Of Loss and Longing

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Nostalgia, Utopian Vision, and the Pastoral in J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit*

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"Almost it seemed that the words took shape, and visions of far lands and bright things that he had never yet imagined opened out before him; and the firelit hall became like a golden mist above seas of foam that sighed upon the margins of the world [...] until he felt that an endless river of swelling gold and silver was flowing over him." (J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Lord of the Rings*, 304)

"I realized that nostalgia goes beyond individual psychology. At first glance, nostalgia is a longing for a place, but actually it is a yearning for a different time – the time of our childhood, the slower rhythms of our dreams. [...] The nostalgic desires to obliterate history and turn it into private or collective mythology, to revisit time like space, refusing to surrender to the irreversibility of time that plagues the human condition." (Svetlana Boym, *The Future of Nostalgia*, XV)

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Für meine Eltern

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Abbreviations used for J.R.R. Tolkien's works:

The Hobbit: *Hobbit*

The Letters of J.R.R. Tolkien: *Letters*

Lord of the Rings: *LotR*

On Fairy-Stories: *On F-S*

The Peoples of Middle-earth: *Peoples*

Tales from the Perilous Realm: *Realm*

The Silmarillion: *Sil*

Unfinished Tales of Númenor and Middle-earth: *Tales*

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1 Introduction

> "[...] I do not think that the reader or the maker of fairy-stories need even be ashamed of the 'escape' of archaism: of preferring not dragons but horses, castles, sailing-ships, bows and arrows; not only elves, but knights and kings and priests. For it is after all possible for a rational man, after reflection (quite unconnected with fairy-story or romance), to arrive at the condemnation, implicit at least in the mere silence of 'escapist' literature, of progressive things like factories, or the machine-guns and bombs that appear to be their most natural and inevitable, dare we say 'inexorable', products" (J.R.R. Tolkien, *On F-S*, 150).

The telling of fantastic tales is deeply rooted in human culture. Man's ability to reflect and be creative has always brought forth fiction in order to deal with adverse aspects of reality and to test alternatives. Consequently, J.R.R. Tolkien calls fantasy "a natural human activity" (*On F-S*, 144). It offers the means to escape the present and return with newfound vigour and visions. Reacting to the contemporary world, modern fantasy writing often draws on the past – on the one hand by taking as models age-old myths and legends, and on the other hand by using real historical features such as knights and castles to create fictional worlds. As these depictions are often given a salvific glow, many works of fantasy are closely tied to nostalgia, the longing for an idealised past that has been irretrievably lost. Flawless worlds removed from and contrasted with the real one are not only a mark of fantasy literature but also of the pastoral genre. Its depiction of carefree life in idealised landscapes offers solace and invites the reader to take a critical stance on his own reality. Like those of fantasy literature, pastoral's nostalgic depictions of bygone times imply a wish to re-establish the lost bliss in the future. Thus, a utopian vision is automatically expressed in most fantasy and pastoral writing. Pastoral's idealisation of nature and of man within nature has been reproduced in a multitude of forms throughout the centuries and can still be found in all kinds of fiction. Modern fantasy writing is one of the literary types that often draws on pastoral motifs. Thus, it is not unusual for fantasy tales to depict idyllic natural settings or creatures that live in close harmony with nature.

J.R.R. Tolkien's extensive mythology is considered one of the central works of modern fantasy literature. Written and published in the first half of the 20th century, *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* did not only enjoy world-wide success in the post-war era but have remained among the best known texts ever since. They experienced a fresh wave

of public attention when they were made into films at the beginning of this century, the latest series of screenplays of a number of adaptations. The renewed cult around Tolkien's work inspired a great number of comments and publications by fans and scholars alike, which added to the already considerable canon of Tolkien criticism. From a genre-centric point of view, Tolkien's writing, especially *The Lord of the Rings* has greatly influenced modern fantasy literature, and many authors have been inspired by its detailed fictional world and epic style. Its fusion of classical and medieval mythology, epic tale, heroic quest tale, and fairy-tale has had a lasting influence on subsequent works of fantasy. A multitude of them show significant similarities especially with *The Lord of the Rings* regarding style, plot and character. Though fantasy literature has continued to evolve since Tolkien's lifetime, his influence on the genre is unbroken. Even recent works such as the widely acclaimed *A Song of Ice and Fire* series by the American writer George R.R. Martin, who has revolutionised the fantasy genre by mixing it with realistic elements, feature medievalised settings, heroes on quests, and an exalted style.

This thesis will take a close look at the intricate connections between fantasy literature, nostalgia, utopian vision, and the pastoral tradition. It will first do so from a theoretical point of view and will then apply the insights thus gained in an analysis of the primary texts. As the most central and influential works in the fantasy genre, Tolkien's best known texts, *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* have been chosen as main sources for this analysis. *The Silmarilion* will further serve as an important texts in this research. Tolkien's own scholarly writing, especially *On Fairy-Stories*, and his letters, which offer a mixture of analysis of his own fictional texts as well as a continuation of his fictitious writing, will offer further grounding for this investigation. It will examine the characteristics, narrative position, function, and meaning of the pastoral, nostalgia, and utopian vision. The study of each of the three fields will lay open connections between them due to their natural interrelations, which will gain special attention. Answers will be offered to the following questions, which have not yet been considered in critical research: Which position does the pastoral occupy in the texts? What are its characteristics and in how far are they related to traditional pastorals? Which function does the pastoral have in the narrative? In how far is the pastoral connected with nostalgic longing? What role does nostalgia play in pastoral cultures? Which functions

does it have? Which utopian vision do the pastoral and its nostalgia convey? In how far does the rest of the narrative support or refute this vision? By presenting answers to all these questions, new insights into Tolkien's texts will be obtained. Though it is of course impossible to speak for an entire genre based on the analysis of only two texts, the centrality of Tolkien's mythology for the fantasy genre renders insights reached in the analysis of *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* transferable to many other works of fantasy following in their tradition. However, such transfers and ensuing analyses will be left to subsequent critics as they would blow the boundaries of this dissertation.

1.1   Definition of Fantasy Literature

Terminology relating to works of fantasy is not consistent and, as Katherine Hume remarks, the multitude of terms and definitions "irresistibly reminds one of the blind men describing an elephant. Each observation is accurate for that part of the whole to which it applies, but none can stand as a description for the entire beast" (Hume, 19). Fantasy literature's very common use of elements from mythology, legend, romance, voyages imaginaires and even science fiction, renders it difficult to find a definition that clearly distinguishes these different types of fantastic literature (cf. Alpers 2005, 15). Faced with this difficulty of stipulating boundaries, the disagreement in the critical community even extends to the question whether fantasy should be regarded as a genre at all. Some critics claim that it should be considered a mode, thus opening fantasy to the inclusion of a great variety of fantastic writing as "[t]he fantastic mode [...] is a vast subject, taking in all literary manifestations of the imagination's ability to soar above the merely possible" (Attebery, 2). Conversely, the treatment of fantasy literature as a formula which follows inflexible patterns of content and style is very limiting (cf. Attebery, 9). In order to find a definition that is neither too narrow nor too broad, fantasy literature is best considered as a genre. As Brian Attebery has pointed out, "[g]enres may be approached as 'fuzzy sets', meaning that they are defined not by boundaries but by a center" (Attebery, 12). For the purpose of this thesis it seems most reasonable to put *The Lord of the Rings* and fantastic works of similar kind into the centre of a definition of fantasy literature. Attebery supports this approach as he points out that "Tolkien is most typical, not just because of the imaginative scope and

commitment with which he invested his tale but also, and chiefly, because of the immense popularity that resulted" (Attebery, 14).

Due to its exalted style and the centrality of the circular quest structure, Tolkienian fantasy writing is often described as 'epic fantasy', 'quest fantasy', 'high fantasy', or 'heroic fantasy' (cf. Wolfe, 52). These terms are usually used synonymously in the critical community and there is no broad consensus regarding their precise definition. In the face of this great variety in terminology and the confusion thus created, this thesis will only refer to 'fantasy literature' whenever discussing works of fiction corresponding to the following definition. However, as all the above terms are applied to Tolkienian fantasy literature, it is helpful to pay attention to some of their defining characteristics in the attempt to find a definition of the fantasy genre. For instance, Clute and Grant define 'epic fantasy' as depicting the deeds of heroes "whose acts have a significance transcending their own individual happiness or woe" (Clute and Grant, 319). Though modern fantasy does not follow the epic tradition of presenting its tale in verse, "[a]ny fantasy tale written to a large scale which deals with the founding or definitive and lasting defence of a land may fairly be called an epic fantasy" (ibid). It contains a blend of legend and myth and is set in a coherent world created by the storyteller, which Tolkien terms 'secondary world' (cf. *On F-S*, 140). In Tolkien's definition of fantasy literature (which he calls 'fairy-story'), the fictional world created by the writer is considered the determining factor (cf. *On F-S*, 113). Similarly, Gary Wolfe defines 'high fantasy' as "[f]antasy set in a fully imagined Secondary World" and clearly distinguishes it from 'low fantasy', "which concerns supernatural intrusions into the 'real' world" (Wolfe, 52) [1]. Fantasy literature offers its readers a fictional world that is clearly distinct from their contemporary one. However, despite its strangeness, the secondary world is utterly convincing and coherent, so that the reader can accept it as 'real' without trouble. This is achieved by the use of many elements familiar to the reader from their own contemporary world. In agreement with Katherine Hume, Brian

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[1] This definition of 'low fantasy' is congruent with the well-known definition of the fantastic by Tzvetan Todorov. According to him, fantastic literature at first seems to depict the real world but then confuses the reader by introducing impossible and inexplicable elements. In consequence, the reader experiences suspense, which is only lifted once the fantastic elements are either logically explained and the literary work is identified as 'uncanny'; or once they are accepted as inexplicable and the work is categorised as 'marvellous' (cf. Wolfe . 37).

Attebery emphasises that "[f]antasy without mimesis would be a purely artificial invention, without recognizable objects or actions" (Attebery, 3). Bearing characteristics of the primary world, fantasy worlds are perceived as familiar and "in a very real sense feel like 'home'" (Searle, 6). As Attebery has pointed out, the structure of Tolkienian fantasy is comic as "it begins with a problem and ends with resolution" (Attebery, 15). It equals the structure Vladimir Propp has identified in traditional fairy tales: "a round-trip journey to the marvelous, complete with testing of the hero, crossing of a threshold, supernatural assistance, confrontation, flight, and establishment of a new order at home" (ibid). Typically, the fantasy plot is centred on the hero's quest, which is aimed at accomplishing a goal and saving himself and his land (cf. Clute and Grant, 796). This external quest is usually joined to an internal quest, as the hero gains self-knowledge during his journey (ibid). The final successful completion of the quest is termed 'eucatastrophe' by Tolkien. For him it has religious meaning as it carries the promise of final redemption (cf. *On F-S*, 153). However, it can also be understood in secular terms as referring to the cathartic effect of a happy ending. It is brought about by a final turn of events, which relieves the reader from the fear of ultimate defeat. The joy thus evoked is also called 'consolation' by Tolkien and refers to the promise of a better future (cf. *On F-S*, 155). Aside from consolation, fantasy literature also has the function of offering recovery and escape. As shown in the prefatory quote, Tolkien defends escape as a positive and healthy way of dealing with life's vicissitudes. For him, the reader gains new perspectives and insights while visiting fantastic worlds: "Recovery (which includes return and renewal of health) is a re-gaining – regaining of a clear view" (*On F-S*, 146). By presenting the familiar in entirely new ways, embedded in a fantastic world, fantasy literature heightens its reader's perceptiveness for his own environment.

In summary, the definition of fantasy literature reached above especially emphasises the otherness of its fantastic world. Though it bears elements familiar to the reader from his contemporary world, the secondary world is clearly recognisable as fictional. Furthermore, the fantasy plot is circular and follows the pattern of a quest. On his journey, the hero has to succeed in order to save himself and his world. In addition, he gains new self-knowledge and reaches maturity. Fantasy literature's functions are the

escape from the vicissitudes of life, the gaining of a new perspective, and the consolatory promise of a better future.

1.2   Approach and Theoretical Foundation

The analysis of the interconnections between pastoral depictions, nostalgic longing, and utopian vision necessarily put humans (or, in the case of fantasy literature, human-like creatures) and their environments into the centre. As in many pastoral texts, a contrast is established between pastoral cultures and non-pastoral groups of beings in *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*. Both parties are in the main defined by their behaviour and attitudes towards their natural environments. The analysis will show that pastoral cultures are inseparably entwined with their ecological homes and live in close harmony with nature. In contrast, non-pastoral creatures have become estranged from nature and encounter it with a hostile and destructive attitude. Thus, the pastoral includes both positive and negative attitudes towards the environment and its analysis has to take account of the meaning and representation of nature. Likewise, environment is central to pastoral nostalgia and utopian vision: Untainted original nature is the most important destination of the pastoral creatures' longing for a blissful past; it is further what they yearn to re-establish in the future. In view of this thesis' focus on the importance of nature and its relation with rational creatures, theoretical grounding for the ensuing analysis is offered by ecocriticism.

