preferred to live beside rivers or flatlands, including the Anduin River (*Fellowship* 3). Consequently, because of my focus on the environmentalism within Tolkien's works, I have chosen to compare the environmental behaviors and attitudes of Gollum with those of the Hobbits.

324. Gollum's privileging of water should remind readers of the Stoor Hobbits' preferences that I reference earlier in this chapter (*Fellowship*, "Prologue" 3, "Shadow" 51).

mountains, the wind, darkness, and fish; moreover, Gollum correctly guesses Bilbo's riddles that allude to daisies, eggs, fish, and a cat ("Riddles" 68-72). As Jeffers also notes (112), Gandalf tells Frodo years later that he believes Gollum (for a brief time) liked discussing the Sun,³²⁵ the trees, the wind, and the grass with Bilbo. At the Council of Elrond, Legolas also mentions that Gollum loves climbing trees and feeling the blow of the wind ("Council" 249). Despite his progressive deterioration, therefore, Gollum still demonstrates that he possesses some environmental knowledge of and some affection for aspects of the physical environment.

Gollum's poor environmentalism results from his callousness toward and ignorance of certain natural entities, as well as his self-centered view of the world. Similar to Morgoth's hatred for and fear of the Sun and the Moon and his dislike for small plants like flowers,³²⁶ Gollum hates the *Yellow-face* Sun and the *White-face* Moon (e.g., *Fellowship*, "Shadow" 53, 56; *Two*, "Taming" 599, 602, "Passage" 607). Gollum also mentions to Sam (as the latter cooks some rabbits in Ithilien) that he (Gollum) despises herbs and strongly dislikes eating "grasses or roots" (*Two*, "Stewed" 640). Since Gollum once lived near the Anduin and only a few days from the Entwives' Gardens, this is immensely important, for it means Gollum rejects two of the main types of plants (i.e., herbs and grasses) beloved by the Entwives, who taught agriculture to Men—including Hobbits ("Treebeard" 464-65).

Tolkien repeatedly depicts Gollum's relationship with nature as one of consumption. Sam theorizes that Gollum might eat beetles or worms, which the narrator

325. Nevertheless, Gandalf also mentions that Gollum grew to despise the Sun both before and after leaving the mountains (*Fellowship*, "Shadow" 52-53, 56).

326. A number of passages support Morgoth's aforementioned ecosadistic tendencies (e.g., *Silmarillion*, "Quenta: Darkening" 76, "Quenta: Beginning" 35-36; *Morgoth's*, "Myths" 395, 395n).

implies might possess merit, since mud covers Gollum's face, as well as his fingers, after he returns from scavenging for food ("Passage" 610). After he mourns the fact that the Dead Marshes lack birds (which Tolkien implies Gollum only misses because he wishes to eat the birds), Tolkien suggests that Gollum ate rather unsavory animals, such as worms, snakes, and vague "things in the pools" (612). While eating to survive is undoubtedly permissible, Gollum often demonstrates a twisted joy in killing to eat; Gollum's perverseness, therefore, stems from his hatred of other beings and his disturbing amount of selfishness.

Several crucial passages highlight Gollum's environmental self-centered callousness. In *The Two Towers* also portray Gollum's poor environmental behavior; after leaving the Dead Marshes ("Passage" 617), Sam overhears Gollum's dream of retaking the One Ring in which Gollum declares: "Perhaps we grows very strong, stronger than Wraiths. Lord Sméagol? Gollum the Great? *The* Gollum! Eat fish every day, three times a day, fresh from the sea. Most Precious Gollum! Must have it. We wants it, we wants it, we wants it!" (619). In terms of environmentalism, an important aspect of this unnerving vision includes Gollum's selfish and callous ability to eat whatever he wishes and however often he desires. Gollum, therefore, envisions nature existing *merely* to meet his needs and whims; Gollum again expresses his conviction that fish and other members of nature simply exist to meet his needs, while he consumes a fish he caught at the Forbidden Pool of Henneth Annûn in Ithilien: "Fissh, nice fissh. Makes us strong. Makes eyes bright, fingers tight, yes" ("Forbidden" 671). Tolkien alludes to Gollum's coarse and unsavory environmental worldview through Gollum's desire to eat animals (human and non-human alike) raw, which readers witness when

Gollum complains that Sam offends him for wanting to eat cooked rabbits and fish (“Stewed” 639-40).

While non-human animal carnivores/omnivores often target the weak, young, and sick, Gollum finds an unsettling, callous glee in targeting sentient individuals that fall within these categories. As Gollum plans to murder and cannibalize Bilbo, Gollum enjoys recalling how “a *small goblin-imp*” “squeaked” when he throttled the Goblin in *The Hobbit* (“Riddles” 75, emphasis added). Because *imp* is associated with a “child” or “youth” and with the added adjective *small*, Tolkien depicts Gollum in a manner that parallels a serial killer who targets the young.

Like many killers, Gollum also satisfies his bloodlust by harming animals. Gandalf, for example, tells Frodo that, before Aragorn captured Gollum, animals and the Woodmen of Mirkwood stated that Gollum killed baby animals and baby humans (*Fellowship*, “Shadow” 56-57). While brief, Gandalf describes Gollum’s demented, callous cruelty with a rather haunting characterization: “Through Mirkwood and back again³²⁷ [. . .] The wood was full of rumour of [Gollum], *dreadful* tales *even* among beasts and birds. The Woodmen said there was some *new* terror abroad, a ghost that *drank blood*. It climbed trees to find nests; it crept into holes to find the young; it slipped through windows to find cradles” (56-57, emphasis added). The extent of Gollum’s carnivorous appetite increases as Gandalf speaks in the aforementioned quotation. The

327. This phrase “Through Mirkwood and back again” also forms a foil to Bilbo’s journey in *The Hobbit: There and Back Again*. Tolkien’s allusion to his earlier tale implies a comparison to Bilbo’s contribution to the vanquishing of Smaug. Whereas Bilbo helped to exterminate the enormous, murderous, ecosadistic dragon Smaug, Gollum slaughters innocent, small, frail non-human animal young and human babies. Consequently, Tolkien’s texts suggest that killing animals is justified when animals harm humans; however, willfully choosing to murder the young of non-human animals—and enjoying the process of the deed—is immoral and unethical. Purposely killing human newborns, moreover, is an unforgivable act.

phrase, “Through Mirkwood and back again,” alludes to the length of time that Gollum stalks Mirkwood, searching for new kills—while focusing on the young, as Gandalf’s final sentence mentions. With *even* birds and other animals noting how terrible Gollum kills, this probably means that Gollum’s behavior disturbs the non-human animals—not because Gollum kills to eat—but because of his callous attitude and his temperament when he kills and because of the number of creatures that he slaughters. In a wood that contains the terrors of Sauron the Necromancer and the Great Spiders (i.e., some of Ungoliant’s descendants), the fact that the Woodmen label Gollum a “new terror” speaks volumes.

The weaknesses in Hobbit culture illustrate how a less-moral individual (e.g., Gollum) could devolve into an incredibly evil character when possessing the One Ring. Because Gollum and his environmental ethics degenerate because of the One Ring and because Gollum eventually destroys Sauron’s One Ring and ends Sauron’s evil rule, my views differ from some of Jeffers’s arguments concerning Gollum. According to Jeffers, “Gollum and Mordor participate in a variation of the ‘power with’ relationship” (e.g., 110), in part, because Gollum shares “community” with the land of Mordor³²⁸ (113). While he usually shares more similarities with the Stoor Hobbits, Gollum’s decision to

328. While Gollum is alone in the world, as Jeffers suggests (113-14), the land of Mordor is not alone in its destruction. The Morannon, the Dead Marshes, the Brown Lands, and other desolate lands also exist in Middle-earth. The “community” of sorts that Jeffers describes derives from the Dark Lords themselves. Gollum travels to Mirkwood and Mordor, because Sauron, the maker and ruler of the One Ring, rules from these areas at various times. The One Ring, which derives from Sauron’s spirit and from the fires of Mount Doom, possesses “community” with the land that spawned it (Mordor), as well as the lands where its maker dwells/lived; therefore, the Ring seeks these lands. Likewise, because the One Ring (infused with Sauron’s spirit) seeks Sauron, a one-time disciple of Morgoth and because Morgoth created the Misty Mountains, Gollum’s possession of the One Ring leads him to take sanctuary in the mountain chain long associated with evil: the Mountains of Mist. Therefore, I believe that Jeffers should emphasize that “community” exists between the One Ring and Sauron, rather than some sort of mystical connection between Gollum the individual and the land of Mordor. Gollum seeks the Ring; the imprinting/scarring caused by the Ring, consequently, leads Gollum to the areas dominated by the Ring’s creator, Sauron.

live under the Misty Mountains and his affection for trees resembles the Harfoot and Fallohide Hobbits, respectively, since the Harfoots like mountain foothills and the Fallohides like trees (*Fellowship*, “Council” 243, “Prologue” 3). Because Gandalf mentions that Gollum is “akin to the fathers of the fathers of the Stoors” (“Shadow” 51), this not only means that Gollum is closer to the Stoors but also that Gollum exhibits traits that parallel the behavior of other Hobbits of later generations, which, in turn, makes Gollum an unsettling evolutionary vision of a Hobbit. For example, during the War of the Ring era, the Shire Hobbits already somewhat resemble the Sun- and Moon-hating Gollum by disliking/fearing certain natural entities, such as “the Sea” (“Prologue” 7). In addition to my earlier comments on the subject, Tolkien’s decision to name various Hobbits *Broadbelt*, *Chubb*, *Bolger*, *Bulger*, *Bracegirdle*, and *Goodbody* refers to the excessive eating habits and the lack of adequate exercise among the sometimes selfish and lazy Hobbits, as Tolkien states in “Nomenclature of *The Lord of the Rings*” (Scull and Hammond, “*Lord*” . . . *Readers* 59, 66-67). Furthermore, similar to the Mirkwood Elves, who hunt but farm little (*Hobbit*, “Flies” 152), the Fallohide Hobbits prefer to hunt when faced with the prospect of the hard work of tilling (*Fellowship*, “Prologue” 3). Although adult Hobbits refrain from killing for fun, younger Hobbits (like the juvenile Bilbo) callously hurl stones at birds, squirrels, and rabbits to pass the time, while adults throw rocks at animals they do not own (*Fellowship*, “Prologue” 3, 6; *Letters* 197n; *Hobbit*, “Flies” 144). Furthermore, as I mentioned previously, Pippin’s selfishness leads him to callously filch bird eggs to possess them for his collection (*Return*, “Minas” 737; Hammond and Scull, “*Lord*” . . . *Reader’s* 516). By rereading Gandalf’s descriptions of Gollum’s cruel behavior in Mirkwood (*Fellowship*, “Shadow” 56-57), therefore, the

startling realization is that Gollum represents a precursor for how the compromised Hobbits could further devolve as environmental guardians. Just as the Four Hobbit Companions display the environmental growth (and other types of moral improvement) possible for Hobbits, Gollum generally stands as their foil.

Usually, the Hobbits ensure that the Shire's landscape remains sustainable as they cultivate and harvest their crops, as well as prune and weed the region's flora. While the Bree Hobbits' affection for parts of the environment affects the Men of Bree in a positive manner, the Hobbits sometimes fail as environmental guardians because of their underdeveloped environmental knowledge, because of their lack of sufficient appreciation for certain types of flora and landscapes (e.g., trees and seas), and because of their tendencies to overeat and to behave lazily. At the time of the War of the Ring, the Hobbits' environmental guardianship regressed, in part, because the isolationist, nativist Hobbits largely ceased to care about environments outside of the Shire. While the Hobbits reject heavy industrialization, preemptive warfare, and bioengineering and the potential pitfalls of these activities, the Hobbits' pacifism proves reckless, for they lazily fail to provide much security for themselves. Because of these aforementioned cultural failures, some Hobbits (e.g., Gollum, Lotho, Ted Sandyman, and the Bracegirdles) selfishly reject moderation and the bonds of community, and consequently, behave callously and ignorantly—while those who refuse to work like Sandyman act lazily. With the return of the Four Hobbits, however, the Shire Hobbits redeem themselves by overthrowing the ecosadists in control of the Shire, by rehabilitating the Shire's

environment, and by taking an interest in the Peoples who inhabit ecosystems outside of the Shire.

3.7. Men of Twilight, Men of Light: Moral Standing Based on Environmental Guardianship among Men

Righteous Men ensure that the landscape remains sustainable; they also value the inherent beauty and worth of the physical environment by adopting environmental ethics that counter the ecosadistic trait of selfishness and the sources that often feed into selfishness: callousness, laziness, and ignorance. For example, during the First Age, many of the Edain choose to try to help the Elves and Beleriand's environment by joining the fight against Morgoth's ecocidal armies—rather than ignoring the Beleriand Elves' plight against Middle-earth's ecosadists. Nonetheless, other members of the Edain embrace pseudo-pacifism until Morgoth's forces actually attack *their* realm; consequently, these pacifists advocate that the Edain should enjoy their land's beauty and seek to learn more about it prior to the time when Morgoth orders his fellow ecosadists to exterminate the war-minded and pacifist-leaning Edain alike.

Prior to their decline, the Númenóreans display a sense of awe of and respect for flowers, trees, horses, birds, and other types of flora and fauna, respectively. Furthermore, they strive to help other Men by teaching them about the physical environment. However, as the Darkening of Númenor spreads, the Númenóreans pervert their environmental guardianship to the point that they annihilate entire forests, mine unsustainably, and conquer other Men simply to relieve their boredom. Rather than creating beautiful and timeless artifacts, the late Númenóreans mainly channel their

intellectual creativity by establishing a potent navy and army, which they *sometimes* use for good—as well as profoundly evil reasons.

In contrast to the callous Númenóreans of later centuries who twist fertile ecosystems into wastelands, who pillage Middle-earth in search of environmental resources, and who sail the seas in search of new lands to dominate, the Drúedain appreciate and comprehend the physical environment of their small, isolated territories where they live in an eco-friendly manner. Unlike many Hobbits, for example, the Drúedain never eat gluttonously. Nonetheless, the Drúedain prove overly isolationist by refusing to fight ecosadists outside of their realm.

Somewhat similarly, Beorn the Bear-Man also distinguishes himself from the fallen Númenóreans in a variety of ways. Whereas Beorn loses his homeland to the invading Orcs but refuses to slay or consume non-human feral animals not aligned with Sauron, the devolved Númenóreans conquer lands, harvest the environment in an unsustainable fashion, enslave other Men, and practice human sacrifice. However, similar to the early Númenóreans, Beorn cultivates flora, cherishes the environment that surrounds him, and refuses to treat animals badly (albeit unless one counts the Goblins' allies, the Wargs, which Beorn kills to protect himself, his livestock, and the Free Peoples).

Akin to how Beorn is willing to fight those who willfully endanger his beloved animals, the Rohirrim fiercely guard their cherished horses—no matter their color. Although Beorn and the Rohirrim exhibit degrees of callousness by celebrating warfare, Tolkien's fantasies indicate that the aforementioned environmental qualities, as well as

their willingness to help other Peoples fighting ecosadists and battling ecosadists themselves, redeem both Beorn and the Rohirrim.

The Gondorians, furthermore, seek solace and healing from the environment, while endeavoring to treat Middle-earth's flora, fauna, waters, and other aspects of the physical environment with respect. In an effort to defend themselves, the Gondorians choose to establish fortresses that certainly alter the landscapes and soils. However, the Gondorians use these positions of strength during their long confrontation against the ecosadistic forces of Sauron, yet these many wars contribute to the deterioration of the Gondorians' environmental ethics. Nevertheless, once the opportunity arises to reverse this unfortunate consequence of fighting Sauron and his ecocidal imperialism following the Downfall of Sauron, King Aragorn and the Gondorians initiate the urban renewal of Minas Tirith by increasing the presence of the physical environment in the fortress-city. Moreover, Aragorn assists in the renewal of the environment by ordering the destruction of poisonous artifacts. Not content with simply focusing on urban renewal, Aragorn also establishes wilderness and rural preserves, which benefit not only the local ecosystems but also the indigenous populations of these areas as well. According to Tolkien's *New Shadow* fragment, however, the aforementioned eco-friendly age in Gondor that begins at the end of *The Lord of the Rings* deteriorates. The environmental renaissance in Gondor fades, for some Gondorians adopt the ecosadistic practices and attitudes of the selfishly callous and ignorant Orcs by butchering trees for no reason, which sadly and eerily parallels one of the indicators of the impending Downfall of the Gondorians' kin of previous eras, the Númenóreans.

3.7.1. Environmental “Unfriends”?: The Inconsistent Environmentalism of the Edain

Despite the Green-Elves’ characterization of Men, in general, and the Edain, in particular, as “hewers of trees and hunters of beasts” (and therefore the Green-Elves’ “unfriends”) in *The Silmarillion* (“Quenta: Coming . . . West” 142), Men of quality appreciate the physical environment’s sensory imagery³²⁹ and reject environmental selfishness, callousness, laziness, and ignorance. For example, the Men of the House of Haleth, the Haladin, enjoy walking in the woods partially because of the sensory imagery that they witness while doing so (“Coming . . . Men” 146, 148). One of the main ways that the Edain demonstrate their environmental care centers on their selfless act of fighting alongside the Beleriand Elves against the ecocidal forces of Morgoth, rather than abandoning the Elves and Beleriand’s environment by migrating to relative safety for centuries like other Men³³⁰ (e.g., “Quenta: Coming . . . Men” 145).

Of the Edain, Beren proves the ideal environmental guardian among Men of the First Age in *The Silmarillion*. Beren, for instance, displays environmental sensitivity through his diet after befriending various animals that help Beren to remain free and unharmed, which causes Beren to abstain from eating or killing “any living thing that was not in the service of Morgoth³³¹” (Quenta: Beren” 164). Beren’s refusal to kill or torture

329. The Edain’s House of Haleth’s heraldic emblem includes a tree and flowers in celebration of these physical entities (*Pictures* 47, 47n).

330. Similarly, Brandir’s desire for secrecy and the peace that comes with it (however short-lived) repeatedly brings him into conflict with the war-like Túrin, because Brandir rightly fears that Túrin’s slaughtering of Orcs will result in Morgoth unleashing violence on Brethil (e.g., *Children*, “Brethil” 197). However, by refusing to fight Morgoth’s forces, the pacifists among the Free Peoples provide Morgoth with the opportunity to destroy his divided enemies more easily.

331. Interestingly, in Tolkien’s early drafts of *Beren and Lúthien*, Morgoth orders Beren to capture “birds” and “beasts” for the demented cat Prince Tevildo (*Beren* 49-50). Although he fails, Beren attempts to capture huge, perverted mice to please Tevildo (50).

non-human animals in non-vital circumstances (and their decision to aid Beren³³²), therefore, demonstrates Beren's environmental qualities.³³³ The dwelling of Beren and Lúthien also proves an environmental positive, for observers name it, "Tol Galen the green isle," because the couple enjoys a fertile relationship with the physical environment ("Quenta: Ruin . . . Doriath" 234). Indeed, Beren's behavior (including his environmental choices) impresses even the Green-Elves (i.e., the Beleriand Elves most critical of the Edain), who welcome Beren and Lúthien to their land and who choose to fight alongside Beren after some of the Dwarves sack Doriath (e.g., "Quenta: Fifth" 188, "Quenta: Ruin . . . Doriath" 234-35).

Although most remembered for his many battles against Morgoth's Orcs and Glaurung the dragon, Túrin also demonstrates his affection for the environment in multiple ways. For example, as a young child in Doriath, Túrin learns "the ways and the wild things of Doriath" from the Sindar wood-elf, Nellas, in *The Children of Húrin* ("Doriath" 80); despite the passage of many years, Túrin continues to remember such things as the names of the flowers that Nellas taught him ("Outlaws" 117). Likewise, as an adult, Túrin still unconsciously draws from his childhood experience by seeking solitude within the woods and recalling the names of flowers as a means to offset his irritation and frustration, as well as for other emotional reasons (103). Túrin, moreover,

332. Tolkien repeats a version of this process with Tuor and his relationship with the dogs of the Easterlings. Tuor treats the dogs of the Easterlings (who usurp the lands of Tuor's kin and who enslave Tuor) with kindness, which, in turn, results in the dogs refusing to track Tuor well enough to enable the Easterlings to find and kill Tuor (e.g., *Unfinished*, "Tuor" 19).

333. Likewise, due to his earlier kindness to animals, the birds and beasts watch Beren on his quest to claim a Silmaril in *The Silmarillion*; when he falls in a swoon after losing his hand to Morgoth's Wolf, Carcharoth, the Eagles descend to Beren's aid and bear Beren and Lúthien away to safety in Doriath ("Quenta: Beren" 181-82). Likewise, after Carcharoth mortally wounds Beren in his attempt to protect Thingol, Huan the Hound sacrifices his life to save Beren and to kill the demented Carcharoth (185-86). These plot elements testify to Beren's environmental qualities.

also routinely displays his awe of the skill of—and the sensory imagery produced by—woodworking, as demonstrated by his interactions with the woodworker Labadal/Sador and Túrin’s reactions to the lame man’s creations (“Childhood” 41, 48-50). Tolkien’s fantasy suggests that Túrin’s fascination with woodcarving as a young boy contributes to why he continues to appreciate forests as an adult.

While similar to Túrin’s interest in and love for the environment’s sensory imagery, the actions and desires of a few Edain strongly contrast with Túrin’s advocacy to combat Morgoth’s murderous ecocide. Rían (the wife of Huor and Túrin’s aunt), for instance, is described as “gentle of heart and [one who] loved neither hunting nor war. Her love was given to trees and to the flowers of the wild” in *The Children of Húrin* (“Childhood” 34). Therefore, Rían, by loving environmental beauty and despising violence, displays appreciation for the physical environment and yearns for the end of violence that is often caused by selfishly callous and ignorant behavior. Brandir, meanwhile, demonstrates his knowledge of Brethil’s plants and his love of walking amid glades and gardens with Niënor when he undertakes the task of teaching her the names of the various members and entities of the physical world (“Coming” 193, “Niënor” 216-17). Besides his knowledge of and devotion to the physical environment, Brandir also parallels Rían’s pacifism,³³⁴ for Brandir routinely protests Túrin’s wars against Morgoth in an effort to preserve Brethil for a longer period of time—even if this means that Morgoth will destroy other lands and people groups more quickly and easily (e.g.,

334. Rían and Brandir’s environmental behaviors could remind readers of the Green-Elves, who rebuke the Edain whom they meet in Ossiriand for killing animals and for felling trees (*Silmarillion*, “Quenta: Coming . . . West” 142). Somewhat similarly, after the First Battle of Beleriand and the death of the Green-Elves’ leader, Denethor, the Green-Elves retreat into Ossiriand and (with rare exceptions like fighting the Dwarves who sack Doriath) only fight to defend Ossiriand, rather than venturing abroad to fight Morgoth’s forces in other lands to help protect other Elves and other Elvish lands (“Quenta: Sindar” 96).

“Brethil” 197). Brandir, by yearning to passively remain out of the wars against Morgoth for as long as possible rather than allying with the Edain and the Elves of Beleriand, only enhances Morgoth’s ability to conquer Beleriand and to enslave or kill Brandir’s Edain kin in other lands, according to Túrin. While understandable to some extent, therefore, Brandir’s selfish desires are rooted in callousness, laziness, and ignorance to Túrin (and to some readers).

Therefore, while Túrin sometimes fails as an environmental guardian because he sometimes lacks sufficient empathy and wisdom, Brandir and other pacifists among the Edain fail because of their insufficient work ethic and because of their selfishly callous desire to preserve their own lands no matter how this affects the lives and lands of the rest of Morgoth’s foes. Tolkien, however, characterizes Beren as an especially successful environmental guardian among the Edain because of his love of the environment that he willingly defends.

3.7.2. From Environmental Guardians to Ecosadists: The Númenóreans’ Long Journey into Ecocidal Waves of Night

Prior to the Númenóreans’ overharvesting of trees and other natural resources, the early Númenóreans try to help some of the Men of Middle-earth by adding to their environmental knowledge and easing the environmental burdens of the Middle-earth Men by teaching them the processes of cultivating and harvesting crops, forestry, and sculpting³³⁵ (*Silmarillion*, “Akallabêth” 263). In addition to teaching, the environmental labors of the Númenóreans include sailing the seas and adding to their knowledge of

335. I discuss some of the long-term negative effects of these voyages in subsequent chapters.

Middle-earth's geography, topography, and coastal Peoples. Moreover, the Númenóreans pursue environmental knowledge through such acts as establishing a tower, so King Tar-Meldur Elentirno can learn how the stars move across the sky (*Unfinished*, "Description" 167). In addition to some Númenóreans showing appreciation for the sight and knowledge of stars, many Númenóreans also show an interest in and affection for various types of flora, fauna, and environmental activities. While the Númenóreans consistently fail to display adequate environmental sensitivity in later years, in earlier eras, the folk of Hyarrostar in Númenor hold the decorative *laurinquë* in high esteem simply because of its beautiful yellow flowers³³⁶; moreover, many Númenóreans appreciate the sensory imagery of the Elven "evergreen and fragrant trees" (167-68). Besides plants, the first Númenóreans love horses and *never* intentionally harm seabirds (169). The Númenóreans also express general appreciation for the environment by participating in a variety of outdoor sports, including archery, rowing, diving, sailing, and swimming (169, 170).

Nevertheless, callousness and selfishness corrupt the civilization of the Númenóreans and cause them to greedily yearn for and seize the realms of other Men and the environmental resources of these other groups. Although the Númenóreans could mine³³⁷ without severe environment degradation, Tolkien's minor work, *The Line of Elros*, mentions that the fifteenth King, Tar-Telemmaitë, earned his name because of his selfish, obsessive yearning to possess more silver, ordering the Númenóreans "to seek ever for *mithril*" (*Unfinished* 221). The phrase "seek ever" strongly suggests the selfish

336. The Númenóreans' love of flowers also appears in the pair of fabrics and the tile saved from the Downfall of Númenor, which appear in *Pictures By J.R.R. Tolkien* (46).

337. Like the Dwarves (e.g., *Silmarillion*, "Quenta: Sindar" 92; *Fellowship*, "Journey" 309), the Númenóreans also mine for copper and iron ore (*Unfinished*, "Description" 170-71).

covetousness of the king, as well as his callous disregard for the means that the Númenóreans resorted to in order to retrieve this precious metal on the king's behalf.³³⁸

Within Tolkien's aborted fragment *The Lost Road*, Herendil mentions selfish and callous reasons for Númenórean imperialism. Herendil, for instance, mentions that many citizens of the island nation leave Númenor for Middle-earth because of a deep desire, "To conquer new realms for our race, and ease the pressure of this peopled island, where every road is trodden hard, and every tree and grass-blade counted. To be free, and masters of the world. To escape the shadow of sameness" ("Chapter III" 67). Thus, Herendil states that many in Númenor believe that they should make war on Valinor to reduce the problems caused by overpopulation, boredom, idleness, and an unmet desire for more knowledge and power. As the Downfall of Númenor demonstrates, however, the labor that is necessary to establish, maintain, and expand Númenor's empire ultimately devastates the well-being of many races of Men, extensively harms the environments of northwestern Middle-earth, and causes the divinely-sanctioned destruction of Númenor itself. Because the late Númenóreans continuously seek for more environmental resources, power, and knowledge in a selfishly callous manner at the expense of others, their choices prove ignorantly counterproductive in the extreme.

Of all the Númenóreans described by Tolkien, Aldarion best characterizes the environmental inconsistencies of the most powerful (and ultimately, most dangerous) of civilizations of Men. Aldarion exhibits his environmental knowledge when he orders and contributes to the labors necessary to reforest Númenor with a variety of trees in order to maintain an approximate number of trees within Númenor's forests so that he could

338. Consequently, the Númenóreans commit some of the same environmental errors as the Dwarves of Moria.

cultivate tree farms to harvest periodically, albeit on a sustainable basis (*Unfinished*, “Aldarion” 190-91, 177). Indeed, Aldarion invests the time necessary to learn where to plant new forests for specific kinds of trees (190).

Rather than environmental sensitivity, nevertheless, Aldarion channels emotionless logic when he observes that the Númenóreans grossly overharvested trees during his absence when he embarked on a fourteen-year sea journey. However, despite this love of exploring and his (at this point in the story) emotionless view of nature he still decides to order the *temporary* cessation of all logging for shipbuilding in order to reforest Númenor (181-82). Aldarion’s selfishly callous attitudes toward trees, nonetheless, peak when he chooses to cut down nearly every single tree (except the Elven tree) around his house in Amenelos (201). Aldarion’s ecosadistic behavior continues when he opts to burn down the house that his father gave him and Erendis (201). Such counterproductive work hardly helps the environment’s well-being and should remind *Lord of the Rings* readers of the absurd, ecosadistic work labors of Saruman’s Ruffians when they destroy much of the Shire’s environment. However, despite these egregious acts, after he sees the Elven tree standing by itself—for the first time—Aldarion learns to appreciate the sensory imagery of (and other intrinsic qualities of) trees (206). This belated appreciation for trees that Aldarion displays in this scene helps to explain why he gives *malinornë* seeds to Gil-galad and the Elves, which later enables Galadriel to enhance Lothlórien’s beauty and (subsequently) helps the Hobbits replace the felled Party Tree (*Unfinished*, “Description” 167-68). In any case, Aldarion’s belated awe of trees means that his father’s decision to provide Aldarion and Erendis with a home surrounded by trees as a wedding gift finally triggers the type of positive emotional response to

nature within Aldarion that his father intended to occur decades earlier (*Unfinished*, “Aldarion” 181, 190). Aldarion, consequently, represents a foreshadowing of the Númenóreans’ slide into ecosadism—as well as a model for how the Númenóreans might have prevented their devolution into ecosadistic Men.

While, for many years, Aldarion endeavors to behave as a Middle-earth conservationist, many middle and late Númenóreans ignore Aldarion’s earlier example. Instead, the middle and (especially) the late Númenóreans follow Aldarion’s rebellious acts of ecocide. Aldarion’s self-centered callousness contributes to his choice to fell many trees in Númenor not only when his wife refuses to return to their home but also to his earlier decision to overharvest some of the forests of Middle-earth after his king-father, Tar-Meneldur, limits and then bans logging for shipbuilding in Númenor (*Unfinished*, “Aldarion” 176). Rather than practicing environmental guardianship, the middle and the late Númenóreans choose to exploit the “vast and almost continuous forests” of Minhiriath and Enedwaith in Middle-earth during the Second Age with “incalculable” and “devastating” consequences because of their “ruthless” logging and their refusal to invest any time or “thought to husbandry or replanting” (*Unfinished*, “History . . . Appendix D” 262-63). Indeed, rather than “great shadows” of trees stretching across the area’s rivers to greet visitors, an observer saw “far and wide on either bank a desert” in a land “treeless but untilled” (262-63). Because Tolkien notes that the land is not only “treeless” but also “untilled,” Tolkien’s wording implies that overharvesting trees is obviously an unsustainable labor; moreover, by refusing to invest the time and labor necessary to ensure that other plants (e.g., crops) grow to replace the trees, the callously lazy Númenóreans behave even more selfishly. With no plants to

retain the soil, reduce the winds, or create shade, the Númenóreans destroy the well-being of the environment by creating a massive desert where once “vast” forests existed.³³⁹

Nevertheless, Aldarion’s environmental labors (e.g., logging), which emphasize that nature exists to meet the needs of the Númenóreans, enable him to create defensive fortresses in Middle-earth to counter Sauron’s growing strength (*Unfinished*, “Aldarion” 199-200). In fact, the narrator credits Aldarion with beginning the process of making possible the subsequent defeat of Sauron during the reign of Tar-Minastir (206).

However, the Númenóreans eventually fail to continue Aldarion’s reforestation projects, which leads to years of fighting with the Middle-earth indigenous groups in Minhiriath and Enedwaith and contributes to why these native peoples join the ranks of Sauron’s armies during the Second Age (*Unfinished*, “History . . . Appendix D” 262-63).

Consequently, the Númenóreans undermine their own labor to stymie Sauron’s ecosadistic imperialism by committing similarly heinous acts themselves. As Hoiem states, “Aldarion’s mission for improving Arda, which finds its counterpart in the evangelical and civilizing missions the British used to justify colonial expansion, thus proves futile, environmentally irresponsible, and morally dangerous. One of the strengths of Erendis’ position is that her love for Númenor exists in the present moment, enabling her to give up the gift when it comes time to meet the giver” (80). Unlike Erendis and the Númenóreans like her, therefore, Aldarion and those like him sin because of their self-centered delusions of grandeur.

339. The Númenóreans desired an abundant amount of wood because of their somewhat callously selfish desire to have wooden structures (rather than buildings made of metal or stone) and because of their desire to possess wood to carve (*Unfinished*, “Aldarion” 190).

The mid-to-late Númenóreans' terrible environmental record in Middle-earth, in general, and Aldarion's selfishly callous decision to cut down the trees around his home, in particular, foreshadow other great environmental evils that the Númenóreans perform shortly before the Downfall. During the reign of the last Númenórean king, Ar-Pharazôn, the Númenóreans follow Sauron's advice to cut down the White Tree of Númenor (i.e., Nimloth), to fell all of the trees on the Mountain of Númenor (i.e., Meneltarma), to even enslave and sacrifice many Men of Middle-earth, and to kill many of the Faithful Númenóreans.³⁴⁰ Works like the "Akallabêth" (e.g., *Silmarillion* 272-74), *The Lost Road* (e.g., "Chapter IV" 74), and "Tar-Elmar" (*Peoples* 438) detail these aforementioned ecocidal acts.

Meanwhile, akin to how the traits of Rían and Brandir contrast with many of their Edain kin, Erendis (as well as other like-minded Númenóreans³⁴¹) condemns Aldarion's refusal to display a sense of environmental awe and to acknowledge the intrinsic qualities of the physical environment in the incomplete *Aldarion and Erendis* novella. Although she loves Aldarion, Erendis also despises Aldarion and the Númenóreans' propensity to kill trees for shipbuilding, for she views the selfish activity as willfully callous, since it leads Men to view trees as only things to use in the future³⁴² (*Unfinished* 182, 185, 190-

340. However, prior to their complete fall into the abyss of evil, the Númenóreans still maintain breathtaking gardens and waterfalls, according to passages within the fragment *The Notion Club Papers* (*Sauron* 198-99).

341. For example, Tar-Meneldur describes a younger Erendis as a kindred spirit of his because of their similar environmental views (*Unfinished*, "Aldarion" 202)

342. Erendis' attitude towards Aldarion's logging and tree farming practices shares many parallels with Wohlleben, the one-time logger-turned-tree-advocate. According to Wohlleben,

When I began my professional career as a forester, I knew about as much about the hidden life of trees as a butcher knows about the emotional life of animals. The modern forestry industry produces lumber. That is to say, it fells trees and then plants new seedlings. If you read the professional literature, you quickly get the impression that the well-being of the forest is only of interest insofar as it is necessary for optimizing the lumber industry. That is enough for what foresters do day to day, and eventually it distorts the way they look at trees. Because it was my job to look at hundreds of trees every day—spruce, beeches, oaks, and pines—to assess their

91). Because of Aldarion's continuously selfish determination to fell trees to build ships to sail to Middle-earth for many years at a time, however, Aldarion's wife, Erendis retaliates by devolving into a selfishly callous person as well. When Aldarion, by refusing to remain in Númenor any longer, again forsakes Erendis and their daughter, the narrator notes that Erendis then "hated the Sea; and now even trees, that once she loved, she desired to look upon no more, for they recalled to her the masts of great ships" (192). Erendis continues this pattern of selfish, callous rage by ridiculing the calls of seagulls and by dismissing the beautiful Elven-birds so that she would no longer hear their song (192, 193). Aldarion's cold, analytical views and use of the physical environment, therefore, contribute to Erendis' own environmental regression into selfish callousness (e.g., Erendis no longer appreciates some of the environment's sensory imagery).

Although the Númenóreans acquired much environmental knowledge and undertook many labors to improve the environment (i.e., according to their cultural standard of beauty and practicality), the ecosadistic, selfish traits of callousness and delusions of grandeur reduced the Númenóreans' appreciation for, love of, and tolerance of not only the physical environment but also the Free Peoples of Middle-earth.

suitability for the lumber mill and their market value, my appreciation for trees was also restricted to this narrow point of view. (xiii)

Nevertheless, Wohlleben subsequently mentions that his assessment of trees altered so that he cherished the sight of a tree's branches, roots, trunk, and bark; he also learned to appreciate eccentric-shaped trees (xiii-xiv). As I mention elsewhere, Aldarion's sudden appreciation for the beauty of the Elven tree (after he fells every other tree surrounding his former home) in Tolkien's *Aldarion and Erendis* demonstrates the type of awakened environmental conscience of a forester that Wohlleben describes.

3.7.3. Environmental Guardianship Survives But Falters When Isolationism or Bloodlust Thrives: Evaluating the Environmental Guardianship of the Drúedain, Beorn, and the Rohirrim

As referenced in the legends of Númenor and discussed within Tolkien's fragment "The Drúedain," the Drúedain foresee that calamity would result from the selfish and callous imperialism of the Númenóreans, which leads the Drúedain to leave Númenor because of their sense that "The Great Isle no longer feels sure under our feet" (*Unfinished* 385-386n). The Drúedain, in fact, possess such an intimate understanding of the lands in which they live that their localized environmental knowledge³⁴³ almost matches the Elves' environmental understanding of Elvish lands (378). In addition to their environmental knowledge and intuition, the Drúedain display environmental mercy and sensitivity by establishing "a law against the use of all poisons for the hurt of any living creatures, even those who had done them injury—save only Orcs" (386n). However, despite their dislike of the Orcs, the Drúedain still use their stone-carving and woodworking abilities to create warning statues to alert the Orcs not to enter the realms of the Drúedain, rather than just killing all of the Orcs on sight (*Unfinished* 379). The Drúedain, therefore, aim to live in peace with other beings and avoid shedding blood when possible.

Similarly, according to the editorial notes of Christopher Tolkien, J.R.R. Tolkien portrays the Drúedain as a selfless group of Men, who appreciate the lives and the well-being of the physical environment by "eating sparingly even in times of plenty and

343. For instance, whereas the Rohirrim and the Gondorians forget or do not know about the decaying Stonewain Road in *The Lord of the Rings*, the Drúedain recall their knowledge of this old road, which enables the Rohirrim to reach Minas Tirith in time to save Gondor (*Return*, "Ride" 814).

drinking nothing but water” (382). The conscientious environmental care of the Drúedain also includes their living quarters, which (like their eating habits) causes minimal environmental impact (386-87n). Besides showing their concern for the environment through their dietary habits and homes, the Drúedain’s artistic expressions also show their appreciation for the environment, because they carve/paint wooden or stone artifacts that sometimes feature non-human animals (379).

Somewhat akin to the Ents’ environmental ethics, therefore, the Drúedain desire not to harm anyone or anything, albeit with the exception (to some extent) of the ecosadistic Orcs. In other words, the Drúedain attempt to live in a minimalistic manner through their choice of diet and shelter; moreover, they live in remote areas that they know intimately and cherish deeply. Nonetheless, because of their isolationism, the Drúedain in the Third Age largely neglect to teach their environmental wisdom to others. Moreover, the Drúedain’s isolationism means that they staunchly refuse to fight beyond their borders even when enemy ecosadists attack a neighboring civilization, because the warfare occurs outside the Drúedain’s borders (*Return*, “Ride” 814). The Drúedain’s isolationism endangers not only the Gondorians and the environments of Ithilien, Minas Tirith, and South Gondor but also all of the other Peoples and the ecosystems of northwestern Middle-earth that would fall to Sauron if the tyrant conquered Gondor.

Beorn’s environmental labors include a variety of tasks in *The Hobbit*. Beorn invests some of his time, for example, cultivating and maintaining flowers, hedges, gardens, and beehives to satisfy his aesthetic and dietary needs and desires (Queer” 106-07). Moreover, Gandalf observes that Beorn “loves his animals as his children” (124-25).

To help protect these non-human animal “children,” to avenge his dead relatives, and to protect the overall environment’s well-being from the wantonly violent Wargs, Goblins, and Orcs, Beorn fights these invasive species (e.g., 106-07, 120-21), although Beorn generally refuses to “hunt or eat wild animals” (106).

Although Beorn clearly cares for the animals that live with him, a degree of self-centered laziness may contribute to his affection for the animals in his custody to some extent, for Beorn teaches them to perform a number of duties for him in *The Hobbit*. For example, Beorn’s horses report when strangers arrive (“Queer” 108), Beorn’s dogs bear torches (“Queer” 115), and Beorn’s sheep, dogs, and ponies set the table with bowls, platters, and utensils (115). Indeed, the narrator summarizes the relationship of Beorn and his non-human animals as, “*They work for him and talk to him*” (106, emphasis added). Beorn’s work with bees, in any case, functions as a symbiotic relationship, because Beorn’s general bee-raising partially derives from the fact that the bees’ honey provides Beorn with some of his nourishment.³⁴⁴ In other words, reciprocity contributes to why Beorn studiously guards his animals (i.e., the animals complete tasks Beorn would rather not perform in return for the Bear-Man’s protection).

Beorn’s devotion to his animals and their reciprocal relationship shares some commonality with the Rohirrim.³⁴⁵ In response to Gimli’s inquiry concerning the rumor that the Rohirrim pay tribute to Sauron in the form of their horses, Éomer angrily

344. If Beorn’s supplies to Thorin’s Company provide additional insight to his diet, Beorn also eats nuts and fruits (*Hobbit*, “Queer” 121, 122).

345. Because they are each particularly associated with a type of flora, Beorn and the Rohirrim again resemble one another, since they each cultivate a particular flora that appeals to their sensibilities. While Beorn cultivates clover (*Hobbit*, “Queer” 107), the Rohirrim encourage the growth of the *simbelmynë* /Evermind flowers on the mounds of their deceased leaders (*Two*, “King” 496).

dismisses this as entirely false, saying, “Some years ago the Lord of the Black Land wished to purchase horses of us at great price, but we refused him, for he puts beasts to evil use. Then he sent plundering Orcs, and they carry off what they can [. . .] For that reason our feud with the Orcs is bitter” (*Two*, “Riders” 426). Based on Éomer’s words, the Rohirrim hate Sauron’s callous use of horses. Whereas the Rohirrim choose to sacrifice themselves rather than make a mockery of their love for the horses that help the Rohirrim defend their homeland by selling their horses to Sauron, Sauron will never appreciate the lives or beauty of the horses whatsoever. Instead, Sauron will choose to use the horses as pawns during his selfish and callous wars of imperialism, while he lazily remains in Mordor.