Ecocriticism has emerged as a field of literary study over the last three decades. Like most theoretical fields, it embraces a range of approaches. These gravitate around the ecocentric and share a number of main features. Its main focus is the study of the relationship between humans and non-human nature or the environment (cf. Johnson, 7). In doing so, ecocritical studies do not usually focus on ecocentric literature, but take a special interest in writing that is not explicitly environmental. They aim at a shift from an anthropocentric to an ecocentric perspective, concentrating on the rich meaning of setting and place (cf. ibid). Thus, ecocriticism offers new readings of canonical texts (such as Shakespearean or Romantic writing, for example) by shifting the focus from topics conventionally associated with those texts to an environmental dimension (cf. Barry, 248). However, it does not reduce its analysis to studies of the environment but adds them to all the other issues traditionally approached in the texts (cf. Barry, 249).

Most fundamental to ecocritical approaches to literature is the discussion of the relationship between nature and culture. In *The Discourses of Nature*, Kate Soper delineates the breadth of widespread notions of nature and culture. She points out the conceptual antithesis of both terms, which is necessary for the discussion of the relations between them. By 'nature' humans "conceptualize what is 'other' to ourselves" (Soper 2015, 267). Nature is treated as everything untouched by human influence. As Soper points out, ecological writing is often based on this assumption and presents unspoilt nature as superior to human culture (cf. Soper 2015, 268). This clear divide is questionable, however, as it presents humankind as being radically opposed to nature and as automatically despoiling it (cf. Soper 2015, 269). As Soper shows, it mislocates the problem of humankind's impact upon the environment by attributing it to human nature as such. Instead, focus should be laid on the specific forms humanity's devaluing actions against nature have acquired over the ages (cf. ibid). This and the question how human behaviour should change in order to preserve nature and live in harmonious unity with the environment are central to many ecocritical readings. "For the ecocritic, nature really exists, out there beyond ourselves, not needing to be ironised as a concept by enclosure within knowing inverted commas, but actually present as an entity which affects us, and which we can affect, perhaps fatally, if we mistreat it" (Barry, 243). Thus, ecocritics depart from the notion that nature is a social and linguistic construct. As Kate Soper has famously pointed out, "It isn't language which has a hole in its ozone layer" (Soper 2000, 124). At the same time, very little of our environment can be considered untouched by human influence – man made phenomena such as climate change and toxic rain affect the entire globe. In summary, according to Soper, nature is both a human construct and something outside human influence, depending on the discourse (cf. Soper 2000, 124-5).

With regard to pastoral writing, ecocriticism takes a controversial stand. As Terry Gifford points out, not all critics are seemingly aware of the complexities of classical pastoral texts. Instead, some of them refute pastoral writing as romanticised depictions of nature which only serve anthropocentric ends (cf. Gifford 2017, 1). Raymond Williams' *The Country and the City*, a key proto-ecocritical text in Great Britain, regards British pastoral as class-interested writing aimed to cement the superiority of the landowning class and thus to support agrarian capitalism. William's negative

criticism has greatly influenced subsequent critics in the UK. One of the most prominent contemporary ecocritics in Britain, Greg Garrard, follows William's critical attitude. He devalues pastoral's ecocritical potential by arguing that classical pastoral writers such as Theocritus took no interest in nature for its own sake "but used nature as a location or as a reflection of human predicaments" (Garrard, 35). Similarly, Garrard understands Romantic pastorals as reactions to Industrialisation, albeit without any awareness of its desastating effect on the environment (cf. Garrard, 43, 48). In contrast, a proto-ecocritical text by the American critic Leo Marx, *The Machine in the Garden*, acknowledges pastoral's complexities and considers it a valuable mode of writing to express ecological concerns. Marx refers to the trope of the interrupted idyll in 19th century literature and argues that the sudden invasion of the machine (such as a train) into a peaceful landscape expresses the dissonance created by Industrialisation (cf. Marx, 105). Thus, modern American writing uses the traditional contrast contained within the pastoral to signify man's estrangement from nature and ironically comments the idyll of nature, which is revealed as an illusion (cf. Marx, 106). Marx argues for the changeability of pastoral writing, showing that the ancient division between country and city has been dissolved in modern pastorals (cf. Marx, 108).

Another proponent of the pastoral's ecocritical potential is Terry Gifford, one of Britain's leading contemporary ecocritics. In his draft *The Environmental Humanities and the Pastoral Tradition*, he shows that the pastoral mode is a recurring theme in contemporary ecocritical writing (cf. Gifford 2017, 16). According to Gifford, the pastoral "constantly asks us to redefine the terms with which we consider our current and historical environmental crisis" (cf. Gifford 2017, 20). He lists six defining characteristics that mark modern pastoral writing, which he terms 'post-pastoral': a humbling awe of nature, which puts nature in the centre of concern; the realisation that creation and destruction are continuous momentums in our universe (birth-death-rebirth, growth-decay, ecstasy-dissolution); the recognition that the workings of human nature are tied to external nature; the recognition that nature and culture are not separate things but overlap and sometimes are the same; the realisation that because we have consciousness we can take responsibility for our treatment of nature and its ultimate survival; and the realisation that environmental and social exploitation (e.g. the suppression of women and minorities) result from the same source and have to be ended

in order to achieve the healing of the environment and social relations (cf. Gifford 1999, 152 – 165). Thus, Gifford connects the pastoral tradition with contemporary ecological concerns and shows their compatibility. As this thesis will argue, J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* can be considered post-pastoral texts as they are concerned with most of the aspects listed by Gifford. This will support the claim that pastoral writing and contemporary ecological concerns can go hand in hand.

J.R.R. Tolkien's work has repeatedly been analysed in view of its ecocritical potential. His detailed depictions of landscapes and nature in conjunction with creatures closely tied to their environments invite such readings. Creatures such as Ents and the skin-changer Beorn dissolve the boundaries between rational being and nature, shifting the focus from an anthropocentric to an ecocentric one. Indeed, as Ursual K. Le Guin argues, fantasy literature is fundamentally concerned with the non-anthropocentric: "What fantasy often does that the realistic novel generally cannot do is include the nonhuman as essential" (Le Guin, 87). In Tolkien's writing, nature is not treated as a commodity but plays a central role as both setting and character. This has caused many ecocritics to treat especially *The Lord of the Rings* as a textbook for ecological behaviour. Prominent among them are Matthew Dickerson and Jonathan Evans. In *Ents, Elves, and Eriador*, they attempt to deduce Tolkien's environmental vision. Though aware of the dangers of treating his mythology as an ecological textbook, they nonetheless extract an ecological agenda from Tolkien's texts and derive from it practical advice for good environmental behaviour. In their eyes, "Tolkien's environmental vision has all of the following: a strong philosophical and theological basis, a comprehensive imaginative picture of what it might look like when worked out, a powerful reminder of what life looks like when that vision is rejected, and practical implications for day-to-day life for us all" (Dickerson and Evans, xvi-xvii). Similarly, Liam Campbell in *The Ecological Augury in the Works of JRR Tolkien* treats the different creatures as positive and negative environmental models. Thus, he understands Tom Bombadil as an example of environmental ethics, while Saruman is the industrialised and mechanised manifestation of the pursuit for power (cf. Campbell, 76, 98). Though Campbell expresses his awareness that Tolkien rejected readings of his work as allegorical, he points to the applicability of his environmental vision (cf. Campbell, 250). Like Dickerson and Evans, Campbell states that Tolkien's mythology

should not be treated as an environmentalist agenda, while at the same time deducing a green moral message from it. Another similar ecocritical reading of Tolkien's texts is offered by Susan Jeffers. In *Arda Inhabited*, Jeffers looks at the moral implications of the actions of Tolkien's characters (cf. Jeffers, 17). Her understanding of ecocriticism, which is widely shared, emphasises its political agenda. For Jeffers, ecocriticism contains a message which "is explicitly tied to programs for social reform" (Jeffers, 11). She concludes her analysis by connecting Tolkien's work with the Romantic movements's criticism of Industrialization as well as with the protest movements during the 1950s and 60s (cf. Jeffers, 121-122). Though Jeffers does not wish to suggest definitive actions readers should take as a result of their perusal of Tolkien's texts, her work evaluates the texts' political purport. Her understanding of ecocriticism as an analytical tool through which morality and political meaning can be transported equals the approach chosen by many of her colleagues (as shown above). However, it is not the approach practicsed in this thesis.

As Robert Kern points out in *Ecocriticism: What is it Good for?* to read literature simply as doctrine is too limiting and cannot do justice to texts' versatility: "[…] ecocriticism, I would argue, becomes reductive when it simply targets the environmentally incorrect, or when it aims to evaluate texts solely on the basis of their adherence to ecologically sanctioned standards of behaviour" (Kern, 260). For Kern, ecocriticism's main task is to offer new perspectives by focusing on the presentation and meaning of the environment within a text, "even if in doing so we resist the tendency of the text itself (or of our own conditioning as readers) to relegate the environment to the status of setting" (ibid). In the specific case of Tolkien's work, moralising ecocritical analyses are not only too limiting in their interests but in most cases tend to disregard the mythology's greater scope. By focusing on the evaluation of different modes of ecological behaviour, critics such as Dickerson and Evans, Campbell, and Jeffers convey the impression that Tolkien propagates that respectful treatment of the environment and life in accord with nature's needs will ultimately save our planet and thus ourselves. What they tend to ignore is the mythology's overarching narrative, which is conveyed in *The Silmarillion*. As will be shown in more detail in the analysis of the pastoral creature's utopian visions, Tolkien's universe is subjected to a fate of degeneration and final destruction. Though the world's degenerative process can

be slowed by the good creature's efforts, it cannot be altered or even stopped. Thus, ecological crisis and loss are part of the world's god-given design and, in their ultimate form, lie outside the influence of rational beings. Though good ecological behaviour is not devalued by the irreversibility of the world's fate, its effects are limited and it is not presented as a panacea against the world's ailments. It is characteristic of the narrowness of environmentalist readings that they do not take account of the complexity of Tolkien's fictional universe.

As will be shown in the course of this thesis, the boundaries between nature and culture in Tolkien's mythology are fluent. Especially the pastoral and non-pastoral creatures are strongly characterised through their ties to their environments. The analysis will take a close look at these relationships and their position and meaning within the overall mythology. Reductions of Tolkien's complex work to moral agenda and practical implications for the reader will be avoided.

1.3   Current State of Research

A great amount has been written about J.R.R. Tolkien's work since its publication in the 1930s and 50s. Tolkien studies constitute an area of their own in the wider field of fantasy studies. Regular journals such as *Tolkien Studies*, *Mallorn*, and *Mythlore* are popular publication channels research dealing with Tolkien and his work. A publishing company exclusively dedicated to publications dealing with Tolkien's works are the Walking Tree Publishers. Though the approaches and topics are varied, main concerns in academic research are the connection of Tolkien's mythology with his own biography[2], its sources[3], its ecological meaning[4], and the question of its religiosity[5]. Since Peter Jackson's cinematic adaptations of *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*, publications have reviewed the films in connection with Tolkien's work[6]. Some publications have touched upon the use of the pastoral in Tolkien's work, its utopian vision, and its expression of nostalgia – though none have paid attention to the

[2] For example: Chance; Glyer; Helms; Zettersten.
[3] For example: Atherton; Burns 1990; Fisher; Flieger; Pask; Solopova.
[4] For example: Campbell; Dickerson and Evans; Jeffers; Kehr; Simonson.
[5] For example: Garbowski; Kerry 2011; Kerry 2011a; Reilly; Urang; Vincent.
[6] For example: Bogstad; Croft 2004; Mathijs; Rosebury; Thompson.

interrelations between the three. These publications, some of which will reappear in more detail in the analytical section of this thesis, will shortly be discussed in the following.

In her monography *War and the Works of J.R.R. Tolkien*, Janet Brennan Croft offers a short analysis of the pastoral and antipastoral in *The Lord of the Rings*. Altogether, her elaborations take up only a few pages of the publication and are mainly aimed at pointing out the role of pastoral depictions in accounts of war. As she does not offer a definition of pastoral, Croft uses the term diffusely for any depictions she identifies as being "in harmony with nature" (Croft 2004a, 34). Due to her vague terminology, she counts all creatures that stand in opposition to evil as pastoral. For her, "[e]ven a dwarf-cave can be in harmony with nature" (ibid). Evil creatures and the landscapes they inhabit are considered antipastoral by Croft. She points out that the pastoral places offer moments of peace and healing amidst antipastoral destruction (cf. Croft 2004a, 36-37).

G.R. Brown's account of *The Lord of the Ring*'s pastoral characteristics, *Pastoralism and Industrialism in The Lord of the Rings*, is equally superficial. Again, there is no definition of the pastoral. The term is used to refer to the natural bliss and bounty of the Shire and to all the peoples considered good by the author. It is contrasted with industrialism and is connected with nostalgia. Both pastoral depiction and nostalgia are regarded critically by Brown, as she claims that Tolkien's aversion to industrialism and his longing for an idealised past are restrictive and backwards (cf. Brown, 88). Taking Tolkien literally, Brown asks why pastoralism should be connected with freedom, while industrialism is presented as unfree (ibid). She thus seems ignorant of one of the main traditional characteristics of pastoral place, the freedom of its inhabitants, which offers the basis for their pastoral lifestyle. Instead of reading the pastoral and industrialism as comments on two diverging ways of life, Brown discards Tolkien's major works as "a huge nostalgic lament for a vanished splendour" (Brown, 91). In her view, art should examine ways in which the future can be shaped (ibid). She clearly misses *The Lord of the Ring*'s utopian and dystopian visions, which will be analysed in the course of this thesis.

In his short comparison of Tolkien's work with that of William Morris, *Pastoralia and Perfectability in William Morris and J.R.R. Tolkien*, Chester Scoville suggests that both

are strongly influenced by the Arcadian pastoral tradition. Quoting Tom Middlebro, Scoville defines Arcadian values as "spontaneity, creativity, love and freedom" (Scoville, 98). However, he discounts the Shire as neither utopian nor arcadian due to its inhabitants' flaws and imperfections. As Tolkien's universe is caught in a constant process of degeneration, blissful happiness such as in Arcadia can never be obtained (cf. Scoville, 101).

In contrast to the other critics, Douglas A. Burger offers a short account of the history of the pastoral tradition and its defining characteristics in his essay *The Shire: A Tolkien Version of Pastoral*. Identifying the portrayal of the Shire as closely related to classical pastoral depictions, Burger's rather descriptive analysis mainly points out its idyllic agrarian characteristics. It emphasises that the hobbits' child-like character establishes a connection to classical pastorals, which are based on the wish to return to a simpler life that is often associated with childhood (cf. Burger 1986, 151). Besides the Shire, Burger further points out that Tom Bombadil, Lothlórien, Rivendell, and Fangorn Forest should also be considered pastoral (cf. Burger 1986, 153). However, he does not elaborate on this insight but only uses it to state that as an archetype of home and normality, the Shire "acts as a foil to set off all the more brightly the marvels that come later" (ibid).

The critic offering the most useful basis for a detailed analysis of pastoral depictions in Tolkien's work is Phyllis Koppes. In her study of *The Child in Pastoral Myth*, she distinguishes between the pastoral and the heroic impulse and argues that both are most common in non-realistic literature (cf. Koppes, 5). Offering a detailed account of the pastoral tradition and its criticism, Koppes emphasises that "there is no formal characteristic, no subject matter, no philosophy that can without doubt be inferred when the term 'pastoral' is used" (Koppes, 4). She suggests looking at myth and folktale as the best places to search for the commonality that connects all Western pastorals (cf. ibid). Her differentiation between a bucolic and a georgic pastoral category will be adopted for the following analysis of Tolkien's works and will be supplemented by two categories developed by the author of this thesis. Koppes does not only offer theoretical considerations of the role of the pastoral in fantasy literature, but she also uses her theoretical categories for the analysis of children's literature. However, her short analysis of *The Hobbit* is solely focused on Bilbo's development as a heroic character and the work as a regenerative heroic text. The pastoral qualities of Tolkien's texts are

only pointed out superficially in Koppes' similarly short chapter on *The Lord of the Rings*. There, she lists Fangorn Forest, Tom Bombadil, Goldberry, and the elves as bucolic pastoral creatures, while identifying the Shire as georgic pastoral. However, she ignores the position of the pastoral in the texts with regards to its functions and meaning. Instead, her interest pertains to character development and the cyclical plot structure. Due to the importance of Koppes' theoretical insights for this thesis, they will be presented in detail in the following first part with regard to the connection of the pastoral with the fantasy genre.

A number of critics point out the utopian qualities of Tolkien's work and emphasise the critical function of fantasy literature. Thus, in *Hobbithöhlen und Türme der Wacht*, Rainer Zuch comes to the conclusion that "[a]uch wenn er in seinem Mittelerde-Kosmos keine dezidierte Utopie zu entwickeln beabsichtigte, so scheinen doch in seiner Absicht, eine 'mythology for England' zu schaffen sowie in seinen Gesellschaftsentwürfen und Archtiketurkonzeptionen utopische Konzepte durch" (Zuch, 101). Similarly, Marco Frenschkowski states in *Leben wir in Mittelerde? Religionswissenschaftliche Beobachtungen zu Tolkiens The Lord of the Rings* that "Mittelerde ist eine Gegenwelt, die unserer Welt utopisch-nostalgische Alternativrealitäten vorhält, und es ist zugleich die Tiefendimension unserer eigenen Welt" (Frenschkowski, 256). Robert Tally argues in *Places Where the Stars are Strange: Fantasy and Utopia in Tolkien's Middle-earth* that Tolkienian fantasy has critical properties that aim at activating its readers in order to improve their world (cf. Tally 2014, 43). Refuting the widely spread notion that fantasy literature merely voices reactionary nostalgia for an idealised past and presents a world completely unconnected to our reality, he shows that fantasy worlds offer visions of our world that explore alternatives to the status quo (cf. Tally 2014, 46). Thus, Tally argues that fantasy literature has to be understood as a critical practice, like utopia (cf. Tally 2014, 53). A rather detailed analysis of *The Lord of the Rings*' utopian properties is offered by Dickerson and Evans in their ecocritical work *Ents, Elves, and Eriador. The Environmental Vision of J.R.R. Tolkien*. As they point out,

"Tolkien's environmental vision has all of the following: a strong philosophical and theological basis, a comprehensive imaginative picture of what it might look like when worked out, a powerful reminder of what life looks like when that vision is rejected, and practical implications for day-to-day life for us all. This perspective is never explicitly stated as either a program for social change or a political agenda [...]. But Tolkien's views concerning the natural world and environmental responsibility are nonetheless implicit throughout the body of his work" (Dickerson and Evans, xvi-xvii).

Taking the concept of environmental stewardship depicted in *The Lord of the Rings* as a concrete programme applicable in the real world, Dickerson and Evans define it by the following three steps of action: being roused into action and rousing others, developing a hopeful rather than a despairing attitude, being motivated in one's actions by the belief in a higher power and meaning (cf. Dickerson and Evans, 219-229). Thus, they treat Tolkien's mythology as concrete utopia. Such an approach is rejected by Eike Kehr in his *Politik und Gesellschaft in Tolkiens The Lord of the Rings*, who points out that *The Lord of the Rings* "ist weder eine Allegorie, noch ein utopischer Roman und bietet in diesem Sinne keinen geschlossenen Gesellschaftsentwurf. Die dargestellten Gesellschaften sind plausibel innerhalb ihres mittelalterlich-phantastisch geprägten Kontextes [...], als Konstruktionsskizzen unter realen Bedingungen sind sie allerdings weitgehend untauglich" (Kehr 2006, 55-56).

The detection of nostalgia in Tolkien's works usually accompanies their analysis. Thus, critics such as Marco Frenschkowski, G.R. Brown, and Robert Tally, which have already been mentioned above with regard to utopia and the pastoral, all point out *The Lord of the Rings'* nostalgic character[7]. Tony Watkins in his essay *Reconstructing the Homeland: Loss and Hope in the English Landscape* argues that *The Lord of the Rings'* nostalgia is manifest in its anti-industrial stance, and a hierarchical feudal system based on tradition (cf. Watkins, 167). As nostalgic texts offer their readers new perspectives and alternatives to their present reality, he concludes that Tolkien's nostalgic mythology possesses utopian aspects (cf. Watkins, 168-169). Christian Kölzer emphasises the centrality of nostalgic longing and melancholy in his work *Fairy Tales are More than True*: "Das Gefühl, welches den gesamten Roman jedoch wie ein schwarzer Faden durchzieht, ist eine latente Wehmut, das zunächst nicht ganz greifbare, aber sich im

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[7] Cf. Brown, 83; Frenschkowski, 256; Tally, 2014., 45.

Zuge der Handlungsentwicklung immer mehr herauskristallisierende Gefühl des Verlusts, des Schwindens und des Niedergangs alten Glanzes und des Sehnens nach einer goldenen Vorzeit" (Kölzer, 111). As emissaries of a lost world, Kölzer points to the elves as the creatures whose fate is central to the evocation of nostalgic melancholia (cf. Kölzer, 116).

1.4 A Short Guide to This Study and Its Research Contribution

No research so far has been conducted on the connection between pastoral elements, nostalgia, and utopian vision in Tolkien's mythology. This thesis will therefore close a gap in current research by offering such an in-depth analysis. As mentioned above, the detailed investigation will examine the characteristics, narrative position, function, and meaning of the pastoral, nostalgia, and utopian vision in *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*. No such detailed investigation of these three concepts in Tolkien's texts has been undertaken so far. This way, new insights into Tolkien's works will be obtained. In the following, a concise overview of this thesis' structure will be given to offer some orientation and simplify the reading process.

The first part of this thesis aims to offer a theoretical foundation for the analysis of Tolkien's texts. Each of the three fields of interest, nostalgia, utopia, and the pastoral tradition, will be introduced in separate chapters. Special attention will be given to the interrelations of the three fields. Their history, meaning, and functions will shortly be elaborated and definitions applicable to their occurrences in fantasy texts will be reached. In doing so, new categories and terms will be proposed that enable a detailed analysis of the nostalgic, pastoral, and utopian properties of Tolkien's works. As nostalgia and utopia are important ingredients of pastoral writing, they will each be introduced first and will finally be related to a definition of the pastoral.

The main part of this thesis will apply the definitions and insights reached in the theoretical chapters to Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit*. This part is divided into three main sections. Again, the order of the chapters follows the line of argumentation. The first section contains the analysis of pastoral depictions in the two texts. Given the separation of the pastoral into different categories, which were outlined in the theoretical part, the chapters examine bucolic and georgic pastoral creatures and

landscapes before turning to non-pastoral depictions, which are sub-divided into the antipastoral and the unpastoral. A separate chapter will look at the bucolic and georgic pastoral's positions and functions in the primary texts. This analysis is followed by a chapter on men's special position in Tolkien's mythology, as their depiction reveals their potential to be both pastoral and antipastoral. The second section of the analytical part is concerned with the role of nostalgia within pastoral culture. The focus will be laid on the meaning and function of the different kinds of nostalgia, which were defined in the theoretical part, detectable in bucolic and georgic pastoral cultures. Finally, the analysis turns to the utopian potential of Tolkien's mythology. Again, the focus lies on the pastoral and non-pastoral creatures. Their utopian and dystopian visions are presented and contrasted. This way, different kinds of utopian vision are detected and set in relation to the overall dystopian fate of Tolkien's fictional universe.

Drawing on the results of this thesis and on Terry Gifford's ecocritical work, the final chapter will argue that Tolkien's texts can be defined as modern pastorals. The connection between Tolkien's work and pastoral literature made explicit in the analysis will thus be cemented in generic terms. The conclusion presents a summary of the central findings of this thesis and introduces questions for further study.

Part Two:
❧ Theory ☙

2 Nostalgia – Fantasy Literature and the Poetics of Longing for Home

Nostalgic longing for a more or less clearly defined past can be found within all kinds of literary and non-literary art, as it constitutes a pivotal element in human culture and psyche. As this chapter and the analysis of *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* in the second part of this thesis will show, one type of literature that particularly draws on and reflects nostalgia is fantasy literature. In the following, a theoretical ground will be created, upon which the analysis of the nostalgia of all pastoral creatures within Tolkien's mythology can be founded. To achieve this, this chapter will start with a concise overview of the various definitions of nostalgia as well as of the historical development of the concept of nostalgia. Only in light of the long string of varying definitions of nostalgia throughout the centuries, and of its progression through diverse academic disciplines, can the complexity of the concept and its appearance in fantasy literature be fully appreciated. Following this overview, contemporary nostalgia's properties as a reaction to modern living conditions and as a source of national identity will be depicted in more detail. Subsequently, an overview of nostalgia's function as a psychological coping mechanism, which is based on recent studies conducted by the American psychologist Tim Wildschut and his team, will be offered. This multifarious account of the historical and the modern understanding of nostalgia is necessary to appreciate the appearance and meaning of nostalgia within fantasy literature. It will further offer the basis for the introduction of different categories of nostalgia. After arguing that the nostalgic categories of two of the best known critics in the field, Svetlana Boym and Fred Davis, do not bear significance for the types of nostalgia detectable in fantasy literature, it will be shown that the categories of nostalgia laid down by Barbara Stern, historical and personal nostalgia, are relevant for this thesis as they are applicable to fantasy literature. Following this, Donald Beecher's observations about the nostalgic structure of the Renaissance romance will be employed to ascertain the same structural nostalgia within the fantasy genre. Two new terms, intratextual nostalgia and extratextual nostalgia, will be proposed by the author of this thesis on the basis of Stern's and Beecher's theories. It will be argued that both of these levels of nostalgia play an important role in fantasy literature. However, it will be argued that for

the purpose of this thesis, only intratextual nostalgia and its expression of historical and personal nostalgia will be of relevance in the analysis of Tolkien's texts.

2.1 Definitions of Nostalgia

One need only look back to Homer's *Odyssey* with its homesick protagonist to find that nostalgia was experienced long before it received the name it has commonly been known by since its coinage in 1688. As will be shown with more detail in the next chapter, between then and now, nostalgia's meaning has developed from a potentially fatal disease of homesickness in the 17th century, through Romanticism's principal concept against the rationalisation introduced by Enlightenment in the 19th century, to a psychological and sociological coping mechanism in contemporary time. Current research shows that in recent decades nostalgia has been recognised in its importance as a social emotion (cf. Davis 1979), as a pivotal element of national identity (cf. Wright), and as a psychological defence mechanism against the vicissitudes of modern life (cf. Boym). In accordance with this, psychological studies have shown that nostalgia plays an important role in dealing with life crises as, among a multitude of other functions, it is used as a psychological strategy against loneliness and identity discontinuity, and as a defence against the threatening sense of life's meaninglessness (cf. Arndt et al.; Sedikides et al.). "This research documents that nostalgia is a psychological resource that protects and fosters mental health. This research constitutes an initial step toward establishing nostalgia as a potent coping mechanism in situations of self-threat and social threat. The past, when appropriately harnessed, can strengthen psychological resistance to the vicissitudes of life" (Sedikides et al., 1028).