Similar to how Sauron fails to display positive emotional and ethical responses to the intrinsic and aesthetic value of horses, Saruman refuses to perceive the need to preserve the environment’s well-being and the sensory imagery of the Isen when he elects to dam it. The Rohirrim, however, appreciate the sound of water falling onto rocks and yearn for the return of such sounds after they witness the environmental damage caused by Saruman’s damming of the Isen. By doing so, Saruman alters the Isen’s course, creates weed-infested areas, and eliminates the beautiful sight, sound, scent, and touch of this running river (*Two*, “Road” 537). While the environmental knowledge and attitudes of the Rohirrim could improve, certainly, by appreciating the aesthetics and health of environmental entities like rivers, the Rohirrim demonstrate that their environmental interests extend beyond their knowledge of and concern for the welfare of their horses.

Nonetheless, despite the environmental positives within the culture of the Rohirrim, Gimli finds himself utterly shocked to witness the depth of the Rohirrim's unwitting environmental ignorance and callousness concerning the aesthetics of stones and subterranean landscapes (*Two*, "Road" 534). Gimli is amazed that the Rohirrim fail to use the correct word to describe the "caverns" by instead calling them "caves" and because the Rohirrim fail to appreciate the incredible beauty of the Glittering Caves (*Two*, "Road" 534). Furthermore, Faramir (in his speech regarding the Men of Light, Men of Twilight, and Men of Darkness) indicates that the Rohirrim (like the Gondorians) need to emphasize non-combat knowledge as much as knowledge pertaining to how to fight ("Window" 663-64). Indeed, the Rohirrim's willingness to fight is so fierce that it egregiously mars their environmental guardianship to the point that they murder the Drúedain for sport (*Return*, "Ride" 815); thus, one of the Rohirrim's greatest strengths as environmental guardians (i.e., fighting the ecosadistic Sauron bent on ecocide), devolves into the cultural normalization of committing war crimes themselves. Tolkien indicates that the Rohirrim, in general, should emulate Éowyn's example by caring about and understanding the environment even more than they had previously.

Rather than a sexist message, Éowyn's declaration, "I will be a shieldmaiden no longer, nor vie with the great Riders, nor take joy only in the songs of slaying. I will be a healer, and love all things that grow and are not barren," and her decision to join Faramir in his principedom to help him rehabilitate Ithilien by establishing and maintaining gardens stand as exemplary beliefs and actions for the overly war-minded male *and* female Rohirrim (*Return*, "Steward" 943-44, 948; c.f., *Two*, "Window" 663-64). Besides just the plains of Rohan, therefore, Éowyn grows to love the gardens and general environment of

Faramir's Gondor as well. Therefore, the environmental guardianship of the Rohirrim may further evolve to include their knowledge of, interest in, love for, and work on behalf of additional environmental species, forms, and entities.

3.7.4. Wearing Environmental Guardians Transformed by the Leadership of Aragorn: The Environmental Sacrifices, Hopes, and Triumphs of the Gondorians

As I note elsewhere, Tolkien's Middle-earth fantasies detail how the Valar and the Free Peoples, such as the Gondorians, undertake various building projects (e.g., roads and fortresses), in part, to oppose the environmental evils of Morgoth, Sauron, and their various servants. Therefore, my views differ from those held by critics like Jeffers. Jeffers criticizes the Gondorians' establishment of fortress-cities on hills and their creation of roads to accelerate their speed of travel; according to Jeffers, such acts are a problem because such behavior decreases the Gondorians' intimacy with the earth's soil (68-69). In other words, Jeffers believes that the Gondorians behave selfishly by callously establishing stone roads and stone fortress-cities on the landscape. Without roads like the one in Stonewain Valley and fortress-cities like Minas Tirith, however, Sauron would destroy even more segments of the environment even more quickly.

Besides creating stone roads and stone fortress-cities, the Gondorians alter their environment in other manners as well. As Tolkien notes in a fragment, "[The Nardol fire-beacon] was on the end of a high ridge, originally part of the Drúadan Forest, but long deprived of trees by masons and quarries who came up the Stonewain Valley³⁴⁶"

346. Similarly, Tolkien mentions in his "Nomenclature of *The Lord of the Rings*" that the Gondorians brought stones from regional quarries to Gondor, via the Stonewain Valley, to meet the needs of the Gondorians (qtd. in Hammond and Scull, "*Lord*" . . . *Reader's* 776).

(*Unfinished*, “Cirion” 51n). The Gondorians and the Rohirrim, as Tolkien mentions in his minor essay “The Rivers and Beacon-hills of Gondor,” used wood for beacon-fires (e.g., Nardol), which they placed on mountains and hills, in order to warn one another if any major problems were occurring (18). In other words, the Gondorians felled some trees, in part, to try to save themselves, as well as the overall ecosystems of northwestern Middle-earth, since the fall of Gondor would likely soon cause the entire region to suffer under Sauron’s ecocidal tyranny.

Although their ages-long struggle against Sauron erodes some of their culture’s environmental sensibilities, the Gondorians continue to appreciate the sensory imagery (among other values) of the physical environment in multiple ways. For example, Faramir maintains the Rangers of Ithilien (a group of soldiers from families who used to live in the fertile land of Ithilien), who repeatedly fight Sauron’s forces so that the Gondorians might inhibit Sauron and his forces from ruining Ithilien to an even greater extent, as *The Lord of the Rings* observes (*Two*, “Herbs” 644-45). The fact that the Hobbits recognize that Ithilien remains more environmentally sound than Mordor³⁴⁷ (636) implies that the Rangers’ environmental labors (i.e., fighting Sauron’s forces) succeed to some extent. Even in their steepest decline, moreover, the Gondorians never abandon the environmental labor necessary to maintain a garden and a grove of trees in Minas Tirith, as well as many acres of crops and orchards³⁴⁸ within the Pelennor (*Return*,

347. For example, once Sam and Frodo reach Ithilien, they find that “Spring was already busy about them: fronds pierced moss and mould, larches were green-fingered, small flowers were opening in the turf, birds were singing. Ithilien, the garden of Gondor now desolate kept still a dishevelled dryad loveliness” (*Two*, “Herbs” 636).

348. Just as the Gondorians’ establishment of roads parallels the actions of Arnor (*Fellowship*, “Prologue” 4), the Arnorians also once cultivated “many farms, comlands, vineyards, and woods” (5) in a manner akin to the Gondorians.

“Pyre” 837, “Minas” 734). Similarly, the Gondorians continue to treat non-human animals with sensitivity to the best of their understanding (*Return*, “Minas” 743). Furthermore, according to the minor essay “The Rivers and Beacon-hills of Gondor,” Minas Tirith’s citizens “frequently” visited Lossarnach, because they appreciated the sensory imagery of Lossarnach’s orchards and flowers (18).

As their retreats to the Lossarnach countryside indicate, the Gondorians traditionally celebrate the beauties of the physical environment. For example, according to one of Tolkien’s fragments, following the (albeit temporary) defeat of Sauron, Isildur climbs the Amon Anwar hill, which begins the royal tradition to visit this hill—especially in times of turmoil (*Unfinished*, “Cirion . . . Tradition” 308-10). Isildur starts this custom, in part, because of his conviction that the beauty and serenity of the hill will improve the decision-making and resolve of Gondor’s future leaders.³⁴⁹ Somewhat similarly, the Gondorians also understand that the sight of growing plants can help humans recoup from illnesses and war wounds, which explains one reason why they continue to maintain the trees and garden near the Houses of Healing in *The Lord of the Rings*, despite not keeping any other garden or tree grove within Minas Tirith (*Return*, “Pyre” 837).

As the Gondorians battle Sauron’s forces for centuries during the Third Age, however, the environmental knowledge of the Gondorians deteriorates; in other words, the Gondorians’ environmental emphasis increasingly shifts away from cultivating the environment, pursuing environmental knowledge, and satisfying their creative pursuits (e.g., sculpting) to surviving and trying to preserve what they can against Sauron and his

349. Isildur’s custom parallels Treebeard’s custom of visiting a “treeless” hill in Fangorn during tumultuous times, as Merry and Pippin witness and Gandalf observes (*Two*, “Treebeard” 451-52, “White” 488).

invading armies. For example, Gandalf the White notes that, by the War of the Ring era, the Gondorians' knowledge of horses proves inferior to the Rohirrim's understanding of these non-human animals, despite the fact that the Gondorians once possessed much more knowledge, in general, than the Rohirrim (*Return*, "Minas" 743). This aforementioned decline among the Gondorians generally corresponds with what Faramir tells Frodo and Samwise. During this conversation in *The Two Towers*, Faramir praises the Rohirrim as "masters of horses" and notes that the Gondorians improved the Rohirrim by teaching them additional knowledge, while the Gondorians descended in terms of knowledge and behavior ("Window" 663-64). Nonetheless, Faramir includes multiple modifying statements: "We are become Middle Men, of the Twilight, but with memory of other things. For as the Rohirrim do, we now love war and valour as things good in themselves, both a sport and an end; and though we still hold that a warrior should have more skills and knowledge than only the craft of weapons and slaying, we esteem a warrior, nonetheless, above men of other crafts. Such is the need of our days" (663, emphasis added). Consequently, Faramir mentions that the Gondorians feel forced to privilege warriors above all else, because soldiers bar Sauron from destroying their lives and their realm; yet, because of their semi-familiarity with their own lore, the Gondorians also grasp that there is more to life than the task of killing invading enemies. Rather than falling into utter ignorance, the Gondorians continue to possess the collective *memory* of better eras, and consequently, the Gondorians yearn to reverse their descent.

Gondor's reclamation of a more sensitive environmentalism extends to even Gondorian names. At the Council of Elrond during the War of the Ring, Elrond states that, centuries earlier, Gondor's "chief city was Osgiliath, Citadel of the Stars [. . .] And

Minas Ithil they built, Tower of the Rising Moon [. . .] and [. . .] Minas Anor they made, Tower of the Setting Sun” (*Fellowship*, “Council” 238). By naming their cities and fortress-cities after these aforementioned natural entities, the Gondorians demonstrate their appreciation for, knowledge of, and interest in the stars, the Moon, and the Sun. Furthermore, following the fall of Minas Ithil to Sauron’s forces, the Gondorians switch the name of this structure to Minas Morgul (i.e., the Tower of Sorcery), while changing *Minas Anor* to *Minas Tirith* (i.e., Tower of Guard) (238). The alteration of the names of the fortress-cities implies that the Gondorians’ focus shifts away from the environment and toward defending Gondor and northwestern Middle-earth from Sauron; in other words, the Gondorians *Guard* against Sauron’s *Sorcery*.³⁵⁰ However, after the Free Peoples’ victory over Sauron, an Eagle (the herald of Manwë and the Valar) calls the citizens of Minas Tirith, the “*people of the Tower of Anor*” (*Return*, “Steward” 942). By using the former name of the Gondorian city, the Eagle’s diction in the message foreshadows the environmental renewal of the Gondorian realm and implies that the Valar, while agreeing with the Gondorians’ earlier focus on defeating Sauron, now encourage the Gondorians to help the physical environment that Manwë, Aulë, Yavanna, and the other members of the Valar cherish recover. Consequently, by arguing that the adoption of environmental names can convey environmental interest, knowledge, and appreciation, my analysis differs to some degree from Jeffers’s reading, for Jeffers downgrades the Gondorians and all other groups who use various things/beings from the physical environment as symbols (71-73). For example, Jeffers characterizes the

350. Consequently, the Gondorians’ environmental shortcomings amid their long struggle against the ecosadists of the Third Age somewhat parallel the environmental guardianship inadequacies, efforts, and focuses of many members of the Edain during the First Age (e.g., Túrin).

Gondorians' use of environmental symbols as not only "problematic" but also indicative that "It is [only] possible, therefore, for the people of Gondor to reconnect to their place and develop into even better people" (73). I contend, however, that it is the destiny of Aragorn's Gondor to foster an environmental renaissance—not just a plausibility.

Tolkien presents Aragorn and Aragorn's realm as environmental models for individuals and communities, respectively. Firstly, Aragorn appreciates the beauties of the physical world. Readers perceive Aragorn's love for the sensory imagery of Lothlórien's Elven-shaped woods. Upon reaching Lothlórien, for example, Aragorn expresses his joy by declaring, "Lothlórien! . . . Glad I am to hear again the wind in the trees!" (*Fellowship*, "Lothlórien" 328-29); similarly, Aragorn—like the rest of the Fellowship—feels immense contentment simply by resting and recovering within the sight of the golden flower *elamor*³⁵¹ and the trees of Lothlórien (*Fellowship*, "Lothlórien" 343, "Mirror" 349). Furthermore, like the other surviving Fellowship members, Aragorn also shows his appreciation for the beauty of nature in the negative, since Aragorn also remains silent and depressed when confronted with the sight of the Brown Lands in *The Fellowship of the Ring*, which Sauron's forces created in the Second Age by obliterating the Entwives' Gardens ("Great River" 372). Finally, Aragorn's desire to celebrate the beauty of the physical environment helps to explain his choice to hold a feast in the Field of Cormallen, following the Downfall of Sauron (*Return*, "Field" 932).

Besides appreciating the spectacle of nature's beauty and mourning its destruction in *The Lord of the Rings*, Aragorn demonstrates himself as a knowledgeable Ranger by

351. Much of Aragorn's fondness for Lothlórien also results from his memories of meeting his beloved Arwen in the Golden Wood.

understanding the medicinal powers of individual plants and by referencing a portion of the environmental history of Middle-earth.³⁵² For example, Aragorn understands where to find and how to administer *athelas* and uses this knowledge to improve the healing of Frodo, Éowyn, Faramir, and Merry (*Fellowship*, “Flight” 193-94; *Return*, “Houses” 846-51). Meanwhile, Aragorn demonstrates his awareness of Middle-earth’s environmental history in multiple passages, such as when he states that Fangorn Forest “is old . . . as old as the forest by the Barrow-downs, and it is far greater. Elrond says that the two are akin, the last strongholds of the mighty woods of the Elder Days” (*Two*, “Riders” 431). Moreover, Aragorn quickly notes some of the names of and linguistic references to *athelas* (i.e., *kingsfoil* and *asëa aranion*) and *pipe-weed* (i.e., *westmansweed* and *galenas*) (*Return*, “Houses” 846, 851). Aragorn also demonstrates that he is not ignorant of the mortal dangers of the physical environment, in general, and ascending Caradhras, in particular (e.g., *Fellowship*, “Ring” 282).

Although not necessarily trying to achieve a “balance” between humanity and the natural world in Minas Tirith,³⁵³ Aragorn perceives the need for more green-spaces within his city, which (before the intervention of the Mirkwood Elves) only contains one place with “a garden and a greensward with trees.” The fact that only one garden exists within the *medieval*-like fortress-city of Minas Tirith at the time of the War of the Ring, is odd, however, as Hazell notes (92). The long period of time that the Gondorians must

352. I do not intend to suggest that Aragorn is never wrong about the history of Middle-earth's environment; after all, Aragorn sometimes fails to understand the environment in its entirety. For instance, prior to the War of the Ring, Aragorn believed that the Ents were only matters of “legend, a memory” of previous ages (*Two*, “White” 488).

353. In our own world, Garrard equates this endeavor to a fool’s errand, since, “The notion of 'balance' in ecosystems is scientifically highly problematic, and ecologists no longer assert that biological diversity is necessarily linked to stability” (27).

focus on defending themselves and their lands from Sauron's forces contributes to the decline of the Gondorians' environmental sensitivity, knowledge, and skills.³⁵⁴ To improve the state of the environment and the lives of the humans of the area as well, moreover, Aragorn uses the Elessar stone, which he receives from Galadriel, to heal the Men living in (and the physical environment of) his realm³⁵⁵ (*Fellowship*, "Farewell" 365-66; *Unfinished*, "History . . . Elessar" 248-50, 250-51, 255). During this era of green urban renewal, Aragorn's kingship witnesses a large expansion in the number of and quality of life for trees and birds—as well as an increase in the number of and an improvement in the appearance of fountains—in places like Minas Tirith and Ithilien (*Return*, "Last" 854, "Steward" 947).

By working to rehabilitate the realms of Gondor, Arnor, and elsewhere, Aragorn agrees with Legolas' previously mentioned opinion that the Gondorians require more flora and fauna (*Return*, "Steward" 947, "Last" 854). Following the successful vanquishing of Sauron, Aragorn grants Faramir (a man who fought Sauron's forces in Ithilien for many years) the land of Ithilien for his principedom (*Two*, "Herbs" 644-45; *Return*, "Steward" 948). Similar to the lands of the Ents and the Hobbits that Saruman's policies harm, Ithilien undergoes environmental degradation because of Sauron's poor

354. Gimli perceives examples of this decline when he observes that the later Gondorian stonework for the main gate of Minas Tirith is inferior to that of earlier Gondorian eras. Moreover, Legolas observes that the Gondorians have permitted the decline in the sensory imagery of the city, as witnessed by the insufficient amount of plants and birds living in Minas Tirith (*Return*, "Last" 854).

By adding more plants to Minas Tirith, Legolas and the Elves will improve the quality of and add to the quantity of scents, sights, tastes, and textures in Minas Tirith; by adding more birds to Minas Tirith, the Elves increase the quality of sounds and sights in Minas Tirith. The addition of many fountains in Minas Tirith also demonstrates that the Gondorians appreciate the sound, sight, scent, and touch of falling water (*Return*, "Steward" 950, "Appendix B" 1070).

355. No matter which of the two versions—or (more likely) a synthesis of the two legends—is correct, the most important fact lies in Aragorn receiving the Elessar, which he uses to help Gondor and Arnor recover from war and neglect (*Unfinished*, "History . . . Elessar" 248-51, 255n, 256n; *Fellowship*, "Farewell" 365-66). Meanwhile, Aragorn's ability to renew Middle-earth with the Elessar, despite Sauron's Downfall, stems from the fact that the stone originated in a time prior to Sauron's rule (*Unfinished*, "Elessar" 251).

industrial tactics and because of warfare. After the end of the War of the Ring and the Downfall of Sauron, Faramir, Éowyn, and many others endeavor to improve the general well-being and sensory imagery of Ithilien by working to rehabilitate the war-damaged waters, soils, flora, fauna, and landscapes of Ithilien (*Return*, “Steward” 942-43, “Appendix A” 1053). The renewal of Middle-earth that corresponds with Aragorn’s crowning includes the environmental labor necessary to re-establish the Arnorian towns near Fornost Erain and Lake Evendim as well (*Return*, “Homeward” 971, “Appendix B” 1071). Although the re-founding of cities may seem callous and/or selfish (since it will alter the environment that formed after the fall of Arnor), Tolkien’s fantasies imply that creating cities on top of the ruins of former human civilizations is appropriate and much more environmentally sensitive than establishing new cities that require the shaping of environments never before altered by Men. Somewhat similarly, since Mordor once fell within the realm of Gondor (*Unfinished*, “Istari” 398), Aragorn (with the aid of his Elessar stone³⁵⁶) can also help the long-desolate landscape of Mordor experience some renewal. Aragorn himself expresses such cautious hope, following the victory over Sauron, when he commands the Gondorians to undertake the environmental labor necessary to dismantle Minas Morgul, which Sauron’s forces had perverted and occupied for centuries³⁵⁷ (*Return*, “Steward” 948).

Meanwhile, Aragorn (in an effort to repay Ghân-buri-ghân and his people for helping the Rohirrim reach Minas Tirith in time to save the fortress-city) declares

356. Mordor’s fertile volcanic soil will also help Mordor’s environment recover to some extent.

357. Aragorn’s desire to see Mordor’s lands and Sauron’s former slaves recover and begin to prosper also leads him to decide to give the ex-slaves of Sauron their own realm in the areas surrounding Lake Númen where they once toiled for Sauron (*Return*, “Steward” 947).

Drúadan Forest³⁵⁸ to be the domain of the Wild Men alone (*Return*, “Many” 954). Similar to the pronouncement concerning the Wild Men’s lands, Aragorn gives the helpful Ents the land near Orthanc and the lands west of the Mountains near Isengard to enable the Ents to continue planting trees partially because of Aragorn’s distant hope that the Ents may one day find the long-lost Entwives and at last produce more Entings (958). Aragorn continues this type of policy when, eight years after defeating Sauron, Aragorn forbids all Men from entering the Shire, although it remained “a³⁵⁹ Free Land under the protection of the Northern Sceptre” (“Appendix B” 1071). Similar to how the Ents demonstrate their quality as environmental guardians by expanding and beautifying the Treetarth (“Many” 958), Aragorn grants more land (i.e., the Westmarch) to the agrarian Hobbits, who generally treat the environment well (“Appendix B” 1072). These decisions demonstrate not only Aragorn’s thankfulness that these Peoples helped Gondor defeat Sauron and his ecocidal minions but also Aragorn’s knowledge that these groups (who have lived in these lands in an, overall, sustainable manner for centuries) understand how best to care for their homelands. Consequently, Aragorn decides that these native Peoples should continue to guard and nourish these environments.

358. Aragorn likely grants freedom to the Drúedain living to the east in Drúwaith Iaur, because they also help during the War of the Ring by defeating what remains of Saruman’s retreating armies (*Unfinished*, “Battles” 384, 387n), and to the Drúedain living on Enedwaith’s coasts, if they still remain in this area (370, 370n, 387n).

359. The use of the indefinite article “a” rather than the definite article “the” implies other such “Free Lands” in the north, which reinforces the likelihood that Gandalf speaks the truth to the Hobbits and Butterbur concerning Aragorn’s plans to also grant home-rule for Bree (*Return*, “Homeward” 971). If so, Aragorn’s decision to make Bree a city with home-rule as well makes sense, because Bree-land refers to Bree (which includes Hobbit citizens) and to three other villages (Staddle, Combe, and Archet) with at least Staddle including Hobbits (*Fellowship*, “At” 146).

Aragorn's wise, eco-friendly policies extend to other Peoples as well. By granting self-rule to the Rohirrim, the Dwarves of Erebor, and the Men of Dale³⁶⁰ (*Return*, "Appendix A" 1045, 1069), Aragorn again proves his wisdom at the end of *The Lord of the Rings*.³⁶¹ The King of Gondor and Arnor, moreover, refrains from imperialistic wars against those among the Easterlings and the Southrons willing to make peace; instead, he agrees to permit them their liberty³⁶² (*Return*, "Steward" 947). According to Gandalf, Aragorn plans to grant Bree self-rule as well³⁶³ ("Homeward" 971-72). Consequently, by refusing the selfish and callous possibility of claiming the lands of other Peoples through violent conquest and instead choosing to make peace with those willing to have peace with Gondor and Gondor's allies, Aragorn wisely prevents the deaths and destruction of more Peoples and more areas of the physical environment alike.

360. However, these realms of Men are something akin to commonwealths, because these lands remain "under the crown and protection" of the king of Arnor and Gondor (*Return*, "Appendix A" 1069).

361. Because Gondor's presence once extended to the Sea of Rhûn and the Dorwinions are Edain descendants as well (*Return*, "Appendix A" 1021; *Unfinished* "Cirion" 288-89; *History . . . Hobbit*, "Halls" 420), it seems likely that Aragorn enacted similar treaties with the Dorwinions, too. Tolkien's late essay "Of Dwarves and Men" may suggest this, because it notes that "Númenórean influence however went far [. . .] passing up the Vales of Anduin to its sources, and reaching the lands east of the forest, between the River Celon (Running) and the River Carnen (Redwater)" (*Peoples* 316).

362. Although Aragorn's treatment of the Dunlendings, following the War of the Ring, appears semi-vague, with the narrator mentioning that some diplomats from Dunland appear to discuss peace terms with Aragorn (*Return*, "Steward" 947), Aragorn seems to treat Dunland as a pseudo-commonwealth. Tolkien mentions in a note within "The Battles of the Fords of Isen" that Aragorn "appeased" the Dunlendings by resolving their many disputes with the Rohirrim (*Unfinished*, "Battles" 371). Aragorn, however, chooses to formally restore Adorn (an area long associated with rebellion against the Men of Rohan) to the Rohirrim (*Unfinished*, "Battles" 364n-365n, "Cirion" 305; *Return*, "Appendix A" 1040-41). Tolkien notes that most of the Men of Adorn (who possess both Dunlending and Rohirrim heritage) side with Saruman during the War of the Ring (*Unfinished*, "Battles" 364n-365n). Aragorn's restoration of Adorn also honors the Rohirrim's pledge to allow the Dunlendings to return to their homes in peace, as long as the Dunlendings remain north of the *Isen*, not the *Adorn* River (*Two*, "Road" 532), which means the Rohirrim continue to regard the Adorn as part of their own realm. If Aragorn reapplies the treatment that the Dunlendings previously experienced during the latter years of the Second Age and the beginning of the Third Age by the Kings and Stewards of Gondor (*Unfinished*, "Battles" 370), the Gondorians will regard the Dunlendings as "peoples of . . . Gondor," but largely allow the Dunlendings self-rule, albeit as long as they remain peaceful. This semi-lenient treatment would follow the logic of Tolkien's later works, because Tolkien also mentions in "Of Dwarves and Men" that the Dunlendings are descended from the Edain's House of Haleth (*Peoples* 314).

363. For more information about this topic, read my note on this subject on the previous page.

Tolkien's fragment *The New Shadow*, however, portrays the ending of Gondor's environmental renaissance that began with Sauron's Downfall. This environmental regression parallels the type of evil deeds committed by the wayward Númenóreans and their descendants of old.³⁶⁴ As noted previously, one of the examples of the decline of the Númenórean civilization includes the gross overharvesting of trees caused by the increasingly selfish, callous methods of logging used by the Númenóreans. Somewhat similarly, corrupted Fourth Age Gondorians like Saelon (who lives a century after the War of the Ring) also mistreat trees (*Peoples* 411, 412).

As a boy, the callously selfish Saelon misused apples and desired to destroy Borlas' trees in *The New Shadow*³⁶⁵; moreover, as an adult, Saelon's callousness increases to the point that he not only enjoys cutting young willow trees (*Peoples* 411), but he also revels in the knowledge that his allies murder other Men (412, 414, 416-17). When Saelon was a boy, Borlas notes that he chided Saelon for his unethical antics because Saelon picked unripe fruit simply to toss it away or to peer inside of it (412). By picking and then throwing away unripe fruit, Saelon prevents others from eating the fruit, which will result in more fruit picked and eaten, which, in turn, lessens the amount of food available for humans and non-human animals. Because Saelon is not conducting a scientific experiment in which he is documenting what he finds within the fruit, this action does not contribute to the knowledge of Men about the flora of Middle-earth.

364. Gondor's evil Queen Berúthiel, for example, despised some aspects of nature (i.e., the sea), perverted gardens, and misused humans and non-humans (e.g., she enjoyed "tormenting" the black cats" that served her) (*Unfinished*, "Istari" 401n-02n; Hammond and Scull, "*Lord*" . . . *Reader's* 284).

365. The aforementioned callous childhood behavior leads Saelon to choose to work in the *timber* industry, which enables him to cut down trees as his adult profession.

Consequently, this indicates that Saelon's actions are selfishly callous, for he is simply destroying fruit to kill time without thought or care as to how his decisions will affect the environment, in general, and other Men, in particular. Moreover, by picking unripe fruit just to look at what is inside of it and *not* for scientific purposes, Saelon displays an ignorant, selfish, and callous impatience, since Saelon could wait for the fruit to ripen before investigating what the fruit looks like while eating the fruit from the tree. If he had done so, Saelon would reduce his need to use more environmental resources to satisfy his hunger. In other words, Saelon's childish behavior harms the overall well-being of the environment. This helps to explain why Borlas rebukes Saelon by saying, "[E]ven a boy must understand that fruit [. . .] does not reach its full being until it is ripe; so that to misuse it unripe is to do worse than just to rob the man that has tended it: it robs the world, hinders a good thing from fulfillment. Those who do so join forces with all that is amiss, with the blights and the cankers and the ill winds. And that was the way of Orcs³⁶⁶" (414).

Borlas indicates that he finds the purposeful wasting of fruit akin to the self-centered, callous decision to "mar the tree in play or spite" by needlessly removing or mutilating its branches and/or bark (413). If a person willfully *misuses* fruit, he/she may wantonly harm the trunk and the branches of a tree. If the selfishly callous person chooses to harm the trunk and/or the branches of a tree, he/she (like an Orc) may then decide to destroy a whole tree "for no better reason than his pleasure in axe-play" (414). Borlas argues that such a person may then ignore that healthy saplings ensures that a tree

366. By making such arguments, Borlas' reasoning parallels Gandalf's own rebuke to Saruman concerning Saruman's decision to alter the color of his robe: "[H]e that breaks a thing to find out what it is has left the path of wisdom" (*Fellowship*, "Council" 252).

species survives. Therefore, these ecosadists may then lazily refuse to invest the time necessary to find dead trees or large, “old” trees instead of felling smaller trees because it requires less exertion to cut down small trees and because such ecosadists feel “pleasure” killing “young” things³⁶⁷ (413-14). When someone cuts down an adult tree for firewood, this yields much more firewood than what smaller saplings could; in other words, Borlas contends that, if a husbandman refuses to cut down an old tree in favor of cutting down a younger tree, this will necessitate felling far more saplings to gather the same amount of wood. Therefore, Borlas argues that, by choosing to cut down only one mature tree, one behaves less callously and less ignorantly by damaging the environment’s well-being to a lesser extent than if one felled multiple smaller trees.³⁶⁸

Borlas also attempts to chide Saelon by arguing that farmers engage in an environmental labor that can improve the environment’s general well-being. According to Borlas, “A man . . . who tends a tree and guards it from blights and many other enemies does not act like an Orc or a canker. If he eats its fruit, he does it no injury. It produces fruit more abundantly than it needs for its own purpose: the continuing of its kind” (414). Borlas, therefore, indicates that Saelon forgets that farmers do more than

367. Gandalf describes Gollum’s love of killing and eating young non-human animals and humans in a similar manner in *The Fellowship of the Ring*, as noted previously.

368. This sentiment contradicts the beliefs of some contemporary environmentalists who seek to protect old-growth forests; Tolkien’s text suggests that such a goal not only ignores human needs but also seems to value the aesthetics of older trees more than the lives of trees, since protecting an old tree from felling or pruning may cost the lives of many younger trees.

Nonetheless, saplings depend on older trees (e.g., the tree that first gave them life by dropping the seed to produce the sapling) to produce sugar produced by photosynthesis, via the sun (Grant). Furthermore, older trees often provide nutrients to younger trees and help these saplings overcome diseases and predators by warning younger trees or hearkening to their electronic, hormonal, or chemical signals that indicate that they are under duress (Grant). To fell an older tree, or “Mother tree,” as Forest Ecology Professor Suzanne Simard describes them (qtd. in Grant), means that the forester must then care for the saplings even more carefully, since the loss of the older, guardian tree can expose the younger trees to more potential problems. Based on the text of *The New Shadow*, Tolkien’s character Borlas appears to represent one such forester.

harvest fruit; farmers also sensitively nourish plants by helping trees fight diseases, winds, heat, and drought to try to ensure that the trees survive. If the tree suffers from a variety of maladies, Borlas' aforementioned statement implies that the righteous husbandman will curtail his/her harvest to maintain the health of the tree(s). Moreover, every year knowledgeable foresters of quality will enable seeds from the tree to grow in areas best suited for their growth by accounting for factors like soil quality, shade, and moisture. By laboring in this manner, Borlas declares that Men then "rightly use" the environment (i.e., "without [selfish] pride or [callous] wantonness, but with [knowledgeable] reverence") (413); consequently, Borlas' argument parallels the statements by Aulë and Manwë to Yavanna in *The Silmarillion* concerning the proper environmental behaviors and attitudes of the Children ("Quenta: Aulë" 45-46). Thus, Borlas counters the ethical egoist actions and beliefs of Saelon with divinely-sanctioned, morally based virtue ethics.

Men of quality labor to maintain the landscape, to safeguard the quality of the water, soil, and air, and to guarantee the continued existence of non-invasive, non-genetically modified flora and fauna species. While a few members of the Edain opt to learn about and to appreciate the physical environment without trying to protect other nations from Morgoth's murderous ecocide prior to the arrival of Morgoth's ecosadistic armies, the majority of the Edain battle Morgoth's forces. By fighting Morgoth's armies, the Edain confront those who repeatedly commit ecocide, as they murder, pillage, and destroy the Elves, the Edain, the Dwarves, and the physical environment of Beleriand and elsewhere in Middle-earth. Although the Númenóreans possess a great depth of

environmental knowledge and although they produce stunning artifacts, their culture devolves, as self-centered callousness becomes the norm among the inhabitants of the island. As Aldarion's usual behavior exemplifies, many non-late Númenóreans could and (usually would) practice an environmental ethic that would preserve the landscape long-term; however, the Númenóreans increasingly treat the physical environment, as well as Men and Elves, with wanton violence and contempt, which leads to the selfish Númenóreans' divinely-sanctioned condemnation. Unlike most middle and late Númenóreans, the Drúedain's environmental ethics include mercy, simplicity, and sensitivity. Beorn the Bear-Man, meanwhile, represents a figure who would destroy Orcs, Wargs, and others who threatened Beorn, his lands, and his non-human animal "children" in a manner akin to the wrath of the Ents when they finally counterattack Saruman's ecocidal servants. The Rohirrim, moreover, represent how humans should treat horses in times of warfare. Like the Rohirrim, humanity should use horses when necessary but condemn those like Sauron who callously disregard their inherent worth and aesthetic beauty of these non-human animals, who dismiss all horses unless they happen to correspond with their favorite color, and who selfishly waste their lives in the pursuit of imperialistic warfare. Finally, although they neglect their duties as environmental guardians to some extent during their wars against Sauron, the Gondorians—under the leadership of Aragorn—renew their commitment to the urban, rural, and wilderness physical environments alike once Sauron is defeated. However, as *The New Shadow* fragment indicates, some Gondorians living decades after the War of the Ring choose to embrace the ecocidal ethics of the Orcs by butchering trees for no reason, which sadly

and eerily parallels one of the indicators of the Downfall of the Númenóreans, the predecessors of some of the Gondorians.

Tolkien's Middle-earth tales teach that those who allow themselves to devolve into ecosadism—or who choose not to confront forces of ecocide—fail as environmental guardians because of their selfishness and the sources that reify this severe character flaw (e.g., callousness, laziness). Tolkien's works create a hierarchy of ecosadism based on what, when, where, why, who, and how something (or someone) is harmed. Consequently, Ungoliant, Morgoth, and Sauron represent the very worst. Morgoth's greater power and knowledge enable him to obliterate more artifacts, Peoples, landscapes, flora, fauna, waters, rocks, and soils, yet it is Ungoliant who annihilates the most sacred of creations, the Two Trees (albeit perhaps with the aid of Morgoth), as well as many other environmental entities and created artifacts. Despite wielding less power than Morgoth, Sauron leads the demented bioengineering to produce ecosadists and contributes to (or directly causes) the destruction of lands like Númenor and the Gardens of the Entwines. Saruman's ecosadism is less pronounced in terms of quantity when compared to Morgoth and Sauron for three main reasons: Saruman labors to improve the environment and aids the Peoples for years before his fall into ecosadism; Saruman's knowledge and powers are less than the Dark Lords; and, finally, Saruman's ecocidal actions and desires at the end of the Third Age prove less vast than those of Morgoth and Sauron. Nonetheless, each of the aforementioned villains' covetousness and callousness leads them to yearn to seize the artifacts created by others, which often leads to widespread violence and subsequent environmental desolation. Unlike these villainous,

twisted spirits, whose greatest sin is to corrupt, enslave, mutilate, and slaughter the Peoples, the Valar prove the greatest role models. Unlike these corrupted spirits, the Valar persist in improving the world and rehabilitating what the ecosadists destroy because they repeatedly fight the unrepentant forces of ecocide and because they teach others how to improve the environment.

Despite possessing less knowledge and power than the Valar, Gandalf's appreciation for the physical environment and for created artifacts, as well as his guidance of, love for, and encouragement of the Peoples during their many battles against ecosadists causes him to be the greatest Maia environmental guardian. Because Melian and Radagast fail to confront ecosadistic armies bent on annihilating some of the Peoples, as well as portions of the physical environment, the environmental guardianship of these Maiar spirits is greatly undermined. Nonetheless, because Melian works to protect the environment and the Elves of Doriath for centuries, because she teaches environmentalism to others, and endeavors to appreciate and to understand far more of the environment than Radagast (who utterly ignores the Peoples he was sent to protect), Melian's environmental guardianship far outranks that of Radagast's.

Since, for centuries, the Old Forest contains the malevolent, tyrannical, nativist, vengeful, and isolationist Old Man Willow that indoctrinates the rest of the Old Forest trees in a form of ecosadism by leading the trees to try to kill the Peoples who enter the Old Forest, Bombadil and Goldberry's environmental guardianship of the Old Forest is certainly flawed. However, the environmental guardianship of Bombadil and Goldberry, ultimately, proves superior to the more powerful but cowardly Maia spirits, Melian and Radagast. This is the case because Bombadil and Goldberry teach the Hobbits

environmental lessons, because Bombadil and Goldberry cultivate gardens, because Bombadil and Goldberry display a profound affection for the physical environment, and because Bombadil saves the Hobbits from mortal dangers threatening all of Middle-earth.

When the Peoples labor to cultivate farms, orchards, hedges, and farms, Tolkien's fantasies teach that they work wisely. While the Children should use natural resources to clothe, shelter, warm, defend, and nourish themselves, they must do so in moderation. Although the Noldorin Elves, the Dwarves, and the Númenóreans produce wondrous industries, mines, and artifacts, Tolkien's works teach that such creations can produce great calamities, and therefore, such labors should only be undertaken with great caution. While the industries of the Noldorin Elves, the Dwarves, the Númenóreans, the Arnorians, and the Gondorians bring them great prosperity, fame, knowledge, and military might, their very notoriety, wealth, and power also lead the ecosadistic Dark Lords to yearn to conquer them and their lands even more. Sometimes deciding to only/mainly cultivate "natural artifacts" like trees, shrubs, hedges, flowers, and crops results in better environmental guardianship over time, a realization that helps readers understand why Tolkien praises the Silvan Elves, the Hobbits, and the Ents, despite their various shortcomings. However, as Tolkien's portrayal of Aragorn's ascension to the thrones of Arnor and Gondor makes clear, Tolkien's works indicate that urban communities must also guard their environments. While this environmental guardianship may necessitate some industrialization and violence in order to defeat ecosadistic forces, urban ecosystems (like rural, wilderness, and other ecosystems) must be rehabilitated as quickly as possible. The Free Peoples should also display an appreciation for the environment by seeking additional environmental knowledge, by recreating amid nature

(e.g., walking in the woods), and by creating environmental artifacts (e.g., painting environmental scenes). Besides these aforementioned environmental labors of quality, environmental guardianship in Middle-earth also includes loving, forgiving, teaching, and encouraging others, as well as giving to and listening to them. The more that the Free Peoples embrace these principles, the more that they avoid the problems caused by isolationism, nativism, revenge, and tyranny that stem from various manifestations of selfishness: callousness, laziness, ignorance, and willfully counterproductive work. The less often that the Free Peoples practice their love for, sensitivity toward, understanding of, work on behalf of, and honesty with the physical environment, in general, and with one another, in particular, the further they descend into the ecosadism. In other words, the Free Peoples increasingly behave as if they agreed with the anti-environmentalism of the Orcs, the Goblins, the Trolls, and others who monstrosly undermine all efforts to guard not only the well-being of the environment at the local, regional, and global levels but also the well-being of the Free Peoples of Middle-earth.

CHAPTER IV

THE CONTEMPORARY ECOPHILOSOPHICAL LEAVES

THAT TOLKIEN PRECEDES

4.1. The Seeing Stones of Tolkienian Environmentalism

My decision to examine the parallels between contemporary ecocriticism³⁶⁹ and Tolkien's Middle-earth fantasies, as well as my contention that more ecocritics should examine Tolkien's works more seriously, derives, in part, from Tolkien's statements concerning literature and criticism. Tolkien's philosophy of fantasy writings, which he discusses within his "On Fairy-Stories" essay, includes his contention that "Probably every writer making a secondary world, a fantasy, [. . .] hopes that he is drawing on reality" (*Tolkien* 87). Tolkien's aforementioned opinion supports his acknowledgment that he consciously incorporated "criticisms of life [. . .] under mythical and legendary dress" into his fantasies (qtd. in Garth, *Tolkien* 295). Consequently, Tolkien acknowledges his indebtedness as a writer to his historical context; moreover, he agrees that he includes his own veiled social/cultural critiques, as well as his suggestions for future improvements, within his writings. Additionally, because Tolkien empowers

369. *Ecocriticism*, as a term, originated from a work by William Rueckert in 1978 (Miller 476).

readers to search for the “varied applicability” of his writings in his “Foreword to the Second Edition of *The Lord of the Rings*,” I believe that my subsequent analysis extends the “applicability” of Tolkien’s texts by referencing how his fantasies continue to be relevant in a variety of ways, including ecocriticism (*Fellowship* xv).

Consequently, I believe that we should apply the type of rationale that Huggan uses to explain why Judith Wright’s texts prove “ecological” in order to help to demonstrate why Tolkien’s works are ecological as well.³⁷⁰ Huggan labels the neo-Romantic Australian poet Judith Wright’s late twentieth-century work “ecological” by today’s standards, rather than simply “conservationist” (“Postcolonial . . . Romanticism” 7-8). Huggan does so, because Wright exhorts humans to remember that they are a member of the environment and should care for nature as a whole, as well as for other non-human members of nature, rather than simply looking at and interacting with nature in a haughty, selfish, and callous manner (“Postcolonial . . . Romanticism” 7-8). I believe that Huggan’s descriptions of Wright’s works could apply to Tolkien’s canon as well, a conviction that I will further develop in this chapter.