Contemporary research has defined nostalgia as "a mode of orientation toward the past" (DaSilva, 54), "a form of mental flight from the distastefulness or danger of the present" (Beecher, 289), "a mode of looking back to the past for a stability lacking in the present" (Hemmings, 3), "a sentiment of loss and displacement, but [...] also a romance with one's own fantasy" (Boym, XIII), "a revolt against the past as *fait accompli*, against the past's facticity" (Chrostowska, 55), or as "a typical reaction to an unsatisfying present that lacks meaning, continuity and security" (Wright, 150). This small collection of definitions alone shows that nostalgia nowadays is perceived as a many-facetted mode or sentiment whose main characteristics are its orientation towards

the past, its function as criticism of and compensation for present deficiencies, and its disregard for historical fact. Nostalgia's romance with the past actively creates its very own version of it; a fact which is acknowledged by most critics[8]. By containing criticism of the present and offering images of the world as it should preferably be, nostalgia implies a utopian vision: "By converting the past into a Utopian homestead, nostalgia may lay the foundations for a radical critique of the modern as a departure from authenticity" (Turner, 154). Nostalgia offers new perspectives on present reality, which point out alternative paths for the future (cf. Watkins, 169). Consequently, "[n]ostalgia [...] has a utopian dimension, only it is no longer directed toward the future" (Boym, XIV).

Many contemporary critics treat nostalgia as a personal emotion that depicts individuals within their autobiographical past in order to serve their individual needs. For instance, the psychologist Tim Wildschut and his research team define nostalgia as "a prima facie self-relevant emotion in the sense that the self is a salient protagonist in the nostalgic experience" (Wildschut et al. 2006, 976). Sociologist Fred Davis follows along the same line when he establishes that "[...] the past which is the object of nostalgia must in some fashion be a personally experienced past rather than one drawn solely, for example, from chronicles, almanacs, history books, memorial tablets, or, for that matter, legend" (Davis 1979, 8). Davis calls the longing for a past predating one's own lifetime 'antiquarian feeling', which he regards as a different category than nostalgia due to the high involvement of fantasy and imagination that must be invested in order to create yearning for a period unknown to oneself (cf. Davis 1979, 8-9). Against this conception of nostalgia as a purely personal emotion stand definitions of nostalgia as a yearning for a past unattached to personal biography and experienced by entire groups of people. Svetlana Boym's understanding of nostalgia, for example, stresses its defensive function against modern conditions and beliefs. Its objects, according to Boym, are elusive and concern emotions and ideas that are projected on the past, rather than historical and autobiographical facts (cf. Boym, XIV). She concludes:

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[8] Cf. Boym, XIII; Chrostowska, 55; DaSilva, 49; Davis 1979, 116; Harper, 26.

> "I realized that nostalgia goes beyond individual psychology. At first glance, nostalgia is a longing for a place, but actually it is a yearning for a different time - the time of our childhood, the slower rhythms of our dreams. […] The nostalgic desires to obliterate history and turn it into private or collective mythology, to revisit time like space, refusing to surrender to the irreversibility of time that plagues the human condition" (Boym, XV).

Though Boym's definition includes personal nostalgia, it goes beyond that by emphasising the indefinite scope of nostalgic objects and the collective quality of nostalgic experience (cf. Boym, XIV). Patrick Wright offers a similar view of nostalgia by characterising it as a collective (and mainly national) reaction to modern life in a capitalist and secular society: In remembering past historical events that happened before one's own lifetime, the national imagination creates "a clear although no longer always preindustrial world from which hope, measure, intelligibility and courage have not been banished" (Wright, 149). As will be discussed in more detail later on, a broad definition of nostalgia as a collective yearning for mythical and historical past can be related to the nostalgia found in fantasy literature and is, therefore, relevant for this thesis.

2.2   Historical Development of the Concept of Nostalgia

In order to understand the different types of nostalgia within fantasy literature – historical nostalgia's longing for a diffuse pseudo-historical past as well as personal nostalgia's longing for a clearly defined home – it is necessary to understand the full range of meanings the concept of nostalgia has acquired throughout its history. While today nostalgia is widely recognised as a reaction to feelings of estrangement, insecurity, and isolation in secularised capitalist societies, its conceptual roots reach deep into medical history. The word was coined in 1688 by Johannes Hofer, a Swiss physician, in his *Medical Dissertation on Nostalgia*. He created it by fusing two words of Greek origin, 'nostos' (return home) and 'algos' (suffering or pain), thus incorporating the concept's basic characteristics in its name: the suffering of the exile whose only salvation lies in his return home (cf. Patrascu, 482). Hofer's findings constituted nostalgia as a serious disease that afflicted Swiss soldiers. These soldiers, having been swept away from their native homes to unfamiliar regions of military conflict, showed serious, and occasionally fatal, symptoms such as "insomnia, sleep disorders, weakness, anxiety, heart palpitations, and fever" (Hofer quoted in Patrascu,

484). Obviously, Hofer's nostalgia was closely connected to the traumatising experience of war and would, from a contemporary psychological perspective, be described as a unifying term for different kinds of neuroses (cf. Hemmings, 6). The only effectual cure for nostalgia, according to Hofer, was the return of the displaced to his home, for even just mention to the patient of his pending return brought about a lessening of his nostalgic symptoms and every mile of the homeward journey was found to effect further recovery (cf. Hemmings, 7). Following these findings by Hofer, nostalgia was pronounced a typical Swiss ailing in the 17th and early 18th century and thus served as a source of national pride due to its implicit commendation of Switzerland as a country of health and happiness (cf. Starobinski, 89).

The concept of nostalgia increased in complexity towards the end of the 18th century. Based on earlier findings that nostalgia could be triggered by the sound of a typical Swiss folk song, it was deduced that the yearning for home is not simply alleviated by returning there, but that great part of the longing is for the irretrievable past times of innocence and childhood. Thus, nostalgia was recognised as a complex and incurable condition and gradually lost its exclusive connection to Switzerland. However, the notion of nostalgia as a potentially fatal disease continued throughout that time (cf. Starobinski, 93-95). At the turn of the century, recognition of its psychological properties gained momentum when it was understood as a mental illness, comparable with the modern understanding of depression, which could lead to severe physical affliction (cf. Starobinski, 97).

Nostalgia lost its medical connotations in the 19th century, during which it was established as a form of melancholia and homesickness (cf. Patrascu, 488-490). Romanticism celebrated nostalgia as the longing for a return to original natural conditions, thus reacting against the rationalisation introduced by Enlightenment, as well as against the severe unsettling changes brought about by industrialisation and urbanisation (cf. Patrascu, 492; Boym, 16, Fritzsche, 1591). Developments in the late 18th and the 19th century laid the foundation for what most critics of nostalgia term 'modernity' and 'modern conditions'. The French Revolution, along with economic and demographic changes, disrupted traditional structures that had previously been perceived as indestructible (cf. Fritzsche, 1593). Mourning for lost security and stability became a predominant tenor during the 19th century (cf. ibid). Perception of history

changed due to the incisive effect of the revolution. The focus was now laid on the future, while past history was suddenly experienced as incoherent epochs that were disconnected from the present and irretrievably lost (cf. Fritzsche, 1591).

From the disruptive changes and developments during the late 18th and the 19th century arose the current notion of nostalgia as a universal "longing for a home that no longer exists or has never existed" (Boym, XIII). From the contemporary point of view, nostalgia unites the sweetness of fantasy about past bliss and perfection with the bitterness of realisation that this past is irretrievably lost or that it has never existed. "In other words, nostalgia constitutes what it cannot possess and defines itself by its inability to approach its subject, a paradox that is the essence of nostalgia's melancholia" (Fritzsche, 1595). The trauma of the two world wars in the 20th century was incisive in modern consciousness and rendered the past even more inaccessible than before, which has led to an intensification of nostalgia in modern times (cf. Hemmings, 5). Other than Hofer's patients, the displaced nostalgic of today has to face homelessness as a perpetual state, for nostalgia no longer describes the longing for an actually existing place, but expresses the deeply felt yearning for a time and place long lost; or rather, for a time and place that have never existed, but the fantasy of which is deeply engrained in human psyche. For modern man, homecoming is no longer possible as a cure.

2.3   Contemporary Nostalgia: A Symptom of Modern Conditions

Nostalgia, as a reaction to present conditions, is an interesting object of study for it offers insight into individual and collective psyche. The 21st century understanding of nostalgia as a symptom of displacement and rationalisation is a direct result of modern living conditions. Capitalist society, with its dependence on the conditions of the market and its emphasis on the role of the individual as consumer, has estranged man from his products as well as from his fellow men (cf. DaSilva, 52). High mobility and globalisation have led to the loss of stable communities and to severe demographic change. Isolation and anonymity are typical symptoms of the fast pace and fragmentation of communities and have to be perceived as a contemporary form of homelessness (cf. Harper, 24). Loss of stability can also be detected in the general orientation of modern society towards the future (cf. Wright, 13). Its driving force is a

belief in progress and development, while at the same time the future is conceived as a threat as technological advances have initiated the ongoing destruction of the natural environment, and might eventually reach their limits with the pending exhaustion of natural resources. With such gloomy prospects, progress has obtained negative connotations against which nostalgia's backwards glance promises soothing release. As Svetlana Boym remarks: "Nostalgia and progress are like Jekyll and Hyde doubles and mirror images of one another" (Boym, 8). Progress' dynamics are even less well borne due to an ongoing loss of religious belief, which has diminished any hope in final redemption and has robbed contemporary man of fundamental, meaning providing structures. The demystification of the world and the replacement of religion by science have led to a loss of moral guidance and to the destabilisation of social relations (cf. Wright, 18-19). Consequently, modern

> "transformations [...] are widely experienced in terms of loss rather than gain. Given the dislocation of memory and traditional integration which has occurred, and given that the various (and in some cases antagonistic) futures projected within modernity seem also to have fallen like so many broken idols in its path, it is perhaps to be expected that anxious revaluation of the past should also take place" (Wright, 20).

Looking back to a time that nostalgic imagination presents as stable, simple, and happy is a powerful defence mechanism against the complexities and insecurities of modern life and against the modern concept of time as history and progress (cf. Boym, XIV).

> "At least since the Enlightenment insistent and often strident demands have gnawed at the soul of Western man, demands for change, self-improvement, more efficient organization, modernization, uplift, reform and reconstitution - all those attributes that are in accord with the doctrine of man's almost infinite plasticity and perfectability and that converge finally in the idea of Progress [...]. Nostalgia fosters a kind of primitive resistance to such urgings, to the probing and poking, to that close examination and magnification which in the view of Max Weber has made for the disenchantment of the world. Nostalgia reenchants, if only for a while until the inexorable processes of historical change exhaust that past which offered momentary shelter from a worrisome but finally inexorable future" (Davis 1979, 116).

Seen through rose-tinted glasses, the past offers refuge from the confusions of the present: The stringent social hierarchy of past society, with its strict moral code and pre-capitalist lifestyle, offers temporary relief and is celebrated as a state superior to the present. Thus, nostalgia creates its own fiction of the past.

In his *Note on Nostalgia*, Bryan S. Turner lists four conditions which, altogether, trigger strong nostalgic fantasies. First, society must be pervaded by a feeling of loss and historical decline. Present day society must in some way be perceived as inferior to a lost time that is experienced as the standard against which the present can be measured. Second, there must be loss of moral certainty and a resulting sense of fragmentation of previously securely structured social relationships and personal experience. Third, the individual must feel a loss of autonomy and individual freedom due to institutionalised regulation and state bureaucracy. Social processes must be experienced to subordinate and isolate the individual. Fourth, there must be a sense that a general state of simplicity and happiness located in the past has been irretrievably lost, and that with it have gone personal authenticity and emotional spontaneity (cf. Turner, 150-151). However, Turner goes further than merely linking nostalgia to present conditions. He does so by explaining nostalgia's timeless and universal existence as a consequence of mans' ability to consciously and self-consciously distance himself from his environment and thus perceive the finiteness of life and his own alienation from the world – both natural and social (cf. Turner, 149-150). As Turner puts it: "Being content is somehow incompatible with knowing that we are" (Turner, 153). Against this discontent, nostalgia offers a secure haven that satisfies man's longing to belong and to be in a state of infinitude – if only temporarily.

> "Modern nostalgia is a mourning for the impossibility of mythical return, for the loss of an enchanted world with clear borders and values; it could be a secular expression of a spiritual longing, a nostalgia for an absolute, a home that is both physical and spiritual, the edenic unity of time and space before entry into history. The nostalgic is looking for a spiritual addressee. Encountering silence, he looks for memorable signs, desperately misreading them" (Boym 8).

2.4   Psychological Functions of Nostalgia

Contrary to Johannes Hofer's definition of nostalgia as a serious – and occasionally fatal - mental disease, modern research has proven nostalgia to be an important factor in the establishment and preservation of mental health and well-being. In a series of experiments the psychologists Arndt, Routledge, Sedikides and Wildschut were able to prove the importance of nostalgia as a meaning-providing psychological mechanism that counterweighs negative emotions and deflects threats to the self in order to preserve mental health.

Wildschut and his team showed that one of the main triggers of nostalgia is a feeling of loneliness and lack of social connectedness. Subjects facing these threatening emotions resorted to nostalgia in order to evoke memories of past social bonds through which they found solace and compensation for their current deficiencies in social connectedness (cf. Sedikides et al., 1023). These findings proved nostalgia to be a deeply social emotion, whose positive effects were shown to include the conveyance of a sense of being loved and protected in people with nostalgia proneness (cf. Arndt et al. 2008a, 306). Also, those with easy access to nostalgic reverie reported to possess greater interpersonal competence (cf. ibid). Later experiments took these findings further and showed that by establishing an impression of social connectedness and by depicting the individual within their social group, nostalgia functions as a meaning awarding mechanism. Therefore, Arndt, Wildschut et al conclude: "Collectively, these findings indicate that the provision of existential meaning is a pivotal function of nostalgia" (Arndt et al. 2011, 638).

Another reason for reverting to a glorified past is that nostalgia can provide a source of identity. By connecting people to their past, "[…] nostalgia is one of the means - or, better, one of the more readily accessible psychological lenses - we employ in the never ending work of constructing, maintaining, and reconstructing our identities" (Davis 1979, 31). As nostalgic memories always present the nostalgic person in a positive light and cancel out anything unpleasant, embarrassing, or unhappy, they create positive self-images (cf. Davis 1979, 37). These then support the individual in their constant struggle against the adversities of life, for the memory of past success and strength lends an impression of general personal ability, consequently functioning as encouragement (cf. Davis 1979, 36). Additionally, the glorification of a past self awards the nostalgic person with feelings of heightened value and importance, thus adorning their identity with the laurels of past success to augment self-worth (cf. Sedikides, Wildschut, and Baden, 206).

Further studies conducted by Wildschut and his team support Fred Davis' discontinuity hypothesis. Davis argues that nostalgia serves to repair a sense of discontinuity in a person's identity. An individual's sense of self is under constant threat through having to face uncertainties, anxieties, and discontents. However, by connecting to their past through nostalgia, the individual can create a sense of identity continuity. Thus,

nostalgia shields the individual from the threat of discontinuity, insignificance, and change. Nostalgia "[…] reassures us of past happiness and accomplishment and, since these still remain on deposit, as it were, in the bank of our memory, it simultaneously bestows upon us a certain current worth, however much present circumstances may obscure it or make it suspect" (Davis 1979, 33). Wildschut et al's findings confirm Davis' hypothesis. The more subjects were prone to nostalgic reveries, the more they perceived the present as meaningful and positive. As self-continuity is an important factor for mental health, it can be concluded that nostalgia enhances people's well-being and protects against the threat of depression (cf. Arndt et al. 2008b, 235).

By providing identity, a sense of its continuity, an impression of social connectedness, and, overall, the experience of life as meaningful, nostalgia is a powerful tool in a person's dealing with their awareness of mortality. Terror management theory has found that in order to cope with knowledge of life's inevitable end, people resort to meaning providing structures and invest in personal relationships (cf. Arndt et al. 2008, 133). Studies have shown that people prone to nostalgic feelings are less likely to develop death thoughts. Also, it was found that in people experiencing thoughts of death, nostalgia buffers the effects of such thoughts. Consequently, it was established that nostalgia offers effective protection against the anxiety raised by awareness of mortality (cf. Arndt et al. 2008, 137).

2.5   Categories of Nostalgia and their Applicability to Fantasy Literature

An attempt at the categorisation of nostalgia has been made by a few recent critics in order to differentiate between the various manifestations of longing they have described in their research. Consensus has not been reached among those critics, which is why there is no generally accepted categorisation of nostalgia. As this thesis is concerned with the analysis of nostalgia within Tolkien's fantasy texts, the different categories of nostalgia will in the following be examined with regard to their applicability to fantasy literature.

2.5.1   Categories of Nostalgia propounded by Svetlana Boym and Fred Davis

Due to their prominence within the critical canon of nostalgia studies, it is necessary to include a short study of the different types of nostalgia proposed by Svetlana Boym and

Fred Davis in any account of nostalgia categories. However, in the following, it will be expounded why Boym's and Davis' definitions of nostalgia do not apply to the kind of nostalgia detectable in fantasy literature.

Svetlana Boym distinguishes between restorative and reflective nostalgia. Restorative nostalgia emphasises *nostos*, home, and constitutes the active effort to return to a long lost place. It is the attempt to recreate the past through the detailed reconstruction of past architectural monuments and traditions. In doing so, restorative nostalgics strive to erase any signs documenting the passage of time (cf. Boym, 41). Instead of recognising their wishes and endeavours as nostalgic, they interpret their efforts as a search for truth and tradition (cf. ibid). However, their erasing of the signs of time and age on buildings and monuments has raised questions of authenticity in some circles, as the originality of restored sites is contested (cf. Boym, 46). Restorative nostalgics invent traditions which, though they are based on past customs, appear exaggerated and, consequently, artificial to others. However, their quest is the establishment of their version of truth and originality. Their action "builds on the sense of loss of community and cohesion and offers a comforting collective script for individual longing" (Boym, 42). Boym states that in extreme cases, restorative nostalgia can generate conspiracy theory. In this theory, the world is clearly separated into good and evil. "'Home', imagine extremist conspiracy theory adherents, is forever under siege, requiring defense against the plotting enemy" (Boym, 43). 'Home' in this case is not personal but collective memory. It evades historical complexities and is the image of a "delusionary homeland", which serves to exclude a diffuse group of others who are perceived as threatening persecutors (ibid).

In opposition to restorative nostalgia, reflective nostalgia emphasises *algia*, the emotion of longing and loss (cf. Boym, 41). It consciously perceives of the passage of time and does not try to recreate the past. Rather, it reflects about the past as a lost time and place. Instead of constructing narratives about past national time, as does restorative nostalgia, reflective nostalgia tells individual stories that "savour details and memorial signs, perpetually deferring homecoming itself" (Boym, 49). It does not search for unblemished relics of the past but instead cherishes chipped and fragmented memories and objects (cf. ibid). Other than restorative nostalgia, it can be ironic and critical

towards its own sense of longing (cf. ibid). This way, reflective nostalgics can recognise and "narrate the relationship between past, present and future" (Boym, 50).

Fred Davis distinguishes between three types of nostalgia in ascending order: 'First order' or 'simple' nostalgia describes unreflective longing for the past, which is experienced as superior to an unsatisfying present. 'Second order' or 'reflexive' nostalgia is characterised by the nostalgic's awareness that the past was not as glorious as nostalgic memory renders it (cf. Davis 1979, 21). In this quality it is similar to Boym's definition of reflective nostalgia, which also critically questions perceptions of the past and can distance itself from them (cf. Boym, 49). Furthermore, Davis' second order nostalgia and Boym's reflective nostalgia are both capable of analysing the relationship between past and present, thus critically reflecting on the question whether the past really was superior to the present and whether the present really is as bad as it is perceived to be (cf. Boym, 50; Davis 1979, 21). However, Davis establishes another reflective type of nostalgia, which is included in Boym's category of reflective nostalgia. Davis' 'third order' or 'interpreted' nostalgia includes analytical questions by which the nostalgic tries to objectify his nostalgic emotions and thus goes beyond second order nostalgia regarding reflective potential (cf. Davis 1979, 24). Concerning a comparison of his three orders of nostalgia, Davis emphasises that none of them should be favoured above the others, as all three are "capable of [their] own vulgarizations, inanities, and illogic, just as each is capable of perspicacity, profundity, and elegance of statement" (Davis 1979, 27). According to him, each person is capable of, and has occasionally experienced, all three types of nostalgia (cf. ibid).

Boym's and Davis' categories do not bear significant relevance for this project as they are not fitting descriptions for the type of nostalgia detectable in fantasy literature. Though the fantasy genre shares the attempt to reconstruct elements of historical past with restorative nostalgia, it does not pursue the same intentions in doing so. Fantasy literature does not strive for historical truth and the reestablishment of 'originals', but consciously blends historical elements with purely fictional ones to create its very own version of the past and history. By situating its narrative in a world not identical with the real world, it does not claim any reconstruction of real historical fact. Rather, its use of real historical elements alongside fictitious elements creates a canvas upon which values and norms can be displayed outside of the confusing complexity of the real

world. This way, a secondary world is created, which functions as a laboratory in which alternatives to the real world can be tested (cf. Kölzer, 59). Tolkien calls this function of fantasy literature 'recovery', i.e. a "regaining of a clear view" by venturing into the world of fantasy and thus gaining a new perspective on our real world (*On F-S*, 146). The inclusion of real-world detail, historical and otherwise, renders the fantasy world familiar and thus believable, whereby readers can identify with and adopt the norms and values presented within it (cf. *On F-S*, 147). Briefly speaking, the fantasy world needs to contain elements of the real world in order to be recognisable for the reader; and at the same time it has to contain fictitious elements so as to be removed from the real world and to offer new perspectives on it. In the case of Tolkien's fantasy works, the secondary world, which is called Ëa, contains a blend of real historical elements, such as pre-medieval and medieval forms of society and political rule, weaponry, values and norms, with purely fictional elements, such as fantastic creatures and geology, or magical powers. As will be shown in the next part of this chapter, fantasy literature's use of real historical elements and its fictionalisation of them constitute its historical nostalgia.

In addition to not being restorative, fantasy literature's nostalgia cannot be rated reflective as fantasy literature does not critically or ironically depict the past. On the contrary, in order to create feasible fantasy worlds, fantasy literature presents its blend of historical and fictional elements as coherent factuality. It would deconstruct the persuasiveness of its own fantastical universe if it were to include critically distancing elements in its narrative[9]. Thus, Boym's and Davis' categories of reflective nostalgia do not apply to the kind of longing expressed in fantasy literature. Contrary to this, at least superficially, Davis' definition of first order nostalgia is consistent with the characteristics of nostalgia within pastoral literature[10] and, in many cases, fantasy literature (cf. Marinelli, 3; Watkins, 167). Davis defines simple nostalgia as "the celebration of now ostensibly lost values, the sense of some ineffable spirit of worth or goodness having escaped time, the conviction that, no matter how far advanced the present may be […], it is in some deeper sense meaner and baser" (Davis 1979, 20).

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[9] With respect to literary techniques creating verisimilitude in fantasy fiction cf. Hunter, 62-69.
[10] As will be shown in chapter 4.4 of this thesis.

From this can be concluded that the effects and convictions inherent in simple nostalgia are also pivotal elements of the nostalgia found in fantasy literature. However, considering the shallowness attributed to simple nostalgia by Davis, his category fails to do justice to the complexity of nostalgic expression within fantasy fiction. Being a reaction to present conditions and serving as a means of communicating values and norms, the nostalgia found in fantasy literature is not simply unreflected longing for a glorified past. As the analysis in the second part of this thesis will show, its inseparability with the pastoral tradition and its function as a means of implicit conveyance of a utopian impulse render the nostalgia within *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit* far more complex and meaningful than can be expressed with Davis' first category.

2.5.2 Historical versus Private Nostalgia – Nostalgia in Fantasy Literature

Barbara Stern establishes two kinds of nostalgia that she links to different literary modes: Historical nostalgia, which she links to historical romance, and personal nostalgia, which she regards as being connected to the sentimental novel. Personal nostalgia yearns for autobiographical past, which is retrospectively idealised and symbolically represents "a desire to return to the womb – the pre-natal state – to recapture the perfect innocence and comfort unattainable in the external world" (Stern, 16). Historical nostalgia is directed to a pre-autobiographical past that is experienced as superior to the present. This type of nostalgia, according to Stern, is central to historical romance, whose plot centres around historical events and mythological time and whose protagonists function as idealised role-models (cf. Stern, 13-14). The romance plot follows the pattern of a quest, which is why action is goal-oriented. The setting is exotic and its temporality is a remote mythical past. It does not merely serve as background but is central to the story (cf. Stern, 13). Events are presented in a salvific glow which "haloes the characters as well, insofar as they are portrayed as idealized men and women holding fast to heroic values, particularly those celebrated in the chivalric quest romance (loyalty, honor, mercy, obedience)" (Stern, 14). By experiencing empathy with the characters and entering a fictitious world that is based on verisimilitude, i.e. "the illusion of reality conveyed by faithfully depicted detail", the reader can identify with the values and mythical epoch thus presented, and he is able to obtain a feeling of recapturing a past he never personally experienced (Stern, 16). Altogether, historical

nostalgia in historical romance has an escapist function and aims at recreating "the past as a golden age"[11] (Stern, 13-14).

The characteristics Stern allocates to historical romance are equally true for much fantasy fiction. According to Clute and Grant, romance and fantasy literature "overlap considerably" (Clute and Grant, 820). As has already been argued above, fantasy plots are set in a mythical past which possesses characteristics drawn from a blend of historical and fictional elements. A linear sequence of events that follows the pattern of a quest is typical of these works of fantasy and is a feature shared with ancient mythology (Homer's *Odyssey* being the earliest quest tale in Western literature), fairy and folk tales, as well as with medieval heroic romance (cf. Clute and Grant, 796, 820; Daemmrich and Daemmrich, 216). In fact, fantasy fiction in general unites characteristics of all of these types of literature and draws heavily on them. Fantasy worlds and their peoples usually bear significant characteristics from past times of the real world. In the case of Tolkien's works, and many more fashioned after their example, pre-medieval and medieval culture, norms, and social and political structure provide the foundation upon which the fantasy world is built. The use of historical elements is further to be found in small details such as fashion, architecture, weaponry, and language. They often appear in idealised form and present the past as times of moral strength and clear behavioural and social norms. Closely tied to the presentation of pre-medieval and medieval cultures and lifestyles as desirable is the ideal of the righteous hero, who repeatedly has to prove his moral worth in a series of tests. The final completion of his quest shows him to be a worthy role-model for the modern reader and emphasises the importance of chivalric[12] values. Besides the moral example of the hero, fantasy texts often also present an ideal ruler, usually a monarch[13]. This ideal king is often opposed by his counterpart, the tyrannical ruler. This way, both the chivalric

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[11] For information on the Golden Age Myth and its function in pastoral and fantasy literature see chapter 4.2.1 of this thesis.