Meanwhile, according to James C. MuckKusick, the “love of nature [represents the] generative of authentic ecological thinking, which means that, ‘What’s needed next is an ethos of commitment to the hard work that will be required to revolutionize human consciousness and thereby save the planet. William Wordsworth, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, and William Blake may well prove to be the poets that we needed all along, the bards of *ecotopia*’” (239). As I will subsequently discuss, I suggest that we should

370. If we use Ashton Nichols’s definition of *ecology* as literature and other mental creations of the physical world (147), the fact that Tolkien’s works are *ecological* in nature appears self-evident.

add Tolkien to MucKusick's list of writers whose works help to foster a "love of nature" among readers and to provide visions for how readers could improve their environmentalism. In other words, one of the main reasons that ecocritics, in particular, and readers, in general, should study Tolkien's Middle-earth works lies in the fact that literature can influence a reader's environmental ethics. As Ottum and Reno tentatively suggest, more readers may embrace biocentrism (i.e., the belief that all living things/beings possess value) or even ecocentrism³⁷¹ (i.e., the ecophilosophical idea that living things/beings and non-living entities/forms alike possess value), if eco-friendly literature "enchants" them ("Introduction" 16). Furthermore, while earlier ecocritical eras condemned human-centeredness, Ottum and Reno note that environmentalists now find themselves more likely to "emphasize human agency, urging the public to choose action in nature's interest. For this reason, the affective experience of choice—of choosing nature—demands critics' attention. What does choosing nature feel like? And how do these affects matter to environmentalism?" ("Introduction" 18). I contend that Tolkien's Middle-earth fantasies not only urge readers to contemplate how to improve their environmentalism but also provide some literary examples of what it means to "choose nature."

Whether in the 1950s or during the decades that followed, "choosing nature" included/includes efforts to reduce industrial-caused pollution; the fact that Tolkien's works discuss pollution proves one reason why Tolkien's Middle-earth fantasies found—and continue to find—readers. The smoke caused by Morgoth, Sauron, and Saruman's

371. I will discuss these and other ecocritical terms in more detail later in this chapter.

industries would undoubtedly remind many 1954-55 historical readers of *The Lord of the Rings* not only of the Great London Fog of 1952 (e.g., the *Big Smoke*), which killed thousands,³⁷² but also of the deadly Fogs of other years (e.g., 1948) (Davis, Bell, and Fletcher A734; Luckin 47-48; “Latest” 489-490). Readers of later years might also recall the toxic fogs of 1956, 1957, and 1962 (Luckin 47-48; “Latest” 489-490). During these fatal time periods, coal pollution would produce “acid rain strong enough to bend iron, erode statues, poison land, and contaminate waterways,” as well as kill many humans, non-human animals, and flora (Dawson 4). As noted periodically throughout my dissertation, Morgoth, Sauron, Saruman, and their corrupted servants degrade statues, buildings, soils, landscapes, waterways, and the air; moreover, their actions often contribute to reducing biodiversity. Given the lethal consequences of the air pollution responsible for producing the Great London Fog and other terribly smoky periods, local British government bodies, such as those in London, Birmingham, and Manchester, created “smokeless zones” (Dawson 273). Meanwhile, following the Beaver Report, which included many suggestions long championed by activists working toward eliminating smoke pollution (as I discuss in chapter three), the U.K. Parliament became the first national legislature to pass an anti-air pollution bill (i.e., the 1956 Clean Air Act), which, in turn, became the model for how to lessen air pollution (Dawson 290-91; Domonoske). Nevertheless, even in 1991, 150+ people died from smog in London (Dawson 297). The relevancy of Tolkien’s imagery of the devastating and the

372. According to the death estimates provided by the BBC, somewhere between four thousand and twelve thousand people died during the Great London Fog (Domonoske). However, Kate Winkler Dawson’s 2017 work *Death in the Air* notes that the British government covered-up the correct number of deaths caused by the Great Smog of December 1952 for decades (281). According to Dawson, the Great London Fog contributed to thousands of additional deaths in January, February, and March of 1953 to total more than twelve thousand, rather than only four thousand (291-92).

aesthetically displeasing sight of industrial-caused air pollution continues, however. For example, the same type of pollution (Sulphur dioxide and nitrogen dioxide) and atmospheric conditions (large droplets of fog) that helped to cause the deadly Great London Fog now plagues China's cities³⁷³ (Wang, et al. 1, 5; Dawson 296); indeed, some *four thousand* people in China die each day because of smog (Dawson 296).

Consequently, the specter of black smoke continues to plague humanity in a manner eerily akin to how the Peoples of Middle-earth suffer under the ecocidal ethics of the Dark Lords and their industrialized war machines.

Because literature can help to improve the environmental ethics of readers and because many readers can feel overwhelmed by the many environmental issues that concern our world's atmosphere, waters, landscapes, soils, flora, and fauna, the fact that Tolkien's texts offer hope that our individual actions can improve the well-being of polluted environments should intrigue ecocritics. Tolkien's Middle-earth works could act as a goad not only to begin but also to continue the labor necessary to improve the condition of the physical environment.

Tolkien's views of *fantasy* and his creative works themselves provide the hope that some readers need to motivate themselves to improve the well-being of humanity and the physical environment in their local area and across the world. In his essay, "On Fairy-Stories," Tolkien calls the "consolation" of the "Happy Ending," *Eucatastrophe*

373. The relevancy of Tolkien's texts to the discussion of pollution and its effect on the environment is even clearer in Tolkien's later works, such as "Myths Transformed" and *Athrabeth Finrod Ah Andreth*. Within these works, Tolkien refers to how Morgoth causes global warming and global cooling, which, in turn, prevents Middle-earth from fully recovering, since Morgoth infuses his own corrupt self within all of the entities and members of Arda (*Morgoth's*, "Myths" 394-95). Because of Morgoth's aforementioned evil, ecosadistic interloping, this causes the self-renewing abilities of matter that Ilúvatar blessed his creation with to mutate negatively (*Morgoth's*, "Athrabeth" 344). This degradation includes cyclical climate change; therefore, Morgoth's evil perverts the sun's rays to periodically strike the world with too much heat (or not enough) (*Morgoth's*, "Myths" 376).

(*Tolkien* 85-86). According to Tolkien, “In its fairy-tale—or otherworld—setting, it is a sudden and miraculous grace: never to be counted on to recur. It does not deny the existence of *dyscatastrophe*, of sorrow and failure: the possibility of these is necessary to the joy of deliverance; it denies (in the face of much evidence, if you will) universal final defeat and in so far is *evangelium*, giving a fleeting glimpse of Joy” (*Tolkien* 86). Even when faced with the Mordor-like Superfund site caused by accidents or by selfish, callous, lazy, and/or ignorant practices, Tolkien’s readers can perceive how even the seemingly insignificant Hobbits can improve the environment’s well-being by selflessly helping other environmental guardians and by thwarting those who choose to harm the environment. Bilbo’s aid during the Quest for Erebor and the Four Hobbits’ contributions during the War of the Ring prove invaluable, for example. Similarly, Tolkien’s Ents leave a significant impression on the majority of Tolkien’s readers, which, in turn, causes many to contemplate how well they value and guard the earth’s environment, in general, and trees, in particular.³⁷⁴ As Tolkien critic, Cynthia M. Cohen, observes:

Tolkien’s usage of tree-like beings with humanlike characteristics and culture reminds us that, in the Primary World, people are the only real defense that trees have against most of the modern threats that they face. The very thing that most readers do notice in *The Lord of the Rings*—the distinction between trees and tree-like beings [. . .] enables a sense of recovery, allowing his readers to see trees—which, for many of us, have become all too familiar—in a vivid, new light.

Portraying trees as something worth fighting for and asserting the connections

374. The need for protecting trees is becoming increasingly urgent; if one could replant every one of the 32 million trees felled each year on earth, one could create a forest the size of Tolkien’s beloved England (Li 277).

that exist between humans and trees, Tolkien compels his readers to become responsible for preserving and protecting the trees in their own lives. (119)

Tolkien's works, consequently, can lead readers to verbalize environmentally responsible beliefs and to act on these newly adopted (or rediscovered) convictions. Such influential texts, I believe, deserve more consideration from contemporary ecocritics.

The discussions of the health, value, and overall well-being of non-human animals in Tolkien's fantasies should also interest contemporary ecocritics. Bombadil and Goldberry's environmental views and behaviors in *The Fellowship of the Ring* appear more radical to contemporary readers, in part, because they share some kinship with contemporary animal liberationism. *Animal liberationism*, according to Michael C. Morris, is "the view that the lives of animals require serious moral consideration and have intrinsic value, independent of their use by humans. From this viewpoint, animals have an interest not only in being free from pain and distress but in being allowed to live out their natural lives to the fullest" (344). This description exhibits some commonality with Goldberry's definitive statement that Bombadil does *not* own anything in the Old Forest, since, "The trees and the grasses and all things growing or living in the land belong each to themselves" (*Fellowship*, "House" 122). In addition to Goldberry's reference to the "intrinsic value" of the various members and entities within the Old Forest, Bombadil implies that they possess "value, independent of their use by humans" (Morris 344), for Bombadil teaches the Hobbits "to understand the lives of the Forest, *apart from* themselves" (127, emphasis added).

Meanwhile, non-religious animal liberationists, Morris observes, detest the idea that humans represent the top species, and therefore, they believe that “we should not make moral distinctions between the needs of human and nonhuman animals” (344). Bombadil’s care for and beliefs concerning the needs of the Hobbits’ ponies share some commonality with the liberationist views that Morris describes. As I mention in chapter three, Bombadil encourages his own horse, Fatty Lumpkin, to roam and eat, as he will; Bombadil only rides him when in great need, such as when Bombadil guides the Hobbits toward Bree. Moreover, rather than initially serving the Hobbits a meal once they reach his home, Bombadil first meets the nutritional and sheltering needs of the Hobbits’ ponies before feeding and supping with the Hobbits. Similarly, Bombadil counsels that the Hobbits should not bear grudges toward their ponies for running away from the Barrow-wight, for the animals only did so because they wished to save their lives.³⁷⁵

Tolkien’s Middle-earth fantasies largely parallel Morris’ description of *conservative animal liberationists*. Morris characterizes this group as those who believe, “that humans are a morally or spiritually superior species, but with that superiority goes responsibility, stewardship [. . .] and an obligation to care for those weaker than ourselves. Such liberationists are more likely to [. . .] accept a hierarchical political structure” (344). From Aulë and Manwë’s comments in reference to Yavanna’s beliefs concerning the needs of the Children in *The Silmarillion* (“Quenta: Aulë” 45-46) to the Fellowship’s decision to release Bill the Pony rather than take him to his likely death in Moria in *The Fellowship of the Ring* (“Journey” 295-96), Tolkien’s works often fit within the mold of *conservative animal liberationism* that Morris describes. The Rohirrim’s loving relationship with their

375. Read the section that focuses on Bombadil and Goldberry’s environmentalism within chapter two for a more in-depth discussion of these subjects.

horses, however, exemplifies this description to an even greater degree, for they willingly risk their lives on behalf of their horses by defying Sauron's desire to obtain the horses of Rohan (e.g., *Two*, "Riders" 426). Consequently, I agree with Morris that, although not "a thoroughgoing liberationist world," "Tolkien's world, in particular, is ahead of its time—and even the present time—as far as respectful treatment of animals is concerned" (354).

Tolkien's works do not match the moderate philosophy of *Welfarism* that Morris discusses (345). I believe this to be the case because Tolkien's works demonstrate more interest in the life of animals than merely "ensuring that animals do not suffer physically or psychologically" and because Tolkien's works disagree with the notion "that the painless death of nonhuman animals is not something with which humans need to concern themselves," (345). However, Tolkien's works indicate that Middle-earth's ecosadists are so evil that they even reject a worldview like the one Morris describes. The rejection of moderation is witnessed by the fact that these reprobates *aim* to cause pain, to maim, and to kill not only many of the Peoples and non-human animals of Middle-earth but also annihilate entire ecosystems.

Although my previous chapters make clear that I view Scott Smith's characterization of the wonton harming of non-human animals, in particular, and the environment, in general, as "antihobbitishness" in his 1967-1968 text "Elbereth!" (qtd. in Hunnewell, "Yellowskin" 13) as an overly broad designation because of some of the Hobbits' problematic cultural tendencies,³⁷⁶ Smith's description has some validity. For instance,

376. For example, as noted elsewhere, Pippin and some of the other male Hobbit youths collect bird eggs rather than allowing the eggs the opportunity to produce adult birds.

Tolkien's discussion of the Hobbits' questionable decision to gather bird eggs probably partially derives from the discussions that lead to the Protection of Birds Act of 1954 in Britain. This law caused certain concerns regarding bird eggs, because, "There was an obvious reluctance to prosecute schoolboys,

the aforementioned label correctly suggests that Tolkien despises the mistreatment of nature and considers the Hobbits far better environmental guardians than the corrupted Orcs, who (as I note elsewhere) often wantonly destroy the physical environment and commit other acts of “antihobbitishness.” I believe that, by using contemporary ecophilosophies and by comparing them to the environmental ideas and messages regarding non-human animals within Tolkien’s Middle-earth fantasies, readers will find the “applicability” of Tolkien’s works broadening and deepening in productive ways (*Fellowship*, “Foreword” xv).

Because Tolkien’s texts advocate that the Peoples should work to protect the overall well-being of the environment and because Tolkien’s works suggest that the Peoples behave wrongly if their actions lead to the wanton destruction of ecosystems and the loss of biodiversity, contemporary ecocritics should also value Tolkien’s works. The Hobbits’ guardianship of the Hedge, for example, deserves more discussion than the condemnation by critics like Flieger, as I discuss in chapter three. As Meryll Gelling, David W. Macdonald, and Fiona Matthews mention in their 2007 article that discusses the effects of hedgerows and small animals in the U.K., they

recommend that wider and more complex hedgerows with adjacent habitats should be encouraged, even at the risk of losing some adjacent arable habitat. On an international scale this study adds weight to the proposal that corridors[, such as hedgerows,] may play a vital role in the preservation of a number of species deemed to be ‘at risk’ from the impact of habitat fragmentation. (1030)

caught stealing sparrows’ eggs, and accordingly it remained legal for anyone to take the eggs of twenty-two of the most common species” (Sheail, *Nature* 36).

Therefore, when other types of flora like *trees* harm hedges (e.g., by monopolizing the sunlight and the available water at the expense of the hedge and/or collapsing onto the hedge and breaking it), the authors find that not only the hedges but also some small mammals and birds are adversely affected (Gelling, Macdonald, and Mathews 1028, 1020, 1030). In terms of Tolkien's Middle-earth, Tolkien's Hobbits sacrifice a greater quantity of crops by focusing on the overall benefits of the Shire's ecosystem as a whole by preserving some trees and by maintaining hedgerows in the Shire. Critics like Flieger (e.g., "Taking" 264-68), Hammond and Scull ("*Lord*" . . . *Reader's* 121), and Petty (227-28, 231, 242) underestimate the environmental need for the Hobbits to protect the Hedge from the Old Forest's sentient trees that seek to destroy the Hedge.³⁷⁷ Even Campbell disparages the Hobbits' protection of the Hedge by declaring that the Hobbits' behavior "seems even less" justified than felling the Old Forest trees to grow more agricultural crops (267). Perhaps if the Hobbits were called *the Shepherds of the Hedge*, more critics would perceive the environmental value of the Hobbits' protection of the Hedge in a manner similar to how readers understand and praise the role that the Ents accept as *Shepherds of the Trees*, even when this guardianship necessitates Entish violence.

The question concerning the proper amount of land to devote to farming, hedges, and trees, which the Old Forest scenes allude to, possesses some parallels with the historical era of when Tolkien published *The Lord of the Rings* (c. 1954-55), as well as with subsequent decades. Indeed, from 1947 to the early 2000s, the British felled many hedges that resulted in the loss of more than half of the country's hedgerows (Gelling, Macdonald, and Mathews 1020). Consequently, the British needed to behave like

377. For more information on this topic, read the section within chapter two that pertains to the Hobbits.

Tolkien's Hobbits more often by cultivating/guarding the well-being of their hedgerows to better protect the lives of other beings like birds that called/call the hedges their home. Not only should Tolkien critics display more concern for the well-being of the Hedge while discussing Tolkien's works but also contemporary ecocritics should take note of how Tolkien's Hobbits labor to protect the valuable ecosystems made possible by the Hedge.³⁷⁸

Because Tolkien's works broadly parallel the first two historical periods of the Environmental movement,³⁷⁹ it seems logical that Tolkien's Middle-earth fantasies parallel portions of the initial two phases of ecocriticism. "First-wave" ecocriticism focuses on the beauties of various flowers and, in general, non-human nature, as well as the *wilderness* lands of previous centuries, local ecosystems, humanity's "primordial bond" with the physical environment, and humanity's need to renew its relationship with "nourishing" nature (i.e., the physical environment rather than human artifacts) (Hiltner

378. Ecocritics, of course, should also observe the Hobbits' poor choice to fell too many trees to preserve the Hedge, yet they must note that, following the "Scouring of the Shire," the Hobbits' culture renews its commitment to preserving the well-being of trees, in particular, and the physical environment, in general, as well.

379. Tolkien's works certainly share some kinship with the early stages of Environmentalism. Allitt states that Environmentalism began as, "a pragmatic affair at first, with clear aims" (264). These goals included the desire "to stop or reduce pollution, improve air and water quality, clean up the rubbish, protect endangered species and their habitats, set aside beautiful areas of wild country for parks, wilderness areas, or wild and scenic rivers, and increase public education about the connections between living things" (Allitt 264). In sections like "The Scouring of the Shire" in *The Lord of the Rings*, Tolkien features scenes where the protagonists labor to redress air, water, and soil pollution in order to improve the environment's well-being and to improve the aesthetics of the countryside. Moreover, the teachings of Bombadil and Treebeard help the Four Hobbits to perceive "the connection between living things," while King Aragorn elects to protect various environments and their inhabitants (including the *wilderness* of Fangorn Forest and the Ents) from the encroachment of Men. Meanwhile, the second stage of *Environmentalism*, Allitt argues, "took on philosophical overtones, leading some environmentalists to advocate a complete overhaul of humans' self-conception and big changes in the American way of life" (264). Although to a smaller extent than the aforementioned description of the initial stage of *Environmentalism*, the evolution of the environmentalism of Tolkien's Free Peoples (e.g., the Hobbits during and after the Scouring of the Shire and the greening of Minas Tirith after the War of the Ring) and various individuals (e.g., Legolas) shows that the environmentalism of Tolkien's Peoples and individual characters could mature.

131-33; qtd. in Bate 79; qtd. in Buell 22-23). Within Tolkien's Middle-earth fantasies, many Peoples celebrate the beautiful sensory imagery and value of fragile flora (e.g., flowers), such as the Hobbits, the Men of Bree, the Rohirrim, and the Elves. Besides featuring multiple forests like Mirkwood and Fangorn Forest, Tolkien also creates memorable settings that are small, local environments, such as the Shire.³⁸⁰ Moreover, because the Ents love "wild" trees the most and because Treebeard yearns for the First Age when far more trees existed (which, in turn, enabled him to walk for many miles in the woods) (*Two*, "Treebeard" 457-58), these Entish desires parallel the interests of "first-wave" environmentalists, who focus on discussing bygone eras when the wilderness covered more areas (Hiltner 131-33).

The kinship between Tolkien's works and "first-wave" ecocriticism includes Tolkien's depiction of Beren as well. As I mention in chapter three, Tolkien portrays Beren as an example of the potential for humans to develop a better understanding with the other beings/entities in nature; because of Beren's inherent qualities, the animals choose to protect and nourish Beren, who subsequently retreats into isolated "wilderness" areas. Beren, therefore, seems like a model for a few nostalgic and idealistic individuals. As such, Tolkien's character parallels what "first-wave" ecocritic Lawrence Buell considers a typical desire to reconnect humans to "nourishing" nature (and thereby, reestablish humanity's "primordial" relationship with the natural world) that is often shared by first-wave ecocritics (23). Furthermore, the fact that Tolkien's fantasies display

380. Consequently, the British Romantic scholar and "first-wave" ecocritic Jonathan Bate would likely agree that Tolkien's texts fuse what Bate considers the general British tendency to write about "small," local environments with the tendency among Americans to depict endangered, large tracts of *wilderness* (79).

some kinship with “first-wave” environmentalism comes as little surprise, for Tolkien’s essay, “On Fairy-Stories,” references his theory that “The magic of Faërie” includes its “satisfaction of certain *primordial* human desires. One of these desires is [. . .] to hold communion with other living things” (*Tolkien* 41, emphasis added).

Tolkien’s fantasy works also share some parallels with “second-wave” environmental criticism. Second-wave ecocriticism gained prominence in the 1980s, and this body of ecocriticism often discusses environmental disasters, examines the environment on a global scale, displays an interest in much earlier eras than “first-wave” environmental writings, and focuses on environmental justice issues that involve groups like minorities and the socio-economic underclasses (Hiltner 131-32). Tolkien’s works routinely describe ecocide in many parts of Middle-earth. Indeed, readers have been perceiving Tolkien’s uncanny ability to create memorable portrayals of ecocide for decades; for example, William L. Taylor observes in his 1967 work that he found the apocalyptic, ruined landscapes in Middle-earth the most memorable (821). During the First Age wars between Morgoth and the Valar, vast environmental destruction occurs because of the toppling of the Two Lamps, the ruining of Utumno and other northern regions of Middle-earth, the felling of the Two Trees in the Blessed Realm, and the annihilation of most of Beleriand, as discussed in works like *The Silmarillion*. Indeed, Tolkien mentions in “Myths Transformed” that Morgoth wounds the entire galaxy, while the Valar endeavor to thwart Morgoth and his fallen allies in order to save as much of the world’s environment as possible, as chapter three details. Furthermore, Tolkien notes in some of his writings within *The Silmarillion*, the *Unfinished Tales*, and/or *The Appendices to The Lord of the Rings* that the Second Age witnesses the destruction of

Eregion, Eriador, the Entwives' Gardens, and Númenor because of the selfish and callous actions of Sauron, Sauron's servants, and (in the case of Númenor) morally bankrupt, un-Faithful Númenóreans. Moreover, as I discuss in chapter three, Tolkien condemns the Númenóreans' obliteration of the majority of the forests of Minhiriath and Enedwaith. Tolkien chose to continue to include environmentally devastated areas in his tales of the Third Age by featuring Sauron's ecocide. Sauron's ecocidal activities include not only his mutilation of Mordor by twisting it into a wasteland but also his directives concerning the destruction of the cities of Arnor and the perversion of Minas Ithil, Mirkwood, Lake Núrnen, the Dead Marshes, and the Morannon. Tolkien, of course, also features characters besides Sauron who commit great acts of ecocide in the Third Age, since Smaug lays waste to Erebor and Dale. To counter these ecosadists and their ecocidal acts, the Valar send Gandalf and the other Istari members as "Stewards" of Middle-earth to oppose Sauron's will to control all of Arda (*Return*, "Minas" 742). Unfortunately, Saruman mutates into an ecosadist himself and (together with his forces) endeavors to destroy Fangorn Forest and the Ents, as well as the Shire and the Hobbits. Meanwhile, as Aragorn's edicts regarding the Wild Men/Drúedain, the Hobbits, the Ents, and others make clear, Tolkien's works include passages concerning environmental justice for minorities, which means Tolkien's fantasies include passages that condemn what contemporary postcolonial critics sometimes refer to as "green imperialism" (qtd. in Mabie 287). Because the working-class Sam proves invaluable in the quest to destroy the One Ring and to save Middle-earth from Sauron and because Sam spearheads the Shire's environmental resurgence, Tolkien's works also contain some discussion of

environmental justice for the underclasses.³⁸¹

Moreover, as Buell observes, whereas the first-wave ecocritics equate the “natural environment” with only the physical environment, second-wave ecocritics realize that nature fuses with what humans create, and consequently also includes urban areas (21-23). The aforementioned descriptions of the *environment* somewhat parallel Tolkien’s description of *Faërie* in his essay “On Fairy-Stories.” According to Tolkien, “*Faërie* contains many things besides elves and [. . . other fantastical creatures]: it holds the seas, the sun, the moon, the sky; and the earth, and all things that are in it: tree and bird, water and stone, wine and bread, and ourselves, mortal men” (Tolkien, “Fairy-Stories” 38). Besides the earth’s soils and landscapes, bodies of water, flora like trees, fauna like birds, and natural entities like stones, Tolkien also includes humans (and human-like Peoples in his fantasies), as well as the food and drink that humans consume (e.g., bread and wine). Nonetheless, the definition of *environment* in Tolkien’s Middle-earth fantasies proves still more expansive by also featuring human engineering (e.g., buildings and roads) and artworks (e.g., sculptures). The fact that Tolkien details the harm that Morgoth, Sauron, Saruman, and their corrupted followers inflict on the natural world, the environments nourished by the Free Peoples, *and* the structures created by the Free Peoples, demonstrates that Tolkien’s texts do not simply resemble the “first-wave of ecocriticism,” which focuses mainly on non-human wilderness. Tolkien’s plots, instead, sometimes parallel Buell’s efforts to refer to both human-created things and non-human nature with the word “environment” (qtd. in Rigby 363). Furthermore, Tolkien’s focus on the greening of Minas Tirith and the “natural” world’s reclamation of the Númenórean roads

381. For a more thorough examination of the aforementioned topics, read chapter two.

in the Stonewain Valley within Drúadan Forest again illustrates Tolkien's interest in more than simply non-human nature "wilderness," which second-wave environmentalists should appreciate, as Buell would likely mention (22, 24). Tolkien's inclusion of the old, largely forgotten Gondorian road in disrepair in *The Return of the King* enables the opportunity for a second-wave ecocritical reading of the passage, because, according to Ghân-buri-Ghân, the former Gondorian "Road is forgotten, but not by Wild Men. Over hill and behind hill it lies still under grass and tree, there behind Rimmon and down to Dîn" ("Ride" 814). This blending of the ruined Gondorian road with the physical environment (i.e., the physical environment's progress in reclaiming the land with trees and grasses) demonstrates what ecocritics now regard as the second-wave ecocritical conviction that the boundary line between "natural" and "built" is difficult to distinguish, because, "Natural and built environments . . . are long since all mixed up" (Buell 22). Furthermore, Aragorn's greening of Minas Tirith similarly blurs the separation between *natural* and *built*, which, in turn, helps to demonstrate why urban areas are worthy of ecocritical study.³⁸²

In addition to Beren of the First Age, therefore, Tolkien provides readers with another potential environmental model: Aragorn of the Third Age of Middle-earth. While Beren retreats to a secluded area with only his family (and yet enjoys an intimate

382. Tolkien also observes how war alters landscapes; for instance, Tolkien mentions that Morgoth evilly erects a massive mound of dead Elves and Edain (i.e., the *Haudh-en-Nirnaeth*, or the *Hill of the Slain*, after the Battle of Unnumbered Tears/the Nirnaeth Arnoediad) (e.g., *Children*, "Battle" 60, "Words" 61). Similarly, Tolkien also notes that the Rohirrim and the Men of Dunland labor to erect large mounds to bury their dead after the Battle of Helm's Deep (*Two*, "Road" 532; Hammond and Scull, "*Lord*" . . . *Reader's* 419-20). Consequently, these Men use the *natural* soil to *build* hills; the nature/humanity binary, therefore, crumbles. Nonetheless, Tolkien also uses some plots that are often used within some first-wave ecocriticism, because Tolkien portrays "nurturing nature" rewarding those who behave more eco-friendly and punishing those who practice ecosadism. For example, in *The Return of the King*, Tolkien declares that "Green and long grew the grass on Snowmane's Howe, but ever black and bare was the ground where the [Witch-king's] beast was burned" ("Battle" 827).

relationship with the various members and forms of the physical environment), Aragorn fights to save Middle-earth before toiling to renew the faded cities of Minas Tirith and the long-desolate city of Annúminas in Arnor.³⁸³ Tolkien's texts, therefore, serve as precursors to the initial two waves of ecocriticism. For those willing and capable of retreating into the wilderness to improve their relationship with the flora and fauna of nature, Tolkien includes Beren, whom Tolkien self-identified with. However, for the legions of urbanite and suburbanite readers of *The Lord of the Rings*, Tolkien's fantasy provides the example of the renewed Gondor and its king, Aragorn. After the defeat of Sauron, Aragorn enlarges the number of eco-friendly zones in Minas Tirith; as a result, "[T]he City was made more fair than it had ever been, [. . .] and it was filled with trees and with fountains" to such an extent that "even the Elves" of Mirkwood "rejoiced to come there" (*Return*, "Steward" 947). Because the narrator observes that this process renders "all . . . healed and made good" (947), Tolkien's *The Return of the King* suggests that many of his urban and suburban readers should follow Aragorn's example by laboring to renew their city's landscape and atmosphere.

By better incorporating a discussion of the various "waves" of ecocriticism into Tolkien studies, this will also help to resolve some disagreements in Tolkien criticism. Jeffers's interpretation of the engineering and the attitudes of the Gondorians exhibits problems, because she privileges ideas that parallel the beliefs held by first-wave ecocritics and by Heideggerian Ecophilosophers (who, as I will subsequently discuss in

383. Since Tolkien created his mythology for England, he may derive some inspiration for Arnor from Scotland, which, even in the twentieth century, desired development because of depopulation that occurred for decades (Sheail, *Environmental* 141-43).

the next section, advocate that we should “let beings/entities be”). Because she somewhat disparages the Gondorian environmental guardianship by arguing that the Gondorians should favor paths over roads and that they should consider leaving hills alone (68-69), Jeffers’s statements parallel the writings of the first-wave ecocritics. Buell describes these ecocritics as those who equate the ““natural environment”” with ““environment,”” rather than realizing that non-human nature fuses with what humans create (21-22). In other words, Jeffers’s ideas do not adequately discuss (to borrow Buell’s words) “urban and degraded landscapes just as seriously as ‘natural’ landscapes” (22).

Jeffers (albeit perhaps unconsciously) aligns herself with first-wave ecocritics because of her questioning of the creation of roads; Jeffers bemoans the loss of the “ritual of familiarity” gained by walking on a path—an idea that she borrows from Berry’s “A Native Hill” (68-69). Such an argument ignores second-wave ecocritical scholarship that casts a skeptical eye over the notion of regaining humanity’s lost “primordial” relationship with nature, because the idea of “human” is a social construct (Buell 23). Berry’s belief, which Jeffers cites (and apparently agrees with), that paths are “not destructive” and maintain “resistance against the landscape” seems uninspired (69). The creation of paths occurs from humans and/or non-human animals repeatedly treading across the same area, killing the grass, which, in turn, results in the loss of some topsoil. With the ability to perceive the ground more clearly with the loss of grass and loose soil, travelers can *avoid* holes and tree-roots that they may not otherwise see, which is the type of result that Berry condemns in roads (qtd. in Jeffers 69).

Following this first-wave-like ideology, Jeffers expresses worry about the ability for the hill of Minas Tirith to rejuvenate once Gondor ceases to exist (68) and declares

that, by establishing a fortress-city on a hill, the Gondorians' environmental ethics approach the evils of the ecosadists: Morgoth, Sauron, Saruman, the various "Orcs," and other wicked figures³⁸⁴ (67-69). Tolkien's *Return of the King* already answers Jeffers' aforementioned concern with the reference to how the natural landscape slowly reclaims the area where the Gondorians established roads long before, because Gandalf and Butterbur describe the now-overgrown, former Arnorian cities as "wilderness" and "wild country," respectively ("Homeward" 971). Tolkien's *The Return of the King* actually alludes to the arbitrary distinction of paths and roads argued by critics like Berry and Jeffers when Ghân-buri-Ghân uses "paths" and "Road" interchangeably when he refers to the Stonewain Valley road³⁸⁵ ("Ride" 814). Ghân-buri-Ghân also references the reclamation of the road by nature, "[I]t lies still under grass and tree" (814); the narrator confirms the Wild Man's judgment by stating that the "trees had had their way with [the road], and it had vanished, broken and buried under the leaves of uncounted years" (815). Ghân-buri-Ghân implies that the Gondorians created roads with stone (814), which the

384. Tolkien's fragment *The Notion Club Papers* offers a qualification to Jeffers' analysis as well, for this work references the idea that things like buildings possess a type of aura that remains despite some modification; however, the aura is annihilated if the building is totally destroyed (*Sauron* 179-80). According to Tolkien's character Ramer,

"And if you destroy an actual house *qua* house, you also destroy, or dissipate, the special haunting. If a haunted house were pulled to pieces, it would stop being haunted, even if it were built up as accurately as possible again. Or so I think, and so-called 'psychical' research seems to bear me out. In a way analogous to life in a body. If all the king's horses and all his men had put Humpty Dumpty together again, they'd have got, well, an egg-shell."

"But you can go a long way, short of destruction, without wholly banishing atmosphere or quite laying ghosts," said Jeremy. "Bricking up windows, changing staircases, and things like that." (179-80)

As the aforementioned passage suggests, Tolkien's fantasies suggest that construction and alteration is permitted, and therefore, Minas Tirith's presence on a hill *does not* negate the hill as a hill, as Jeffers ponders (67-69). Only if the Gondorians entirely leveled the hill to create Minas Tirith or removed all of the soil to level the hill and then poured the soil on the same spot once more would the hill cease to exist as the same hill, according to Tolkien's Middle-earth *Legendarium*.

385. This interchanging of "path" and "road" to describe the stone-work of the Exiles of Númenor also applies to Arnor, as evidenced by Aragorn's discussion of Arnor and Weathertop/Amon Sûl (*Fellowship*, "Knife" 180-81).

very name *Stonewain Valley* indicates, since wains once used these Gondorian roads of stone (814). By discouraging humans from making paths/roads with natural entities like stone, Jeffers's analysis appears to classify humans as beings not wholly "natural" and to privilege grass and dirt over stone; likewise, it underemphasizes the fact that postmodern ecology observes that the natural landscape alters with or without human intervention³⁸⁶ (Garrard 58). Non-human nature, consequently, can and will overcome largely pre-industrial human impact—whether "paths" or "roads." The only major difference between "paths" and "roads" in this regard is the amount of time needed to reduce the signs of previous human activities in the area, as the physical environment overwhelms human construction.

As demonstrated by the discord between the Dark Elves and the Dwarves,³⁸⁷ Tolkien mourns the antagonism between those who feel drawn to flora like trees the most and those who prize natural entities like stones. Besides the discussion of the Noldorin Elves (who receive tutoring from Aulë and Yavanna in Valinor, and therefore possess the ability to better cherish the parts of the environment beloved by each Vala) that I mention in chapter three, Tolkien observes that the Sindarin Elves *and* the Dwarves create the

386. Furthermore, because Jeffers criticizes the Gondorians for creating stone-roads, her analysis arguably represents a biocentric bias, for stones remain a part of the non-living environment. Consequently, although I am not currently referring to Tolkien criticism about Dwarvish environmental actions, I agree with Seymour's critique of Tolkien scholarship (e.g., Dickerson and Evans's analysis). Seymour notes that too many Tolkien critics display a "biocentric" bias that marginalizes landscapes, soils, rocks, the air, the weather, and bodies of water due to a scholastic privileging of flora and fauna (30, 31).

Phrased somewhat differently, Jeffers's aforementioned comments imply *Biophilia*, or the "affection for living things" but not *Ecophilia*, or the "unconditional love for everything that exists in the place we call 'home,' both living and nonliving" (MucKusick 234). *Ecophilia*, therefore, includes the profound affection for not only soils, landscapes, flora, and fauna but also the sensory imagery produced by water, rocks, clouds, and the wind (MucKusick 234).

As discussed in this chapter and chapter two, characters in Tolkien's works (such as Goldberry and Bombadil) demonstrate that they cherish environmental entities like water, rocks, clouds, and the wind.³⁸⁷ For more information on this topic, read the sub-section concerning the Noldorin Elves, in general, and Galadriel's interaction with Gimli, in particular, in the Elvish portion of chapter two.

subterranean fortress of Menegroth out of “living stone”³⁸⁸ in *The Silmarillion* (“Quenta: Sindar” 92-93). Therefore, not only could the Elves cherish stone (as my examination of Finrod Felagund in chapter three references) but also (as the characterization of “stone” as “living” implies) Tolkien’s fantasies suggest that the Peoples (and the readers) should cherish stone, rather than marginalize it and other parts of the physical environment. Unfortunately, the Silvan Elves (and probably the even less-wise Avari Elves) often cannot comprehend such a love for and skill with stone that the Noldorin Eregion Elves display. As a result, this helps to explain why even Legolas, a Prince of Sindarin lineage but Silvan upbringing,³⁸⁹ characterizes the Noldorin as “a race strange to us of the silvan folk” in *The Fellowship of the Ring* (“Ring” 276). However, this difference among the Elves themselves and between the Silvan Elves and the Dwarves can be overcome, as the Caverns of Helm’s Deep dialogue between Legolas and Gimli demonstrates. Within these conversations in *The Lord of the Rings*, Gimli praises the sensory imagery of the stone formations and the sound of moving water in the Glittering Caves (*Two*, “Road” 534-35). Gimli’s affection for two examples of *Ecophilia* (MucKusick 234) leads Legolas, who had hitherto mainly concerned himself with living trees and other types of flora and fauna, to feel “move[d]” by the depth of Gimli’s affection for the sight and sound of

388. Importantly, this phrase appears not only in Christopher Tolkien’s edited vision of his father’s *Silmarillion* but also in Tolkien’s own hand in First Age works like *The Grey Annals*, which Tolkien began revising in 1950-51 (*War . . . Jewels* 11, 3).

Because of such phrases as “living stone” (which implies that characters and readers should respect and appreciate non-living things like rocks rather than only plants, animals, and people), I disagree with Seymour’s belief that Tolkien “demonize[s] the connection Dwarves feel to geology” and “marginalizes the Dwarves’ culture and heritage” because of Tolkien’s alleged biocentrism (30). Moreover, scientific research has proven that microbial forms of life consume rock minerals and help to create cave formations (“Mysterious”). Consequently, Tolkien’s description of stone as “living” is actually scientifically accurate in a sense.

389. Read the section concerning the Elves within chapter two for a detailed discussion concerning these topics.

water and for the sight of stone (535). Legolas' awe of the Caves solidifies and deepens, even more, when he actually visits the Caves with Gimli, which results in Legolas' inability to even articulate how incredible he finds the beauty of the stone and the dripping water within the Glittering Caves (*Return*, "Many" 956). Tolkien's Middle-earth fantasies, consequently, counsel the Peoples (and Tolkien's readers) to appreciate the sensory imagery of unshaped and shaped stone, and therefore, Jeffers's aforementioned criticism of the Gondorians' use of stone roads and stone cities (68-69) appears out-of-sync with Tolkien's Middle-earth.

Tolkien's Middle-earth fantasies also exhibit kinship with portions of the convictions held by ecocritics like Wendell Berry, as mentioned by critics like Ertsgaard.³⁹⁰ Beren's sensitivity to the animals that he encounters and his choice of diet somewhat parallels one of Wendell Berry's arguments: "To think . . . like the best humans, we are probably going to have to learn again to judge a person's intelligence . . . by the good order or *harmoniousness* of his or her surroundings. . . . 'The intelligent man, however unlearned, may be known by his surroundings, and by the care of his horse'" (192-93, emphasis added). Beren's refusal to needlessly kill or torture non-human animals, as well as their decision to aid Beren in his moments of peril, demonstrates that Beren's relationship with the physical environment (which Tolkien references in *The Silmarillion*) parallels Berry's characterization of "harmoniousness."

Meanwhile, Aldarion's insight into the poor logging practices of the Númenóreans, his choice to inspect the forests of his island-nation, and his planning and

390. Ertsgaard compares the Hobbits' agricultural society to Berry's sustainable farming model (218).

follow-through in reforesting Númenor in order to meet its future need of wood, fulfill aspects of Berry's first, second, fourth, and fifth principles concerning humanity's relationship with the physical environment³⁹¹ (195-96). However, the Númenóreans' horrific clear-cutting of the once-massive forests in Middle-earth (*Unfinished*, "History . . . Appendix D" 262-63) parallels the downfall of not following the ideas expressed by Berry's seven principles of proper land management. The wealthy Númenóreans' exploitation of forests in Middle-earth shares kinship with Berry's convictions that the land must be cared for or face destruction, that economics alone cannot prevent environmental degradation, and that successful environmental relationships depend on long-term settlements over a *limited* amount of space where people believe their heirs will live in the future (195-96).

391. According to Berry,

In our relation to the land, we are ruled by a number of terms and limits set not by anyone's preference but by nature and by human nature:

I. Land that is used will be ruined unless it is properly cared for.

II. Land cannot be properly cared for by people who do not know it intimately, who do not know how to care for it, who are not strongly motivated to care for it, and who cannot afford to care for it.

III. People cannot be adequately motivated to care for land by general principles or by incentives that are merely economic—that is, they won't care for it merely because they think they should or merely because somebody pays them.

IV. People are motivated to care for land to the extent that their interest in it is direct, dependable, and permanent.

V. They will be motivated to care for the land if they can reasonably expect to live on it as long as they live. They will be more strongly motivated if they can reasonably expect that their children and grandchildren will live on it as long as they live. In other words, there must be a mutuality of belonging: they must feel that the land belongs to them, that they belong to it, and that this belonging is a settled and unthreatened fact.

VI. But such belonging must be appropriately limited. This is the indispensable qualification of the idea of land ownership. It is well understood that ownership is an incentive to care. But there is a limit to how much land can be owned before an owner is unable to take proper care of it. The need for attention increases with the intensity of use. But the *quality* of attention decreases as acreage increases.