[12] Chivalry was a medieval code of behaviour which was initially determined to guide and elevate mounted knights. The chivalric code included moral, religious, and social concerns. Over the centuries, the concept of chivalry was applied to describe the "behaviour expected of a gentleman, demanding personal honour, generosity, loyalty, and courage" (Cannon, *chivalry*).

[13] This depiction of good and valorous heroes and leaders goes back to medieval romance, of which it was one of the defining characteristics (cf. Burlin, 3-4).

hero's and the ideal king's actions and decisions serve as templates of exemplary behaviour to the modern audience. Altogether, the use of pre-medieval and medieval aspects in modern fantasy literature is strongly expressive of contemporary historical nostalgia. "The medieval code of ethics and chivalry operates as an idealized standard to which characters aspire, and against which the values of the contemporary world are measured and found wanting" (Searle, 6). The use of medieval elements offers fantasy authors the opportunity to create feasible secondary worlds: differing from the readers' contemporary world in many aspects, they are nonetheless perceived as familiar and "in a very real sense feel like 'home'" (ibid). This shows that Stern's definition of historical nostalgia does not have to remain restricted to historical romance, but can equally well be applied to secondary-world fantasy fiction.

With regard to its psychological functions, it can be established that historical nostalgia operates in the same manner as personal nostalgia, albeit in a supra-individual context. Even though Wildschut et al only define nostalgia as a private, autobiographical emotion, their findings can be transferred to historical nostalgia. As shown above[14], nostalgia is a defence mechanism not just against the vicissitudes of personal life, but also against the anxieties experienced by entire groups of people exposed to modern living conditions. In his work *On Living in an Old Country,* Patrick Wright depicts the importance of historical nostalgia for national identity. By creating a sense of national coherence and importance, the national imagination of the past can serve to overcome feelings of difference and fragmentation within society (cf. Wright, 132). The past, as it is rendered by the national imagination, creates an impression of continuity of national identity, for by its remembrance and celebration of national past, the nation attempts to recover and reaffirm old traditions (cf. Wright, 148). Wright emphasises historical nostalgia's glorifying tendencies, which enhance national self-worth, by pointing out that in remembering past historical events, the national imagination reveals "a clear although no longer always preindustrial world from which hope, measure, intelligibility and courage have not been banished; a counterposed and authentic world which expresses its incongruity like some strange wild flower forcing its way up through

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[14] Cf. subchapter 2.4 of this thesis.

cracks in urban concrete" (Wright, 149). This past is commemorative of a blissful primordial state and endows modern man's existence with a sense of meaning by presenting this glorious world of the past as "'our' birthright and inheritance, a world which 'we', exiles as we are in the Wasteland of western modernity, can recognise as our own" (ibid). Therefore, historical nostalgia is a meaning-awarding mechanism on a national level and thus has a softening effect on modern society's fear of future decline and degeneration (cf. Wright, 66).

2.6 The two Levels of Nostalgia in Fantasy Fiction: Extratextual Nostalgia and Intratextual Nostalgia

As mentioned above, fantasy literature's close relationship with the romance genre renders possible the transfer of findings about the latter to the fantasy genre. Thus, Donald Beecher's reflections about the role of nostalgia in Renaissance romance open up interesting new vistas concerning the role of nostalgia in fantasy fiction. On an elementary level, Beecher proposes that the quest pattern of romance is nostalgic in itself: the hero's (often involuntary) departure from home, his adventurous journey, and his final redemptive homecoming represent a cyclical movement that is based on the idea of *nostos* and *algia*. According to Beecher, the longing for home is an underlying drive which urges the romance plot to completion:

> "The question must in some instances be entertained whether an art form can express through its compulsive circular design an equivalent of that emotionalized mind state of memory and plangent desire that constitutes nostalgia. It is as though the genre itself assumes the feeling for home that drives the plot to its closure […]" (Beecher, 282).

Thus, the plot structure of romance, and, due to their similarity, that of fantasy literature as well, can be regarded as an embodiment of nostalgia. On a higher level, nostalgia is the romance protagonist's main motivation that urges him on throughout his journey. His final return home ends his trials and tribulations, and offers reward in form of domestic happiness, tranquillity, and peace (cf. Beecher, 285). Consequently, nostalgia

also plays an important role with regard to romance's and fantasy literature's storyline[15].

Having related Stern's and Beecher's deliberations on nostalgia in romance fiction to fantasy literature, two new terms have to be introduced in order to distinguish between expressions of nostalgia in the fictional and in the real world: intratextual and extratextual nostalgia. As Stern postulates that the emotional needs of real people (readers and authors) influence the production and reception of literary texts, her argument is focused on extratextual (i.e. real-life) nostalgia and its interplay with written fiction. According to her, (romance) texts serve to satisfy readers' emotional needs by offering them compensation for deficiencies in real life. The depiction of idealised protagonists within settings that blend historical and fictional elements and are dated back to mythological time satisfies and stirs readers' yearning for a better life. Altogether, the term extratextual nostalgia denotes connections between emotions of longing in the real world and the setting and time in a text. In contrast, Donald Beecher's observations about nostalgia in Renaissance romance exclusively deal with nostalgia on an intratextual level, i.e. within the fictional world and on the plot level. Thus, the term intratextual nostalgia refers to expressions of longing within the text alone. Having shown that Stern's and Beecher's theories can be taken together and transferred to fantasy literature, this leads to the conclusion that both levels of nostalgia, extratextual and intratextual nostalgia, also play an important role in fantasy texts. Further following Barbara Stern's observations, it can also be established that there are two types of nostalgia: The first type is historical nostalgia, i.e. the longing for pre-autobiographical past, and the second type is personal nostalgia, i.e. the longing for autobiographical past. As illustrated in Figure 1, historical and personal nostalgia can both appear on the level of extratextual as well as of intratextual nostalgia. Following

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[15] The long history of quest narratives even leads Beecher to hypothesise that nostalgia is a genetic human disposition which is timeless and unchanging and which manifests in the romance quest pattern (cf. Beecher, 281). He bases this hypothesis on the observation that the retreat home must always have had significant positive effects and connotations for human beings: "Imagined scenarios pertaining to our remotest ancestors are easily defined in terms of instinctual predilections for the sanctuary provided by a return to the village and community, whether from the dangers of the hunt, feuds over hunting grounds or borders, exile, abduction, initiation rites, or the challenges of exogamous bride quests" (Beecher, 293). Following these mere speculations about the emotional life of our primitive ancestors, Beecher fails to offer solid verifiable proof for his hypothesis.

Stern's observations, the two types of nostalgia on an extratextual level are tied to different literary genres. According to her, historical nostalgia is related to historical romance, while personal nostalgia is tied to the sentimental novel (cf. Stern, 16). Stern's statement that "[h]istorical nostalgia's most important temporal element is presentation of the past as *the time before the audience was born*" is equally true for the type of fantasy literature created by J.R.R. Tolkien (Stern, 13; *emphasis in original*). The use of pre-medieval and medieval elements in many works of fantasy clearly serves nostalgia for a pre-autobiographical past. Thus, this genre is based on historical nostalgia on an extratextual level. However, as will be pointed out further down, extratextual nostalgia will not be of relevance in this thesis, and the following analysis of Tolkien's works will focus on nostalgia on an intratextual level only. On this level, personal and historical nostalgia both play an important role, as the second part of this thesis will show.
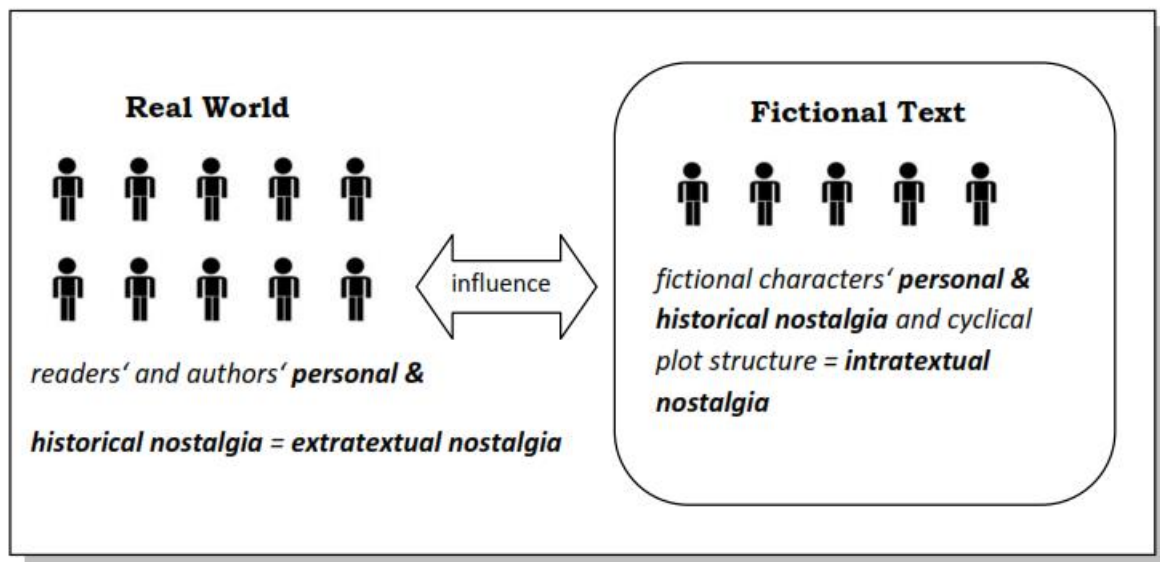
Fig. 1 The two levels and types of nostalgia (source: author of this thesis)

Based on Beecher's observations, intratextual nostalgia occurs on the plot and story level. It is an integral part of the fantasy genre and is, other than extratextual nostalgia, not directly linked to specific contextual and historical aspects. It appears prominently in the fantasy narrative in the shape of the quest structure and the protagonist's motivation to return home. The plot's cyclical movement away from home, through the delusions and confusions of the quest, to the final return emphasises *nostos* and *algia*. Thus, the entire plot structure can be regarded as an embodiment and literary

manifestation of nostalgia. Psychologically, this nostalgic plot structure is mirrored within the protagonist, who is driven onwards by his more or less conscious longing for home. His memories of home are personal nostalgia, as they are directed to a time and place within the protagonist's autobiographical past. Furthermore, as the analysis of the nostalgia of pastoral creatures within *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* will show, nostalgia within fantasy texts often stretches beyond the figure of the protagonist and appears within other characters and even entire groups of characters. Beecher's understanding of nostalgia within romance texts must therefore be broadened to include the nostalgia of all characters within a text, as its restriction to the protagonists alone is too limited to conceive the frequency and importance of nostalgia within the fantasy texts analysed within this thesis. As will be shown in the analysis of the primary texts, many characters in *The Lord of the Rings*[16] show historical as well as personal nostalgia. Threatened by the political and environmental upheavals in Middle-earth, most pastoral creatures turn to their autobiographical and/or pre-autobiographical past to find solace and a source of identity.

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[16] In *The Hobbit*, nostalgia only occurs in the shape of Bilbo's homesickness for the Shire, i.e. as personal nostalgia. As the analysis in the second part of this thesis will show, there are clear differences between Tolkien's earlier and his later work with regard to depictions of nostalgia (cf. chapter 7.1.3 of this thesis).