VII. A nation will destroy its land and therefore itself if it does not foster in every possible way the sort of thrifty, prosperous, permanent rural households and communities that have the desire, the skills, and the means to care properly for the land they are using. (195-96)

Because the Khazad-dûm Dwarves know their subterranean dwelling well, often earn their living by mining or related labors, and live in (and plan to continue to remain in) a permanent domain that they inhabit for generations, these Dwarves represent fantastic exceptions to Berry's second, fourth, and fifth principles regarding humanity's relationship with the physical environment. The Dwarves of Khazad-dûm also show why Berry notes that people will destroy a land without appropriate stewardship (especially if their lands are not limited) (195-96), because the Dwarves choose to mine until forced to stop because of the unearthing of the Balrog. Berry's ideal rural caretakers of the environment, meanwhile, can also fail to find a parallel in Dwarvish culture, because Thorin underappreciates Hobbits because of their farming occupation to such an extent that Gandalf wants Bilbo on the Erebor quest, in part, to prove Thorin wrong (Berry 196; *Annotated*, "Quest" 371).

Aragorn's environmental policies concerning the Wild Men, the Ents, the Hobbits, and others also parallel the principles of Berry. Aragorn enables groups like the Wild Men, the Ents, and the Hobbits, to continue to live in the lands that they have long inhabited unhindered by outsiders. Because these groups know that they and their descendants (or, in the case of the Ents, their trees) will continue to possess their ancestral lands without foreign interlopers from Gondor and elsewhere, these Peoples may be even more likely to keep their lands fertile.³⁹² Moreover, by granting only certain

392. Diego Azqueta and Gonzalo Delacamara contend that *extended anthropocentrism* must include the idea that subsequent, not-yet-born generations of humans possess the inalienable right to use the earth's natural resources, and therefore, each generation should endeavor to preserve the overall well-being of the environment for those who come afterward (525). I contend that Aragorn's edicts, in particular, and the messages of Tolkien's works (which urge the "respectful" and "thankful" use of environmental resources), in general, parallel this aspect of the aforementioned characterization that Azqueta and Delacamara discuss.

Minas Tirith, during Aragorn's reign, somewhat parallels Ernest Callenbach's *ecotopia*, which McKusick defines as, "[A] place where people can live in harmony with their environment by using appropriate human-scale technology to create an urban dwelling place that nourishes the creative spirit of

sections of land to each group, Aragorn's behavior alludes to the idea that successful environmental guardianship necessitates a limited amount of land ownership.

Tolkien's depictions of the sacking of the various Elvish realms in Beleriand by Morgoth's forces, of the obliteration of Númenor's woods, of the destruction of large swaths of Eriador, of the annihilation of the Entwives' Gardens at Sauron's direction, and of Saruman's work to degrade Fangorn Forest and the Shire each represent fantastic parallels to another argument posed by Berry.³⁹³ According to Berry, "There is [. . .] no distinction between the fate of the land and [. . .] the people. When one is abused, the other suffers" (qtd. in Wulf, *Invention* 398). When Morgoth kills, enslaves, and/or tortures the Elves, their former lands quickly fall into ruin, while the Gardens of the Entwives, whom Sauron enslaved/murdered/exiled, devolve into the Brown Lands. If given sufficient time, doubtlessly, Saruman would have imposed such irrevocable damage on Fangorn Forest and the Ents, as well as on the Shire and the Hobbits.

Tolkien, therefore, provides readers with a variety of environmental lessons that can and should hearten those with eco-friendly consciences. Not only should Tolkien's characters and readers avoid the selfish and callous ecocidal behaviors and attitudes of Tolkien's antagonists but Tolkien's characters and readers should also labor to continue to improve his/her/their environmental ethics. While Tolkien's Middle-earth texts observe how morally reprehensible it is to glory in the act of inflicting pain on other sentient beings, Tolkien's works exhort protagonists and readers alike to value the

all residents," and thereby avoids the irrational *ecophobia* that leads to a host of environmental problems (238).

393. Dickerson and Evans observe that Tolkien's works parallel many of Berry's principles as well. For example, they note that Saruman's poor industrial practices and Sauron's Mordor demonstrate why Berry questions agricultural technology, as well as the truth of Berry's second, fourth, fifth, and seventh points (e.g., 248, qtd. in 191-92).

inherent worth and well-being of other humans (or human-like beings in Tolkien's Middle-earth), fauna, flora, landscapes, waters, rocks, soils, the air, and celestial bodies. Animal welfarism, biocentrism, and biophilia³⁹⁴ all prove superior to ecosadism and the results caused by the delusionary belief in the "progress" of unregulated industrialization. Tolkien's texts teach that the Free Peoples become better environmental guardians by maintaining or improving the well-being of the physical environment and by learning to appreciate the beauty of the whole environment: created artifacts, plants, animals, various bodies of water, stalactites, stalagmites, and the sensory imagery of wilderness, rural, and urban landscapes.

4.2. The Wood between the Worlds: Tolkien's Middle-earth Fantasies as Precursors to Contemporary Ecophilosophies

Akin, to some extent, to the tree-filled wood that hosts portal-pools to other lands in the Wood between the Worlds in C.S. Lewis' *The Magician's Nephew* (31-40), Tolkien's fantasies act as portals that foreshadow some of the subsequent contemporary ecophilosophies. Tolkien's Middle-earth fantasies, for example, share some kinship with the ecophilosophy Moderate Environmentalism, which accepts the idea that humans can and should responsibly tap natural resources (e.g., Garrard 18-21). Aulë and Manwë's statements to Yavanna that inform her that the Children of Ilúvatar must responsibly and graciously use environmental resources parallel the aforementioned description of Moderate Environmentalism. Moreover, the Valar's focus on fighting Morgoth to save as many Children and as much of Middle-earth as possible for the Children again exhibits

394. E.O. Wilson popularized the term *biophilia* (qtd. in Li 14).

the human-centeredness (or human-like, in Tolkien's mythology) of Moderate Environmentalism.³⁹⁵ Gandalf uses resources like trees, for example, when confronted with the uncanny wolves in *The Fellowship of the Ring* ("Journey" 291); as Campbell observes (271-72, 272n), the trees appear to willingly sacrifice themselves³⁹⁶ to save superior beings (i.e., the nine members of the Fellowship). Most of the Peoples (albeit to various levels) borrow from the environment to survive and to create artifacts that please their culture's sense of aesthetics. While the Elves sometimes delve fortresses (i.e., Menegroth, Nargothrond, and Thranduil's Mirkwood realm) for protection, they also create powerful cities and towers like those found in Gondolin and in Ost-in-Edhil, or they build dwellings amid the trees like those located in Lothlórien. While the Teleri Elves fell trees to build ships, the Noldorin Elves repurpose natural resources for such things as creating roads, forming the Silmarils, and fashioning the Rings of Power. In addition to carving-out powerful defensive subterranean fortresses for themselves (and sometimes for others, such as the Elves), the Dwarves also create/shape artifacts, such as the Arkenstone. Besides building houses or digging-out Hobbit holes, the Hobbits use natural resources for extracurricular activities like smoking pipe-weed.³⁹⁷ Men, meanwhile, also borrow from the environment to survive in a variety of ways. Besides laboring to establish stone fortress-cities and roads (e.g., Minas Tirith in Gondor), for instance, Men also cultivate trees for their fruit in places like Gondor, as Borlas acknowledges to Saelon in *The New Shadow* (*Peoples* 414). Men, of course also use

395. Nonetheless, as I discuss elsewhere, Tolkien modifies this sentiment by mentioning that saving just the physical environment would still prove beneficial, even without saving the Children themselves.

396. Because the fire that consumes the trees appears like "a leaf and bloom" (*Fellowship*, "Journey" 291), I believe that this suggests that the trees sacrifice not only themselves (i.e., *leaf*) but also the future trees that would otherwise descend from their seeds (i.e., *bloom*).

397. I examine the previously referenced points in this paragraph in more detail in chapter three.

environmental resources to create artifacts like statues and fountains, while other Men, such as Aldarion, focus on creating and maintaining tree-farms to satisfy their desire to build ships and explore the seas and distant lands (*Unfinished*, “Aldarion” 177, 181-82). By promoting responsible, human-centered environmental guardianship, Tolkien encourages environmental work, albeit labor that requires the rejection of selfishness and sins that often contribute to selfishness like callousness and ignorance.

Tolkien’s Middle-earth fantasies also often note that the spirits and the Free Peoples should enjoy the physical environment’s sensory imagery (e.g., Garrard 18-19). From the era of the First Age of Middle-earth when he lives in Valinor, Gandalf’s environmental ethics parallels Moderate Environmentalism’s appreciation of nature (Garrard 18-19), since he often lives in the gardens of Lórien/Irmo and finds joy in the sights and sounds of the physical environment in *The Silmarillion* (“Valaquentia” 30-31). In *The Fellowship of the Ring*, Gandalf demonstrates his love for Middle-earth’s environment by spending time smoking within view of a garden of flowers (“Long-Expected” 25), by speaking with others (e.g., even Gollum) about aspects of the environment like grasses, trees, and the wind (“Shadow” 53), and by riding horses (e.g., “Council” 256). Because Bombadil loves skipping, walking, and singing in the Old Forest and because he encourages the Hobbits to “Run naked on the grass” after their encounter with the Barrow-wight (“Old” 117-18, “Fog” 140), Bombadil’s environmental ethics can parallel Moderate Environmentalism’s promotion of rural areas and hiking (Garrard 18-19). Meanwhile, Goldberry repeatedly illustrates her love of the natural world through her singing about reeds, lilies, water, heather, hills, the wind, rain, clouds, mist, pools, the Moon, the Sun, the stars, and the sky (“Old” 120, “House” 123, 129, 130,

“Fog” 133). Furthermore, she lives beside (and likely works in) flower gardens and vegetable gardens; she also enjoys the outdoors during the rain (“House” 126, 127). The Hobbits’ and Men of Bree’s cultural custom of using floral/botanical names for their children also parallels the Moderate Environmentalist love of nature (e.g., “At” 152). Likewise, Rían of the Edain similarly finds happiness when she sees natural entities (such as flowers and trees) (*Children*, “Childhood” 34). The Third Age “Misty Mountains” song of the Erebor Dwarves in *The Hobbit* also demonstrates an interest in the physical environment (e.g., trees, daylight, winds, the Moon, caves, waterfalls, and mountains), as demonstrated by the song’s title, by the song’s lyrics, and by the images that the song conjures in Bilbo’s mind (“Unexpected” 14-16). Finally, Éowyn and Faramir recover, in part, because they feel joy when they walk in the garden of Minas Tirith (*Return*, “Steward” 940). Tolkien’s texts, therefore, parallel Moderate Environmentalism by encouraging readers to reduce their environmental callousness and to better appreciate the physical environment’s beautiful and sublime sensory imagery.

Because Tolkien’s fantasies celebrate the flora, fauna, soils, waters, landscapes, and air of Middle-earth, it follows that Tolkien’s Middle-earth texts also display a Moderate/Reform Environmentalist-like concern for how and why the Peoples tap natural resources and the results of this use (e.g., Garrard 18-19; Katz, Light, and Rothenberg, “Introduction” ix). As such, Tolkien’s works often discuss various environmental problems, such as excessive logging. Besides detailing the problems caused by Aldarion’s and the Númenóreans’ overharvesting of trees in multiple works within the *Unfinished Tales*, Tolkien features Bombadil’s references to the extreme reduction of the size of the Old Forest (*Fellowship*, “House” 127-28), as well as Treebeard’s sorrowful

reflection concerning Middle-earth's shrinking forest areas in *The Lord of the Rings*. Furthermore, *The Silmarillion*, "Myths Transformed," *Unfinished Tales*, *The Hobbit*, and *The Lord of the Rings* all repeatedly mention that Morgoth, Sauron, and/or Saruman harm the fauna, flora, landscapes, waters, soils, and air of Middle-earth (and beyond, in the case of Morgoth).

Tolkien's works also parallel Moderate Environmentalism by emphasizing how individuals can contribute to improving the physical environment's well-being, yet Tolkien's Middle-earth fantasies usually emphasize that these influential figures are a People's/nation's political leaders (e.g., Garrard 18-19). Consequently, Tolkien's fantasies also emphasize that government action is often necessary to improve the environment, as Moderate Environmentalists also suggest (e.g., Garrard 18-19). For example, once king of Gondor and Arnor, Aragorn issues many edicts/statements concerning the environment, including those related to the greening of Minas Tirith, the preservation of lands like the Shire, and a desire to see the expansion of Fangorn Forest (and the Ents' numbers).

Yoram Levy and Marcel Wissenburg would also likely describe passages within Tolkien's works as similar to writings by Moderate Environmentalists, for Levy and Wissenburg state that these works argue that humanity should safeguard environmental resources for "humans, [as well as] sometimes [. . .] future humans and [. . .] other sentient creatures" (193). Tolkien's texts certainly emphasize the need to preserve the physical environment for future humans (and other Peoples), as well as for non-human nature, albeit perhaps especially for trees, bears, horses, dogs, and the Eagles. For example, in *The Silmarillion*, the Valar (according to Manwë) must fight Morgoth, "at

whatsoever [environmental] cost, and deliver the Quendi [Elves] from the shadow of Melkor,” even though this means, as some of the Valar (e.g., Aulë) understand, that Middle-earth “must” endure many “hurts” in the process (“Quenta: Coming . . . Elves” 50-51). Similarly, Frodo suffers multiple wounds (physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual) in his quest “to save the Shire,” his homeland, for his fellow Hobbits and for future generations of Hobbits (*Return*, “Grey” 1006). While doing so, Frodo’s Shire (and many other environments) suffers degradation, as a result of the actions of ecosadists, although the ecosadists are eventually defeated and many of the lands, like the Shire, are repaired.

Despite their differences with Moderate Environmentalists,³⁹⁸ Deep Ecologists also teach environmental ideas that sometimes generally correspond with environmental messages within Tolkien’s texts, such as an emphasis on valuing not only local environments but also the global non-human environment. In *The Silmarillion*, Tolkien includes Manwë’s acknowledgement of the environmental “cost” of fighting Morgoth and the sorrow of Aulë, whose “foreboding [of] the hurts of the world that must come of that strife [with Morgoth]” occurs shortly before the Valar defeat Morgoth in the war that destroys Utumno and other areas in northern Middle-earth (“Quenta: Coming . . . Elves” 50-51). Because the eco-minded Yavanna sanctifies war as a means to save most of nature³⁹⁹ (“Quenta: Aulë” 45-46), Tolkien’s works discuss the possibility of long-term

398. Deep Ecologists, for example, marginalize Moderate Environmentalism by labeling it “shallow,” merely “moderate,” or only “reform environmentalism” that addresses the symptoms of (rather than the more important roots of) environmental problems (Katz, Light, and Rothenberg “Introduction” ix).

399. Yavanna emphasizes this desire even more clearly when she requests the creation of the Ents so that they might righteously condemn any beings who willfully harm the environment (*Silmarillion*, “Quenta: Aulë” 45-46).

global environmental gains caused by fighting a war that results in environmental devastation for a specific area. Aulë and Yavanna's concerns for the environment as a whole, consequently, extend beyond something like those of reform/moderate environmentalists; rather, their values parallel Deep Ecology, because (to borrow the phraseology of Deep Ecology) they "take seriously the concerns, interests, [and] value of the [whole] nonhuman natural world" (Katz, Light, and Rothenberg, "Introduction" ix). As one of the Valar's Maiar representatives (and the only one entirely faithful), Gandalf mirrors the Valar's global concern for Arda, although Gandalf follows the Valar's example in their wars with Morgoth for Utumno and Beleriand by concentrating on a specific region (i.e., northwestern Middle-earth) to thwart Sauron's ecocidal behavior, as I discuss in chapter two. Similarly, during his argument with Saelon within the *New Shadow* fragment, Borlas condemns Saelon's decision to pick unripe fruit on purpose, since the action disregards the effect of the selfish and callous deed on the rest of the environment.⁴⁰⁰ Borlas' logic parallels Deep-Ecology's advocacy that humans should think about and maintain the environment as a whole.

While Deep Ecologists believe that humans should maintain a global environmental perspective, Deep Ecologists realize the importance of individuals, which is why they encourage the processes of "self-realization" and "identification" with the environment to improve each person's individual environmental ethics (i.e., "personal ecosophy" or personal ecophilosophy) (e.g., Katz, Light, and Rothenberg xiv-xv; Katz 25). Interestingly, Tolkien's fantasies include passages that express ideas similar to these Deep Ecological theories. Within *The Fellowship of the Ring*, Bombadil's songs and tales

400. I discuss each of the aforementioned points in detail in chapter three.

of the Old Forest and Goldberry's songs about various bodies of water and hills help to broaden the environmental perspectives of the Four Hobbits (e.g., "House" 127-30). Meanwhile, Frodo's experience with the trees of Lothlórien in *The Fellowship of the Ring* also parallels the aforementioned Deep Ecological tenets, since Frodo senses "a tree's skin and of the life within it" and realizes "a delight in wood and the touch of it, neither as forester nor as carpenter; it was the delight of the living tree itself"⁴⁰¹ ("Lothlórien" 342). According to Naess, Deep Ecologists desire "not a shift of caring away from humans and toward non-humans, but rather an extension and deepening of overall caring. It is unwarranted to assume that the human potential for caring is constant and finite, and that an increase of caring for some creatures necessarily reduces caring for others" ("Deep . . . Century" 466). Tolkien's Middle-earth fantasies teach a similar message to the one championed by Naess and other Deep Ecologists.

Similarly, the Hobbits' and the Men of Bree's cultural custom of using environmental names for their children shows that these communities can also embrace an ecophilosophy similar to Deep Ecology's "identification" with nature. Likewise, when other Peoples, such as the Elves, adopt and use names inspired by nature, these cultural customs also suggest their identification with nature.⁴⁰² Partially because of the positives

401. Frodo's experience with the tree parallels what Norton calls "transformative value." According to Norton, "I say that an object has 'transformative value, as opposed to demand value, if it provides an occasion for examining or altering a felt preference rather than simply satisfying it" (*Why* 10). Such passages, therefore, help to reinforce the message of non-consumerism within Tolkien's texts and Deep Ecological writings, as I will subsequently discuss.

William Reddy, moreover, argues that we use *self-exploring* emotional diction to refer to a feeling that results from seeing the non-human environment, which causes us to ponder our beliefs in a *self-altering* phase that agrees with or critiques the aforementioned emotional diction used to describe the sentiment caused by experiencing the environment's sensory imagery (qtd. in Ottum and Reno 14). Months after Frodo feels the life and worth of the tree, he writes his memoir about the War of the Ring; because of this process, his reflections enhance his *self-altering* phase.

402. For more information concerning these eco-inspired names, read chapter three concerning the environmental practices and beliefs of the Peoples of Middle-earth.

gained when a person/group experiences identification with the environment, my views differ from Jeffers's beliefs regarding environmental symbolism. Environmental symbolism serves as one example of the breakdown of the "power with" and "power from" nature groups in Jeffers's hierarchical analysis of Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*. While Jeffers criticizes the Gondorians' use of the White Tree as a national symbol⁴⁰³ (71-73), she bypasses the fact that pipe-weed serves as the symbol of the Hobbits, that the Mallorn tree symbolizes the Elves of the Golden Wood, that the Mirkwood Elves are called "the People of the Wood," and that the Ents are referred to as "the Shepherds of the Trees." Because each of the aforementioned Peoples, whom Jeffers characterizes as superior environmental "power with" groups when compared to the Gondorians, also use environmental symbolism to allude to, to reinforce, and to expand their affection for certain aspects of the environment, the Gondorians can also use symbols to identify with the environment (i.e., trees) in a positive manner.

Living simpler lives as individuals and as a community are two possible environmental improvements, according to Tolkien's texts and Deep Ecological writings. Within his work *Defending Middle-earth: Tolkien, Myth, and Modernity*, Curry observes that "In sharp contrast to our possessive individualism, the hobbits are intensely communal—*The Lord of the Rings* rarely follows the story of less than two together—and live in a relatively simple and frugal way. Rediscovering the difference between

403. Similar to how the renewing of the Shire features the replanting of trees (such as the Mallorn from Galadriel), the planting of the White Tree signals Gondor's renaissance, as critics like Petty note as well (239-40). These acts, therefore, parallel the historical tradition of planting trees to symbolize a new era and endurance in a manner akin to the actions of Repton and other English gardeners (Wulf and Gieben Gamal 205-06). Indeed, by planting more trees in Gondor and in the Shire following the defeat of the machine-mad and -violent Sauron and Saruman, respectively, the Gondorians and the Hobbits act as Ruskin encourages earthly humans to behave (i.e., rehabilitate the soils, waters, air, and landscapes harmed by industry and by urban sprawl) (94).

quality of life and standard of living, something hobbits have never forgotten, is becoming urgent” (40). In the view of Taylor, meanwhile, “Increasingly, social movements are becoming ecologized, recognizing that growth and industrialization are illusions of prosperity offered by elites to keep ordinary people from defending and promoting appropriate and sustainable alternatives” (“Deep” 279). The fact that the Hobbits return to family-focused agriculture after the overthrow of Saruman and the Ruffians parallels Naess’s fourteenth general description of Deep Ecology in Scandinavia: “Appreciation of, or participation in, primary production—small-scale agriculture, forestry, [and] fishing” (“Deep . . . Lifestyle” 260). Farmer Cotton certainly perceives the fraudulent claim that the polluting, useless new mill represents a superior version of the old mill. By rejecting the crude, inefficient, and counterproductive new mill, Hobbits like Farmer Cotton parallel Naess’s first and fifth generalities concerning Deep Ecology in Scandinavia. Naess’s generalities encourage humanity to “Avoi[d . . .] unnecessary complicated means to reach a goal” by refusing a lifestyle “‘of novophilia’—the love of what is new merely, because it is new,” and instead, “Cherishing the old and well-worn things” (260). The Shire Hobbit community’s general refusal, moreover, to embrace the new mill simply because of its age parallels some other aspects of Hobbit culture as well. Frodo, for instance, chooses to reuse the furniture of Bilbo, rather than opting to refit Bag End with his own new furniture, a method that he continues when he briefly relocates to Crickhollow before leaving the Shire through the Old Forest (*Fellowship*, “Conspiracy” 98). As Tolkien mentions in “The Prologue” to *The Lord of the Rings*, moreover, the trait of living in the homes of their ancestors was common among many Hobbit families (7). Naess’s fifteenth summary of Deep Ecology

in Scandinavia similarly notes that adherents of this type of ecophilosophy, “Resis[t] the urge to ‘go shopping’ as a diversion or therapy” by “Reducing the sheer number of possessions [and by] favoring the old, much-worn, but essentially well-kept things” (“Deep. . . Lifestyle” 260).

Tolkien’s Middle-earth fantasies sometimes parallel the first point of the 1984 Deep Ecology Platform: “The flourishing of human and non-human life on Earth has intrinsic value. The value of non-human life forms is independent of the usefulness these may have for narrow human purposes” (Katz, Light, and Rothenberg xiv-xv; Garrard 32). Within *The Silmarillion*, for instance, Aulë tells Yavanna that her creations of fauna and the flora “have worth in themselves, and would have worth in themselves if no Children were to come” (“Quenta: Aulë” 45). While speaking to Manwë shortly thereafter, Yavanna declares that “All,” (i.e., the fauna (i.e., *kelvar*) and the flora (i.e., *olvar*)) “have their worth [. . .] and each contributes to the worth of the others” (45). Taken together with the aforementioned quote from Aulë, these statements parallel the aforementioned Deep Ecological tenet. Bombadil’s Old Forest songs and tales in *The Fellowship of the Ring*, likewise, teach the Hobbits about the intrinsic worth of the Old Forest’s physical environment by instructing the Hobbits to perceive the Old Forest “apart from themselves” (“House” 127). In other words, the Hobbits now possess some ability to appreciate and to understand the Old Forest without mentally connecting the landscape to—or automatically associating the landscape with—Hobbit interests. Furthermore, Tolkien makes a similar point during his *Aldarion and Erendis* fragment. Because Aldarion learns to perceive how “beautiful” a tree is “in itself” (*Unfinished*, “Aldarion” 201), Aldarion’s epiphany parallels the aforementioned nineteenth trait of Naess’s

Scandinavian Deep Ecology, even though Aldarion's previous logging methods and tree-farms do not. According to Naess, humanity should "Never use life-forms merely as means"; instead, we should, "Remain conscious of their intrinsic value and dignity even when using them as resources" ("Deep . . . Lifestyle" 260).

Besides perceiving the inherent worth of nature, Gandalf's ecophilosophical stance also parallels the Deep Ecological belief that we should sense the worth of non-animals in the natural world when he mourns the loss of the two trees beside the doors leading into the Mines of Moria in *The Fellowship of the Ring* ("Journey" 301; Garrard 22). Gandalf's environmental ethics again parallel the aforementioned Deep Ecological belief when he acknowledges the worth of non-human animals, since he considers quality care of animals as part of the reason why the Gondorians fit the description of "good and wise folk" (Garrard 32; *Return*, "Minas" 743). The Deep Ecological belief that the natural world maintains its worth no matter the condition of certain human civilizations parallels Gandalf's conversation with Denethor when the wizard arrives at Minas Tirith shortly before Sauron's armies lay siege to the city during the War of the Ring (Garrard 21; 32). According to Gandalf, "[A]ll worthy things that are in peril as the world now stands, those are my care. And for my part, I shall not wholly fail of my task, though Gondor should perish, if anything passes through this night that can still grow fair or bear fruit and flower again in the days to come" (*Return*, "Minas" 742). Gandalf, therefore, maintains an environmentally holistic view of Middle-earth, a stance that Deep Ecologists encourage humans to adopt in our own world.

Deep Ecological writings and Tolkien's fantasies also parallel one another, because both reinforce the message that the physical environment has intrinsic/inherent

worth by teaching readers to adopt an “egalitarian attitude” toward the non-human environment, in general. In *The Fellowship of the Ring*, Bombadil wishes to assist the Hobbits by instructing them how to better value the Old Forest by singing about the creatures, flowers, and trees that call the area “home” (“House” 127-28). G. Sessions would likely agree that Bombadil's songs embody an important aspect of the ecocritical philosophy of Deep Ecology, because the ecophilosophy focuses on “encouraging an egalitarian attitude on the part of humans not only toward all *members* of the ecosphere, but even toward all identifiable *entities* or *forms* in the ecosphere. Thus, this attitude is intended to extend, for example, to such entities (or forms) as rivers, landscapes, and even species and social systems considered in their own right” (qtd. in Garrard 22).

Goldberry’s discussion about Bombadil's refusal to own the Old Forest and her characterization of the Old Forest’s animals and plants seems akin to an egalitarian-like spirit as well, for Goldberry declares that “The trees and the grasses and all things growing or living in the land belong each to themselves” (*Fellowship*, “House” 122). Goldberry, therefore, suggests that not only Hobbits (and the other Peoples) deserve respect but also the rest of the physical environment, and consequently, the Hobbits’ environmental attitude should alter. Within *The Hobbit*, the narrator mentions that Bilbo’s environmental ethics positively evolve, since he ceases his boyhood habit of callously “throwing stones at things, until rabbits and squirrels, and even birds, got out of his way as quick as lightning if they saw him stoop” to only throwing things like darts during games⁴⁰⁴ (“Flies” 144). Just as Bilbo should not hurl rocks at other Hobbits to pass

404. Nonetheless, because the Hobbits toss stones at animals not owned by the Hobbits that approach or enter their property (*Fellowship* 6), Deep Ecologists like Naess would condemn this cultural practice among the Hobbits. After all, Naess advises that “When there is a conflict between the interests of dogs and

the time, Tolkien's works advocate that Bilbo (and readers) should refrain from cavalierly killing, harming, or distressing animals simply to pass the time.

To foster and then maintain an egalitarian attitude toward the non-human environment, Tolkien's texts and the writings of Deep Ecology each emphasize the need to "listen"⁴⁰⁵ to the environment, which means that characters (and readers) must practice *ecocentrism* rather than only *biocentrism* by aiming to protect biodiversity *and* the physical environment's overall well-being. Goldberry's quiet teaching through music and brief statements in *The Fellowship of the Ring* arguably leads the Hobbits to value not only flora and fauna but also the waters and lands to the west, south, north, and east of the Old Forest ("Old" 119-20, "House" 121-22, 130). If one agrees with this theory, this passage in Tolkien's work parallels Deep Ecology's rejection of *biocentrism*, which values only "living" things rather than things like landscapes and rivers (Katz 19-20; Garrard 32), in favor of *ecocentrism*, which argues that "entire systems are [. . .] valuable," as opposed to only "individual humans or individual natural entities" (Katz, Light, and Rothenberg xiii). Bombadil's songs and stories about the Old Forest's and the surrounding area's animals, trees, waterfalls, pebbles, rocks, flowers, grasses, clefts, mounds, hills, and hollows in *The Fellowship of the Ring* ("House" 127-28), moreover, also teaches the Hobbits to value the whole environment. Tolkien invests a significant amount of time reinforcing the message that water inherently possesses beauty and worth.

cats (and other pet animals) and wild species, [we should adopt] a tendency to protect the latter" ("Deep . . . Lifestyle" 260).

405. To "listen" to the environment adequately, Deep Ecologists embrace mysticism (e.g., Garrard 18-22, 28). As I discuss elsewhere, many of the eco-minded characters/Peoples can speak to non-human animals or plants, such as Gandalf, Bombadil, the Elves, the Ents, and the Entwives. Even some Men in Tolkien's texts exhibit such fantastic skills, such as the righteous, early Númenóreans, who could communicate with horses through telepathy, according to a minor Tolkien fragment (*Unfinished*, "Description" 169).

This helps to explain why Goldberry routinely sings about various forms of water, why the Elves cherish the sound of water from the time the Elves first awaken, why Gimli recalls his awe at the sound of subterranean water slowly dripping into pools, why the Rohirrim and the Ents disapprove of Saruman's damming of the Isen, and why the Hobbits denounce the pollution of the Shire's rivers. By including Peoples that feel specifically drawn to particular aspects of the environment,⁴⁰⁶ Tolkien's texts encourage readers not to model one's behavior entirely off one of the Peoples but to synthesize the Peoples' environmental interests. Even if one's sense of environmental aesthetics differs from another's views, we should recall that this is healthy and can lead to a fruitful dialogue that can broaden the environmental interests of all involved; in other words, I agree with Denekamp that environmental ethics should welcome "ecological diversity" (2). Consequently, I agree with critics like Simonson (ii) and Ertsgaard (211-12), who note that Tolkien's fantasies feature multiple net-positive (as well as net-negative and net-neutral) environmental perspectives, including many non-human worldviews.⁴⁰⁷ Similarly, I believe that Seymour is correct when she declares that "The multi-dimensionality of nature in Middle-earth allows for alternative interpretations of beauty and goodness, and this can lead to intriguing examinations of differences and philosophy" (46).

While Tolkien's works and Deep Ecological texts each teach that it is natural to feel drawn to certain species of flora, fauna, landscapes, waters, and other parts of the

406. Examples of this include the following: the Silvan Elves toward trees; the Ents toward large, "wild" trees; the Entwives toward small trees and herbs; the Hobbits toward crops and flowers; and the Dwarves toward stones, stalagmites, and stalactites.

407. Nonetheless, I do not entirely agree with Denekamp's description of the Elves and the Ents as the only representatives of *biocentrism* and *ecocentrism* in Middle-earth, respectively, and as the only beings who yearn to conserve trees (11, 25).

physical environment, both canons instruct readers to realize that their own personal feelings are not universal. Tolkien and Deep Ecologists teach that, just because one feels special kinship with an oak tree, this does *not* mean that other types of trees are less important. Because Yavanna feels a special connection for her “dear” trees in *The Silmarillion* (“Quenta: Aulë” 45-46), Yavanna’s sentiment also partially parallels the beliefs of some Deep Ecologists. According to Naess, “Each tree has a different life experience from birth [. . .] Each tree is a mighty presentation of the drama of life. To some you feel near, others you feel further from” (“Metaphysics” 247). The Ents and the Entwives, meanwhile, select certain kinds of natural entities/forms (e.g., certain kinds of tree species) to study and to love (*Two*, “Treebeard” 464-66). Sadly, rather than perceiving their own biases and learning more about the physical environment from one another, the Ents and Entwives vie for whose “land is best” prior to the destruction/enslavement/disappearance of the Entwives (466). Fortunately, unlike the Ents and the Entwives of another era, Legolas and Gimli learn to understand more about the physical environment by talking to one another about why they especially love certain environmental forms/entities (*Two*, “Road” 534-35; *Return*, “Many” 956).

By extending Naess’s aforementioned Deep Ecological principle about trees to the rest of the physical environment (“Metaphysics” 247), positive environmentalism can stem from developing one’s love for a particular environmental form/being and broadening this interest/devotion to include others as well. This idea contrasts with Jeffers’s analysis of Tolkien’s *The Lord of the Rings*. Jeffers cites Gimli’s statement that the rock under Helm’s Deep “is more to my liking” as evidence that the stony land of Rohan “encourages” the Dwarf, as he prepares to fight Saruman’s forces, and therefore,

this statement contributes to why the Dwarves fall within the dubious category of beings who seize “power from” their environment (53). Nevertheless, despite Jeffers’s aforementioned reading, the environment affects the temperaments of all of the Free Peoples of Middle-earth. *The Lord of the Rings* narrator notes that the sight of the Brown Lands affects all of the Fellowship, which includes an Elf, a Dwarf, two Men, and four Hobbits (*Fellowship*, “Lothlórien” 332, “Great” 372); likewise, all of the Fellowship members find solace and relief while recouping in the woods of Lothlórien (“Mirror” 349). The Ents, of course, emotionally respond to the deaths of their trees with deep sorrow and (eventually) violent, righteous wrath (*Two*, “Treebeard” 463, 472, 475, “Flotsam” 554-57). I, therefore, disagree with Jeffers’ decision to distinguish the Peoples from one another based on whether or not a landscape “encourages” one of Tolkien’s characters. Instead, I examine how well each People resist selfishness and the roots of selfishness (e.g., callousness, laziness, and ignorance) in environmental matters, and I note that positive environmental behaviors and beliefs can start from or include an intense love for certain aspects of the environment rather than necessarily deserving some demerits, as Jeffers appears to contend.

Both the Middle-earth fantasies of Tolkien and the writings of Deep Ecologists emphasize the need for environmentalists of various kinds to co-exist, to discuss ideas, and to discover how they can work together in a productive manner. In his work “Deep Ecology and Lifestyle,” Naess writes that Scandinavian Deep Ecology favors the “Appreciation of ethnic and cultural differences among people, not feeling them as threats [. . . and] of lifestyles which are universalizable, which are not blatantly impossible to sustain without injustice toward fellow humans or other species” (260).

Although problems arise between and among the Free Peoples, their various alliances against Morgoth, Sauron, and Saruman imply environmental, social, and cultural messages akin to Naess's aforementioned points. Indeed, Tolkien's texts imply an "appreciation" of the various "ethnic and cultural differences" within and among the Free Peoples, for some of the Peoples and their environmental guardianship models are the focus in certain tales. For example, the Elves and the Edain are the focus in *The Silmarillion*; the Dwarves and the Hobbits are the focus in *The Hobbit*; Men, the Hobbits, and the Ents⁴⁰⁸ are the focus in *The Lord of the Rings*. The increasing understanding between Legolas and Gimli and Aragorn's pronouncements that guarantee groups like the Hobbits, the Ents, and the Wild Men may continue to live in their homelands with little-to-no demands from Gondor also parallels the aforementioned Deep Ecological ideas. After all, Aragorn appreciates the cultural differences and views of these other Peoples and groups of Men by enacting such policies. Because the Four Hobbits, Gimli, Legolas, and the Ents each develop greater appreciation for the environmental views of other Peoples, as they battle ecosadists, Tolkien's fantasies generally parallel the Deep Ecological conviction that "Social action comes later, when individuals, with their own ecosophies [i.e. ecophilosophies], get together to change things" (Katz, Light, and Rothenberg xii-xiii).

408. Treebeard and the singing Ents' march toward what Treebeard (albeit incorrectly) believes will prove the "doom" of the Ents (*Two*, "Treebeard" 474-75) parallels a Deep Ecological passage. Within his "Metaphysics of the Treeline," Naess observes that "Swayed by the wind, large *trees move* in slow rhythms, and the music can have the heartbreaking feel of a *funeral march*. Or they may *express slowly* something like, '*doomed, doomed, doomed*'" (47, emphasis added). Naess's characterization uncannily parallels the movement and speech of the tree-herding Ents and the Huorns, as they each march to fight Saruman's forces.

Tolkien's fantasies sometimes parallel some of the tenets of Heideggerian Ecophilosophy as well. Similar to the writings of Heideggerian Ecophilosophy, for example, Tolkien's works also include characters who embody the message of "let beings be" (e.g., Garrard 32). Consequently, these characters who embrace an ecophilosophy akin to "let being be" also oppose an ideology akin to what Heidegger labels "Technological thinking," which is a worldview that teaches that natural resources exist merely for human consumption⁴⁰⁹ (Garrard 31; Cole 33, 36). Instead of arguing that some (if not all) animals deserve "rights" like humans or that we should reduce the status of humanity (as the radical preservationists often do⁴¹⁰) (61, 65), humans should seek to ensure the well-being of ecosystems, in general, and the lives and quality of life of non-human animals as well (Schalow 61, 62, 63, 64, 70-71, 73-74). While "world-poor" animals cannot relate to humans, according to Heideggerian Ecophilosophy (75), humanity's "world-openness" enables humans to relate to animals, which means that humans alone possess the ability to behave as environmental guardians who ensure the survival and quality of ecosystems (74-75). In the case of non-human animals, Kalpita Bhar Paul states that Heideggerian Ecophilosophy argues that humans should work to ensure that these animals behave as naturally as possible (i.e., "let beings be") (85). Thus, according to Paul, humans should not behave as an overlord set apart from the non-human environment; instead, humans should feel empathy and sympathy for the

409. This Heideggerian Ecophilosophical tenet, of course, parallels the "Nature as matter" tradition, which teaches that humans can use natural resources however they wish without moral/ethical constraint (as I discuss in chapter three).

410. Heideggerian Ecophilosophers would also condemn the actions of radical preservationists when members of the latter group hammered pieces of metal into trees to cause problems for loggers (Engler 97-98). Heideggerian Ecophilosophers would oppose this behavior because such actions are not examples of "letting being be"; instead, these radical preservationists resort to a form of tyranny by altering the "being" of the tree to try to save the rest of the tree's well-being.

environment—of which humanity is a part (81-83). Phrased somewhat differently, Kevin Michael Deluca states that “Humanity [. . .] is always in the world, a part of the world, and, indeed is constituted by relations in the world” (74). In other words, whereas radical preservationists typically desire to reduce humanity’s position in relation to the environment, Heideggerian Ecophilosophers wish to raise the status of the non-human environment in the minds of human beings.

Yavanna’s yearning for the Children not to use environmental resources (especially trees⁴¹¹), as she references in her conversations with Aulë and Manwë (*Silmarillion*, “Quenta: Aulë” 45-46), and Bombadil’s general refusal to reform Old Man Willow and the Old Forest (e.g., *Letters* 179, 192) recall the implied ethics of “let beings be.” Meanwhile, Goldberry’s environmental beliefs and actions share some common ground with Paul; according to Paul, Heideggerian Ecophilosophy contends that humans should ensure that non-human animals are “allow[ed] [. . .] to be/to act the sense that it desires” (85). Goldberry’s comment that “The trees and the grasses and all things growing or living in the land belong each to themselves” (*Fellowship*, “House” 122), generally parallels the aforementioned Heideggerian Ecophilosophical tenet.

However, Yavanna and Bombadil’s eco-centered worldviews can endanger the Children’s welfare, as Aulë and Manwë each imply when they modify Yavanna’s statements (*Silmarillion*, “Quenta: Aulë” 45-46). Likewise, the Hobbits’ predicament when they are captured and tortured by Old Man Willow also demonstrates some of the

411. Somewhat similar to Yavanna’s aforementioned beliefs and statements, Erendis repeatedly voices and shows her disapproval of her shipbuilding-husband Aldarion’s attitude toward nature largely because of his refusal to embrace an ideology akin to Heideggerian Ecophilosophy and simply leave the trees alone (e.g., *Unfinished*, “Aldarion” 190-91; Garrard 22, 31-32).

shortcomings of “letting others be,” as practiced by Bombadil (*Fellowship*, “Old” 114-16). Although Tolkien’s texts qualify the beliefs and practices of Yavanna and Bombadil, Tolkien’s works also indicate that both are needed to help prevent others from behaving and believing as if they can (to borrow a phrase from Heideggerian Ecophilosophy) “reduce nature solely into what we want” (Cole 37). Bombadil appears to aim to correct something akin to the aforementioned sentiment within the Hobbits by teaching them “to understand the lives of the Forest, apart from themselves” and to perceive that sometimes they behaved as “destroyers and usurpers” (*Fellowship*, “House” 127). Finally, whereas Aldarion’s method of creating tree farms to gain timber in Tolkien’s novella fragment *Aldarion and Erendis* seems akin to the ethics of “Technological thinking,” Erendis’ yearning to preserve every tree in Númenor and to “defeat” Aldarion’s shipbuilding activities generally parallels Heideggerian Ecophilosophy’s “let beings be” philosophy (*Unfinished* 182).

Passages like the “Scouring of the Shire” help to portray the kinship between the environmental ideas within Tolkien’s fantasies and Heideggerian Ecophilosophy’s contention that economic motivations are insufficient reasons to harm the environment in the name of dubious “progress” (Garrard 30). As discussed previously, the Hobbits’ overthrow of Saruman, the Ruffians, the Sackville-Bagginses, the Bracegirdles, and Ted Sandyman demonstrates their refusal to accept a devastated environment in the Shire in exchange for a supposedly more-advanced mill and greater wealth in the hands of a few pseudo-crony capitalists. Since the majority of Shire Hobbits choose to use the old mill over the new, the Hobbits’ environmental views show kinship with Heidegger’s beliefs, because “Heidegger does not encourage a flight from machinery [. . .] rather, for

Heidegger, we should think of nature as being more than just something to use and existent only for human use” (Cole 34). Such logic parallels the Hobbits’ reasoning when they opt to demolish the unnecessary and pollution-causing new mill in *The Return of the King*⁴¹² (“Scouring” 989-90, “Grey” 999).

Tolkien’s texts also parallel another message promoted within Heideggerian Ecophilosophy: “do not undervalue/overvalue artifacts.” Unlike radical preservationists, Heideggerian Ecophilosophers reject the idea that humans should abandon technology, because the overly simplistic anti-technology advocates merely privilege one type of nature (physical environment) over another (human-produced artifacts) (Paul 87-88). In other words, in the view of Deluca, Heideggerian Ecophilosophy provides a third way by avoiding the binary between Moderate Environmentalists and radical preservationists who “privilege humanity” or “demonize humanity,” respectively, by refusing to privilege humanity or the non-human environment above the other⁴¹³ (72-73). Despite Morgoth’s yearning to reduce the physical world to “nil,” as “Myths Transformed” states (*Morgoth’s*, “Myths” 397), even Morgoth displays appreciation for created artifacts, albeit in the most selfish and callous manner possible, since he kills others in order to obtain and then keep the greatest gems of the Noldorin in *The Silmarillion*. Besides the fact that he tempts the wrath of the Valar and the Noldorin Elves by seizing the Silmarils and other jewels, Morgoth’s reluctance to give Ungoliant the various gems after the destruction of the Two Trees demonstrates his ability to acknowledge the beauty of their

412. The Ents and the Rohirrim similarly reject Saruman’s damming of the Isen and (correctly) find it the opposite of “progress,” for Saruman’s *technological thinking* results in ecocide.

413. Because Heideggerian Ecophilosophical writers like Deluca cast a skeptical eye on the use of pictures and other images of the non-human environment by radical preservationists as a means to promote their views (84-85), this stance by the Heideggerian Ecophilosophers shares some commonality with Anti-consumerism advocates who condemn manipulative, coercive advertising (Humphrey 38, 33, 82).

artisanship⁴¹⁴ (“Quenta: Flight” 79-80). Indeed, by refusing to allow Ungoliant to consume the Silmarils, Morgoth’s willingness to face Ungoliant at her most powerful moment shows the depth of Morgoth’s appreciation for the beauty of the Silmarils, though his selfish, murderous callousness perverts his love of gem-shaping, certainly. In other words, at this point, while Morgoth proves the worst ecosadist in terms of quantity by “marring” all of creation when the Valar sing the world into existence and by continuing to harm the world, Ungoliant becomes the worst environmental villain in terms of quality and desire. Ungoliant not only kills and consumes the greatest living things in the physical environment in Tolkien’s Middle-earth *Legendarium*, the Two Trees, but also attempts to destroy the Children’s greatest created artifacts in Arda’s history, the Silmarils (“Quenta: Darkening” 76, “Quenta: Flight” 78-80). Whereas Morgoth wants to preserve the Silmarils for himself, Ungoliant yearns just to consume them and the light within the three jewels. Somewhat similarly, the Orcs not only harm the physical environment but they also deface works of art, such as Gondorian statues (*Two*, “Journey” 687). Only artifacts tied to violence appear to interest Morgoth’s corrupted beings; for example, the Trolls preserve Elven swords from Gondolin in *The Hobbit* (“Roast” 40, “Short” 49). In *The Return of the King*, the Orc Gorbag desires to risk the wrath of Sauron in order to keep Frodo’s *mithril* shirt⁴¹⁵ (“Tower” 885). As evil as Glaurung and Smaug demonstrate themselves to be by slaughtering many members of

414. Nonetheless, Morgoth gleefully sacrifices multiple Elven-shaped jewels to lure Ungoliant out of her hiding place in order to goad her into destroying the Two Trees, according to late drafts of the *Quenta Silmarillion* (*Morgoth’s* 199, 285). Moreover, in this revised version of his earlier drafts of *The Silmarillion*, Tolkien features Morgoth toppling the Valar’s various thrones in the Blessed Realm (*Morgoth’s* 288).

415. While Gollum shows more appreciation for the environment than any Orc, Gollum also resists Sauron by desiring to find and keep an artifact (i.e., the One Ring) for himself rather than give it to Sauron. For more information concerning Gollum’s devolved (but not wholly ruined) environmental ethics, read the section concerning the Hobbits in chapter three.

the Free Peoples and by destroying/polluting many landscapes, flora species, non-human animals, soils, waters, and the air, Glaurung does not obliterate Nargothrond's treasure, while Smaug selfishly hoards Erebor's wealth.⁴¹⁶ Likewise, in their selfish and callous pursuit to obtain artifacts like the Rings of Power/One Ring, Sauron (e.g., the Brown Lands and Mordor) and Saruman (e.g., Fangorn Forest and the Shire) annihilate/degrade the physical environment.

Levels of callousness, ignorance, and laziness, therefore, affect these selfish evildoers' ability to appreciate the physical environment and/or created artifacts. Whereas Morgoth lazily refuses to invest the time necessary to create gem-shaped artifacts and instead chooses to steal the works of others, the Orcs prove too ignorant, callous, and lazy to create any beautiful or sublime artwork; instead, they merely destroy the physical environment and most created artifacts. Although appreciative of the economic value of treasure, the dragons cannot create wealth and only participate in labors that harm the environment's well-being. While Sauron's knowledge and labors enable him to create the One Ring, he selfishly and callously seeks to control all of the greatest artifacts, as well as Middle-earth's physical environment. Similarly, Saruman creates a Ring of Power but does so ignorantly, since he and his Ring are doomed to be enslaved to the will of Sauron and the One Ring, as Gandalf informs Saruman in *The Fellowship of the Ring* ("Council" 251-53). Moreover, similar to how Sauron's selfishness leads him to seek to possess all of the Rings of Power, Tolkien notes in one of his fragments that Saruman deviously acquires a variety of artifacts from Rohan and Arnor (*Unfinished*, "Disaster" 276-77).

416. Nonetheless, dragons still corrupt the treasure by fusing it with their selfishness, as witnessed when the Master of Lake-town falls prey to "dragon-sickness," and therefore, hoards some of the wealth—to his death—in *The Hobbit* ("Last" 272).

Likewise, as noted in multiple Tolkien texts, such as *The Lord of the Rings* and the “Palantíri” fragment, both Sauron and Saruman acquire one of the seeing stones once held by the Númenórean Exiles. Consequently, although Ungoliant represents the darkest form of evil by seeking to annihilate the physical environment and created artifacts alike, the other evil beings appreciate artifacts but selfishly yearn to possess as many as possible and will destroy or maim almost anything or anyone in the environment to do so. Whereas Ungoliant refrains from privileging either the physical environment or artifacts, she nihilistically wishes to destroy everything. For the other antagonists in Tolkien’s texts, followers of Heideggerian Ecophilosophy would note that all fail as environmental guardians, in part, because they create artificial hierarchies with artifacts as more important than the physical environment.⁴¹⁷

Sadly, many of the protagonists also exhibit problems in relation to created artifacts, albeit often unintentionally. While Heideggerian Ecophilosophy warns us of the problems of establishing an arbitrary hierarchical binary between the physical and the created environments⁴¹⁸ (Holy-Luczaj 59), Tolkien’s works feature how the two “environments” can merge into one.⁴¹⁹ When Fëanor shapes the three Silmaril gems in

417. The horrific, ecosadistic behavior described in the previous two paragraphs also parallels the spirit of (albeit not necessary the contemporary methods of) Anti-environmentalism, as described by Garrard (16-18).

418. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, Legolas and Gimli’s argument regarding Gimli’s proposed shaping of the Glittering Caves in *The Two Towers* generally describes the aforementioned bias. While Legolas’ initial reaction exposes his bias that favors preserving the physical environment as much as possible and his deep skepticism of the use of natural resources as artifacts, the Dwarves sometimes place too much emphasis on altering the environment. Gimli, however, promises to make a minimum amount of superficial changes for cultural and aesthetic purposes (“Road” 534-35). Tolkien’s *The Lord of the Rings* suggests that Gimli’s plan is permissible, since it attempts to find the precarious balance between the unshaped physical environment and artifacts, and thereby avoid the type of problem created by the hierarchical prioritization of the environment/artifacts or artifacts/environment that Heideggerian Ecophilosophy notes (Holy-Luczaj 59).

419. Consequently, the created artifacts that I discuss in subsequent paragraphs also parallel second-wave environmental analysis that focuses on exploring the overlap between the non-human and human (or human-like, in Tolkien’s mythology) environments.

The Silmarillion,⁴²⁰ he fuses the light of the Two Trees within them, which means that the Silmarils embody the unsteady divide between the “natural” and the “created” in multiple ways (e.g., “Quenta: Flight” 78). In other words, not only do Fëanor’s crafted Silmarils originally come from the ground but the gems also include the infusion of the Two Tree’s brilliance. Similarly, the Elven Rings of Power feature gems drawn from the ground; moreover, these beautiful but perilous artifacts preserve the Elven environments where their Ringbearer rules (e.g., *Silmarillion*, “Rings” 288). While the Dwarves find the Arkenstone within the mountain of Erebor (*Return*, “Appendix A” 1046), they shape this precious jewel (*Hobbit*, “Not” 212-13); this cultural habit also leads Gimli (and other Dwarves) to desire to cautiously shape the Glittering Caves in Rohan (*Two*, “Road” 534-35). Likewise, Gimli wishes to and plans to create a “crystal” heirloom to enclose and display three strands of Galadriel’s hair⁴²¹ (*Fellowship*, “Farewell” 367). Tolkien, therefore, not only depicts the Dwarves fusing the physical environment with created artifacts but also planning to meld parts of Elven identity (i.e., Galadriel’s three hairs) with shaped objects.

Gandalf also shows his appreciation for created things in a variety of ways, including his advocacy that the Fellowship carry the Dwarvish Book of Mazarbul. Indeed, despite their arduous journey in Moria, Gandalf still desires to preserve the record of Balin’s ill-fated attempt to retake Moria (*Fellowship*, “Bridge” 314-15), because Gandalf realizes that the Book of Mazarbul stands as an immensely important

420. For more information concerning these passages in Tolkien’s mythology, read chapter three.

421. Gimli’s plan to use the Noldo Galadriel’s hair in this manner represents an example of the positive influence of the Noldorin Elves on the aesthetics of the Dwarves’ artifacts centuries earlier. This seems to be the case since Tolkien’s 1950s work on the *Quenta Silmarillion* mentions that Dwarvish “works had little beauty until they had met the Noldor and learned somewhat of their arts” during the First Age (*War . . . Jewels*, “Later” 204).

record of a segment of northwestern Middle-earth history, and therefore, the Fellowship should try to save the artifact. Although Gandalf states that his “task” requires him to strive to preserve as much of the physical environment as possible (*Return*, “Minas” 742), Gandalf’s treatment of the Book of Mazarbul demonstrates that Gandalf remains mindful of the need to protect artifacts as well. Gandalf’s ability to seek the preservation of the physical *and* created environments, of course, makes sense, since he opposes Sauron the Torturer and Destroyer of “the very hills” (*Fellowship*, “Council” 259). Moreover, Gandalf confronts Sauron by ceaselessly working on behalf of Middle-earth and its Peoples with the aid of Elvish artifacts: the Ring of Fire and Glamdring, the former sword of the long-dead Turgon, King of Gondolin (e.g., *Return*, “Grey” 1007; *Hobbit*, “Roast” 40, “Short” 49).

The environmental views within Tolkien’s fantasies often (but not always) differ from radical environmentalism. Whereas Tolkien lived as a devout Catholic and taught at one of the most prestigious European schools, radical environmentalists argue that Western religions (e.g., Christianity) and Western civilization, in general, are the cause for the earth’s various environmental problems (Taylor, “Tributaries” 31-32). As a lover of domesticated animals like horses, Tolkien would have hated the proposal by some radical preservationists to kill the majority of such animals in order to improve the overall health of the earth, supposedly (41). Because he consumed meat, championed the values of agriculture through fantastic settings like the Shire, and because Tolkien believed in private property, Tolkien would have condemned the tendency among some radical preservationists to destroy the private property of the owners of slaughterhouses, ranches,

and farms (Loadenthal 12-13). Most importantly, Tolkien's negative depictions of so-called "weeds" like thorns, thistles, and nettles starkly contrast with the views of radical preservationists (e.g., Gary Snyder) who contend that no "weeds" exist; instead, all plants possess worth, value and beauty, according to these environmentalists (qtd. in Taylor, "Tributaries" 39).

Nevertheless, at times, Tolkien's works express environmental messages that share some commonality with radical preservationist texts as well. Similar to how the Four Hobbits' journey through the Wild improves their environmental views, radical preservationists champion the benefits of exploring wilderness areas (Taylor, "Tributaries" 39-40). Moreover, because radical environmentalists believe that music, dancing, and art are some of the ways that humans can recall their ties to the physical environment and because radical environmentalists seek to foster communication between humans and other species (Taylor, "Tributaries" 28, 40), writings by radical environmentalists have a degree of commonality with Tolkien's fantasies. In Middle-earth, for example, readers witness the wonders and beauties of nature by examining Tolkien's paintings and drawings of Middle-earth, by reading about Beren seeing Lúthien dancing on "the unfading grass in the glades beside Esgalduin" in *The Silmarillion* ("Quenta: Beren" 165), and by the Erebor Dwarves' "Misty Mountains" song in *The Hobbit* ("Unexpected" 14-15, 25-26). Somewhat similar to how the Ents and the Hobbits violently overthrow ecosadists bent on destroying the physical environment by means of unregulated industrialism, some radical preservationists commit acts of "ecotage" by destroying, crippling, or otherwise defacing products of industrialism and urbanization (Taylor, "Tributaries" 45). Finally, Taylor states that radical preservationists often

believe that “pre-agricultural, foraging societies were superior, ecologically appropriate, and socially egalitarian” (“Tributaries” 41). The aforementioned conviction among many radical preservationists generally parallels Tolkien’s portrayal of the Ents’ feracultural society, the model of the Entmoot, and the Ents’ rejection of the Entwives’ agricultural society, respectively.

The realms in Tolkien’s works often feature bioregional borders, as demonstrated in the maps of Númenor, Beleriand, and northwestern Middle-earth, as well as Tolkien’s tales, in general. Indeed, within *The Silmarillion*, Tolkien devotes an entire chapter to describing the topography and the Peoples living in the various realms of Beleriand (“Quenta: Beleriand” 118-24). However, these bioregional boundaries are often the site of wars and other forms of violence in Tolkien’s fantasies, which parallels what occurs in our own primary world, as critics of Bioregionalism often note (e.g., Taylor, “Deep” 281-82). For example, during the Battle of Sudden Flame, Morgoth unleashes fire from the Mountains of Iron and annihilates the plains of Ard-galen (as well as many of the Children) (*Silmarillion*, “Quenta: Ruin” 151). In the aforementioned war, Morgoth’s forces also fight the Elvish and Edain warriors in and around their fortresses in the Mountains of Ered Wethrin (152). Similarly, Morgoth’s armies attack Maedhros’ armies on the Hill of Himring, and Morgoth’s ecosadists annihilate the plains of Lothlann, the land to the south between the Gelion rivers, and the realm of Thargelion between Lake Helevorn, the Blue Mountains, the River Ascar, the River Gelion, and the Greater Gelion (153). Meanwhile, following the break-up of Arnor into the realms of Arthedain, Cardolan, and Rhudaur in the Third Age, the one-time allies in the latter two realms

battle one another for control of bioregional areas, including the Weather Hills and Amon Sûl (*Return*, “Appendix A” 1016). Furthermore, as noted previously, the Hobbits fight the sentient trees of the Old Forest where the Hedge meets the Old Forest (*Fellowship*, “Old” 108). Finally, Sauron seeks to protect himself and his armies in Mordor (which is mostly surrounded by the daunting Ash Mountains and the Mountains of Shadow) prior to his decision to cross the River Anduin and launch another selfish and callous war against his Gondorian enemies. Bioregional warfare, consequently, often occurs in Tolkien’s mythology.

Tolkien’s Middle-earth fantasies, however, also depict how some of the spirits and Peoples work as a community to nourish the lands where they dwell and to improve their own environmental ethics by ceasing to passively witness ecocide, which parallels the best of Bioregionalism (Sale, *Dwellers*, 44-47; Taylor, “Deep” 282). For instance, the Hobbits’ communal rebellion against Saruman and the Ruffians during the Scouring of the Shire and the Hobbits’ subsequent efforts to renew the waters, soils, air, flora, and fauna of their homeland parallel the aforementioned description of the potential positives of Bioregionalism.⁴²² Indeed, because Lotho and Saruman’s ruthless industrialization and urbanization leads to environmental degradation and the harming of the psyches and

422. The scale of environmental labor and environmental knowledge necessary to rehabilitate the Shire, I believe, helps to demonstrate that Tolkien’s texts do not simply subscribe to what Huggan and Tiffin describe as the overgeneralized concept of the environment’s *self-regeneration* held by Eco-Populists (93n). Indeed, in places like Mordor, the environment’s ability to rehabilitate itself entirely is highly unlikely. In any case, the entire Shire Hobbit community must work for months to correct the errors of only a brief time; moreover, Sam and others must invest many hours researching and planning how, what, and where to replant and nourish trees and other flora. Finally, the Shire’s incredible revival also derives from Galadriel’s environmental knowledge and her willingness to help a community reeling from the callous actions of a few corrupt individuals. The soils, landscapes, air, waters, and flora of the Shire, in other words, do not simply *self-regenerate* on their own.

behaviors of some of the Hobbits (e.g., *Return*, “Scouring” 979), this chain-of-events parallels another tenet of Bioregionalism (Salleh 109).

Another contemporary ecophilosophy that shares some kinship with portions of Tolkien’s fantasies is Ecofeminism.⁴²³ Tolkien’s inclusion of “male” and “female” spirits associated with nature contrasts with some traditional (and incorrect) views that assume *nature: women*. The Valar spirits, for example, include the male Manwë (who cherishes winds, clouds, and birds), the female Varda (who creates the stars), the male Ulmo (who loves the various bodies of water), the male Aulë (who enjoys the process of creating, in general, while especially showing devotion to precious metals and mountains), the female Yavanna (who finds all of nature a joy, yet especially loves trees), the male Irmo (who maintains gardens in Valinor), and the male Oromë (who cherishes trees, dogs, and horses) (e.g., *Silmarillion*, “Valaquenta” 26-29, “Quenta: Aulë” 45-46). Female characters, moreover, are essential to Tolkien’s Middle-earth mythology. For instance, it is only when Varda is by Manwë’s side that he can perceive the events of the world to the greatest extent, as the *Valaquenta* mentions (*Silmarillion* 26). Furthermore, as Yavanna’s conversation with Manwë concerning the creation of the Ents makes clear, Yavanna *also* teaches Manwë, as *The Silmarillion* references (“Quenta: Aulë” 45-46). However, because Manwë represents the “dearest” and “mightiest” of the loyal Ainur to the *male* Creator, Ilúvatar, and because Manwë’s presence enables Varda’s hearing to reach further distances (*Silmarillion*, “Valaquenta” 26), Ecofeminists will reject the privileging of the position of male spirits in Tolkien’s mythology. Moreover, Ecofeminist critics

423. As I previously observe, Ecofeminism includes several sub-groups, such as Deconstructive Ecofeminism and Vegetarian Ecofeminism.

(among others) will also condemn the heteronormative worldview embedded within Tolkien's fantasies. Thus, Tolkien's Middle-earth mythology arguably represents a modified form of the patriarchal worldview often found in the Western Classical literary tradition (e.g., Greek mythology).

Similarly, although Christopher Tolkien failed to include the material in the published version of *The Silmarillion*, J.R.R. Tolkien actually wrote that Nerdanel (the wife of the great Elven craftsman Fëanor) proved one of the greatest sculptors of stone and metal figures of all time (*Morgoth's* 272). Indeed, Kane observes that Christopher Tolkien elected to reduce or eliminate the references to no less than eight female characters in *The Silmarillion* that J.R.R. Tolkien created. Christopher's editing contributes to why many feminist critics, in particular, and literary scholars, in general, tend to overgeneralize in their criticism of Tolkien's depictions of females, for Christopher's decisions create a dubious impression in this regard (e.g., 26, 252). These seemingly erroneous edits by Christopher include not only his marginalization of the intense evil of Ungoliant but also his removal of references to Galadriel as "the most valiant" (qtd. in 114). In fact, Galadriel is one of the foremost Noldorin imperialists/colonizers of the First and Second Ages, although critics like Hoiem focus more on male colonizers in Tolkien's tales (81). Moreover, Christopher eliminates all passages in *The Silmarillion* that feature the peaceful Nellas, who teaches Túrin about the environment (e.g., Kane 200; *Children*, "Doriath" 80-81). In other words, Tolkien's First Age manuscripts provide a wider variety of female characters than what many readers of *The Silmarillion* realize.

Nonetheless, despite the shortcomings of the published version of *The Silmarillion*, readers still witness memorably powerful female characters who impact the environment in a positive way. Lúthien, for example, saves Beren multiple times, outwits the terrible ecosadists Sauron and Morgoth, and helps Beren recover one of the Silmarils, and thereby preserving one of the greatest works of craft (“Quenta: Beren” 175-83, 186). Furthermore, the brave Haleth of the Edain is chosen by the Haladin to become the group’s *chief*; indeed, Tolkien writes that “there were many who loved the Lady Haleth and wished to go whither she would, and dwell under her rule” even after she chose to lead her people on the terrible journey west past the Mountains of Terror, even with the Elves refusing to bless the journey (“Quenta: “Of . . . Men” 146, 146-47). Readers must also remember Idril not only acted on her perception that Gondolin’s doom was approaching and worked to create another hidden passage but also acted wisely by not divulging the fact to any more than was necessary; her actions helped to preserve a remnant of the Gondolin population (“Quenta: Of Tuor” 241, 243-44). Furthermore, somewhat like her kin Lúthien, Elwing saves the Silmaril, in part, because of her love for her husband, Eärendil; consequently, Elwing’s bravery at the Mouths of Sirion in the face of yet another ecocidal onslaught of the Sons of Fëanor enables the preservation of a Silmaril (“Quenta: “Of . . . Voyage” 247). Tolkien’s Middle-earth canon, therefore, includes far more female characters who defy ecosadists than just Galadriel and Éowyn.

Gaard (as well as other Ecofeminists) argues, “Men tend to focus on rights, whereas women tend to focus on responsibilities” (“Living . . . Nature” 2). Interestingly, Tolkien uses this type of idea through his depiction of several Vala spirits, but he reverses what Gaard states is the typical focus of men and women (2). Tolkien portrays the male

spirits Manwë and Aulë emphasizing the Children of Ilúvatar's responsibility to not abuse their right to use natural resources, while the female Vala Yavanna successfully champions the creation of the Ents, who will possess the right and responsibility to righteously punish any being who harms the flora of Middle-earth (especially trees) (*Silmarillion*, "Quenta: Aulë" 45-46). Meanwhile, although Tolkien divides the environmental roles of the Ents and the Entwives by gender, Tolkien still notes the fluidity of this difference, and therefore, Tolkien's fantasies sometimes parallel a tenet of Deconstructive Ecofeminism. Similar to the analysis of Yvette L. Kisor, who notes that Tolkien reverses the usual gendering of the Sun and the Moon⁴²⁴ (212), Olsen contends that "the Entish and Entwifely perspectives runs exactly counter to the traditional gender concepts that characterized the feminine as the passive principle and the masculine as the active" (42). Similarly, because the Ent and the Entwife in the Elvish song trade gender roles concerning which one is active and passive (Olsen 49), Tolkien presents the Ents and the Entwives from multiple perspectives rather than choosing to create mere "flat" characters. As a result, this means that Tolkien's decision parallels the desire to problematize binaries in environmental writing, as Deconstructive Ecofeminists desire (e.g., Garrard 23; Guttman 43). When one of the great Northern Eagles comes to Gondor with word of the victory over Sauron, the final stanza reads: "*And the Tree that was withered shall be renewed / and he shall plant it in the high places / and the City shall be blessed*" (*Return*, "Steward" 942). The importance of the renewal of the environment coincides, therefore, with the return of the King. The Eagle's words convey that the end

424. Contrary to tradition, Tolkien describes the Sun as feminine and the Moon as masculine. However, Tolkien probably characterized the Sun and the Moon in this manner (at least in part) because the Moon is grammatically masculine and the Sun is grammatically feminine in Old English.

of Sauron will usher in a time of (among other things) environmental renewal, which the Tree symbolizes. While this renaissance of Gondor and Arnor requires Aragorn's ascension, and thereby partially reinforces the stereotype of *male: culture* that the Deconstructive Ecofeminists rightly dislike (Guttman 43), the intimate relationship of Aragorn with the natural world of his kingdoms still undermines the idea that *female* must mean *nature*.

Carol J. Adams, meanwhile, mentions that Ecofeminism attacks, in addition to things like pollution and imperialism, "ableism" (1); interestingly enough, Tolkien's fantasies not only include characters with disabilities but also provide multiple, relevant viewpoints concerning disabilities. For example, Sam weeps when he hears the Gondorian minstrel declare that he will recount the tale "of Frodo of the Nine Fingers and the Ring of Doom" towards the end of *The Return of the King* ("Field" 933). Likewise, Tolkien does not shy away from the fact that Frodo (after the successful conclusion to the War of the Ring) routinely experiences physical and emotional trauma, as the Hobbits and Gandalf ride towards the Shire: "Though I may come to the Shire, it will not seem the same; for I shall not be the same. I am wounded with knife, sting, and tooth, and a long burden. Where shall I find rest?" ("Homeward" 967). Tolkien forces readers to remain conscious of Frodo's physical wounds and psychological trauma; readers cannot overlook the problems that the now physically- and emotionally-challenged hero of *The Lord of the Rings* experiences ("Grey" 1002). Tolkien's masterpiece implicitly rebukes those who act like the Shire Hobbits, who marginalize Frodo in favor of the non-disabled Merry, Pippin, and Sam (1002). As a veteran of the Great War, Tolkien witnessed the barbarous wounding of many soldiers and the insufficient respect given to them by the

British public, as Tolkien's "Foreword" makes clear (*Fellowship* xv). Tolkien seems to have internalized the need and desire to imply that a person's disabilities should not define him or her and that holding "disablist" views mars one's moral standing.

Tolkien's *The Children of Húrin* also references a character with physical challenges: Sador/Labadal. While Túrin, as a child, calls Sador *Hopafoot* (i.e., *Labadal*), Túrin feels "pity" with love for Sador (rather than "pity" from pride and "not in scorn"), which leads Túrin to complete some of Sador's chores "to spare his leg" ("Childhood" 41). Because Sador states that, following the loss of his foot, he lost his foot as punishment for leaving those attempting to thwart Morgoth's ecocide (42), he may be internalizing the negative appraisals of people like Morwen, who declares that "[Sador] is self-maimed by his own want of skill" (49). However, Tolkien's work indicates that people with physical challenges should not receive scorn but understanding, attention, care, and hope.⁴²⁵ For example, Morwen's husband and Túrin's father, Húrin, rebukes Morwen by saying that we should "Give [. . .] pity" to Sador since "An honest hand and a true heart may hew amiss; and the harm be harder to bear than the work of a foe" (50).

I do not intend to suggest, however, that Tolkien's works simply reverse stereotypes of people with disabilities by portraying all disabled characters as protagonists, for Tolkien also includes compromised and evil characters with missing limbs. Despite losing one of his hands, the Elven warrior, Maedhros is described as an Elf who "lived to wield his sword with [his] left hand" to the point that he became even "more deadly" in the wars against Morgoth and his ecosadistic forces in *The Silmarillion* ("Quenta: Return" 110-11). However, Maedhros (despite willfully opting to defend the

425. Christopher Tolkien faithfully follows his father's vision of these scenes, as readers can see when they read *Narn I Hîn Húrin* in *Unfinished Tales* (60,64-65).

most vulnerable area in northern Beleriand from an attack by Morgoth's ecocidal armies⁴²⁶) (112) also commits several heinous deeds in pursuit of reclaiming his father's lost Silmarils. For instance, Maedhros participates in the slaughtering of the Grey Elves of Doriath and the Mouths of Sirion and in the destruction of these areas) ("Quenta: Ruin . . . Doriath 236-37, "Quenta: Voyage" 246-47), as *The Silmarillion* and other First Age works repeatedly discuss. The ecosadistic Morgoth, meanwhile, suffers the loss of a foot and a mutilated face after fighting Fingolfin the Elf and Thorondor the Eagle ("Quenta: Ruin . . . Beleriand" 154).

Tolkien's Middle-earth texts share some common ground with Ecofeminists and other critics who speak out against "ableism" for multiple reasons. Tolkien's fantasies praise the nine-fingered Frodo for his sacrifices; moreover, Tolkien (by portraying Sador/Labadal in a sympathetic light) seemingly borrows from his experiences as a Great War veteran who witnessed the damaging effects caused by someone assuming that a soldier's accidental maiming of himself was actually done on purpose. Furthermore, Tolkien includes fatally flawed characters with physical challenges like Maedhros, and while Tolkien's fantasies condemn Morgoth not because of his disfiguration and maiming but because of his murderous ecocide.

Gaard also observes in her "Preface" to *Ecofeminism: Women, Animals, Nature* that "a central value of ecofeminism is its plurality of voices," and therefore, she opts "not to write a single-author text" (vii). Tolkien includes a qualified, parallel version of such an approach by stating that many voices sing and contribute to the creation of Arda

426. Christopher Tolkien's editing of *The Silmarillion* faithfully follows his father's descriptions of Maedhros'/Maidros' reasoning for defending these lands of Beleriand in *The Grey Annals (War. . . Jewels, "Grey" 34)*.

in order to realize the vision of Ilúvatar. Likewise, according to Tolkien's *Legendarium*, Frodo and Sam pen *The Lord of the Rings* in the world of Middle-earth (e.g., *Return, "Grey"* 1004), while Bilbo, Sam, and others create the poems in *The Adventures of Tom Bombadil*, which includes lore learned from the Elves of Rivendell and the Men of Gondor (Tolkien 191). Tolkien, meanwhile, drew inspiration, critiques, and the encouragement necessary to create *The Lord of the Rings* from his circle of friends and peers in the intellectual society called "the Inklings." Therefore, Tolkien's writing process and major works parallel the "plurality of voices" encouraged by Ecofeminists.

The ethics of eating forms another parallel between Tolkien's fantasies and some Ecofeminist writings. While Vegetarian Ecofeminists allow for exceptions to vegetarianism in life/death situations (i.e., contextual moral vegetarianism) (Curtin 69-70), Vegetarian Ecofeminists encourage the general adoption of a vegetarian diet (e.g., Gaard, "Vegetarian" 127). Because characters like Bombadil, Goldberry, and Beren appear to practice a non-meat diet (*Fellowship*, "House" 122; *Silmarillion*, "Quenta: Beren" 164), this means that these characters parallel this portion of Vegetarian Ecofeminism (e.g., Gaard, "Vegetarian" 127). Moreover, because of their diet, their hunting practices, and their general reticence to harm other beings (which Tolkien observes in "The Drúedain" fragment), the ethics of the Drúedain/Wild Men resemble those of "Reflective nonvegetarians," whom Vegetarian Ecofeminists describe as those who morally and ethically interact with non-human nature, yet refuse to eat as a vegetarian⁴²⁷ (Curtin 73n). Because the often-pacifist, male Ents eat only fallen fruit and

427. Tolkien's "Hobbit"-like aversion to refrigerated foods and love of fresh mushrooms (*Letters* 288-89) somewhat parallels the arguments of Vegetarian Ecofeminists like Gaard, who declares that "no one's culture" includes "mass-produced" food ("Vegetarian" 134-35). Moreover, because of Tolkien's willingness to eat meals entirely devoid of meat, Tolkien's behavior (akin to messages within his writings)

love the trees of the “wilderness,” Tolkien’s *The Lord of the Rings* deconstructs several stereotypes regarding males, including the notion that healthy “masculinity” necessitates violence, a disinterest in flora, and a meat-based diet.⁴²⁸ Thus, Tolkien’s depictions of the meat-less eating habits of the strong, male Ents also parallels the Vegetarian Ecofeminist Curtin’s declaration that there is nothing inherently “manly” about eating meat (71).

Although Tolkien’s belief in and creation of characters who practice a hierarchical relationship with the physical environment contrasts with the convictions of contemporary Ecofeminists (Curtin 66), zoocritics (Huggan and Tiffin 180, 189), and postcolonial environmentalists (Huggan and Tiffin 180-81, 189), they seem to share a suspicion of meat-based diets. This is not to say, however, that Tolkien considered eating meat an act of “speciesism.” To some extent, consequently, Tolkien’s texts contrast with writings by Vegetarian Ecofeminists, such as Gaard (“Vegetarian” 117), by zoocritics (Huggan and Tiffin 180-81, 189), and by postcolonial environmentalists (Huggan and Tiffin 180-81, 189). Each of these ecophilosophical groups, however, generally regard a diet based on the slaughtering of animals as an example of “speciesism” that psychologically and—in terms of violence—physically often parallels the repercussions of human racism, sexism, and imperialism. Tolkien’s Middle-earth fantasies, nonetheless, exhibit a sense of skepticism for characters who eat an inordinate amount of meat. This skepticism of immoderate meat consumption contributes to why the plots of Tolkien’s fantasies sometimes parallel the verified links exist between murderers, rapists, and those

can again parallel Vegetarian Ecofeminist Curtin’s arguments that there is nothing inherently manly about eating meat (71). Because of Tolkien’s eating habits and because some of Tolkien’s characters serve and eat meals without meat, Curtin would likely characterize Tolkien as a “reflective nonvegetarian” (73n). 428. Similar to the Ents, Bombadil also parallels the aforementioned Ecofeminist idea that masculinity is not a fixed description that necessitates violence and a meat-eating diet.

who display “somatophobia” (i.e., “hostility to the body”) and animal abusers, as Vegetarian and Material Ecofeminist scholars like Gaard note (“Vegetarian” 137-38). In other words, many criminals who torture non-human animals eventually (or simultaneously) harm women, in particular, and/or wound/torture/kill human beings, in general. In *The Lord of the Rings*, Gandalf tells Frodo that animals and the Woodmen of Mirkwood all stated that Gollum killed baby animals and baby humans (*Fellowship*, “Shadow” 56-57). One, furthermore, must also note the progression of Gollum’s killing: baby birds, non-bird animal young, and then human babies; this alludes to how disturbed individuals can slide from a disregard for certain life-forms to even cavalierly slaying their fellow humans.⁴²⁹ Likewise, Morgoth’s (e.g., his diabolical treatment of the Eagles⁴³⁰) and Sauron’s abusing of animals (e.g., his abuse of horses⁴³¹) and the Free Peoples parallels this Ecofeminist tenet as well (“Vegetarian” 137). Morgoth, Sauron, and Saruman, by mutilating/corrupting the Orcs, the Goblins, and the Trolls, torture (and otherwise harm) the bodies of other beings in a way that parallels the Western tendency of “somatophobia” (Gaard, “Vegetarian” 138).

429. Because Saelon wantonly harms trees and eventually supports even murder (indeed, Saelon appears to plan to kill Borlas) in *The New Shadow* (*Peoples* 412, 414, 416-17), Saelon exhibits something akin to “somatophobia” (i.e. “hostility to the body”). As Vegetarian Ecofeminists observe (Gaard, “Vegetarian” 137-38), animal abuse is linked to murder; I contend that Saelon’s killing/maiming of trees sows the seeds for his later contemplation of and desire to kill Men. Borlas’ fears concerning the possibility for a person’s ethics to devolve from purposely wasting fruit to harming parts of the tree (e.g., a tree’s bark or its branches) to killing a whole tree for no reason to felling young trees without justification (other than the love of slaying something) also somewhat parallels this aforementioned Vegetarian Ecofeminist idea (*Peoples*, “New” 413-14).

Consequently, my reading displays a degree of commonality with Denekamp’s characterization of Saruman and the Orcs’ wanton destruction of trees as environmental “genocide” (4).

430. Morgoth engages in animal cruelty by chaining the Eagles to “sharp rocks” and forcibly removing the wings of “many” Eagles in *The Fall of Gondolin* fragment (*Book . . . 2* 193-94).

431. For more information on this topic, read chapter three and the Rohirrim section of the “Moderate Environmentalism” portion of this chapter.

Finally, Tolkien's Middle-earth fantasies also sometimes parallel Vegetarian Ecofeminist critic Curtin's championing of "dialogue" to achieve an understanding between species, and thereby avoid unnecessary violence (Curtin 64). For example, in *The Two Towers*, Treebeard must first "hear the voices" of the Hobbits in order to avoid wrongfully killing them⁴³² ("Treebeard" 452-53). Likewise, Bombadil's talks with the Hobbits about the various flora, fauna, non-living entities, and landscapes of the Old Forest and other nearby lands in *The Fellowship of the Ring* improves the Hobbits' comprehension of the physical environment in and around the Old Forest ("House" 127-28). As a result, Bombadil's instruction may reduce future violence between the Hobbits and the physical environment (e.g., the rivalry between the Hobbits and the Old Forest trees may lessen) ("House" 127-28).

The fantasies of Middle-earth also share commonality with some of the tenets of Eco-Marxism, which teaches that an individual—even knowledgeable and influential men and women—cannot consistently thwart ecosadistic forces (e.g., Garrard 30). Because Melian the Maia decides to isolate herself by speaking only to Mablung and because Melian chooses to cease helping to protect Doriath after the death of her spouse, Thingol, Melian's environmentalism parallels the aforementioned Eco-Marxist tenet that notes the environmental shortcomings of individual efforts to preserve the environment.

432. In some instances, however, opponents of Sauron are less fortunate and *hastier* than Treebeard and harm other enemies of Sauron who should be their allies. For example, because the Rohirrim violently persecute the Drúedain, Vegetarian Ecofeminists would likely note that the Rohirrim (prior to the War of the Ring) parallel Sauron's oppression (albeit to a lesser degree); rather than empathizing with the Wild Men, their fellow sufferers, the Rohirrim choose to hunt and kill the Wild Men (Gaard, "Vegetarian" 120-21).

Moreover, because Tolkien describes the solitary⁴³³ Radagast as a partial failure yet characterizes the alliance-forging Gandalf as a success, Tolkien's fantasies again parallel the Eco-Marxist point that a large group of eco-friendly forces must band together to prevent environmental ruin (Garrard 30). Gandalf's environmental behaviors and attitudes, therefore, also parallel the Eco-Marxist belief that isolated individuals and small groups cannot preserve nature from harm. By tirelessly working to encourage and otherwise aid the Elves, the Men, the Hobbits, the Dwarves, and the Ents of Middle-earth against forces of evil intending to harm the Free Peoples and nature alike, Gandalf creates alliances that eventually vanquish Sauron, who would have defeated the various Peoples if not for Gandalf's various interventions.⁴³⁴ However, as Gandalf mentions (*Return*, "Homeward" 974), his efforts on Middle-earth largely end with the Downfall of Sauron. Therefore, just as Gandalf and Aragorn look to the Ents to spur the environmental recovery in the area of Isengard (*Return*, "Many" 957-58), Gandalf informs the Hobbits that they must unite as a People to defeat Saruman, since Gandalf will no longer actively fight evil (*Return*, "Homeward" 974). In each of these categories, Gandalf, as an individual, cannot create the environmental recovery of an area; instead, the Ents and the Hobbits, respectively, must defend their own realms (*Return*, "Many" 957-58, "Homeward" 974). Gandalf, therefore, also illustrates the inability of a lone individual to save the natural world, as the Eco-Marxists argue; instead, an alliance of many Peoples must work against ecosadists like Sauron, although Gandalf and a few other individuals accept leadership roles in this fight against Sauron.

433. Radagast lives alone at Rhosgobel (*Fellowship*, "Council" 250; *Unfinished*, "Istari" 390, 401n).

434. Elrond acknowledges this at the Council of Elrond in *The Fellowship of the Ring* (244); Gandalf himself states the same thing during "The Quest for Erebor" short story (*Annotated* 370), and Treebeard alludes to Gandalf's indispensable aid in *The Return of the King* ("Many" 957).

Eco-Marxists, moreover, deride capitalism for harming the environment (in part, because of the terrible environmental record of some industrialists) (Garrard 29), yet Eco-Marxists doubt the capabilities of a few activists to prevent environmental damage (Garrard 28-30). The return of the Four Hobbit Companions to the Shire, meanwhile, results in the hitherto rather-passive Hobbits⁴³⁵ banding together to drive the Ruffians and Saruman out of the Shire, and thereby ending the squandering of natural resources, air degradation, and water pollution of the foolish pseudo-capitalistic enterprises of Lotho, Sandyman, and others (*Return*, “Scouring” 984-96). In other words, Tolkien’s *The Lord of the Rings* angrily denounces pollution and profoundly questions the need for and results from industrialization, while also arguing that individual leaders must rally their communities to combat environmental exploitation; as such, Tolkien’s characterization of Saruman’s fall includes ideas that parallel portions of contemporary Eco-Marxism.

Tolkien’s Middle-earth fantasies also generally correspond with the writings of many Eco-Marxists, because the Eco-Marxists also celebrate small, local farms and local governments (Lievens 14-15). The nineteenth-century Marxist Fredrich Engels, for example, praises the benefits of “fresh country air” and the “healthful work” that occurs when one toils on the farm and/or in the garden (qtd. in Bate 91). Engels’ aforementioned convictions parallel Tolkien’s descriptions of the gardening/farming work of many Hobbits in the Shire. The Shire Hobbits’ widespread rejection of Lotho’s

435. Although a few other Hobbits (e.g., Mayor Will) fight the Ruffians, the Tooks represent the major exception to this general trait among the Hobbits by choosing to resist the Ruffians.

Because the success of the Hobbit revolt partially results from the aid of the most powerful Hobbit family, the Tooks, this plot element within Tolkien’s *The Lord of the Rings* parallels the arguments of the one-time Marxist and Social Ecologist and subsequent *Communist*, Murray Bookchin. Bookchin believed that the “whole community” should and must contribute to a revolution—not merely the working classes (Biehl 3).

industrial farming and their re-adoption of family-oriented cultivation, for instance, parallel a portion of *Ecosocialism*, as described by Lievens: “the restoration of small-scale organic farming” (16). Finally, by granting something akin to “home-rule” for many indigenous groups (e.g., the Ents, the Wild Men, the Hobbits, and the ex-slaves of Mordor) who live in localized areas, Aragorn’s policies parallel another tenet of *Ecosocialism* (14-15).