Intratextual Nostalgia
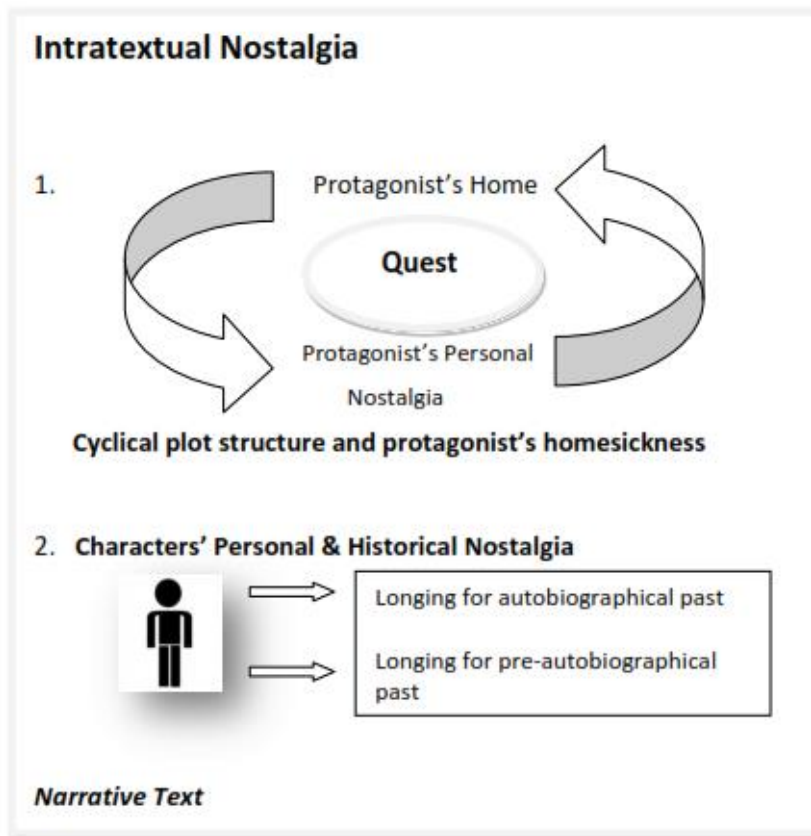
Fig. 2 Intratextual nostalgia in fantasy fiction (source: author of this thesis)

1. Protagonist's Home

Quest

Protagonist's Personal Nostalgia

Cyclical plot structure and protagonist's homesickness

2. **Characters' Personal & Historical Nostalgia**

Longing for autobiographical past

Longing for pre-autobiographical past

Narrative Text

In conclusion, both levels of nostalgia, extratextual and intratextual, are expressive of a feeling of lacking and longing that has pervaded humanity throughout all ages. While extratextual nostalgia is based on real people's nostalgia for a better past, intratextual nostalgia mirrors these emotions on a fictional level by transferring them to fictional characters. The interplay between extratextual nostalgia and fantasy texts creates settings that bear characteristics of real historical past. By converting this past into an ideal and blending it with fantastic elements, fantasy texts offer counter-images to their readers' experience of the real world. They present past societies, their political systems, and their values as preferable to those of the present, thus offering their readers the opportunity to compare and question the status quo and gain new perspectives. Tolkien terms this function of fantasy literature 'recovery', as the fantasy world serves to present familiar things in an entirely new light: "Recovery (which includes return and renewal of health) is a re-gaining – regaining of a clear view" (*On F-S*, 146). Furthermore, by consuming fantasy texts that present them with nostalgic depictions of pseudo-historical worlds, readers' escapist needs are satisfied. Understanding escapism as a positive way of dealing with the frustrations and restrictions of real life, Tolkien

points out that escape "is evidently as a rule very practical, and may even be heroic" (*On F-S*, 148). Consequently, the strong expression of nostalgia in fantasy texts functions in two ways: first, as a mirror to the real world; and second, as a psychological coping mechanism with the tribulations of life in this world for the reader.

With regard to historical nostalgia on an extratextual and personal nostalgia on an intratextual level, an important psychological effect can be observed, which serves to explain fantasy literature's ongoing success. The circular pattern of the fantasy plot, which first propels the hero away from home into the unknown to return him to his home at the end of his quest, strongly emphasises nostalgia's central emotion: the longing to return home. Here, home is represented by the hero's physical place of residence, which is generally depicted in very positive terms as a place of communal and natural life. Usually, the hero's quest is based on his need to defend his home against destruction from outside. Therefore, his actions are motivated by the wish to protect his community and home, and to preserve their blissful state. His return home towards the end of the story, therefore, is a joyous occasion, as the hero returns victorious after he has banished the threat to his home. Other than the readers' historical nostalgic longing for a diffuse and fictive long-lost home, therefore, the fantasy hero's personal nostalgia knows the precise address of his longing: his physical home. And other than in real life, the fantasy hero is actually able to return there. This final joyous turn of events in fantasy texts, which sees the hero's happy return to his native place, is termed 'eucatastrophe' by Tolkien (cf. *On F-S*, 153). It is tightly bound to a function he calls 'consolation' or 'Joy'. By this, Tolkien refers to the readers' perception of an afterlife, which is fleetingly given by the eucatastrophic turn of events. Based on his Catholicism, Tolkien understands this joy in Christian terms as an anticipation of the biblical New Jerusalem[17], which is why he capitalises it. In secular terms, the consolatory function of the eucatastrophe lies in its creation of hope for a better future within the readers. This hope, as will be shown in chapter 3 of this thesis, constitutes fantasy literature's utopian dimension. Altogether, fantasy literature's cyclical plot is

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[17] For a more detailed description of the New Jerusalem and its functions as a future place of redemption and bliss see chapter 4.2.2 of this thesis.

not only the epitome of nostalgia due to its structure, but it also depicts the hero's nostalgic journey. His longing for his physical home mirrors the readers' historical nostalgia for a long-lost home. By identifying with the fantasy hero, the readers can participate in his successful return home and from this derive hope for their own future homecoming – be it in this or in another life. A eucatastrophic end in fantasy literature can therefore have a cathartic effect on the readers – i.e. it offers them temporary relief from the pressure of their longing and their desire for a better life. Thus, intratextual nostalgia and extratextual nostalgia together render fantasy literature highly attractive to modern audiences. Due to their interplay, the two levels of nostalgia should be regarded as complementing each other. Using real historical elements to offer recovery and escape, and giving consolation and hope for a better future through its circular plot structure that finally sees the hero return home, fantasy literature is an effective tool against the anxieties and strains experienced by modern man. Altogether, it can be concluded that fantasy literature is a highly nostalgic genre.

With regard to this thesis' research interest, only intratextual nostalgia will be considered in the analysis of the pastoral, nostalgia, and the utopian impulse within *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit*. As the analysis will be made on an intratextual level, only the nostalgic longing of the pastoral characters and the nostalgic narrative structure will be of interest. The influence of extratextual nostalgia on Tolkien's work has already been duly examined (though not under this name) with regard to Tolkien's use of real historical elements and his literary sources[18].

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[18] For example, cf. Alonso; Alvarez Faedo; Bates; Burger 1984; Burns 2005; Chance and Siewers; Flieger; Huttar; Manni; Pettit; Sebok; Veldman; Whetter; Wicher.

3 Utopia and the Utopian Impulse – Fantasy Literature and the Desire for a Better Life

The main objective of this chapter is to reach a definition of utopia that can be applied to fantasy literature and thus to Tolkien's work. In order to achieve this end, it will be necessary to look at the chief theoretical tendencies and problems within the field of utopia studies. As a clear definition of utopia is pivotal for its analysis in the primary works, it is important to shed light on the two main approaches within the field, the Humanist and the Marxist approach, and to reach a definition of utopia which is applicable to fantasy literature. In the course of this, the distinction between utopia and utopian impulse will be presented and related to analytic and descriptive definitions of utopia. In order to establish a connection between utopian writing and fantasy literature, Ruth Levitas' definition of utopia as a "repository of desire" will then be introduced (Levitas 1990a, 199). It will be argued that Levitas' broad definition of utopia is consistent with Thomas Schölderle's and Fredric Jameson's definition of a utopian impulse. This will serve to show that *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit*, though they do not conform to descriptive definitions of utopia, can be called 'utopian' nonetheless, as they both contain a utopian impulse.

3.1 The Difficulty of Defining Utopia

To date there is no consensus among critics regarding a definition of utopia[19]. Complete agreement exists only about the origins of the term: it was coined by Thomas More in his work *De Optimo Rei Publicae Statu Deque Nova Insula Utopia* (1516). His coinage is a composition of two Greek words: 'ou', meaning 'no', and 'topos', meaning 'place'. Utopia is Nowhere, a non-existent place. At the same time, More intended a pun, for 'ou-topos' is homophonic with 'eu-topos', 'eu' meaning 'good'. Therefore, utopia is not only any non-existent place, but it is a good place that is non-existent (cf. Schölderle, 18).

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[19] Cf. Levitas 1990a, 7; Saage, 157; Schölderle, 17.

Centuries of utopian writing and theorising have produced an enormous corpus of fictional and theoretical literature which is extremely varied and only finds broad agreement in that a utopia is the depiction of the ideal life, state, or society[20]. Though being cited by most critics (with some variation in the use of the three nouns), this very general definition of utopia has repeatedly provoked criticism as being "anodyne and empty" (Goodwin and Taylor, 5) and too broad to be of any use: "If utopia is merely the good/impossible society, this may include literary fictions, satire, fantasy, science fiction, religious or secular paradises, political theories, political programmes and manifestos, small-scale attempts to create ideal communities and nationwide attempts to create the good society, to name but a few areas" (Levitas 1990a, 4)[21]. Furthermore, the term 'ideal life/ state/ society' creates difficulty due to the unspecific nature of the adjective 'ideal'. Critics who have used this definition of utopia in order to establish which works of utopian writing to include in their corpora have had to rely on their own subjective understanding of the word. According to Goodwin, this has often led to absolutist standards and criticism of utopia as static and unreal (cf. Goodwin, 5). Apart from this, it should be noted that there is some important variation in critics' use of the three nouns 'state, society, or life' in this definition[22]. This leads to considerable definitional variation as those three do not necessarily correspond and sometimes even stand in opposition to each other. Ideas of what constitutes an ideal life do not always conform to visions of an ideal state. In fact, depictions of an ideal life might even be based on the abolition of state and the reformation of society in an entirely new way, as can for example be seen in William Morris' utopia *News from Nowhere*. Consequently,

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[20] For example cf. Frye, 31; Goodwin, 4; Manuel, 70; Segal, 5; Soeffner, 36.

[21] The same criticism is also voiced by Fred Davis (cf. Davis 1979, 12-13).

[22] For example, Northrop Frye defines utopia as the depiction of "an ideal or flawless state, not only logically consistent in its structure but permitting as much freedom and happiness for its inhabitants as is possible to human life" (Frye, 31). For Barbara Goodwin, utopia offers a "model of the ideal society" that is based "on the *concept of the Good Life*" and focuses on the improvement of man and society (Goodwin, 4; *emphasis in original*). Howard Segal agrees with Goodwin in his definition of utopia as a vision of "the allegedly perfect society" (Segal, 5), while Ruth Levitas' definition is very broad and characterises utopia as the depiction of a good life: "Utopia is about how we would live and what kind of a world we would live in if we could do just that" (Levitas 1990a, 1). Frank E. Manuel chooses a similarly broad definition based on the idea of a good life: for him, the main importance in defining utopia lies in "the intent to evoke a vision of the life of man in an earthly paradise that would be radically different from the existing order and would presume to render its inhabitants happier in some significant sense of that ambiguous yet unavoidable word" (Manuel, 70).

even this broadly applied and very general definition does not serve to generate consensus among critics due to its imprecise, varying, and partly contradictory phrasing.

One of the obvious reasons for the lack of a widely agreed definition of utopia, and one that is pointed out by most critics in their attempt to explain it, is that the field of utopian studies consists of a broad range of disciplines due to the multitude of utopian expression: it encompasses history, psychology, sociology, theology, literary studies, political theory, and philosophy[23]. Furthermore, the long history of utopian writing has brought about great variety within the field. Utopias, being reactions to and criticism of their writers' historical and social context, are inevitably bound to historical progress and have therefore changed throughout the ages (cf. Saage, 9; Schwonke, 1). The multitude of utopian forms and contents, their constant updating, and their historical contextuality present major problems in the attempt at finding a definition that embraces all kinds of utopian writing, yet separates the field from other types of literary, political, philosophical, or theological writing (cf. Goodwin, 3).

3.2 The Humanist and the Marxist Approach towards a Definition of Utopia

Roughly speaking, two streams of definitions of utopia can be identified: narrow definitions that characterise utopia in a generic sense, i.e. as a literary genre closely fashioned after More's *Utopia[24]*, and broad ones that move away from generic classification and define utopia as an expression of desire or hope[25]. As narrow definitions do not allow for any diversity in utopian writing, they do not encompass the fantasy genre. Consequently, in order to find out whether fantasy literature possesses utopian characteristics, it is necessary to formulate a definition of utopia broad enough to be applicable to many literary genres, including the fantasy genre. In the following, the field of utopia studies will be introduced and separated into two groups of critics. As it is extremely varied and full of contradictions, a detailed overview of its history would

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[23] For example, cf. Levitas 1990a, 2; Manuel and Manuel, 21; Schölderle, 21; Schulte-Middelich, 42.

[24] For examples of such an approach cf. Frye; Hanenberger and Haufschild; Kumar; Morton; Schölderle; Seeber; Swales.

[25] For examples of such an approach cf. Bloch 1978; Crossley; Levitas 1990a; Schulte-Middelich.

blow the boundaries of this thesis. However, for the purpose of reaching a definition of utopia that can be applied to fantasy literature, it is necessary to be aware of the main streams of definitions and their strengths and weaknesses.

Ruth Levitas has proposed a detailed division of the field of utopia studies, which seems most useful. According to her, utopia is always defined in terms of one or two of the three aspects: form, function, and content (cf. Levitas 1990a, 4). Additionally, she distinguishes between a Humanist group of theorists and a Marxist group (cf. Levitas 1990a, 6). The Humanist theorists mainly define utopia based on its form and content, thus equating it with a fictitious account of a good or ideal society. In many cases this pertains to their understanding of utopia as a literary genre formed after More's *Utopia* (cf. Levitas 1990a, 5). Despite their common identification of More's work as the source of utopian fiction, the Humanist critics have not been able to find agreement with regard to a corpus of utopian works. Only a very small core of writers (Bacon, Campanella, Cabet, More, and Plato) is universally acknowledged as being utopian (cf. Levitas 1990a, 31).

> "Once we move away from this core, disagreements multiply. The difficulties have to do with the boundaries between literature and politics, between utopia and religion, and with differences of content and intent within the literary genre, and thus the possible distinctions between utopia, dystopia, anti-utopia and satire. But they also have to do with habit, which affects what is neglected, as opposed to explicitly excluded, as well as what is chosen for discussion" (Levitas 1990a, 31-32).

Consequently, theorists in the Humanist strain only reach consensus superficially, while establishing varying categories and definitions in order to vindicate their personal choices of utopian works.