An emphasis on local decision-making is one of the main ways Tolkien’s works and Postcolonial Ecocriticism bear a degree of similarity with one another. Postcolonial Ecocritics argue that social and environmental justices are inherently tied to one another (Huggan, “Greening” 704), which leads these ecocritics also to maintain that “local communities” possess the “right to steer their own societal, cultural, and environmental course” (Huggan and Tiffin 69). Consequently, Postcolonial Ecocritics contend that local communities should decide how much “development” they should/should not embrace without marginalizing small-scale farming (Huggan and Tiffin 33), which reinforces the Postcolonial Ecocritical desire to shift away from much of current ecocriticism, which often privileges the global “whole” (“Greening” 720). Furthermore, Postcolonial Ecocriticism contends that *low-impact ecotourism* is permissible (Huggan and Tiffin, *Postcolonial* 68). Huggan and Tiffin, for example, describe *ecotourism* as a collection of activities attempting to improve “public awareness of the environment,” while “maximizing economic benefits for local communities, fostering cultural sensitivity, and minimizing the negative impact of travel on the environment” (69).

As I mention in earlier sections of this dissertation, Tolkien portrays Aragorn granting home rule-like status to a variety of Peoples, including the Shire Hobbits,⁴³⁶ the Breelanders, and the Wild Men/Drúedain. Thus, Aragorn's edicts concerning these Peoples share some kinship with the aforementioned Postcolonial Ecocritical tenet, which emphasizes the need to empower locals to decide how to guard their environments and how to manage their country. Similarly, Aragorn encourages the Ents to plant and nurture more trees in additional areas beyond the Treegarh and Fangorn Forest, and he encourages the Ents to renew their search for the Entwives, but Aragorn refrains from commanding the Ents to do so (*Return*, "Many" 958). Indeed, Aragorn only requires that the Ents guard Orthanc (which Aragorn's ancestors created) against intruders and to report anything peculiar to him (*Return*, "Many" 958). *Locals* still decide how to maintain the land, since Aragorn represents the *local* political authority among Men, while Treebeard serves as the leader among the Ents, who agree to follow Aragorn's requests. Furthermore, as the Ents' destruction of Saruman's polluting and clear-cutting machines and the Hobbits' rebellion against Lotho's counterproductive, unnecessary, and polluting new mill demonstrate, these local communities choose to reject the technocrats' inventions that they tried to impose on their neighbors. Consequently, these passages parallel the aforementioned Postcolonial Ecocritical tenet concerning locals determining

436. Since some of the agricultural Hobbits eventually move west with their livestock to *The Westmarch*, the Hobbits parallel what postcolonial environmentalists note as a typical Western tradition: move west and bring flora and fauna to new lands, which, in turn, will result in altering the landscape(s) and ecosystem(s) to some degree (*Return*, "Appendix B" 1072; Huggan and Tiffin 181). This westward migration by the Hobbits continues their cultural tendency to move in this direction, since, centuries before, when Sauron began twisting the Greenwood into Mirkwood, Hobbits also migrated in a westward direction (*Fellowship*, "Prologue" 3). Indeed, *The Silmarillion* repeatedly discusses the westward migrations of the Elves during the Great Journey to the Blessed Realm (e.g., "Quenta: Coming . . . Elves" 53-54) and of the Edain, who yearn to escape Morgoth and his domination of Men (e.g., "Quenta: Coming . . . Men" 141-45).

the proper amount of development for their communities.⁴³⁷ Meanwhile, Gimli's vision of Dwarves embarking on "an endless pilgrimage [. . .] merely to gaze at" the Glittering Caves in Rohan in *The Lord of the Rings*⁴³⁸ (*Two*, "Road" 534) and the Minas Tirith residents' journeys to Lossarnach to behold the land's orchards and flowers ("Rivers" 18) seem akin to *ecotourism*, as described by Postcolonial Ecocritics. Whether or not one believes that these two examples of ecotourism in Tolkien's works classify as "low-impact," the activities could increase the participants' knowledge and appreciation of the environment, which (as noted previously) Postcolonial Ecocritics consider to be some of the positive benefits of *ecotourism*.

Tolkien's Middle-earth fantasies also include passages that address a version of environmental guardianship that includes the troublesome ethics of "hegemonic centrism" (i.e., the self-centered privileging of one's own group over all others) that Postcolonial Ecocritics discuss (e.g., Huggan and Tiffin 180). Because Galadriel and the Elves of northwestern Middle-earth of the Third Age resist their yearning to maintain the beauty of their realms a little longer by not helping the other Free Peoples against Sauron during the War of the Ring (*Fellowship*, "Mirror" 356), these Elves refuse to adopt the ethics that parallel hegemonic centrism. Sauron, however, behaves in the opposite manner, for Sauron selfishly and callously conquers his enemies by seizing and harming the physical environments of his foes' homelands, and therefore, Sauron's warfare tactics

437. By observing the kinship between postcolonial theory and the Hobbits' beliefs and actions during their rebellion against Saruman and the Ruffians, as well as during their renewing of their homeland, I disagree with Ertsgaard's belief that postcolonial discussions cannot extend to Europe, since Tolkien infuses the Hobbits with some European qualities (210). I believe Ertsgaard's analysis not only ignores the fact that the Irish suffered/suffer under centuries of British colonial control but also that, historically, England experienced multiple waves of imperialism from groups like the Romans, the Angles, the Saxons, the Vikings, the Normans, the Spanish, and the Germans.

438. After the conclusion of the War of the Ring, Gimli's desire quickly becomes reality, since he and many other Dwarves soon live in the Glittering Caves (*Return*, "Appendix A" 1053).

parallel Postcolonial Ecocriticism's characterization of "ecological imperialism" (Huggan and Tiffin 181). Unfortunately, the middle and late Númenóreans also increasingly parallel this description⁴³⁹; indeed, Huggan and Tiffin's description of the immoral motives for imperialism reads like an account of the Númenóreans' behavior that Herendil mentions in *The Lost Road* fragment ("Chapter III" 67). As Huggan Tiffin state, "Justification for dispossession and/or displacement was usually provided on one or more of three possible grounds: the self-accorded rights of 'conquest' or 'discovery'; the perceived inability of Native peoples to use land 'properly'; and the still more skewed perception that the land was 'empty' and could therefore be occupied at will" (137). *The Silmarillion*, however, attempts to indicate that (prior to their culture's descent into evil) the Númenóreans help the Men of Darkness suffering under Sauron's tyranny by teaching them the processes of cultivating and harvesting crops, forestry, and sculpting ("Akallabêth" 263). Nonetheless, Postcolonial Ecocritics would note that this compassion for the less knowledgeable, more harassed Middle-earth Men creates the opportunity for later generations of Númenóreans to callously steal from, enslave, and kill the descendants of these Men of Darkness, whom the mid and late Númenóreans increasingly treat in a condescending manner. Indeed, Ertsgaard astutely observes that "Tolkien was well aware of the degenerate course of imperialism" (214). The fantasies of Middle-earth share some similarity with Raymond Gore Clough's work *Oil Rivers Trader: Memories of Iboland*, which describes the enslavement and ritualistic killing of others as "British"

439. Tolkien's condemnation of Númenórean imperialism may partially stem from his knowledge that the Afrikaners/Boers (not to mention indigenous African tribes) despised the coastal imperialism of the British (who sought to establish their influence across the world during this era). Consequently, these descendants of Dutch and French colonialists immigrated further inland, although British imperialism eventually resulted in the defeat of the Afrikaners/Boers after years of bitter "guerilla warfare" (Russell 226-28).

and that this dark legacy continues via trade (Newell 6). Tolkien's works about the middle and late Númenóreans (whom many readers compare to the British), meanwhile, rebuke the arrogance and corruption of the technologically advanced but depraved islanders, because they evilly seize, enslave, and sacrifice Middle-earth Men.

Because Tolkien's fantasies take place during the earliest eras of Middle-earth, some of the Free Peoples actually migrate into lands without other Free Peoples. For example, when the Elves establish kingdoms in western Middle-earth and Beleriand during the First Age in *The Silmarillion* and other related First Age texts, no other Peoples yet exist. Moreover, as the Hobbits' migration into the Shire (*Fellowship*, "Prologue" 4-5) and Aragorn's suggestion that the Ents could spread into nearby "open" lands (*Return*, "Many" 958) demonstrate, disease and warfare actually do depopulate these areas. Moreover, the Hobbits gain permission to enter the Shire from the Arnorian King and agree to abide by the Northern Dúnedain's laws, while Aragorn states that the Ents may choose to cultivate their tree-herds in these other "open" areas. Consequently, the Hobbits do not ignore or harm the local government and indigenous population, and Aragorn does not forget the physical environment (i.e., Aragorn means that the land lacks Peoples when he describes the land as "open"; he does not suggest that the physical environment lacks value).

While ecocritics could suggest that the aforementioned depiction of depopulated lands represents a retreat into escapism that willfully ignores the plights of indigenous peoples on earth, readers should recall that Tolkien's *The Return of the King* observes that (prior to Sauron's final siege of Gondor) the Rohirrim purposely "hunt" the Wild

Men for sport (“Ride” 815). The tone and context of this *The Lord of the Rings* passage implies that Tolkien unequivocally condemns this act practiced by some of the Rohirrim. Readers should also remember that Tolkien wrote a mournful note, which mentions that some of the physically stronger and bigger Men would eventually seize the fertile lands of the Hobbits and force the Hobbits to retreat into infertile areas (*Unfinished*, “Disaster” 287n). Furthermore, the fragment “Tar-Elmar” repeatedly discusses the evils that indigenous populations experience because of imperialism, including the cruel actions of the fallen Númenóreans. Similarly, readers of *The Hobbit* repeatedly encounter reminders that Smaug seized the homeland and monetary treasure of the Erebor Dwarves after conquering the kingdoms of Dale and Erebor.

Tolkien’s works, however, feature not only characters with ethics that parallel hegemonic centrism but also its most controversial version: “environmental racism”; Tolkien, however, does not continually create his characters in this regrettable manner, for his works *can resist* the idea that an individual’s/group’s poor environmental behavior and beliefs stem from the person’s/group’s race (Huggan and Tiffin 4-5). Morgoth, the Balrogs, Sauron, Saruman, and Ungoliant, for example, prove that the Valar, the Maiar, and the other spirits do not all embrace positive environmentalism because of their race. Each *chooses* to perform evil and each (often repeatedly) refuses to repent. Furthermore, while Ertsgaard suggests that Tolkien’s works fall into racism by including binaries (210-11), Tolkien declines to create simple binaries in terms of evil, because some of the Maiar (such as Ossë,⁴⁴⁰ Melian, and Radagast) fail as environmental guardians to some

440. Ossë and his spouse Uinen teach the Teleri Elves knowledge about the ocean in the *Annals of Aman*; nevertheless, Tolkien appears to suggest only Ossë teaches the Teleri in a later draft of the *Quenta Silmarillion* (*Morgoth’s* 84, 175).

extent, although they remain more loyal to “good” than the aforementioned fully “fallen” characters. By noting the various environmental failings of the (overall) “good” Free Peoples, Tolkien’s texts again neither entirely avoid nor entirely fall within what contemporary postcolonial environmentalists label the “positive” form of “environmental racism” (Huggan and Tiffin 4-5). Tolkien seems to complicate his descriptions by dividing the various races into something like evolving ethnicities (e.g., the various pseudo-ethnicities among the Elves: the Vanyar, the Noldorin, the Sindarin, the Nandorin, the Silvan, and the Avari), each of whom possess unique environmental goals and interests. However, this difference among pseudo-ethnicities still arguably reverts to discussions of *race*, since, in Tolkien’s era, *race* referred to not only race but also nationality, ethnicity, and language (Fimi, “Teaching” 147). However, because Tolkien consciously drew some inspiration from a variety of lands (e.g., Oxford, England for Hobbiton and Ravenna, Italy, for Minas Tirith) (Flood), it indicates that Tolkien embraced some of the values associated with ethnic diversity and multiculturalism. In any case, the aforementioned evolution of the Peoples’ identities results, in part, from living in different geographical locations, as similar-minded people gather in areas they find most to their liking (e.g., the Nandorin Green-Elves of Ossiriand, the Sindarin Elves of Falas, and the Silvan Wood-Elves of Mirkwood and Lothlórien). Marriage and warfare also create greater mixing between the various pseudo-ethnicities, which, in turn, sometimes modifies or alters the beliefs and practices of individuals and cultures. For example, Galadriel possesses the lineage of the original three Elven kindreds: the Vanyar, the Noldorin, and the Teleri (e.g., *Silmarillion*, “Quenta: Eldamar” 60-61, “Quenta: Noldor . . . Beleriand” 128). Moreover, following Sauron’s obliteration of Eregion, the

Eregion Noldorin Elves flee to various places, including Lothlórien, a hitherto predominantly Silvan realm but led by Sindarin Elves (*Unfinished*, “History . . . Galadriel” 238, 243). Similarly, Tolkien creates not only eco-conscious Hobbits but also evil Hobbits, such as Lotho Sackville-Baggins and Ted Sandyman, who commit ecocide as well. In his descriptions of these characters, Tolkien does not always simply limit *environmental racism* to *environmental clannism*, for Tolkien mentions that the hitherto selfish and callous Lobelia (formerly Bracegirdle) Sackville-Baggins donates her money to aid other Hobbits harmed by the environmentally unsound policies of her son, Lotho, and the Ruffians (*Return*, “Grey” 998). In other words, the Bracegirdles and Sackville-Bagginses are not fated to callousness and general evil simply because of their family lineage. Furthermore, as characters like Finrod Felagund, Beorn, Thorin, Frodo and his Hobbit companions, Legolas, Gimli, the Lothlórien Elves, Treebeard and the Ents, the Rohirrim, the Gondorians of Minas Tirith, and Butterbur each demonstrate, the environmentalism of the Peoples can improve at the individual *and* cultural levels. Finally, readers should recall that Galadriel rebukes her Elven subjects for (what I will call) their *environmental prejudice* by noting the difference between their preconceived idea of Dwarvish characteristics, although they have not seen any Dwarves for centuries, and Gimli’s behavior (*Fellowship*, “Farewell” 366-67). Moreover, readers should recall that Gimli reduces Legolas’ *environmental prejudice* by mentioning that Legolas’ view of Dwarvish delvings is not how responsible Dwarves carve stone (*Two*, “Road” 534-35). Tolkien’s Middle-earth fantasies, consequently, encourage the use of dialogue to reduce inter-racial skepticism, in general, and misunderstandings related to the environment, in

particular, in an effort to promote, as Fimi mentions, a more harmonious and “multicultural” society⁴⁴¹ (“Teaching” 144).

Nevertheless, Tolkien’s Middle-earth fantasies sometimes characterize some groups with portrayals that parallel “positive” “environmental racism,” as described by Postcolonial Ecocritics. Tolkien’s depictions of the Wild Men parallel the overgeneralized depiction of indigenous people found in some Deep Ecological writings, which can partially essentialize indigenous peoples, such as the North American and South American Indians (Garrard 120). While Tolkien mentions in “On Fairy-Stories” that he liked stories about American Indians because of their “archaic” lifestyle and because of their languages (*Tolkien* 63), within *The Lord of the Rings*, he depicts Ghân-buri-Ghân wearing only a grass loincloth (*Return*, “Ride” 813). The possible stereotyping continues when, despite Sauron’s sorcery obscuring the sun, the Wild Men can still sense the warmth of the sun, even though the Rohirrim cannot (815). Tolkien again connects the Wild Men to nature by portraying their ritual of saying goodbye, which involves Ghân-buri-Ghân embracing the ground with his forehead (816); likewise, when Ghân-buri-Ghân quickly leaves the Rohirrim and disappears into the woods, the narrator compares Ghân-buri-Ghân to “some startled woodland animal” (816-17). Finally, Ghân-buri-Ghân and the Wild Men can detect the alterations of the wind (817), which implies a poetic reference to the changes of fortunes for those fighting during the War of the Ring. The Drúedain’s capacity to sense the natural world quite intuitively and their ability to

441. I also generally agree, therefore, with Bess Russell’s conclusion that “J. R. R. Tolkien was too young to remember much about South Africa. [...] However, more important than the child’s memory of incidents would have been his early absorption of his parents’ values: to press on with a job under difficult circumstances; to make a home among strangers in an uncongenial place; to respect people of different races and languages” (Russell 226).

perceive the alteration in the change of fortunes in the War of the Ring is also mentioned in Tolkien's unfinished work, "The Drúedain." As referenced in the legends of Númenor, the Drúedain foresaw that calamity would result from Númenórean imperialism, which led the Drúedain to leave Númenor based on their intuitive feeling that "The Great Isle no longer feels sure under our feet"⁴⁴² (*Unfinished*, "Drúedain" 385-386n). Therefore, by suggesting that less-advanced cultures have a better understanding of the environment and a better environmental intuition, Tolkien's fantasies can parallel the Deep-Ecological pension for oversimplifying the relationship of indigenous peoples and their environment and, in turn, recall what Postcolonial Ecocritics condemn as "positive" "environmental racism." However, it is important to also mention that DiPaolo states that American Indian environmental activists (and other Americans concerned with the environment) continue to reference Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* for inspiration, for solace, and for comparisons in regard to their opponents (e.g., those in favor of expanding fossil fuel drilling) (52-53). Since a lack of clothes can also signify marginalized groups in postcolonial ecocriticism (Mabie 288), Tolkien's portrayal of the Wild Men may have an additional positive. Therefore, Tolkien's works contain valuable environmental teaching as well, despite the aforementioned shortcomings of Tolkien's texts.⁴⁴³

442. Similar to the Drúedain, the Lossoth Snowmen of Forochel also display foresight when "they smelled danger in the wind" (*Return*, "Appendix A" 1017-18). However (like the Númenóreans and their refusal to heed the Drúedain), the last King of Arnor, Arvedui, fatally ignores the Snowmen's warnings when he boards the ships sent by the Sindarin Elven shipwright Círdan, since the winds and ice subsequently destroy the Elven ship, as the Snowmen feared (1017-18).

443. Tolkien also shows the intelligence of the Wild Men. For example, not only does Tolkien mention that the Wild Men remember the Stonewain Valley road and note that they realize that they must help an enemy (i.e., the Rohirrim) defeat a greater enemy (Sauron) but Tolkien also features Ghân-buri-Ghân rebuking Éomer, who suggests that Ghân-buri-Ghân, as an inferior Wild Man, could not grasp the military situation. Indeed, Ghân-buri-Ghân rebukes Éomer so well that Théoden characterizes Ghân-buri-Ghân's reply as "shrewdly" said (*Return*, "Ride" 814).

Nonetheless, Tolkien scholar Fimi argues that Tolkien presents the Wild Men as ignorant, because Tolkien borrows from Victorian racial theories that (wrongly) contended that "the mental development in 'lower', 'uncivilized' races halted in early adolescence and so their character remained more automatic and

According to Huggan and Tiffin, “negative” “environmental racism” refers to the disagreeable idea that an individual’s/group’s poor environmental behavior and beliefs stem from the person’s/group’s race (e.g., 4-5); Tolkien’s Middle-earth *Legendarium* unevenly distances itself from these ideas. Although Ertsgaard considers Tolkien’s characterizations of the Men of Darkness as homogenously evil (212), some of the Easterlings and the “peoples of Harad” (i.e., multiple groups exist within this nation) elect to live in peace with Aragorn’s Gondor (and Gondor’s allies), following the War of the Ring (e.g., *Return*, “Steward” 947). The Orcs, the Goblins, the Uruk-Hai, and the Trolls, meanwhile, are somewhat difficult to compare to the Postcolonial Ecocritical idea of “environmental racism.” After all, Tolkien provides many different possible origin stories for these groups, whose origins derive from Morgoth, Sauron, and (subsequently) Saruman conducting experiments on, torturing, and/or interbreeding Elves, Men, non-human animals, and/or fallen Maiar spirits, and/or combining them with natural substances like stone⁴⁴⁴ (e.g. *Morgoth’s*, “Myths” 406, 414). Tolkien, furthermore, notes

instinctive” (150). While I agree with Fimi’s statement that, unfortunately, Tolkien borrows from the Romantic “noble savage” tradition when he created the Wild Men (150-51), I disagree that Tolkien characterizes the Wild Men as childishly dumb (150-51). Despite the halting speech of Ghân-buri-ghân in *The Return of the King*, I contend that Tolkien does *not* describe the Wild Man as a naïve fool who is only as mentally developed as mere “children,” as Fimi contends (150). I believe this to be the case, because of Ghân-buri-Ghân’s ability to refute Éomer’s claims and because of the Wild Man’s ability to negotiate better treatment for his people, I do not believe. Instead, I believe that Tolkien’s work borrows from what contemporary readers now regard as a regrettable, stereotypical description of ESL-learners speaking in broken English but who are presented as intelligent human beings as well.

One should also mention that Tolkien lessens the stereotyping of the Wild Men and their intuitive capabilities by describing the Dúnedain (e.g., Aragorn) and the Elves (e.g., Círdan and Finrod Felagund) as groups who also possess the ability to foresee.

One *applicable* message of *The Lord of the Rings* is the rebuking of America’s treatment of the American Indian tribes. This seems to be the case because Tolkien’s *The Lord of the Rings* condemns the Rohirrim for slaughtering the Wild Men for “sport” (*Return*, “Ride” 815) and because Aragorn forbids other Men from entering the lands of the Wild Men after the War of the Ring (“Many” 954). Furthermore, Tolkien condemns American (and Russian) imperialism in a May 1945 letter to his son Christopher (*Letters* 115).

444. Because the Orcs appear to possess some non-human animal ancestors, Tolkien’s texts can undermine the human/non-human animal binary, as zoocritics would likely note. Postcolonial Ecocritics, nevertheless,

that Morgoth, Sauron, and Saruman tried to breed the vilest beings within each group that showed the worst characteristics (e.g., a lack of quality environmentalism, a lack of empathy, and violent tendencies), which means that these ecosadists bioengineer races and ethnicities in order to maximize the chances that they will commit evil. Moreover, the Dark Lords and Saruman reinforce their twisted genetic mutations by fostering a hostile physical and social environment for the Orcs, the Trolls, and the Goblins.⁴⁴⁵ The fact that section nine of “Myths Transformed” ends with Tolkien mentioning that the Orcs’ forced loyalty to Morgoth “becomes evil,” however, means that the Orcs are not in their origins unequivocally evil (*Morgoth’s* 409), which *The Silmarillion* also suggests, for Tolkien observes that the Elves believe that the Orcs descended from Elves tortured into ecosadists (“Quenta: Sindar” 93-94). This devolution, in turn, follows Tolkien’s earlier note that the Orcs “must be *corruptions* of something” and that “Melkor could utterly corrupt and ruin individuals [. . .] not [. . .] a whole people, or group of peoples, and *his making that state heritable*” (*Morgoth’s*, “Myths” 409). Furthermore, Tolkien poses the question, “Orcs [. . .] could be amended and ‘saved’?” in “Myths Transformed”

would likely describe Tolkien’s fantasies as “speciest” (e.g., Huggan and Tiffin 5), since the Orcs, the Goblins, the Uruk-Hai, and the Trolls all appear more “animal-like” and degraded. However, the Free Peoples mainly fight the Orcs and other fallen beings, because the Orcs and their corrupted peers persist in attacking the Free Peoples.

In *The Silmarillion*, Christopher elected to leave out the sentence where Tolkien describes the early Númenóreans as tutors who cure the Middle-earth Men of animalistic behavior and speech (*Peoples* 149). Consequently, Postcolonial Ecocritics would likely condemn this particular passage as speciest. 445. Because the Orcs wantonly harm various ecosystems (e.g., the beautiful lands of Beleriand during the First Age and the memorable trees of Fangorn Forest during the Third Age), Jeffers’s hypothesis that the Orcs might harm the environment, because they live in the worst sections of the world (44) seems questionable. However, one could argue that the Orcs degrade various environments, because they envy the success of others; one could also theorize that the Orcs’ poor environmental surroundings in places like Mordor enhance their inclination toward harming the physical environment and the Peoples. In any case, perhaps Jeffers wishes to distance Tolkien’s works from something like environmental racism; after all, Jeffers’s theory parallels Postcolonial Ecocritical arguments that state that poor environmentalism often derives from poor socio-economics, rather than the result of an inherent tendency within certain races (Huggan and Tiffin 180).

(409). The fact that the Orcs can rebel against their masters (e.g., Morgoth) (422), moreover, means that the Orcs are less essentialistic. Nonetheless, because Tolkien's theories about the Orcs remain speculative, Croft correctly observes that "unlike any other race in Middle-earth," "Tolkien continued to struggle to reconcile [the Orcs' problematic nature] long after [*The Lord of the Rings*] was published" (7).

Because I discuss the Postcolonial Ecocritical topic of "environmental racism" in Tolkien's works, I believe that it is also essential to state that I do not contend that Tolkien and his works praise or condone acts of prejudice based on skin color and other physical traits associated with "race," such as height.⁴⁴⁶ To claim otherwise would prove

446. However, based on contemporary standards of ethnic and racial relations, Tolkien's fantasies do sometimes include what appears to be overgeneralized, clichéd stereotypes (e.g., the Wild Men), as I mention previously, in an apparent effort to demonstrate the inherent worth of *all* of the Free Peoples. Some readers may reject Tolkien's decision to begin with a general impression of a People before problematizing it with descriptions of individual characters (cf., Gandalf's intention to prove to Thorin that the Dwarf's impression of Hobbits, in general, and Bilbo, in particular, is wrong by bringing Bilbo on the Quest for Erebor. Other relevant examples include the following: Galadriel's endeavor to rebuke the Lothlórien Elves' prejudice towards Dwarves, in general, and Gimli, in particular; the marked differences among the Hobbits, such as Bilbo, Frodo, Pippin, Merry, Samwise, the Gaffer, Ted Sandyman, and Lotho Sackville-Baggins; the uniqueness among the Ents, such as Skinbark, Leaflock, Quickbeam, and Treebeard). Nonetheless, although contemporary readers may now view Tolkien's writing method as outdated, problematic, and/or insensitive, Tolkien's rhetorical strategy still undermines racism by repeatedly observing the uniqueness of individuals and by showing that the prejudice that reifies racist metanarratives fails to match reality. Nevertheless, Tolkien's works still sometimes include what contemporary readers now view as positive yet reductive descriptions of people groups, such as the characterizations of the Wild Men in *The Lord of the Rings*.

I believe, therefore, that we should distinguish between noting some unfortunate shortcomings of Tolkien's characterizations that he used to summarize some of the general impressions of mythical people groups (i.e., Tolkien's texts do not suggest a lack of individual differences among the groups) and purposely malicious caricatures of other groups. Tolkien repeatedly mentions that the failings of the Elves, the Dwarves, the Hobbits, and the Men of Middle-earth often occur because of their choice to commit evil deeds. As the Downfall of Númenor demonstrates, the location of a civilization and the color of a race/nationality does not mean that the individuals who comprise a nation will remain "good" or "evil"; the morality and salvation of the Peoples of Middle-earth, in other words, should not be associated with Social Darwinism or Calvinism. The Men of Light are not predestined to remain among the "elect" in Middle-earth, and the Men of Darkness are not necessarily damned for all of eternity based on their birth, as I discuss elsewhere. While some contemporary readers will find the portrayal of the antagonistic Orcs, the Goblins, the Uruk-Hai, and the Trolls to be offensive, readers should recall that Tolkien's texts apparently borrow from linguistic and religious sources that refer to "Orcs" and "Goblins" as evil spirits (as I will discuss in more detail later in this chapter). Consequently, Tolkien does not intentionally create allegories, in general, as he notes in his "Foreword to the Second Edition of *The Lord of the Rings*" (xv), or base the aforementioned corrupted monsters of Morgoth, Sauron, and Saruman on specific human races or ethnicities, in particular.

inaccurate, because such an argument often contradicts Tolkien's fantasies, as well as relevant religious, historical, and linguistic facts. For example, Steuard Jensen (qtd. in Rearick 867-68) helps to refute claims of Tolkien's racism by mentioning that not only the Men under Sauron's control but also the Men of Bree and the South Gondorians under Forlong's command are called "swarthy" (or are described in related terms).⁴⁴⁷ Short, darker Men, therefore, are among the protagonists—not only the antagonists. Many of the physically short Shire Hobbits, as well as Gimli and his Dwarvish kin, also prove their heroic environmental guardianship qualities. Rearick, moreover, makes the substantive point that the non-Elvish Free Peoples' respect for the Elves often centers on the Elves' positive mental, emotional, spiritual, and intellectual qualities rather than their vague whiteness. Furthermore, the Peoples remain definitively non-Elvish rather than sufferers of double-consciousness and other evils associated with cultural imperialism (869-70). When critics contend that Tolkien's fantasies praise European imperialism and view non-whites with skepticism, therefore, these scholars overgeneralize.

Critics often problematically group the enemies of the Free Peoples en masse, as Rearick observes (861-62). When scholars conflate Sauron, the Orcs, the Haradrim, and the Easterlings as beings who represent black Africans, they oversimplify Tolkien's texts. The Orcs, the Trolls, and the Goblins do not merely live in the South and East but also in the North and West. Sauron lives in many places—including the North and West—not just the East. Many of the Easterlings make peace with Gondor after the War of the Ring (which means many serve Sauron out of fear rather than intrinsic evil). Tolkien's "Last

447. Tolkien describes the Men of Bree as "rather short" (*Fellowship*, "At" 146), and he characterizes Forlong's Lossarnach Men as "swarthier" and "shorter" than most Gondorians (*Return*, "Minas" 753).

Writings,” meanwhile, detail Tolkien’s final ruminations on the Blue Wizards and how they worked to lead some of the Men of the East to yearn for freedom and to resist Sauron; by doing so, these Wizards and Men helped the Free Peoples of northwestern Middle-earth preserve their lives and liberty (*Peoples* 385). Not all of the Men from the lands under Sauron’s tyranny, therefore, chose to align with evil willfully; indeed, some elected to undermine Sauron’s murderous ecosadistic imperialism. Consequently, evil Peoples live in geographical areas that, even if one ignores Tolkien’s explicit rejection of allegorical intention as an author (*Fellowship*, “Foreword” xv), allegorically match European areas—not just Africa—and some Southern and Eastern Men demonstrate that they possess positive qualities. Even though Tolkien describes the “black men like half-trolls” from Far Harad sounds racist, certainly (*Return*, “Battle” 828), as Middle-earth readers well know, the half-Orc Southerner, who steals the Hobbits’ horses in Bree, is a hybrid who serves Saruman (*Fellowship*, “Knife” 175-76; *Unfinished*, “Hunt” 347-48). It seems likely, therefore, that Tolkien’s descriptions of the “half-trolls” imply that the evil ecosadistic Dark Lords and Saruman force the females of all of the races of Men to have sexual relations with the fallen Orcs, as I discuss in chapter two in detail. Consequently, I agree with Hoiem’s observation that “corruption is refreshingly unconnected to contact with [the] colonial Other. Decline directly results from a cultural shift in how we assign value to things. In Tolkien’s tales, colonization inevitably commodifies personal and natural resources and justifies questionable actions in pursuit of the dream of progress” (77).

Rearick, however, may counter the charges of racism within Tolkien’s works the best with his final reflection on the subject:

The final argument against Tolkien being an affirmed racist can be gained by looking at the overall message of the work rather than at particular battles or physical descriptions. Whatever qualities the forces and peoples of Middle-earth have behind them, there is the universal truth that all things were created good. And since good is not always shining out like light, a lesson that many of the individuals in *The Lord of the Rings* must learn is not to judge individuals by their outward appearances. “We always seem to have got left out of the old lists,” complains Merry when he and Pippin discover that the Ents have no recollection of them. It is true that all through the work Hobbits are either gently condescended to or overtly disdained. No one, not even the Elves, judges them aright. And yet this least significant of races—at least so considered by the other peoples of Middle-earth—is the only one with enough love of life and enough selflessness to produce individuals who can carry the Ring to the very edge of Mount Doom. Racism is a philosophy of power, but *The Lord of the Rings* functions with the Christian idea of the renunciation of power. Christ gives up heaven, power on earth, and finally his life to achieve his goal. Frodo gives up the Shire, the power the Ring might give, and finally his life for the quest. Racism claims that one can tell the value of an individual just by looking at his or her outward appearance. But nothing could be more overtly counter to the Christian worldview that Tolkien functions in even as he creates his fantasy. To paraphrase: “Man[, Hobbit, Elf, Dwarf, and Ent] looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart” (1 Sam. 16.7). Nothing could be more contrary to the assumptions of racism than a Hobbit as a hero[, for it defies the knowledge,

expectations, prejudices, and skepticisms of the Peoples of Middle-earth—to the betterment of all]. (872)

Besides his works, Tolkien's biography and letters show that "racist" does not generally apply to Tolkien and his works. Such critics discount the fact that the notion that Tolkien possessed an anti-African bias would be a form of self-hatred, since he was born in Africa. It was only because of family issues that Tolkien declined a Professorship at the University of Cape Town in 1920 rather than a dislike of Africa (Gorelic 8). Thus, Gorelic seems right to rebuke the South Africans (among others) who incorrectly assume that Tolkien did not care about or feel a kinship with South Africa, (14). More significantly, within his "Valedictory Address," Tolkien specifically mentions that his "hatred of *apartheid* [is] in [his] bones" (238).

Similarly, Tolkien does not hate Jews, despite the troublesome fact that Tolkien's characterization of Dwarves as generally greedy parallels a pejorative description of Jews made by anti-Semites. Literary critics like Rearick recognize Tolkien's letters show that Tolkien compared the Dwarves to the Jews, because he thought that the two groups shared some commonality regarding their status as immigrants living in foreign lands and their knowledge of multiple languages (864). Rearick also correctly notes that Tolkien penned letters attacking racial purity theories, Nazism, and anti-Semitism, in addition to praising the accomplishments of Jews (866-67; *Letters* 37, 410). The positive and negative traits of the Dwarves, moreover, are not necessarily supposed to be Tolkien's commentaries on the Jewish People; for example, Tolkien characterizes the Dwarves as the adopted Children of Ilúvatar, whereas, in the Bible, the Jews are the *chosen* People of YHWH and the Gentiles are adopted. Russell's discussion of how the lives of Tolkien's

parents in South Africa likely influenced Tolkien's works is also relevant to the discussion of the Dwarves, as I noted previously. According to Russel, Tolkien infused his texts with "his parents' values: to press on with a job under difficult circumstances; to make a home among strangers in an uncongenial place; to respect people of different races and languages" (Russell 226). Tolkien's parents share these similarities with the Dwarvish refugees of Erebor after they lose their homeland to Smaug and live and work in foreign lands. Dwarvish characteristics, therefore, are certainly not one-to-one allegories for the Jewish people, for Tolkien builds from a variety of sources to construct his Middle-earth *Legendarium*.

Even the existence and characterizations of the problematic Orcs do not *necessarily* mean that Tolkien espoused racism. As Rearick concludes, "[Tolkien's] life, works, and letters suggest that his treatment of dark forces in general and Orcs in particular is based more on an archetypal and Judeo-Christian parameter than a racial one. In fact, the central message of his famous work is contrary to the central racist presumption, which is that individuals can be categorized and judged by their physical, racial appearances" (864). All Orcs, therefore, deserve death because of their spiritual allegiance to evil, which is an idea that Tolkien borrows from his Christianity, as Rearick mentions (870). Tolkien theorized that the Orcs might be, in part, fallen Maiar (demons), and therefore, irredeemable, as I reference in chapter two and Tolkien explains in a 1954 letter (*Letters* 177-78). Tolkien also theorized that Orcs might have come from animals and/or stones (as I mention in chapter two); either way, Christianity teaches that neither animals nor rocks possess souls/spirits. Whether they have the blood of demons, animals, and/or stones, the various kinds of "Orcs" are not like the rest of the Peoples, in other

words; therefore, when readers compare the Orcs to human races and earthly nations, the analogy is fairly strained. Rearick, furthermore, also compares the need for divine intervention rather than mortal aid for the Orcs' rehabilitation to the early Christian teaching concerning the demons voiced by Origen (871), which means that Tolkien may again build from some Christian traditions to create his fantasies. Since Tolkien, as a Catholic Christian, believed that human believers can lead other humans to eternal salvation, no human could be like an Orc in this regard either.

Since Tolkien was a philologist and since he began his mythology by creating languages that he wished to use in stories, it is also important to mention that linguistic evidence also indicates that claims that Tolkien must be a racist because of his portrayals of Orcs and Goblins appear exaggerated. "Orc" and associated words, for example, are also associated with extreme wickedness and fallen spirits in multiple languages, as Rearick mentions (870-71). Because Tolkien borrowed "Orc" from the Old English language and the Old English tale *Beowulf* (which scholars like Rearick mention) (870-71), this linguistic indebtedness implies that the ancient English, their kin, and their descendants could descend to such evil—not merely "the Other" races, ethnicities, and nationalities.⁴⁴⁸ Because Tolkien also apparently borrowed from Latin (i.e., the language used by the Roman Catholic Churches for centuries) when he decided to use "Orc" (Rearick 870-71), his decision implies that Christians, in general, and Roman Catholics, in particular, could behave Orcishly. One need only review the history of the Great War and the Second World War to perceive that "Christian" countries readily annihilated the

448. Similarly, as Rearick observes, "Goblin" may derive from a Middle English word, "gobelinus" (which John Wycliffe borrowed from to translate Psalms 90:6) and means "evil spirit," as well as "incubus" and "demon" (Rearick 871).

physical environments of, defaced/destroyed/stole the created artifacts of, and maimed/tortured/killed the peoples from the land of their enemies in a manner akin to the Orcs and the Goblins. In works like *The New Shadow* (as I mention in chapter two and three), Borlas explicitly compares Saelon's wanton ecosadism to Orcish behavior. This literary fact indirectly leads to the conclusion that, because Tolkien borrows from Christianity, models Minas Tirith on an Italian city, builds from European and world history, and writes a "mythology for England," Tolkien's fantasies chide Tolkien's fellow Europeans (i.e., not *just* "the Other" nations of Africa and Asia) for behaving in a manner similar to the Orcs.

Tolkien's fantasies also parallel some of the environmental tenets within Post-humanism.⁴⁴⁹ For example, "Trans-subjectivity" refers to the state where food exists within humans, which leads one to discuss the fates of the flora and fauna that humans consume, as well as the landscapes from which the aforementioned non-human animals and plants come from (Alaimo 4). Because of the ability for foreign objects (e.g., food) to pass through the human body and for humans to affect their environments, humans possess "transcorporeal" bodies; in other words, "bodies extend into places and places deeply affect bodies" (Alaimo 5). Examples of "transcorporeality" and learning about one's environment ranges from more moderate examples like gardening to more radical choices like "tree-sitting" on platforms amid trees, according to Stacy Alaimo (28-29). Because the *Ent-draughts* affect the bodies of those who drink them, Tolkien's works certainly contain precursors to the transcorporeal idea that Alaimo describes. Not only

449. Denekamp mentions that Tolkien's depiction of a fox's inner thoughts during a scene in the Shire in *The Fellowship of the Ring* ("Three" 71) is tantamount to "a hint of post-humanism" (20).

does Tolkien repeatedly allude to how the diets of the Peoples affect and exhibit the Peoples' environmental beliefs and actions but also Tolkien's fantasies include gardening Peoples like the Entwives, the Hobbits, the Elves, and the Gondorians, as well as the tree *flets* of the Lothlórien Elves. Finally, because the greening of Minas Tirith includes an increase in the numbers of birds in the fortress-city (*Return* "Last" 854, "Steward" 947), Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* parallels one of the solutions to improve the urban environment mentioned in Alaimo's 2016 work, *Exposed: Environmental Politics and Pleasures in Posthuman Times*⁴⁵⁰ (33-34). Likewise, since some of Tolkien's Elves and Dwarves carve images of the flora and fauna that they cherish into their subterranean dwellings (e.g., *Silmarillion*, "Quenta: Sindar" 92-93), this means that their actions also share some kinship with Alaimo's belief that "biomorphic or zoomorphic architecture may inspire environmental practices" (33).

The fantasies created by Tolkien also prove akin to the Social Ecological tenet that encourages others to emulate those who practice positive environmental behaviors⁴⁵¹

450. As Alaimo's work alludes to, the plight of songbird species in our primary world has reached a critical juncture. According to Bart Ziegler of *The Wall Street Journal*, the populations of some North American songbird species have declined by half or more since the mid-twentieth century, which has led members of the National Audubon Society and other environmental groups to encourage urbanites and suburbanites to plant certain flora to help reverse these trends (par. 2-4, 8-9). While I do not intend to suggest that Tolkien consciously predicted such a steep decline in the number of songbirds, I mean to suggest that Tolkien's fantasies again include the proper solution: humans should labor to guard and preserve these bird species.

In fact, in March 2018, IPBES: Science and Policy for People and Nature published an article stating that, across the globe, "biodiversity and nature's capacity to contribute to people are being degraded, reduced and lost due to a number of common pressures" (par. 5). These pressures include "climate change," "increasing numbers and impact of invasive alien species," "air, land, and water pollution," "habitat stress," and "unsustainable use of natural resources" (par. 5).

451. In addition to the traits of the characters listed below, readers could also emulate the environmental behaviors of Beren and Aragorn, as I discuss elsewhere. Moreover, as noted in earlier chapters and sections, the alliance of the Free Peoples against Sauron and the Hobbits' rebellion against Saruman (and Saruman's Ruffians) represent possible templates for readers and communities to follow when faced with megalomaniacal, imperialistic forces who commit ecocide.

(e.g., Garrard 29-30). Gandalf, since he is the only entirely “faithful” member of the Istari in the Third Age of Middle-earth, is an exemplary environmental model (Garrard 29-30). Because horses repeatedly greet Gandalf with joy, because horses arrive at his command (*Two*, “White” 477, 492), and because Gandalf helps Aragorn locate the White Tree seedling after the War of the Ring (*Return*, “Steward” 950; *Silmarillion*, “Rings” 304), Gandalf’s environmental knowledge and appreciation are clear. When one reads the initial version of “The Elessar,” Gandalf’s attention to the environment becomes even more pronounced.⁴⁵² In this version of the fragment, Gandalf returns the Elessar to Middle-earth, as requested by Yavanna and the rest of the Valar, to encourage the exiled Galadriel and to demonstrate that the Valar remain interested in the renewal of Middle-earth by resisting (and seeking to redress) the ecocide committed by Morgoth, Sauron, and their followers (*Unfinished*, “History . . . Elessar” 249-50). Gandalf, consequently, treats non-human animals like horses, as well as Men and Elves, in a kind, selfless, and knowledgeable manner.

Besides Gandalf, Bombadil (to an extent) also serves as a potential environmental model, since he teaches the Hobbits to treat the environment with more respect. Bombadil feeds and waters the Hobbits' ponies before feeding the Hobbits, because the Hobbits have not worked as hard as the ponies (*Fellowship*, “House” 122; Byerly 63; Garrard 29-30), which implicitly teaches the Hobbits to focus less on their own needs and more on the well-being of others. Bombadil continues this instruction when he sings and speaks to the Hobbits the following day; during this lesson, the Hobbits learn to better

452. In the first version of “The Elessar,” Enderhil creates the green stone that appears to viewers like living leaves and sunlight and possesses the power to heal even the most “grievous hurts” in Middle-earth, including maimed and traumatized Elves, humans, and non-human animals (*Unfinished*, “History . . . Elessar” 248-49).

comprehend and value the physical environment without relating the flora, fauna, soils, air, landscapes, and waters just to themselves (*Fellowship*, “House” 127).

Tolkien describes the Wild Men as qualified environmental models in “The Drúedain” fragment as well. Besides their immense knowledge of nature (*Unfinished* 382), the Drúedain also parallel the Social Ecological idea of individuals and communities behaving in an “exemplary” and “sustainable” manner through their “frugal” eating habits (Garrard 29-30), which (as I discuss in chapter two) contrasts with the Hobbits’ cultural tendency to embrace gluttony.

Tolkien’s works also reference a variety of other lessons of “exemplary” environmental behavior. As the examples of the Eldar Elves, the Edain, the Númenórean Exiles, the Hobbits, the Dwarves of northwestern Middle-earth, and the Ents and their battles against ecosadistic forces demonstrate, Tolkien’s Middle-earth tales argue that the morally/ethically upright *must* resist ecocide. If readers prove victorious over ecosadistic combatants, Tolkien’s texts suggest that readers should follow the models of the Hobbits in the Shire, the Ents in the Treetag and Fangorn Forest, and the Gondorians in Minas Tirith and elsewhere by rebuilding, replanting, and cleaning up polluted areas. Nevertheless, Tolkien’s Middle-earth fantasies do not shy away from the fact that imperialistic ecosadists are sometimes victorious, as the obliteration of Beleriand, Eregion, and the Entwives’ Gardens make clear. Not all things end with a “eucatastrophe,” as Tolkien himself mentions in “On Fairy-Stories” (*Tolkien* 85-86). Yet, Tolkien’s *The Lord of the Rings* indicates that the “exemplary” environmental attributes within a culture may continue to help others through those they mentored for a time—even if the former environmental mentors’ civilization no longer exists. For instance, the

Entwives taught the Hobbits and Men agriculture (*Two*, “Treebeard” 465), which helped multiple civilizations for centuries, which, in turn, enabled righteous communities of Men and some of the Hobbits to come to the aid of others besieged by ecosadists.

Postcolonial Ecocritic Huggan, meanwhile, condemns the argument of those who privilege non-human animals over humans by describing such convictions as “lunatic-fringe misanthropy” (“Greening” 702); by broadening Huggan’s blunt label to refer to critical commentaries that privilege non-human nature over humanity, the term can apply to portions of a few arguments within Tolkien studies. Because Flieger criticizes the Hobbits for farming, for defending the Hedge, and for protecting themselves from the onslaught of the dangerous Old Forest trees and because Jeffers questions the Gondorians for constructing things to save their lives, each of these critical arguments approach “misanthropy,” as defined by ecocritics in several ecophilosophies. If Tolkien scholars used contemporary ecocritical terminology more often, it seems less likely that these types of controversies would occur in Tolkien studies.

Like Campbell (261-71), I agree that Flieger is correct to point out that some critics (e.g., Curry) underestimate the Hobbits’ environmental mismanagement of the Old Forest. However, I disagree with Flieger’s decision to undervalue the context for why the Hobbits aggressively defend their Hedge from the Old Forest, and I disagree with Flieger’s criticism of the Hobbits’ use of farmland (e.g., 265-66). Because Old Man Willow possesses the ability to manipulate his trunk to open and close and because Old Man Willow uses his root to hurl Frodo into the Withywindle (*Fellowship*, “Old” 114-15), this strongly suggests that Old Man Willow can move like the Huorns of Fangorn

Forest,⁴⁵³ who consume the Orcs with their roots and branches after the Battle of Helm's Deep with the blessing of the Ents. The fact that Sam and Frodo's fire visibly and audibly arouses the Old Forest in a manner akin to Fangorn Forest indicates that the Hobbits—in their effort to save their friends by “frightening” Old Man Willow with fire—are probably doomed to deaths similar to how the Orcs died.⁴⁵⁴ Consequently, this means that Flieger is partially right when she points out that some similarities exist between the Old Forest and Fangorn Forest (e.g., 264). Nonetheless, Frodo and his companions desire to escape the Old Forest trees as quickly as possible, avoid destroying any Old Forest trees after Old Man Willow seizes Merry and Pippin, and still refrain from harming the trees out of revenge even after Merry and Pippin are safely out of Old Man Willow's clutches (109-19). If Old Man Willow (and/or the trees under his control) impishly teased Hobbits in a manner similar to how he tortures the Four Hobbits in previous eras, it suggests that the Hobbits felled the Old Forest trees in the Bonfire Glade-era, because they may have faced a life-or-death predicament. Furthermore, even without sinister trees, the Hobbits

453. Consequently, Pippin's dream of Old Man Willow in Bombadil and Goldberry's home might be based in reality like Frodo's dream of Gandalf (*Fellowship*, “House” 125, “Council” 254). Perhaps Bombadil permits Old Man Willow to wander only at night, which would mean that Bombadil literally means what he says (i.e., “Heed no nightly noise! Fear no grey willow!”), as he bids the Hobbits, “Good night” (“House” 124). If Old Man Willow does wander at night, this could provide added meaning to why Merry mentions that the Buckland Hobbits find the Old Forest “most alarming at night” when the Old Forest trees “actually move” (“Old” 108).

Therefore, the likelihood that some of the trees in the Old Forest can move in a manner akin to the Huorns, I believe, undermines Hammond and Scull's argument that the Old Forest trees never assaulted the Hedge, because “the trees were naturally propagating” (qtd. in “*Lord*” . . . *Reader's* 121).

454. I believe that some internal textual parallels help to suggest that the Old Forest includes Huorns. When Frodo and Sam anger Old Man Willow by threatening him with fire, the Old Forest trees are noticeably disturbed to the point that the Hobbits' actions are akin to “dropp[ing] a stone into the quiet slumber of the river-valley” (*Fellowship*, “Old” 116). Similarly, Gandalf states that the arrival of Merry and Pippin to Fangorn Forest resembles “the falling of small stones that starts an avalanche” (*Two*, “White” 485).

Therefore, the ignorance of the Hobbits would have cost them their lives, if not for the arrival of Bombadil, since the fury of the Old Forest with the onset of nighttime would probably look comparable to the furor of the Fangorn Forest Huorns. Nonetheless, as Campbell mentions in his critique of Flieger's reading (269), the Hobbits' environmentalism improves, which stands in sharp contrast to the Orcs' static ecosadism; after all, it is partially because of the Hobbits' arrival that the Ents march to war and Fangorn Forest is saved from the Orcs' mischief, as Gandalf states (*Two*, “White” 485).

need a thick, unified Hedge to help the Hobbit Bounders protect the Hobbits and their homeland against the occasional occurrences when feral animals (e.g., wolves) and/or mysterious Men roam nearby and even cross their borders (e.g., *Fellowship*, “Prologue” 5, 10). Consequently, Campbell (by qualifying the analysis of other critics like Flieger and James C. Davis) correctly observes that the Hobbits’ “desire” to protect the Hedge for “vital” reasons is ethical (qtd. in 262, 270). Deep Ecologists (Garrard 22; qtd. in Clark 4; Naess, “Deep” 261), Postcolonial Ecocritics (Huggan, “Greening” 702), Vegetarian Ecofeminists (Curtin 69-70), and other ecocritics would likely agree with this assessment. Similarly, because Flieger criticizes the Hobbits for maintaining farms on land that the Arnorians converted from woods to farmland centuries before, Flieger undervalues the necessity for the Hobbits to feed themselves and then undervalues the fact that the Hobbits are not even to blame for initially clearing the land for the vast majority of the Shire (365).⁴⁵⁵ Thus, by including the ecocritical discussion of misanthropy, readers perceive that Flieger correctly notes that the Hobbits are not ideal environmental guardians, while also noting the critical fact that Flieger’s reading underemphasizes the necessity of certain environmental choices in vital circumstances.

Meanwhile, Jeffers’s skeptical view of the actions and attitudes of the Gondorians’ construction activities peaks when she discusses Minas Tirith and her concern over the hill’s ability to lose signs of human presence once Gondor ceases to exist (68). Jeffers (who borrows from one of Wendell Berry’s arguments) makes some value judgments. Her analysis parallels the Deep Ecological idea that natural forms, such

455. Indeed, by doubting the ability for the Shire to be “well-farmed” (265), Flieger underrates the differences between the Hobbits’ sustainable farming methods and agribusiness techniques that often alter and harm the environment even more.

as landscapes, deserve the same type of treatment as non-human animals and humans (Garrard 22), as well as a tenet of Heideggerian Ecophilosophy: do not regard natural resources as simply awaiting their selection to be used by humans, and therefore, refrain from interfering (Garrard 31-32). Jeffers finds the creation of Minas Tirith atop a hill “not far from” the type of “oppression” of the ecosadists Sauron, Saruman, and the Orcs (67). My views differ from Jeffers’s arguments, however. Rather than directly challenge her naysayers, Jeffers offers the following statement concerning the dire need of the people of Gondor and the importance of Minas Tirith’s position upon the hill:

Now, one may argue that the need of the people was great, and that sacrificing the natural processes of one hill is a small price to pay for the protection of the rest of the world. One might even be tempted to argue that nothing could be more natural for a hill or a mountain than to be a fortress, as they have had that function for most of human history. There may be merit in these arguments. (69)

“There *may* be merit in these arguments”? This is an overly cautious qualification, considering the tens of thousands of people in Gondor (to say nothing of the other realms and Peoples) who will *die*, or become *enslaved* by Sauron, or find themselves in exile if Gondor fails to prepare for and defend against a siege from Sauron’s Mordor. Similarly, if not for the Gondorian road created in Stonewain Valley, the Rohirrim would not arrive in time to lift the siege of Minas Tirith. Partially because of the ancient engineering of the Gondorians, Sauron fails to conquer the northwestern areas of Middle-earth. Not only does Jeffers’s analysis marginalize the fact that the Gondorian forts and roads enable their salvation (and the rest of northwestern Middle-earth), her reading also equivocates the certainty of death by Sauron’s forces with the potentiality of attack. By saying such

ideas “may” be rational (69), Jeffers seems to doubt the belief that “vital” human needs trump the needs/desires of the rest of nature, which is a conviction held by a wide variety of ecocritics, including Deep Ecologists (Garrard 22; qtd. in Clark 4; Naess, “Deep” 261), Postcolonial Ecocritics (Huggan, “Greening” 702), and Vegetarian Ecofeminists (Curtin 69-70). Without Gondor’s defense system, not only the Free Peoples of northwestern Middle-earth will suffer but also the flora and fauna of Middle-earth as well, since Sauron would then threaten northwestern Middle-earth to an even greater degree. Jeffers, on the other hand, appears to try to sidestep this problem by switching to the topic of how humans create fortresses to defend themselves from possible attack.⁴⁵⁶

The main problem with Jeffers’s reading of Tolkien’s Middle-earth works stems from her attempts to distinguish the overly broad “power with,” “power from,” and “power over” groups. According to Jeffers, the hill that Minas Tirith rests on “is no longer a hill,” because a fortress-city lays atop the hill (69). Jeffers creates an example of the classic binary of Westerners: natural hill vs. no hill with a fortress on the non-hill. Besides privileging the notion of “natural” and the idea that nature stays static if not for humans and human activity, Jeffers’s analysis discounts the fact that a hill can remain a hill despite a fortress adorning the hill. If we follow the logic of Jeffers’s analysis further, Bombadil and Goldberry’s house on a hill is no longer a “knoll,” because their house stands on it (*Fellowship*, “Old” 119), and the Lothlórien Elves’ use of trees to create “wooden platforms” (flets) that they attach to trees renders the Lothlórien forest no longer a forest (“Lothlórien” 333-34). Likewise, the legendary Hobbit holes make the soil

456. This construction strategy parallels the Moderate Environmental belief that promotes the use of natural resources in moderation to meet human needs (Garrard 18-19).

no longer the ground, and the Dwarves' stone-carving of Erebor causes Erebor to cease to exist as a mountain. Meanwhile, by such logic, the Watchwood created by the Ents fails as a wood, because the Ents impose their will by nourishing it, while the Ents live on the ground tarnished by Isengard and Orthanc that the Gondorians erected long before. In other words, I believe Jeffers's "power" groupings leads to overgeneralizations.

Although Jeffers opts to limit her criticism to *The Lord of the Rings*,⁴⁵⁷ other Tolkien texts qualify her characterization of Minas Tirith as "not too far from" the type of "oppression" and environmental annihilation caused by the Orcs, Saruman, and Sauron (67). Hazell offers a view that counters Jeffers's: "Built into the side of a hill, Minas Tirith, like many of Tolkien's habitations, seems part of the earth. It takes advantage of a lofty rock bastion that bifurcates the city and provides a vantage point as part of the extraordinary defense system that protects the king's abode. The city climbs the hill within seven circles of fortified walls, each with gates offset from the other levels" (91). Thus, by building Minas Tirith (which follows the obliteration of Númenor that partially results from the deviously manipulative and evil counsels of the second Dark Lord, Sauron), the Gondorians mirror the creation of the fortified dwelling in Valinor by the Valar after the first Dark Lord, Morgoth, assaulted the Valar and destroyed the Two Lamps (*Silmarillion*, "Quenta: Beginning" 36-37). According to *The Silmarillion*, the Valar establish a kingdom and a protected citadel, complete with gardens, after learning that a present danger exists. The Valar's actions foreshadow later cities of Elves and Men

457. Whereas I believe Jeffers is wrong to analyze *The Lord of the Rings* in isolation, I agree with Fimi's contention that scholars should analyze Tolkien's Middle-earth *canon* rather than only his masterpiece to improve the depth and accuracy of their critical interpretations of Tolkien's fantasies (*Tolkien* 202), as I mention at the beginning of this dissertation.

like Gondolin and Minas Tirith, respectively⁴⁵⁸: “Behind the walls of the Pelóri, the Valar established their domain in that region which is called Valinor; and there were their houses, their gardens, and their towers” (“Quenta: Beginning” 37). Consequently, Jeffers overreaches by deeply questioning the quality of the Gondorians’ environmental guardianship, because the Gondorians (who live under threat of attack from Sauron and his allies) echo the activities of the beings that serve as the protectors of Middle-earth. If the Númenórean Exiles who establish Minas Tirith are approaching the status of near-Orcs, as Jeffers argues (67), the Valar (the Guardians of Arda) and the First Age Noldorin/Sindarin Elves of Gondolin, which Turgon founds at the direction of the Vala Ulmo (*Silmarillion*, “Noldor” 125-26), are as well. If readers, therefore, agree with Jeffers’s analysis, all of Tolkien’s tales are amoral power struggles. However, as I indicate in the aforementioned paragraphs and chapters, I firmly believe that this is not the case. On the contrary, Tolkien’s Middle-earth fantasies provide environmental guardianship lessons, which teach readers not only more about how to ethically guard the

458. Similar to Pelóri, Minas Tirith also resembles Gondolin. Gondor's name means “Stone-land” (*Letter* 409); the Wild Men call Minas Tirith the “Stone-city” (*Return*, “Ride” 814), and Elrond mentions that *Minas Tirith* translates as “Tower of the Guard” (*Fellowship*, “Council” 238). Gondor’s chief city of the Third Age, Minas Tirith, also includes seven gated levels and names multiple Stewards (e.g., Egalmoth and Ecthelion) with the same names as some Elf-lords in Gondolin. The famous Gondolin realm founded by Noldorin Elves in the First Age, meanwhile, has the (somewhat) similar-sounding name of *Gondolin*, while boasting *seven* nicknames, including “the City of Stone,” “City of the Dwellers in Stone,” and “Tower of Guard” (*Book . . . 2*, “Fall” 213, 160); moreover, the Elven fortress-city boasts Seven Gates that protect it from enemies (*Unfinished*, “Tuor” 46-49).

Because Gondor's rulers either came from or were descended from Númenor (the island nation where Men could see Elvenhome in the West) another parallel exists with Gondolin, because the city's founder, Turgon, once reigned in the coastal land of Nevrast in Beleriand before building Gondolin. Turgon constructs Gondolin in memory of the High-Elven city in the Blessed Realm where he once lived before he and many other Noldorin Elves journeyed into exile.

Since the Amon Gwareth fountains were a feature in Gondolin (*Book . . . 2*, “Fall” 160), the fact that fountains become more prominent in Gondor under Aragorn’s leadership also indicates another allusion to the ancient Elvish city and testifies to the strength and splendor of Aragorn's Gondor (*Return*, “Steward” 947).

physical environment but also about the ethics of guarding created artifacts and about the need to preserve social harmony among, overall, eco-friendly groups.

Rather than misanthropy Tolkien's fantasies embrace principles that generally parallel contemporary Christian environmentalism. Christian environmentalists favor a modified form of human-centeredness, as Mabie notes (281-82); Pope Francis and Tolkien are two Christian environmentalist authors who advocate for moderate anthropocentrism. Humans, as the writings of Pope Francis and Tolkien teach, can and should moderate their use of environmental resources by questioning the need to purchase something, by refusing to callously exploit the physical environment, by maintaining a healthy skepticism of technology, and by better appreciating the sensory imagery and the intrinsic value of the environment. By living in this manner, humans will not live selfishly without regard to maintaining sustainable ecosystems. Consequently, Pope Francis' 2015 "Encyclical Letter *Laudato Si'* of the Holy Father Francis on Care for Our Common Home" condemns humans who behave recklessly toward the environment, while also qualifying the arguments of environmentalists who oppose anthropocentrism. These two main eco-friendly messages parallel the commentary in Tolkien's fantasies, as discussed throughout this dissertation, in general, and in this chapter, in particular.

Humans, in general, and Christians, in particular, should not use the earth's resources, as the writings of Pope Francis and Tolkien indicate. Pope Francis describes humanity's sinful use of "sister" earth in the following manner, within his second point:

We have come to see ourselves as her lords and masters, entitled to plunder her at will. The violence present in our hearts, wounded by sin, is also reflected in the symptoms of sickness evident in the soil, in the water, in the air and in all forms

of life. This is why the earth herself, burdened and laid waste, is among the most abandoned and maltreated of our poor; she “groans in travail” (*Rom 8:22*).

(“Encyclical”)

Pope Francis, therefore, rebukes many Christians for their callous selfishness, which leads far too many Christians, in particular, and humans, in general, to seize too many environmental resources without adequate consideration for the amount or natural resources that they use, the speed in which they acquire and use these resources, and the manner in which they retrieve the resources. Passages like Saruman’s degradation of the River Isen, Fangorn Forest, and other nearby areas in *The Two Towers* parallel Francis’ aforementioned message.

Although living decades before Francis became Pope, Tolkien’s works characterize the proper method of environmental guardianship as one that seeks to allow humans to use the environment but one that also condemns human activities that use nature while obliterating the physical environment and those who mock others for caring about the health of the environment. Consequently, the environmental messaging within Tolkien’s fantasies highly resembles Pope Francis’ environmental beliefs. In *The Silmarillion*, for example, Aulë informs Yavanna that Ilúvatar designed the Children to use natural resources but that they needed to do so gratefully and respectfully, in part, because Aulë also observes that Yavanna’s beloved fauna and flora possess intrinsic value (“Quenta: Aulë” 45-46). Similar to the sentiments expressed by Deep Ecologists (whom I discuss at some length in chapter four), Pope Francis argues that Catholicism believes that “Because all creatures are connected, each must be cherished with love and respect, for all of us as living creatures are dependent on one another” (“Encyclical”).

Phrased somewhat differently, Francis later notes that, because of “God’s loving plan, [. . .] every creature has its own value and significance” (“Encyclical”). Francis’ aforementioned conviction certainly parallels the environmental statements throughout Tolkien’s Middle-earth fantasies, in general, and Aulë’s, in particular.

Tolkien’s fantasies and Francis’ encyclical each teach the need to resist those who willfully and ignorantly harm the environment, as well as the need to steel ourselves against the urge to use technology to enable us to consume beyond our needs. Francis’ convictions, consequently, imply that Catholicism teaches that Christianity argues for something beyond what the Deep Ecologists describe as “shallow,” “moderate,” or “reformed” environmentalism. Furthermore, Francis posits that Catholicism’s adherents focus on correcting the root causes of environmental problems rather than only the symptoms. Francis writes in his 111th note that “Ecological culture cannot be reduced to a series of urgent and partial responses to the immediate problems of pollution, environmental decay and the depletion of natural resources.⁴⁵⁹ There needs to be a distinctive way of looking at things, a way of thinking, policies, an educational programme, a lifestyle and a spirituality which together generate resistance to the assault of the technocratic paradigm” (“Encyclical”). Besides increasing the environmental knowledge of Catholics and improving the environmental work of Christians, Francis aims to enhance the environmental sensitivity and appreciation of Christians so that they desire to maintain (and improve, if possible) the global environment’s well-being far

459. Francis, however, does display concern for the loss of biodiversity, for Francis encourages his readers to assist in “developing programmes and strategies of protection with particular care for safeguarding species heading toward extinction” (“Encyclical”). Because Aragorn hopes that, by giving more land to the Ents and by empowering the Ents through his encouragement and praise, the Ents may again search for and perhaps find the Entwives in lands far to the east (*Return*, “Many” 958), Aragorn’s desires for and policies concerning the Shepherds of the Trees parallel Francis’s aforementioned advice.

more than to possess the next technological gadget that may harm the environment.⁴⁶⁰ Consequently, Francis emphasizes ethical and emotional appeals to Christians to alter their environmental views, beliefs, and behaviors, rather than focusing mainly on the logical reasons to reduce present environmental problems like pollution. Readers readily find such appeals in Tolkien's works. From the teachings of Bombadil and Treebeard in *The Fellowship of the Ring* and *The Two Towers*, respectively, to Thorin's remorse for his greedy yearning to possess all of Erebor's treasure at the end of *The Hobbit* to Frodo's environmental epiphany concerning trees in Lothlórien in *The Fellowship of the Ring*, Tolkien's works repeatedly allude to the urgency for (to borrow Francis' diction) a new "way of looking[. . .] thinking, [. . .] an educational programme, a lifestyle and a spirituality which together generate resistance to the assault of the technocratic paradigm." As far as Francis' call for Christians to adopt better environmental programs against "the assault of the technocratic paradigm" and its promotion of unsustainable "consumption," Tolkien's works certainly parallel this as well, since his fantasies repeatedly feature the confrontation between the (overall) eco-friendly cultures of the Free Peoples and the callously selfish, industrialized imperialism of the Dark Lords (and Saruman).

460. The fact that Tolkien characterizes Gandalf as the "faithful" wizard, who refuses to only concentrate on the benefit of one nation like Gondor and instead tries to make decisions for the good of the Peoples across Middle-earth, parallels the sentiment expressed by Pope Francis in 2015. Within his *Laudato Si'*, Francis dates and praises global viewpoints:

Beginning in the middle of the last century and overcoming many difficulties, there has been a growing conviction that our planet is a homeland and that humanity is one people living in a common home. An interdependent world not only makes us more conscious of the negative effects of certain lifestyles and models of production and consumption which affect us all; more importantly, it motivates us to ensure that solutions are proposed from a global perspective, and not simply to defend the interests of a few countries. Interdependence obliges us to think of *one world with a common plan*. ("Encyclical")

While Tolkien's works refrain from eliminating private property and all technology, Tolkien's fantasies view economic trade, the ownership of vast amounts of land, and technological "advances" with skepticism, which means the environmental messaging within his texts again parallels the convictions of Pope Francis. According to Francis,

Science and technology are not neutral; from the beginning to the end of a process, various intentions and possibilities are in play and can take on distinct shapes. Nobody is suggesting a return to the Stone Age, but we do need to slow down and look at reality in a different way, to appropriate the positive and sustainable progress, which has been made, but also to recover the values and the great goals swept away by our unrestrained delusions of grandeur. ("Encyclical")

Lotho "Pimple" Sackville-Baggins proves one character in Tolkien's fantasies who desperately needs to adopt Francis' aforementioned advice to question what forms of technology are necessary and useful in order to preserve cultural values and the environment's well-being instead of trying to inflate his reputation to satisfy his inordinate ego. Lotho, who "wanted to own everything himself, and then order other folk about," elected to destroy the old mill in favor of building a larger one "to grind more and faster," despite the fact that "there was no more for the new mill to do than for the old" (*Return*, "Scouring" 989-90). Lotho's avarice represents the foil to what Pope Francis advocates within the "Joy and Peace" section of his writing:

Christian spirituality proposes an alternative understanding of the quality of life, and encourages a prophetic and contemplative lifestyle, one capable of deep enjoyment free of the obsession with consumption. We need to take up an ancient

lesson, found in different religious traditions and also in the Bible. It is the conviction that “less is more” [. . .] Christian spirituality proposes a growth marked by moderation and the capacity to be happy with little. (“Encyclical”)

To counteract the problems caused by selfish human environmental practices, Francis proposes that readers must work to overcome their desensitization toward the environment’s sensory imagery so that we may then recognize the various bonds we share with the earth’s flora, fauna, landscapes, bodies of water, and soils. Indeed, Francis warns readers that “If we approach nature and the environment without this openness to awe and wonder, if we no longer speak the language of fraternity and beauty in our relationship with the world, our attitude will be that of masters, consumers, ruthless exploiters, unable to set limits on their immediate needs” (“Encyclical”). As mentioned throughout the dissertation, I contend that Tolkien’s fantasies parallel this message made by Francis because of Tolkien’s depictions of the positive and negative aspects of the environmental beliefs and practices of the Free Peoples and the terrible warnings provided by the ecosadists (e.g., Morgoth, Sauron, Saruman, the non-Faithful Númenóreans, and the various “Orcs”).

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION: THE ELDER DAYS AND THE WORLD AHEAD, OR TOLKIEN'S CANON AS ENVIRONMENTAL THRESHOLDS

Over time, the protagonists of Middle-earth develop a greater appreciation for the environment's various landscapes, soils, waters, flora, and fauna by working, recreating, and resting amid nature, as well as by laboring on behalf of the environment. Because of these actions, these characters increase the breadth and depth of their environmental knowledge by using their five senses more regularly and by pursuing environmental knowledge holistically rather than narrowly. Tolkien's Middle-earth tales urge readers to make these aforementioned environmental lessons *applicable* to their own lives by continuing or modifying their environmental ethics and beliefs so that they, too, may become (or continue to act as) responsible and sensitive guardians of the physical and created environments. Indeed, Tolkien's January/February 1956 letter draft to Michael Straight provides an example of how Tolkien understood the "applicability" of his Middle-earth fantasies (*Fellowship*, "Foreword" xv), since he notes that "the spirit of 'Isengard', if not of Mordor, is of course always cropping up" but that readers should resist "the malice of Sharkey and his Ruffians here" (*Letters* 235).

Readers of Tolkien's Middle-earth fantasies can perceive some of the "applicability" of his works because of their experiences with and knowledge of air, water, and soil degradation caused by pollution from industries and other sources (*Fellowship*, "Foreword" xv). Likewise, the sorrow caused by—and the environmental damage resulting from—the decline in the world's biodiversity and the general well-being of the earth's flora, fauna, landscapes, soils, air, and waters provides readers with the opportunity to grasp how the environmental history of Britain and other lands helps to inform the reading of Tolkien's fantasies. For example, by better understanding the significance of the creation of national reserves, preserves, and parks in Britain and elsewhere, readers can better perceive the success of Aragorn's reign. Likewise, by being aware of the severe loss of hedgerows in Britain during the mid-1900s through the early 2000s and the resulting ecological calamities caused by the destruction of these ecosystems (Gelling, Macdonald, and Mathews 1020), readers can better empathize with the Hobbits' desire to preserve the Hedge.

Tolkien's Middle-earth works, moreover, teach that one must temper the works of craft and the quest for knowledge with caution and moderation. While the Elves' willingness to support Frodo's quest (which amounts to them sacrificing their own lands for the overall health of Middle-earth) represents a positive model, the fact that the Noldorin Elves originally create the Rings of Power due to a thirst for knowledge and power means that these traits can stand as key negatives. After all Sauron, subsequently, uses these Rings (albeit not the Three Elven Rings of Power) to inflict immense misery and harm across Middle-earth. Indeed, the yearning for more knowledge and more power, as exemplified by Celebrimbor, leads others to describe Celebrimbor as an Elf

with “‘an almost Dwarvish’ obsession with crafts” (*Unfinished*, “History” 235). Because Tolkien notes that one of the worst tendencies among the Dwarves is their capacity for “greed” (*Letters* 262), Tolkien counsels his readers to shun *the excesses* of the Dwarves and Elves like Celebrimbor. Within a letter draft to Peter Hastings, Tolkien makes this sentiment even more explicit when he compares the contemporary makers of “poisonous gases and explosives” to the Eregion Elves, creators of the environmentally problematic Rings of Power (190). Since Tolkien served in World War I, which stood as one of history’s most horrifying wars, in part, due to the use of chemical warfare on the Western Front where he fought in 1916 during the Battle of the Somme, Tolkien’s reference to the Elves as akin to the creators of mustard gas, chlorine gas, and phosgene gas is important.⁴⁶¹ This comparison indicates that Tolkien argues that the Eregion (and mainly Noldorin) Elves are far from “ideal” environmental guardians. Within the September 25, 1954, letter to Naomi Mitchison, Tolkien voices this sentiment quite openly: “the Elves are *not* wholly good or right” (197); the italics emphasize Tolkien’s *ire* at the idea that the Elves represent a flawless People. To support the reading of his own work, Tolkien cites the Elves’ desire to freeze Middle-earth by creating the Rings of Power as problematic, because it would prohibit or lessen major “change” (including some growth) in Middle-earth. Thus, the Elves falter due to their overwhelming desire to play the role of “embalmers” to a living world so that they might continue to exercise power in areas where they proved the greatest People (197). Although Tolkien also notes in his *Letter*

461. As critics like Mark Atherton observe (150), the sight and the effects of the release of chemical weapons like mustard gas, tear gas, phosgene gas, and chlorine gas released at the Somme seem akin to that of the “vapours” and “mists” that issue from Morgoth’s fire-drakes (*Book . . . 2* 185-86, 187). These terrible “vapours” and “mists” cause “scalding heat and blinding fogs” in *The Fall of Gondolin* (*Book . . . 2* 185-86, 187).

131 to Milton Waldman that the Elves originally yearn for “sub-creation” rather than “domination” due to their role as “artists” (146), he also mentions how individual Elves fall as a result of their “possessiveness” that connects with, in the case of some Elves, an increasing craving for power (146n). Tolkien traces the Fall of the Elves directly to Fëanor and his sons because of their “possessive attitude” for the three Silmarils that Fëanor creates in Valinor (148) and because of their “pride,” which Tolkien lists as the Elves’ prime problem in the November 17, 1957, letter to Herbert Schiro (*Letters* 262). Tolkien’s works, consequently, encourage readers to avoid these Elvish mistakes so that they may improve their qualities as environmental guardians.

Because of her fatigue, her lack of interest/desire, her loss of power with the ending of the Three Rings, and/or her fear of forgetting her knowledge of the earth, Galadriel (together with the other Elven Rings of Power bearers) chooses to leave Middle-earth. Therefore, readers can perceive that the Elves’ environmental model is doomed to failure in eras much beyond the Fourth Age when the Elves, to use the words of Galadriel, regress to nothing more than a backward “rustic folk of dell and cave, slowly to forget and to be forgotten” (*Fellowship*, “Mirror” 356). Because Tolkien concludes this phrase with the idea that the Elves will eventually fall into ignorance, Galadriel foresees that the Elves who remain in Middle-earth will amount to no more than “rustic folk,” which the *OED* describes as “Having the appearance or manners of a country person; esp. (depreciative) lacking in elegance, refinement, or education; boorish; ignorant.” Therefore, while the Elves of the first Three Ages of Middle-earth provide some positive examples for Men to follow,⁴⁶² the Elves of Middle-earth of future Ages

462. I discuss this topic in more detail during the section that features Aragorn's reign in Arnor and Gondor.

decreasingly serve as positive environmental stewardship models. The fading Elves display multiple environmental negatives, such as their diminishing knowledge and/or their unwillingness to remain in Middle-earth to redress the remaining environmental disasters caused by Sauron and other ecosadists. Nonetheless, the Men of Middle-earth (and readers) should emulate the best qualities of the Elves by endeavoring to know more about the physical environment, by appreciating the physical environment more deeply and regularly, and by meticulously laboring to create beautiful artifacts.

Similarly, the passage of time undermines the idea that the Ents are *the* models of future conservation. According to Jeffers, the Ents “have ‘power with’ the flow of time in their place” because of spending centuries upon centuries in Middle-earth observing various plants, soils, waters, landscapes, and animals, and consequently, the Ents possess immense environmental knowledge of certain areas (26). Nevertheless, because Tolkien repeatedly includes statements foreshadowing the impending demise of the Ents and woods, my views differ from those of Jeffers, because I do not believe that the Ents share a “power with” relationship with time. “By using [the Ents and the Hobbits],” according to Jeffers, “that are socially neglected and perceived as insignificant or powerless, or even nonexistent, [*The Lord of the Rings*] further suggests that anyone with love and understanding enough can do what is necessary for the protection of his or her space” (38). My analysis, nonetheless, diverges from Jeffers’s opinions partially because of the fact that the Elves, the Hobbits, and the Ents will fade, as mentioned throughout *The Lord of the Rings* and other texts. Tolkien references the doom of the Ents repeatedly. In *The Two Towers*, Treebeard recounts the loss of the Entwives and their long, futile search to find them (“Treebeard” 464-65). Legolas, an ancient Elf of the People of the Wood,

implies the depth of the decline of the Ents when he mentions that the Ents and “their long sorrow[ful]” search for the Entwives remains a subject of song among the Elves, although “even among us they are only a memory. If I were to meet one still walking in this world, then indeed I should feel young again!” (“White” 488). Moreover, within *The Return of the King*, Gandalf also highlights the fact that the Ents will fade in the Fourth Age when he informs Treebeard that “The New Age begins . . . and in this age it may well prove that the kingdoms of Men shall outlast you, Fangorn my friend” (*Return*, “Many” 957). Treebeard, as he states in *The Two Towers* to the Hobbits, bemoans the fact that he and the Ents possess little hope of ever finding the Entwives and begetting Entings (*Return*, “Many” 958). Tolkien repeats this conviction, this sense of doom, even when Aragorn gives the Ents the land near Orthanc, as well as the lands west of the Mountains near Isengard, for the Ents to continue planting trees and offers the hopeful idea that the Entwives could live in lands “eastward that have long been closed” (*Return*, “Many” 958). However, Treebeard mournfully declares that “Forests may grow. Woods may spread. But not Ents. There are not Entings” and little chance exists that this will change, since “there are too many Men” (958-59). Furthermore, Treebeard discusses the impending doom of the Ents and their environmental views and practices most poignantly within the prophecy that the Ents and the Entwives will only find one another after “we have both lost all that we now have” (*Two*, “Treebeard” 465). The unlikelihood of the Ents renewing themselves hearkens back to near the beginning of time when Manwë informs Yavanna that the Ents will “be held in reverence, and their just anger shall be feared. For a time: while the Firstborn [Elves] are in their power, and while the Secondborn [Men] are young” (*Silmarillion*, “Quenta: Aulë” 46). With the One Ring

destroyed, the power of the Three Elven Rings of Power eliminated, and the fading of the Firstborn Elves accelerating (which inaugurates the Age of Men because of Gondor's reunification with the long-desolate Realm of Arnor), Manwë's aforementioned prophecy eliminates the chance of the Ents experiencing a major renewal in both numbers and power.⁴⁶³ If a marginalized group, such as the Ents, could sustain their environmental efforts, as Jeffers's writing implies (26), Tolkien's recurring discussion of the dwindling of the Ents (as well as the dwindling of the Elves and the Hobbits) would not occur. While Tolkien's texts depict his love of and nostalgia for feraculturalism (and wilderness in general, as well as agrarianism), Tolkien's fantasies suggest that feraculturalism is not an environmental model of the future. However, Tolkien's works emphasize that the environment's well-being partially rests on others choosing to incorporate the Ents' appreciation for, knowledge of, and care for "wild" trees into their own environmental ethics. Consequently, I generally agree with Denekamp's description of the Ents and Fangorn Forest as the "platonian ideal of a wilderness of trees [. . . but] also an acknowledgment that the ideal is unattainable" (2).

Like the Ents and the Elves, the Hobbits represent a People on the wane, and therefore, the Hobbits cannot embody *the* environmental model for readers to follow; Tolkien characterizes the Hobbits as figures modeled after a bygone era and, in the plot of Middle-earth itself, a People whose civilization already peaked. According to Tolkien, "The Scouring of the Shire" reflects the situation in England [. . .] which [. . .] was being shabbily destroyed before I was ten, in days when motor-cars were rare objects"

463. Other works also reference the decline of the Ents, including some of Tolkien's later works. Within some of the notes that Christopher Tolkien collects in *The Peoples of Middle-earth*, for example, Tolkien repeatedly uses the word choice of "decline" to describe all Peoples—besides Men—in the ages that follow the Third Age ("Tale . . . Second" 172-73).

(“Foreword” xv). Since, as Tolkien realizes, automobiles will only increase, the idea of championing a People much less reliant on—and much more skeptical of—advanced industry and mechanical objects hardly stands a chance of acceptance by the masses, no matter how nostalgic the thought of a People far more in-tune with nature than with technology may seem.

Attempting to view the Hobbits as an archetype for future civilizations to return to makes even less sense if readers agree with the questionable arguments made by David Harvey, an advocate for environmental justice. Harvey believes that the Hobbits embody “the archetypal pre-Industrial Revolution English yeoman” (qtd. in Curry, “Less” 128). Meanwhile, according to Curry, the Hobbits appear as “English natives who existed prior to the pre-Norman Invasion of 1066” (“Less” 128). Hammond and Scull, however, greatly reduce the ability to read the Shire passages like Curry (or Harvey). As mentioned by Hammond and Scull,

[T]he Shire is, as Tolkien said . . . based on rural England at the end of the nineteenth century: calendars on which one could tick off dates, a postal service (with local offices), written invitations to parties, fireworks, silk waistcoats, party crackers, tissue-paper, moth-balls, umbrellas, inkwells, bookcases, etc. The tone had been set in *The Hobbit*, with Bilbo’s engagement tablet, door-bell, tea-kettle, clock on the mantelpiece, [and] pocket handkerchiefs.” (“*Lord*” . . . *Reader’s* 65)

In any case, Tolkien, as an intelligent human being, realizes that the English will not return to a society similar to the one found in 1065 England or even to the days prior to the Industrial Revolution due to the ease and comforts created by industrialization (and despite the environmental costs of industrialization). Tolkien implies such thoughts by

not presenting the Hobbits—whose civilization has “dwindled” since the era of The War of the Ring—as future models of environmental stewardship⁴⁶⁴ (*Fellowship*, “Preface” 1). Tolkien may include this reference to the Hobbits’ doom to allude to his knowledge that an economy based on agriculture often cannot contend with the lure of technology. The most poignant portrayal of this may occur in a brief note in which Tolkien mentions that (at some point after the War of the Ring but in an era now long past) Men violently forced the Hobbits to flee from their fertile lands to areas with poor soil⁴⁶⁵ so that the Hobbits descended to the status of stereotypical beasts: simply scavenging for food and scantily surviving (*Unfinished*, “Disaster” 287n).

Partially because the Hobbits’ knowledge and imagination are much less than that of the Elves, many Hobbits have a problematic relationship with nature, which could lead to subsequent environmental exploitation by the Hobbits. Although the Hobbits’ cultural practices of only minimally altering the environment to meet the needs of the community appears rather noble to many twenty-first century Western readers, the Shire Hobbits highlight how the environmental stewardship model can swerve from moderately shaping nature (with restraint always at the forefront of consciousness) to arrogant and foolish environmental destruction. The Hobbits, nevertheless, typically provide a relatively

464. Curry is not alone in his questionable belief that Tolkien’s Hobbits allude to pre-1066 England. Rearick notes that Stephen Shapiro argues that Tolkien’s description of the Shire means that Tolkien longs for a mythical time of an “English” period before the Norman invasion of 1066 and that Tolkien despised decolonization (which altered the racial makeup of the English countryside). Shapiro argues that Tolkien and his works prove racist because Tolkien wrote and revised *The Lord of the Rings* during the 1930s, 1940s, and early 1950s, which, in turn, supposedly helps to explain Tolkien’s alleged hatred of foreigners (865). However, Rearick rightly undermines Shapiro’s analysis by alluding to Shapiro’s prejudice by implying that it is wrong to assume that “living in a racist time and culture is to be assumed as a determiner of guilt” (865).

465. By behaving in this manner, these Men represent a foil to one of Naess’s Deep Ecological policies. According to Naess, one should foster an “Appreciation of ethnic and cultural differences among people, not feeling them as threats” (“Deep . . . Lifestyle” 260).

healthy view of industry because of their general skepticism of advanced machinery (*Fellowship*, “Prologue” 1). For example, speaking on behalf of other Hobbits, Farmer Cotton asks whether the community needs the machine, whether the community wants the industry (rather than endeavoring to discover if a group or an individual can create or “improve” something simply to achieve the goal in the abstract), and whether its operation will harm the environment (*Return*, “Scouring” 989). This seemingly solid foundation for the Hobbits' environmental guardianship, however, can devolve from one of “respect” and “gratitude” for nature that Ilúvatar desired and envisioned to the twisted mutation of environmental oppression that Yavanna understands Melkor/Morgoth practices and teaches (*Silmarillion*, “Quenta: Aulë” 45). Although Flieger, I believe, exaggerates the environmental impact of the Hobbits' agricultural society by describing the Hobbits as pseudo-Orc-farmers (264), a civilization that bases its environmental relationship on “need” and with only the vague restrictions of “respect” and “gratitude” leaves open the possibility for future environmental abuse. Such abuse occurs when Lotho's pipe-weed production and foreign trade reduces many Hobbits to serfdom-like status. Treebeard's admission that the sight of the Hobbits reminds him of the “little Orcs” he deplores can also allude to the possible slide from sustainable harvesting into ecocidal practices (*Two*, “Treebeard” 452-53).

As noted previously, the “nice little voices” of the Hobbits strongly contrast with the harsh discord of the Orcs (452-53), which Flieger's analysis, in my estimation, does not adequately recognize. I believe that Flieger errs since the aforementioned difference between the Hobbits and the Orcs can symbolically stand for how the Hobbits treat nature in speech as well as when, why, and how they impose their dominion over nature. At a

point some years prior to the War of the Ring, some of these “nice” Hobbits, however, opted to “cut down hundreds of trees” and burned the fallen trees in a “great bonfire in the [Old] Forest” (as opposed to choosing a more eco-friendly route by reusing the fallen timber for buildings or fences). Nonetheless, these same Hobbits acted in this manner to warn the sentient trees to avoid the Hobbits’ Hedge around Buckland. Yet, this behavior represents an example of selfish arrogance and callous wastefulness, since, even though this calculated tree-felling occurred “long ago,” Merry tells Pippin, Frodo, and Sam that there remains “still a wide bare space not far inside where the bonfire was made⁴⁶⁶” (*Fellowship*, “Old” 108). The Hobbits’ cultural descent involves their transition from behaving as responsible environmental guardians to cavalierly wiping out scores of trees occurs, in part, because of their insufficient environmental knowledge and because they lazily refuse to invest the labor necessary to use the fallen wood for a variety of potential projects. Bombadil's stories of the Old Forest, however, reconnects (or further connects) the Four Hobbit Companions to the physical environment by reducing their focus on themselves and their fellow Hobbits: “As they listened, they began to understand the lives of the Forest, apart from themselves” (*Fellowship*, “House” 127). Indeed, with the Four Hobbits “feel[ing] themselves as . . . strangers where all other things were at home” (127), Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* observes that the Hobbits fell off the pedestal of ideal environmental guardianship. Nonetheless, Tolkien also includes how the Hobbits can correct their behavior by giving more thought to the well-being of the flora, fauna, landscapes, soils, waters, and air of their homeland and other nearby areas. Farmer

466. This may not be entirely the case, however, if Old Man Willow purposely orders the Old Forest trees not to grow in the burned area in order to keep the other trees angry by reminding them on a daily basis of the Hobbits’ previous tree felling.

Cotton's anecdotal aside to the Four Hobbit Companions, "And before we knew where we were" also implies how other burdens, absentmindedness, laziness, self-delusions, and/or a lack of communal coordination can cause the degeneration of a community's environmental ethics into various forms of selfishness. Like Treebeard's statement and Bombadil's history lesson about the Old Forest, consequently, Farmer Cotton tells a story about ecocide within the Shire (*Return*, "Scouring" 989), which reinforces the need for sustained vigilance against unnecessary industries, ecocidal pollution, and brutally wasteful logging practices.

Willful lethargy and ignorance harm the Hobbits' environmental guardianship of their realm in other ways as well. Because the Hobbits' defense merely consists of the Hedge in Buckland, because only a few patrolling Hobbit Bounders try to prevent troublesome Outsiders from entering the Shire, and because the Hobbits typically distrust (and therefore avoid) the three Elf-towers⁴⁶⁷ on the Tower Hills,⁴⁶⁸ readers perceive the recklessness of the Hobbits' ignorant strand of pacifism (*Fellowship*, "Old" 108, "Prologue" 6-7, 10). The Hobbits' behavior demonstrates that they believe that the Shire will remain attack-free, despite the fact that the nearby lands of the Old Forest and the Barrow-downs each possess "sinister . . . reputations" in Hobbit lore ("Old" 111). This relatively carefree attitude contributes to the short-term success of Saruman's ecocidal forces and the Hobbits' ignorance of and thankless attitudes toward the Rangers, who

467. Tolkien wrote conflicting origin stories for the Elven Towers (i.e., White Towers) on the Tower Hills (i.e., Eryn Beraid) in the Shire, as noted by Hammond and Scull ("*Lord*" . . . *Reader's* 28). Either Gil-galad erected them, on behalf of Elendil, as mentioned in *The Silmarillion* ("Rings" 292), or Elendil and the Númenórean Exiles built them, as referenced in the unfinished *Index* (Hammond and Scull, "*Lord*" . . . *Reader's* 28).

468. Because of this decision, the Hobbits neglect positions that they could use as lookouts for approaching dangers to protect themselves.

protect the Shire and other areas of the North (like Bree). The willful blindness of the Hobbits leads them to believe that “peace and plenty were the rule in Middle-earth and the right of all sensible folk. They forgot or ignored what little they had ever known of the Guardians [i.e., the Rangers], and of the labours of those that made possible the long peace of the Shire”⁴⁶⁹ (*Fellowship*, “Prologue” 5). Because of the Hobbits’ callousness, ignorance, and laziness, therefore, Tolkien’s *The Lord of the Rings* implies that the Hobbits’ cultural weaknesses help to create the opportunity for corrupt, selfish individuals like Lotho to harm the Shire’s environment.

Tolkien’s *Letters* confirm that the Hobbits’ culture is not, in general, an environmental model for the future, although readers may borrow some positive aspects from the Hobbits’ culture. According to Tolkien, because of the various environmental problems within the societies where Hobbits live, the Hobbits cannot represent a “Utopian vision” or the “ideal” society of the twentieth century—or of any other era (*Letters* 197). The Hobbits’ weaknesses include their tendency to exhibit “sloth [i.e., laziness] and stupidity” (*Letters* 262), their arrogance despite their ignorance, in general (*Letters* 329), and their willingness to create self-delusional meta-narratives, in particular, despite the fact that the Hobbits possess only “limited experience” (*Letters* 329).

Nonetheless, Gandalf perceives that the Shire Hobbit’s “power” lies in the fact that they

469. The Shire Hobbits’ cultural habit of neglecting to properly praise the Rangers, the defenders of their homes—some of whom die when they attempt to bar the Ringwraiths from entering the Shire by means of the Sarn Ford (*Unfinished*, “Hunt” 341)—extends beyond the Shire and into Bree. Butterbur, the innkeeper of *The Prancing Pony* in Bree, also disapproves of Rangers before he realizes (after the departure of the Rangers to the south to fight Sauron is followed by an influx of evildoers and fierce creatures in northwestern Middle-earth) that the Rangers helped to protect his homeland (*Fellowship*, “Strider” 165; *Return*, “Homeward” 971).

can and will (eventually) righteously resist ecosadists and acts of ecocide (*Fellowship*, “Many” 217).

Besides the cautionary lessons that can be derived from learning from the mistakes made by the Ents, the Elves, and the Hobbits, these three Peoples also provide net-neutral and net-positive examples for others in how to approach nature. When Treebeard acknowledges in *The Two Towers* that “I have been idle. I have let things slip. It must stop! . . . But . . . it is easier to shout *stop!* than to do it” (“Treebeard” 463), Tolkien’s fantasy observes the necessity for action, albeit with calm planning, since environmental exploiters like Saruman and Sauron will not willingly curtail their destructive behavior. Similarly, Tolkien’s work teaches that the refusal to “stop” unsustainable environmental policies in one’s home country leads to the possibility that these horrors will spread to other countries. The spread of ecocide is a likelihood that Treebeard references when he counsels Merry and Pippin to help Treebeard fight Saruman and his tree-destroying forces, since the Hobbits “will be helping your own friends that way, too; for if Saruman is not checked Rohan and Gondor will have an enemy behind as well as in front” (463). Another environmental lesson drawn from the Ents involves their willingness alter the environment in order to achieve a net gain for the environment. This occurs when the Ents divert the water into Isengard to destroy the machinery and furnaces of the war industries of Saruman; however, after ruining Saruman's industries, the Ents immediately “stopped the inflow in the night, and sent the Isen back into its old course” (*Two*, “Flotsam” 557). Consequently, Tolkien’s Middle-earth fantasies teach that environmental alterations are sometimes necessary to reverse the effects of ecocide.

In *The Lord of the Ring*, the Ents, the Elves, and the Hobbits share the same fortune that, after receiving an unwarranted, violent attack from ecosadistic forces, they (eventually) not only heal the environmental damage caused by the invaders but also expand their territory, and therefore, they serve as overall benevolent caretakers of the areas in which they dwell. The fact that these three Peoples' beloved trees suffer warrants attention due to the consistency of the reappearance of evil forces needlessly harming the environments where overall "good" Peoples live. Tolkien demands that individuals and civilizations alike must treat trees well to live morally and to maintain quality environmental guardianship. After the evil attacks by Saruman and his forces on the Ents of Fangorn Forest and the Hobbits of the Shire, the Ents expand their shepherding of trees to include "The Watchwood" that they plant around Orthanc (*Two*, "Voice" 573). Meanwhile, the Hobbits' Shire—with the aid of Galadriel's gift to Sam (*Return*, "Grey" 999-1000)—not only experiences tremendous environmental renewal in subsequent years but also expands in territory from the Far Downs to the Tower Hills, an area known as "The Westmarch" (*Return*, "Appendix B" 1072). Likewise, the Elves of Lothlórien suffer "three" attacks from Dol Guldur that result in "grievous harm . . . to the fair woods on the borders," yet, eventually, causes the Elves to destroy the corrupted area and buildings of Dol Guldur and to expand the Lórien realm to also include the environment of southern Mirkwood/the Wood of Greenleaves. The Elves of the Woodland Realm also find themselves attacked and witness their lands devastated by the "great ruin of fire" but also succeed in defeating the forces of Sauron, and thereby enlarge their environmental guardianship in Northern Mirkwood/the Wood of Greenleaves (1069). With all of these Peoples suffering from attacks and yet eventually finding victory, another environmental

lesson exists (as Ruskin's works also teach, as I discuss in chapter three): retain hope and refuse to cower to invading forces who wantonly harm nature.

Tolkien's works encourage the virtues of cultivation (e.g., gardening) and pruning (e.g., hunting in moderation, selective tree-felling, hedge trimming, and eliminating invading species, such as the Orcs and the Giant Spiders). Readers recognize this to be the case, in part, because of the large number of passages that note the positive attitudes and emotions of the characters when they see and live within the realms of the Hobbits and the Elves. As far as tree felling is concerned, the Hobbits believe that the activity should only occur for a few reasons. These reasons include the following: to plant what the Hobbits view as protective hedges (*Fellowship*, "Old" 108), to create space for agricultural fields (*Fellowship*, "Preface" 1), to clear paths for roads, to establish homes (*Return*, "Scouring" 989), to provide wood for fires (*Hobbit*, "Last" 271; *Fellowship*, "Home" 128), and to create and maintain fences.⁴⁷⁰

The Hobbits, however, usually disapprove of chopping down trees wantonly. This sentiment is expressed when Farmer Cotton labels the act of randomly felling trees—only to leave the trees rotting on the ground—as less than even "bad sense" (*Return*, "Scouring" 989), when Sam literally weeps at the sight of the Party Tree simply "lying lopped and dead in the field" and labels such acts "worse than Mordor!" (993, 994), and when the (normally) pacifist Shire Hobbits take up arms to overthrow those committing ecocide (*Fellowship*, "Preface" 5, 6; *Return*, "Scouring" 986-97). Only because of Galadriel's gift of seed and blessed earth, however, does the renewal of the Shire occur so rapidly (*Return*, "Grey" 1000-01); otherwise, Sam's belief that the massive "loss and

470. This Hobbit environmental activity is illustrated in Tolkien's painting *The Hill: Hobbiton-Across-the-Water* (reprinted in Hammond and Scull, *Artist* 106).

damage” to the trees would “take long to heal, and only his great-grandchildren . . . would see the Shire as it ought to be” would have matched reality (*Return*, “Grey” 999). The Hobbits, consequently, strongly disapprove of Sharkey and his ecosadistic Ruffians, because their ecosadism results in the unnecessary felling of many trees, because they neglect to use any of the wood for constructive purposes, and because the aforementioned ecocidal group refuses to replant any trees or any other flora.

Although not environmental models for the future in totality, the Elves, the Ents, and the Hobbits each provide positive examples in certain respects, which includes how they resemble one another. For example, Tolkien’s fantasies encourage mutual admiration and tolerance for varying environmental practices and beliefs so long as the well-being of the local ecosystem(s) where the People(s) live/visit does/do not generally suffer. Influential figures among the Hobbits, the Elves, and the Ents support the overall environmental approaches of the other groups. Because of their strategic felling of trees, their gardening for aesthetic purposes, and their choice to hunt in order to protect and to feed themselves, the Hobbits resemble the Elves, which explains some of the reasons why knowledgeable Hobbits and Elves generally approve of one another's relationships with nature. Likewise, although the Ents forage for food in a far less obtrusive manner, the Ents also shape their environment to protect themselves and others, as well as for aesthetic reasons as well. An example of the Elves’ general approval of the Hobbits’ care for nature, meanwhile, occurs when Galadriel gives a Mallorn tree seed and blessed dirt to Sam to aid in the renewal of the Shire that Galadriel perceives will occur and as Sam foresaw in the Mirror of Galadriel (*Fellowship*, “Farewell” 366, “Mirror” 353). Frodo’s evolution as an environmental guardian (e.g., Frodo cares more for and about trees, in

part, because of the Elves' influence in Lothlórien) also demonstrates that knowledgeable Hobbits support the best aspects of Elvish environmentalism⁴⁷¹ ("Lothlórien" 342). Sam, meanwhile, especially approves of the Lothlórien Elves, because these Elves seem "nearer to the likes of us [Hobbits]" ("Mirror" 348). This similarity probably stems from the fact that the Shire Hobbits and the Lothlórien Elves each generally remain in one geographical area, maintain gardens, love trees, and possess a strong suspicion of outsiders. Furthermore, Tolkien's fantasies again depict a similarity between these Peoples by mentioning that Sam and Frodo find solace (and some protection) by remembering Galadriel, her Lothlórien realm, and her Phial of starlight (*Two*, "Shelob's" 704-05). Finally, because Hobbits in multiple texts experience healing in several Elven realms, readers know that informed Hobbits approve of Elven environmentalism (e.g., *Hobbit*, "Last" 268; *Fellowship*, "Lothlórien" 342, "Council" 233, "Mirror" 349). The extent of the Elves' love for and knowledge of the environment, therefore, earns the respect and admiration of the Hobbits who have interacted with them in some depth.

Treebeard, meanwhile, voices his overall approval of the Elves when he informs Merry and Pippin that he and the Ents "take more kindly to Elves than to others," because the Elves provided the Ents with a "great gift" when the Elves "cured" the Ents of "dumbness" (*Two*, "Treebeard" 461). Treebeard again displays his respect for the Elves when he yearns for Celeborn and Galadriel to see his forest and because he bows *slowly*, not once, but "three times [. . .] and with great reverence to Celeborn and Galadriel" (*Return*, "Many" 959). Meanwhile, because the Elves take the trouble to teach the Ents, Legolas displays an interest in and love for the trees under the care of Treebeard, and

471. Sam's wide-eyed approval of Lothlórien that endears him to Haldir demonstrates Frodo's aforementioned response is shared by the other Hobbits as well (*Fellowship*, "Lothlórien" 341-42).

because Legolas seeks permission from Treebeard to visit Fangorn Forest⁴⁷² (*Two*, “Treebeard” 461, “Voice” 571), the Elves illustrate their appreciation for the Ents’ environmentalism. Consequently, because the Elves love trees and possess the environmental knowledge to—and invest the time and energy necessary to—teach the Ents and the trees language, Treebeard generally approves of Elvish environmentalism. Because the Ents devote themselves to comprehending, tending, appreciating, and guarding trees, moreover, the Elves respect the Ents’ knowledge of, labors for, and love of “wild” trees.

The Free Peoples, therefore, teach readers to discover what aspects of the environment other cultures appreciate to help open a dialogue between the Peoples, and thereby join them by celebrating these artifacts, non-human animals, bodies of water, rock formations, landscapes, flora, and other parts of the environment. For example, Tolkien’s works show that the Free Peoples share a universal love for water. As noted in *The Silmarillion*, the Elves, from the beginning, cherish the sound of “water falling over stone” (“Quenta: Coming . . . Elves” 49). Interestingly, Gimli and the Dwarves also prize the sound of water dripping onto stones, as he mentions in *The Two Towers* (“Road” 537). Therefore, the Dwarves also love the type of sound that greeted the newly awakened Elves. Likewise, the Rohirrim mourn Saruman’s damming of the Isen, in part, because the dam deprives the area of the sound of water falling onto stones (*Two*, “Road” 537), but they, doubtlessly, rejoice when the Ents enable the waters to again make such music on the rocks by destroying Saruman’s dam (“Flotsam” 557). Moreover, when

472. Because Legolas asks Treebeard’s permission to tour Fangorn Forest, Legolas’ question (rather than showing the Ents as equals to their trees) alludes to the Ents’ empowered position as the guardians of their tree-herds.

Frodo leaves the sight and sound of the Nimrodel stream behind, *The Fellowship of the Ring* states that Frodo believed “that he would never hear again a running water so beautiful” (“Lothlórien” 337). The fact that these Peoples share a love for the sound of water helps the Peoples to understand, appreciate, and love not only the environment to a greater extent but also each other as well, as exemplified by the budding friendship between traditional enemies: Legolas the Wood-Elf and Gimli the Dwarf⁴⁷³ (*Two*, “Road” 537). Similar to the celebration of rocks, soils, and landscapes in Tolkien’s Middle-earth fantasies that I reference elsewhere, the aforementioned celebration of the sensory imagery of water causes me to disagree with Seymour’s conviction that “The assumption of goodness, which is associated with growing things in Tolkien’s works, marginalizes the parts of the natural world not associated with plant or animal life” (46).

Although the Elves, the Ents, and the Hobbits each possess overall positive relationships with the environment, none represent the environmental model that Tolkien’s Middle-earth texts provide for urban/suburban contemporary readers. While Tolkien’s texts teach Men (and readers) to borrow from the environmental traditions of the Elves, the Ents, and the Hobbits, Tolkien’s fantasies indicate that these Free Peoples represent the *past* rather than the future for many humans living during and after Tolkien’s era. While we should learn to better emulate the Ents’ intimacy with trees and/or their diet (which leaves a minimal environmental footprint), the Elves’

473. Because all of the Peoples display an awe for the Dwarves’ *mithril* mail, Tolkien’s works also observe that artifacts can unite the Peoples. However, as the history of the Silmarils, the Rings of Power, and the Arkenstone each demonstrate, this collective sense of wonder of and appreciation for created works among the Peoples can quickly deteriorate into violence rooted in selfishness, in general, and callousness and self-delusion, in particular.

appreciation for and knowledge of nature and their abilities to create artifacts, and the Hobbits' traditional agrarianism,⁴⁷⁴ such desires will not come to fruition on a large scale following industrialization. By yearning for industrialized and urbanized societies to change to such a degree, one's wishing will prove as vain as Galadriel's self-admitted empty "wish" for a Middle-earth devoid of the evil One Ring at the time of the War of the Ring (*Fellowship*, "Mirror" 356).

Nevertheless, Tolkien's fantasies include some positive environmental models among Men, whom readers may choose to emulate. While a positive example of the relationship between humans and the natural world, Tolkien's works limit the applicability of Beren in a manner that somewhat parallels the Elves, the Ents, and the Hobbits. Rather than presenting Beren as a model for nations to follow, Tolkien's Middle-earth tales view the behavior of Beren as a possibility for only a minority of readers. Instead of living among a large community of people, Beren and Lúthien live largely alone (*Silmarillion*, "Quenta: Ruin . . . Doriath" 234). Tolkien's *Silmarillion* suggests only a few can successfully follow Beren's model of living safely as a family in a remote setting, although Tolkien appears to have gravitated to this model himself. Arguably, Tolkien further limits Beren's applicability by directly linking Beren to himself, which he did when he requested that the name of *Beren* appear on his tombstone. Consequently, Beren, who lived in the First Age of Middle-earth (i.e., ancient history even by the standards of the Third Age), seems like an environmental model for a few nostalgic and idealistic individuals.

474. Although the Dwarves' environmentalism possesses distinct problems at times, Tolkien's works also indicate that the Men of his tale, as well as Tolkien's readers, should aspire to love stones, stalactites, stalagmites, and stars with the type of love that the Dwarves exhibit.

Tolkien's Middle-earth tales teach that a small, isolated group of people cannot overcome an eco-sadist like Sauron without the assistance of others. While Ghân-buri-Ghân leads the Rohirrim through the Stonewain Valley (*Return*, "Ride" 814-17), Ghân-buri-Ghân repeatedly exhorts the Rohirrim to "Drive away bad air and darkness with bright iron" (814, 816), which emphasizes the Drúedain's reliance on others to preserve their lands from falling under the mastery of Sauron. Likewise, Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* refrains from presenting the Drúedain as models for many readers, since (in the words of Elfhelm of Rohan) the Drúedain represent "Remnants of an *older* time [. . .] living few and secretly" (813, emphasis added).

Aragorn and his realm, however, represent the environmental models of the future for many readers (perhaps especially Westerners and/or those living in industrialized, "developed" countries). Tolkien's texts teach readers of the need to (and value of) increase the number of urban parks and wildlife in cities, the value of the importance of cultivating trees, the need to rehabilitate war-damaged lands, and the value of demolishing contaminated buildings that pollute the environment. Furthermore, Aragorn and his realms of Arnor and Gondor exemplify the need to live in peace with former enemies willing to end conflicts, as well as the need to respect indigenous populations; Aragorn exemplifies these positive traits by refusing to seize the lands and other natural resources of these other People grounds and by recognizing their right to self-determination.

Finally, I believe that environmentalists, ecocritics, and teachers should value Tolkien's works even more.⁴⁷⁵ For example, of the seven main environmental topics for teachers to discuss with students that Garrard mentions ("Ecocriticism and Education" 375), Tolkien's Middle-earth fantasies include five, which helps to indicate the value of Tolkien's Middle-earth *Legendarium* to anyone interested in the environment and humanity's guardianship of the environment. Firstly, Tolkien's works include Garrard's tenet *Reducing Poverty and Inequalities* (375). In a variety of texts (e.g., *The Silmarillion* and *The Lord of the Rings*) Tolkien's Middle-earth tales feature the righteous among the Valar and the Maiar repeatedly aiding the Peoples and combatting the evils of Morgoth, Sauron, and (eventually) Saruman, all of whom commit ecocide and all of whom order the killing, enslavement, and torturing of countless Children. Somewhat similarly, after the victory over Saruman, Aragorn emancipates Sauron's slaves and gives them the land near the Sea of Númen in *The Return of the King*, which means that Aragorn also reduces poverty and inequalities. Tolkien's texts also parallel Garrard's second point: *Making Agriculture Sustainable* (375). Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* includes the example of the Hobbits, who reject industrialized farming during "The Scouring of the Shire" chapter, for rural societies. In the case of Gondor, the fortress-city of Minas Tirith nourishes itself with crops from areas like the Fields of the Pelennor. During Aragorn's reign, Gondor works to rehabilitate its lands; Gondor's example teaches that industrial societies must maintain sufficient acreage to feed its population.⁴⁷⁶

475. However, I do not intend to suggest that only teachers, students, and ecocritics can find environmental ideas within Tolkien's works illuminating, for general readers have long loved Tolkien's texts as well.

476. Within his September 25, 1954, letter to Naomi Mitchison, Tolkien writes that "Gondor has sufficient 'townlands' and fiefs with a good water and road approach to provide for its population; and clearly has many industries though these are hardly alluded to" (*Letters* 196).

Unsurprisingly, since Tolkien loved trees in a profound way, Tolkien's fantasies are also examples of literature that include the topic, *Protecting Forests and other Habitats*, which is the third environmental guardianship issue that Garrard believes that teachers should talk about with their students (375). Within *The Silmarillion*, Yavanna expresses her urgent desire for the creation of the Shepherds of the Trees (e.g., the Ents) to which Manwë agrees, while *The Lord of the Rings* features the righteous wrath of the Ents when they destroy those who harmed the trees of Fangorn Forest. Moreover, *The Silmarillion* and *The Children of Húrin* each discuss the roles of the Girdle of Melian and the Men of Brethil in preserving some of the forests in Beleriand. As some of Tolkien's artwork and a variety of Tolkien tales (e.g., *The Silmarillion*, *The Children of Húrin*, and *The Hobbit*) demonstrate, one of the greatest environmental evils of the dragons Glaurung and Smaug is their unwarranted decision to destroy trees. Similarly, the Rohirrim fight the ecosadistic Saruman and Sauron, in part, to preserve the well-being of the plains ecosystem that they call home in *The Lord of the Rings*. Within works like *The Hobbit* and *The Appendices to The Lord of the Rings*, the Dwarves fight to preserve or to retake their mountains, caverns, and mines in places like Erebor and Moria. Likewise, a portion of the Men from the various lands of South Gondor (e.g., Prince Imrahil and the Men of Dol Amroth from the seacoast) march to the aid of Minas Tirith in *The Return of the King* ("Minas" 753-54). Consequently, Tolkien's Middle-earth fantasies consistently mention the need to safeguard habitats like forests, as Garrard encourages.

Akin to Garrard's call that teachers should teach students the value of *Making Water Use Sustainable* (375), Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* teaches the value of water as well. For example, the Ents destroy Saruman's non-eco-friendly damming of the Isen,

while the Hobbits in the Shire demolish the new water mill that heavily pollutes the Shire's ecosystem.

Tolkien's works also convey messages somewhat similar to Garrard's call to teach students the value of *Reducing waste generation* (375). Characters like Beren refuse to kill non-human animals, save for dire situations. One reason why the Hobbits destroy the new water mill stems from the fact that it is useless; moreover, the new mill pollutes the Shire's environment and renders the Shire a wasteland. Within the fragment *The New Shadow*, Borlas rebukes Saelon for Saelon's inability/refusal to grasp that the sacrifice of one large tree may negate the need to fell many young, small trees to acquire as much wood for fences, homes, and fuel for human use. Moreover, by preserving the young trees, Borlas argues that Men help preserve the various tree species, since the younger trees will live longer, and therefore have more time to produce more seeds to preserve the tree species.

Finally, Tolkien's works strongly parallel Garrard's conviction that "fundamental knowledge must surely include the critique of consumerism and advertising, perhaps an understanding of distorted retail prices and environmental costs, and the contrast in moral values between [the] technocratic and ecocentric perspectives" ("Ecocriticism and Education" 376). The antagonists in Tolkien's works repeatedly hold to the aforementioned *technocratic* worldview, such as a few individual, greedy Hobbits, Lotho Sackville-Baggins and the Bracegirdles, as well as Morgoth, Sauron, and Saruman. When the most industrialized races/ethnicities among the Free Peoples (e.g., the Noldorin Elves, the Númenóreans, and the Khazad-dûm Dwarves) fail to practice sound environmental practices, it is because they adopt a *technocratic* vision of consumption. When discussing

the various alliances among the Free Peoples against Morgoth, Sauron, and Saruman, Tolkien repeatedly discusses how the Free Peoples—despite their various shortcomings—maintain visions of the world far closer to *ecocentrism* than the ecosadists of Middle-earth: the Dark Lords, Saruman, the Orcs, the Trolls, the Goblins, and the Uruk-Hai.

Partially because of my belief that more ecocritics should analyze Tolkien's texts, I also agree with Justin Edward Everett's conviction that more teachers should assign Tolkien's fantasies, because of the beneficial influence that Tolkien's works may have on readers. According to Everett,

In a university that emphasizes memorization, data, and empirical knowledge [. . .] subject matter associated with culture, the arts, and felt experience is often seen as irrelevant. Engaging social and scientific topics in the rich contexts provided by *The Lord of the Rings* permits students to envision the problem of environmental sustainability in new ways [. . .] Breaking free of scripted views, they develop perspectives that appeal both to evidence and to systems of morality, ethics, and cultural value. *The Lord of the Rings* makes this possible in its journey through a secondary world, where the strangeness of the setting allows students to see their own world more clearly. (189)

Tolkien's works, in other words, are hardly *escapist*, as many dismissive critics argue; on the contrary, Tolkien's Middle-earth texts offer readers many lessons (including environmental ones) for readers willing to listen.

Moreover, because of the parallels between eco-friendly Peoples and settings within Tolkien's works and aspects of Japanese culture, this reinforces my conviction

that environmentalists, ecocritics, and teachers should value Tolkien's works even more than they have generally shown in previous decades. Indeed, when I examined the 2018 work *Forest Bathing: How Trees Can Help You Find Health and Happiness* by Dr. Qing Li (the President of Japan's Society of Forest Medicine, the Vice President of the International Society of Nature and Forest Medicine, and the Associate Professor of Nippon Medical School), I repeatedly perceived parallels between Li's scientific commentaries and the environmental messages within Tolkien's fantasies. In his work, Li mentions, "Preserving our urban forests is just as important as looking after our [. . .] wild forests and woodlands" (287). In *The Lord of the Rings*, Tolkien praises the Gondorians for increasing the presence of the physical environment in Minas Tirith after the War of the Ring, the Elves for defending the trees of Lothlórien, the Ents for preventing the ecosadistic Saruman and his forces from continuing to destroy Fangorn Forest, and the Hobbits for fighting to save trees in places like Woody-End. Somewhat akin to Li's discussion of people using mats on their bare feet to connect themselves to the soil's electric current to improve their overall well-being (115-16), Tolkien portrays Bombadil encouraging the Hobbits to run barefoot on the grass of the Barrow-downs to help the Hobbits recover from their deeply disconcerting encounter with the Barrow-wight (*Fellowship*, "Fog" 140-41). Similar to the lights on the trees of Lothlórien at night in *The Fellowship of the Ring* that appear to Frodo like "a vanished world," as he walks within the forest ("Lothlórien" 343-44), the Skygarden in Seoul, South Korea, features 24,000 trees (as well as other plants) and blue lights amid the flora at night (Li 295). According to Li, the nighttime view makes it seem like a self-contained world for those who walk in this urban green area (295). Within Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*, the

Gondorians preserve the trees and garden near the Houses of Healing even during the War of the Ring era (*Return*, “Pyre” 837). Interestingly, while citing multiple health studies, Li posits that the sight of nature, in general, and of trees, in particular, accelerates the healing process for humans (111-13), who appear to die more quickly and more often when a loss of trees occurs (113-15). Tolkien’s works, therefore, indicate that the Men of Light (e.g., the Gondorians) understood the potential healing power of trees in a manner that is akin to Li’s aforementioned reflections.

After reading Li’s science-backed statements that walking among trees “help us stop brooding on our problems,” lowers the risk of depression, decreases anxiety, improves memory retention, and extends a person’s life expectancy⁴⁷⁷ (105, 115-16), Li sounds like he could be describing the ancient, tree-shepherding Ents like Treebeard, who recalls thousands of years of memories (*Two*, “Treebeard” 458). Not only do the Ents enjoy walking, live for many centuries, and remember thousands of years of Middle-earth history (457-58) but (as Treebeard acknowledges) the Ents also “do not like worrying about the future” (461) and find solace and joy in the presence of their trees, despite the knowledge that their species is edging closer to extinction (*Return*, “Many” 958-59).

Finally, Li notes that scientific research has found that “the soil stimulates the immune system, and a boosted immune system makes us feel happy. Every time you dig in your garden or eat vegetables plucked from the ground, you will be ingesting

477. Wohlleben, however, observes that some scientific studies show that the health of many humans improves when they walk in old-growth, native forests rather than tree farms or non-native conifer forests (222-23).

Interestingly, Wohlleben posits that humans “intuitively register [a] forest’s health” (223), which means that, when Tolkien’s fantasies state that the characters can sense the health of the forests of Middle-earth (e.g., the Old Forest, Mirkwood, Lothlórien, and Fangorn Forest), Tolkien’s tales may resemble reality to a greater degree than many readers realize.

[*Mycobacterium vaccae* bacteria] and giving yourself a boost” (102). By promoting the Ents’ feracultural society, the horticultural society of the Elves, and the agricultural societies of the Entwives, the Hobbits, and the Men of Light as possibilities for readers to emulate (so that readers might maintain their physical, mental, emotional, and ethical well-being), this environmental message within Tolkien’s fantasies parallels the aforementioned scientific findings that Li discusses. If more humans follow Li’s advice by eating more vegetables and by gardening more often, in other words, their actions will also share some kinship with the behavior of Tolkien’s beloved Hobbits, who “love [. . .] good tilled earth” (*Fellowship*, “Prologue” 1), as well as other overall “good” groups. By showing greater appreciation for trees as environmental writers like Li encourage humans to do, readers may then better emulate the eco-friendly behaviors of the various tree-loving Free Peoples of Tolkien’s Middle-earth and even Tolkien himself.

Additionally, Tolkien’s fantasies parallel several points within the related field of forest therapy, which emphasizes the innate healing powers of the woods (Clifford xviii-xix). In Tolkien’s *The Lord of the Rings*, the Ents save the trees of Fangorn Forest while also helping the other Free Peoples by fighting and defeating Saruman and his ecosadistic forces, as Treebeard mentions (*Two*, “Treebeard” 463). M. Amos Clifford, a leading advocate of Forest Therapy in the U.S., similarly states that the, “Healing of people and forests happens together, or not at all” (xi). In *Aldarion and Erendis*, the tone of Tolkien’s fragment conspicuously questions Aldarion’s environmental ethics when he creates tree farms (*Unfinished* 190-91, 177); meanwhile, Clifford mourns how “most” humans “no longer know trees as our relations and view them instead as crops to harvest in service of purely human aims” (xvi). Just as Tolkien praises the growing of and

consumption of fresh mushrooms in his letters and in his fantasies (*Letters* 288-89; *Fellowship*, “Short” 89, 93), Clifford references an anecdotal story concerning a forest therapy group eating mushroom soup as evidence that “People and woodlands belong together” (31-32). Perhaps Clifford’s theory concerning the purpose of humanity’s *mirror neutrons*, which may allow humans “to feel what others are feeling” (49-50), might help to explain Goldberry’s timely ability to comfort the Hobbits when they arrive at her home (*Fellowship*, “House” 121). Readers, subconsciously perhaps, can recall when mentors have encouraged them, in other words. Additional examples of well-developed empathy occur when Galadriel rebukes the Elves for their prejudices towards Gimli while *simultaneously* consoling Gimli (*Fellowship*, “Mirror” 347), and again when the Woodland Elf Legolas switches from yearning “to be excused” from witnessing the beauty of caves to *desiring* to see the Glittering Caves after hearing Gimli lovingly describe these caverns (*Two*, “Road” 534-35). Moreover, while Bombadil encourages the Hobbits to run barefoot on the grass of the Barrow-downs to improve the moods of the Hobbits in *The Fellowship of the Ring* (“Fog” 140-41), Clifford mentions that “Many health advocates hold that a half hour or so of barefoot walking should be a daily part of our health regimen” (86). As I have mentioned elsewhere, Tolkien’s fantasies repeatedly depict weeds like *brambles* and *nettles* in an unfavorable light; interestingly, Clifford encourages readers to, “Avoid any place where access requires a descent [. . .] through brambles or nettles” (104). When the Fellowship reaches Lothlórien, they bathe their feet in the waters of Nimrodel, which lessens their fatigue and leaves them feeling refreshed and with fond memories of the beautiful sight, sound, and touch of the stream and waterfall (*Fellowship*, “Lothlórien” 329-30, 335, 337). According to Clifford, waterfalls

(which can also produce a beautiful “soundscape”) cause the air that surrounds them to retain healthy “negative ions” (100,144, 96). Moreover, Clifford encourages others to behave in a manner similar to the Fellowship members, in general, and the singing Legolas, in particular (330-32), by advocating that they sit beside a small stream, that they bathe their feet in its waters, and that they blend their voices with the waters in order to better relax and heal (106, 105, 108, 110). Indeed, when Frodo bids the falls of Nimrodel goodbye (*Fellowship*, “Lothlórien” 337), he does so at an environmental threshold or one of the “invisible boundaries” that Clifford mentions; noticing such a boundary, Clifford states, is key to developing one’s environmental awareness (102). Likewise, Tolkien describes how Gimli, Sam, and Frodo find some solace by looking into the waters of the Mirrormere after Gandalf’s death (*Fellowship*, “Lothlórien” 325), which parallels Clifford’s promotion of the act of “Gazing at water” (106). Even if one cannot walk beside a river, stream, lake, ocean, or waterfall, Clifford states that “fountains,” to some extent, can improve the physical and mental well-being of those who see and hear them (106). Clifford’s statement should interest Tolkien readers, since not only the woodland realm of Lothlórien (*Fellowship*, “Great” 370, 372) but also Middle-earth cities like Aragorn’s Minas Tirith feature fountains (*Return*, “Steward” 950, “Appendix B” 1070). The beautiful and timely environmental lessons of Tolkien’s fantasies, therefore, act as precursors to the environmental writings by philosophers like Clifford and prove as beautiful as the sounds of fountains.

Teachers, students, historians, environmentalists, ecocritics, and general readers can appreciate not only the lessons within Tolkien’s works but also what Tolkien calls the

“applicability” of his fantasies by learning more about the parallels between Tolkien’s Middle-earth fantasies and the earth’s environmental history, as well as between Tolkien’s Middle-earth *Legendarium* and contemporary ecocriticism (*Fellowship*, “Foreword” xv). As I observe in chapter three, Tolkien’s Middle-earth fantasies share a degree of kinship with Christianity, in general, and Catholicism, in particular, because of the ecophilosophical messages within the Bible, some deuterocanonical texts, various papal encyclicals, and the examples of some Catholic saints. Intriguing parallels also exist between passages/elements within Tolkien’s Middle-earth novels, fragments, poetry, and artwork and the problematic, unfortunate history of imperialism, deforestation, poor damming construction, industrialization, urbanization, and air, water, and soil pollution in Britain and other parts of the world. Repeatedly, therefore, callousness, laziness, and ignorance contribute to these forms of selfishness in Middle-earth and in the primary world as well. Thankfully, Tolkien’s Middle-earth works also display kinship with the trend for governments on earth to create preserves and parks and to recognize home-rule for indigenous peoples in order to try to offset the aforementioned problems. Furthermore, as chapter four details, the environmental messages within Tolkien’s canon often share some commonality with many forms of contemporary ecocriticism, such as Moderate Ecocriticism, Deep Ecology, Heideggerian Ecophilosophy, Postcolonial Ecocriticism, Ecofeminism, Bioregionalism, Eco-Marxism, Social Ecology, Post-humanism, and (of course) Christian environmentalism. Tolkien’s fantasies sometimes parallel aspects of even radical preservationism. Whether in a classroom, at a table at a local coffee shop, in a sitting room at home, or in a booth at Tolkien and Lewis’ favorite pub *The Eagle and the Child*, the opportunities to discuss the

physical and created environments within Tolkien's Middle-earth fantasies seem endlessly possible and infinitely beneficial.

Tolkien's fantasies, therefore, teach that the necessary qualities for maintaining a sustainable landscape include the following: a modest amount of individual land ownership, a healthy skepticism of industries, a willingness to work in gardens and farms, a community supporting their eco-friendly leaders, and leaders willing to defend their lands and the lands of their neighbors from ecosadists. Only then may Tolkien's characters (and his readers) follow the message of Gandalf's counsel to the Captains of the West, and "do what is in us for the succor of those years wherein we are set, uprooting the evil in the fields that we know, so that those who live after may have clean earth to till" (*Return*, "Last" 861). Tolkien's *Legendarium*, consequently, features ecofriendly and ecosadistic individuals and cultures among the spirits and the Free Peoples, which, in turn, can help readers improve their own environmentalism by better knowing what to imitate and what to avoid. For instance, contemporary readers yearning "to live off the grid" might idolize the lifestyles of Beren and Lúthien. Some suburban and urban readers, on the other hand, may hope to follow Aragorn's model of renewing the environment of Minas Tirith and northwestern Middle-earth by creating more urban parks, by establishing wilderness preserves, by respecting the rights of indigenous peoples, by living in peace with those willing, and by confronting ecosadists. By reading Tolkien's Middle-earth fantasies, readers can experience "forest bathing" or "forest therapy" and other forms of environmental medicine by improving their "secondary belief" that can partially reverse the effects of things like consumerism, urbanization,

imperialism, and industrialization, which can contribute to the atrophy of our imaginations and environmental consciences. For Christians like Tolkien, improving the environmental guardianship of humans is a matter of following God's will or sinning; Tolkien's fantasies provide a helpful guide for ecofriendly readers.

Instead of mainly focusing on just the result, Tolkien's Middle-earth fantasies emphasize that quality environmental guardianship also depends on the motives, attitude, degree, and rate that humans use natural resources. Tolkien *never* wavers in his commitment to the idea that humans can and should act as responsible users of natural resources, while also acknowledging that bad, self-centered human actors will arise and that distressing times of warfare will strain the abilities of humans to continue to care about the earth's air, flora, fauna, soils, waters, and landscapes. As the "The Steward and the King" chapter in *The Return of the King* makes clear, however, humans must diligently work to maintain the environment until the return of the king (i.e., Ilúvatar, in Tolkien's Middle-earth, and Christ, according to Tolkien's faith). Although environmental problems will continue, the Free Peoples (and readers as well) can overcome these issues, however haltingly, by diligently working together to improve their environmental guardianship.⁴⁷⁸

478. Short-term triumphs and failures will continue in Middle-earth until Manwë confronts a returned Morgoth at the Dagor Dagorath, at the end of time, when evil is (at last) entirely defeated (e.g., *Unfinished*, "Istari" 395).

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