Critics in the Marxist tradition define utopia based on its function. To them, utopia depicts some kind of goal, though the exact nature of this goal remains obscure (cf. Levitas 1990a, 5). The functions of utopia are commonly identified as criticism of the present, escape, compensation, expression of desire, and catalysing of change. However, critics do not agree in all those points, which is why Marxist definitions also vary considerably (cf. Levitas 1990a, 34). Definitions relying on content alone do not exist. According to Levitas: "Working definitions range from the refusal of any definition at all, through definitions in terms of form, form and content, function, function and form"

(Levitas 1990a, 7). As mentioned above, an identification of utopia based on content is problematic, as it forces critics to draw upon their personal understanding of ideal or good ways of life, thus rendering their definitions subjective and, in most cases, very narrow. Definitions which mainly rely on utopia's form are problematic due to utopia's historicity which has generated a multitude of utopian forms and expressions. Additionally, definitions based on function are rendered unsatisfactory by the great variation in utopia's intent. The only function always displayed in utopian works is criticism of the present. All other kind of intent is individually tied to the utopia's author and can reach from mere criticism through a serious note of caution to an appeal for action (cf. Schölderle, 402). In the following, one representative of each of the two groups of critics will be presented whose definitions of utopia open up the concept to include fantasy literature. The ground-breaking work of the Marxist critic Ernst Bloch will be presented first. His work *Das Prinzip Hoffnung* was the first to present a broad and inclusive definition of utopia, which will be of importance in the establishment of Tolkien's work as utopian. Of even more consequence to this project will be Thomas Schölderle's Humanist approach towards a definition of utopia. His insight that a distinction between utopia as a literary form and a utopian impulse as a more general expression of utopian desire is necessary is shared by Hans Seeber and Fredric Jameson. Their work will offer the theoretical grounding upon which fantasy literature can be defined as utopian literature.

3.2.1   Broadening the Boundaries of Utopia: Ernst Bloch's *Das Prinzip Hoffnung*

The founding fathers of Marxism, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, define utopia in rather negative terms. Emphasising utopia's unrealistic nature, they see its sole function in the maintenance of the status quo and in the avoidance of revolution by distracting the working classes from pursuing concrete revolutionary plans. To them, "utopian writing was a purely mental exercise in which 'Reason became the sole measure of everything.' It was a search for absolute truth 'independent of time, space, and of the historical development of man'. Certainly it did not have the 'real basis' that their socialism was, in their view, to have" (Davis 1983, 14). By presenting a social ideal, utopia, from Marx's and Engels's point of view, fails to offer realisable alternatives to the present. Contrary to this, they regard their own designs as scientific and realistic

blueprints that offer the means for a change in society, which is why they reject the term utopia for their own work (cf. Levitas 1990a, 57-59).

The most prominent proponent of a Marxist definition of utopia is Ernst Bloch[26]. In his extensive work *Das Prinzip Hoffnung* (1959) he attempts the rehabilitation of utopia as an important Marxist concept. In order to achieve this end, he considerably broadens the hitherto narrow definition of utopia as literary works of the type of More's *Utopia*. In Bloch's view, the traditional Humanist understanding of utopia as a 'Staatsroman' (i.e. a novelistic account of an ideal state) fails to do justice to its versatility and adaptability:

> "Doch Utopisches auf die Thomas Morus - Weise zu beschränken oder auch nur schlechthin zu orientieren, das wäre, als wollte man die Elektrizität auf den Bernstein reduzieren, von dem sie ihren griechischen Namen hat und an dem sie zuerst bemerkt worden ist" (Bloch 1978, 14).

Thus *Das Prinzip Hoffnung* comprises a large number of expressions and aspects of human life which, according to its author, contain utopia. Bloch starts his work with a detailed account of dreams and then focuses on human drives, needs, and different kinds of consciousness. From there, he concentrates on diverse aspects such as utopia in ancient mythology, fairy-tales, film, and theatre. His reflections include deliberations on utopia in fashion, advertising, and travelling. The final two sections of *Das Prinzip Hoffnung* investigate utopia within architecture, travel narratives, paintings, opera, free time, images of death, and, finally, Karl Marx' work.

Bloch's definition of utopia is based on what he calls the 'principle of hope' – i.e. for him utopia is any kind of expression of hope for a better life. Hope, for Bloch, means active anticipation of a better future and stands in opposition to passive escapism[27] (cf. Bloch 1978, 1). It is a human propensity that can be contained within any type of human expression. Fundamental to Bloch's theory of hope are his concept of time, the

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[26] In the German-speaking world, Bloch's work has always been treated as the most relevant work of utopian theory in the 20th century (cf. Schölderle, 400). However, due to the delay in translating Bloch's *Das Prinzip Hoffnung* into English (in the 1980s), the English-speaking world often considers Karl Mannheim as "probably the most well-known theorist of utopia" (Levitas 1990a, 59).

[27] This division into 'good active hope' and 'bad passive escapism' is inseparably tied to Bloch's two utopian categories, concrete and abstract utopia, which will be discussed in more detail further down in this chapter.

unconscious, and dreams. To Bloch, the partition of time into past, present and future pertains to different levels of consciousness. In his work, he elaborates on the impossibility to consciously perceive the present and points out that "Das Jetzt liegt im Dunkel des gelebten Augenblicks […]" (Bloch 1985, 286). The only time which can be consciously perceived is the past due to its temporal distance from the perceiver. It is observable through remembrance and becomes even more so with greater temporal distance to the present (cf. Bloch 1985, 287). The past is the realm of the Not-Anymore, while the future, as the realm of wishful thinking and hope, is that of the Not-Yet. The Not-Yet is split up into the Not-Yet-Conscious, which is the subjective psychological side of it, and the Not-Yet-Become, i.e. its objective material side (cf. Bloch 1978, 12).

Bloch takes up Freud's definition of the unconscious as suppressed past experience, which continues to have an effect on human behaviour and thought without being consciously perceived. However, to this he adds that the unconscious also contains material which has never before been consciously perceived. Thus he goes beyond Freud's definition by adding the new dimension of the Not-Yet-Conscious, which is directed towards the future. Bloch suggests the term 'preconscious' as the Not-Yet-Conscious can eventually gain consciousness and serves as the source for utopia (cf. Bloch 1985, 288-289). This observation forms the starting point for Bloch's theory of dreams. While Freud per se defines dreams as expressions of the unconscious, Bloch differentiates between nighttime dreams and daydreams. For him, the Not-Yet-Conscious finds expression in daydreams, while the nighttime dream regresses towards the Not-Anymore-Conscious (cf. Bloch 1978, 131). As Bloch's main interest lies with utopian hopes for the future, he concentrates on daydreams as expressions of the Not-Yet. In them the material of the Not-Yet-Conscious starts to rise into consciousness in form of fragments. As soon as these fragments reach consciousness, they can trigger hope and anticipation and thus obtain a utopian function (cf. Bloch 1978, 163). This function lies in utopia's applicability – according to Bloch, hope can only result from daydreams which depict a world that is possible in the future; all other dreaming is solely escapist and therefore of no value (cf. Bloch 1978, 1).

In order to distinguish compensatory from anticipatory daydreaming, Bloch establishes two types of utopia: abstract and concrete utopia. Abstract utopia is escapist dreaming and does not contain any wish to actively change reality (cf. Bloch 1978, 165). Concrete

utopia, on the other hand, is an expression of hope and anticipation, as it depicts real possibility. Bloch regards the present world as unfinished, which is why it is in a state of process whose outcome is indeterminate. Not all real possibility will be realised in the future, yet, as realistic options for the future, it is already contained within the present (cf. Levitas 1990, 17). Utopia, as an expression of the Not-Yet-Conscious and the Not-Yet-Become, which both contain real possibility and are therefore already existent in the present, is not just fiction but a part of reality (cf. Schölderle, 397). It "is thus actively bound up in the process of the world's becoming, as an anticipation of the future [...] and, through its effects on human purpose and action, as a catalyst of the future. Human activity, informed by imagination, has a decisive role to play [...]" (Levitas 1990a, 87). However, according to Bloch, the division between abstract and concrete utopia is not clear, as he treats them as ideal types. In his objects of study he therefore detects a mixture of anticipatory and compensatory utopia. Consequently, he regards it as a main task to separate the two types and "to reveal and recover the anticipatory essence from the dross of contingent and compensatory elements in which utopia is dressed up in particular historical circumstances" (Levitas 1990a, 88). However, Bloch leaves the question as to how this recovery of concrete utopia can be effected unanswered (cf. Levitas 1990a, 91).

Bloch regards Marxism as the only concrete utopia and devalues all other types of utopian production as abstract utopia (cf. Kellner, 94). Thus he rehabilitates utopia as a positive tool within Marxism and stresses that "Marxistische Philosophie ist die der Zukunft […]" (Bloch 1978, 8). As a result, Bloch's theory nowadays appears one-sided and outdated (cf. Schölderle, 400). Though a broad definition of utopia is necessary for the analysis of utopian content in fantasy literature, Bloch's definition of abstract utopia is too negative to be useful in the analysis of literary texts. In addition, his differentiation between abstract and concrete utopia in practice relies on each critic's subjective evaluation of the material's content as either compensatory or anticipatory. The two types of utopia proposed by Bloch cannot, therefore, effectively serve as objective means of categorisation (cf. Levitas 1990a, 100). Furthermore, Bloch's identification of utopia with hope excludes visions that are impossible to realise, as hope implies practicability (cf. Levitas 1990a, 190). His concept thus also excludes fantasy literature's impossible worlds. Apart from this, his theory does not offer

concrete criteria to differentiate between utopia and other types of wishful thinking. This lack manifests most obviously in Bloch's extremely varied subjects of study in which he detects utopia. All the same, Bloch's work is still regarded as a masterpiece within the field of utopian studies (cf. Schölderle, 400). For the purpose of this thesis, it offers an important starting point, as it considerably broadens the definition of utopia for the inclusion of texts that do not stand in the tradition of More's *Utopia*. Bloch's work thus clears the ground for the formulation of a broad definition of utopia which is applicable to the fantasy genre.

3.2.2 Formulating the Difference between Utopia and a Utopian Impulse: Thomas Schölderle

Most contemporary critics follow in the Humanist tradition while the Marxist approach is rarely used (cf. Levitas 1990a, 157). The Humanist critics regard Thomas More's *Utopia* as the founding work of a distinct literary genre and attempt to formulate definitions of utopia that rely on form and content. As mentioned above, they are faced by the difficulty of defining the boundaries between utopian writing and other literary genres, as they are fluid. Consequently, there is no agreement within the Humanist group regarding a definition of utopia. Thomas Schölderle is one of the more recent Humanist critics who have offered a comprehensive study of utopia. His definition of utopia is one of the most convincing within the Humanist tradition, as he reaches it by uniting the four categories usually used separately by critics: form, function, content, and intent. Aware of the difficulty of defining utopia as a literary genre after More's example, Schölderle introduces a new, much broader category which is set apart from the utopian genre. This distinction between utopia as a literary form and a more universal utopian expression of desire can also be found in the works of Hans Seeber and Fredric Jameson. It shall later serve to outline utopian aspects in Tolkien's work.

In his work *Utopia und Utopie* (2011), Schölderle follows in the footsteps of his Humanist predecessors by defining utopia as a literary genre with More's *Utopia* as prototype (cf. Schölderle, 432). He argues that, though the utopian discourse has changed throughout time, some core characteristics that go back to More's work have remained. He refers to formal and contentual characteristics such as the pattern of the travel narrative, the use of the island metaphor, the emphasis on reason, or the depiction

of private property and money as the sources of all evil (cf. Schölderle, 432). However, despite the recurrence of many core characteristics in utopian writing, Schölderle emphasises the considerable variation within the genre due to its function as critical reflection on present circumstances and its resulting historicity (cf. Schölderle, 435). The originality of Schölderle's approach lies in his attempt to use four categories as foundation for his definition: form, content, function, and intent. He reaches the conclusion that, concerning form, utopia can be characterised as contrafactual fiction which presents alternative human reality. Contentually, he defines utopia as a universal expression of an ideal, rational, and socio-political counterimage to present circumstances. Regarding function, utopia is characterised as a thought experiment which relativises reality in order to analyse and criticise the present. This goes hand in hand with its intention as criticism of present socio-political circumstances and the goal to change and improve them (cf. Schölderle, 479). Uniting all these aspects, Schölderle reaches the following definition of utopia:

> "Eine Utopie ist der meist literarisch verfasste, fiktionale und universale Entwurf von idealtypisch und rational-experimentell konstruierten Institutionen oder Prinzipien eines Gemeinwesens, der den realhistorischen Verhältnissen in kritischer Intention gegenübergestellt und auf ein besseres Leben der Menschen gerichtet ist" (Schölderle, 481).

As guideline in determining a canon of literary utopias, this definition seems more helpful and inclusive than most others, as it unites a great number of criteria which otherwise appear in fragmented form.

It is of prime importance to observe a distinction laid down by Schölderle in his work: that of utopia as a distinct literary form and of the 'utopian' as a nominalised adjective describing a means of expression that can be contained in all kinds of writing.

> "*Utopisches* setzt demnach weder zwingend eine spezifische Darstellungstechnik noch ein Erfüllen aller als konstitutiv eingestufter Kriterien voraus. Es mag 'utopische' oder 'utopietypische' Intentionen, Funktionen und Gehalte in den unterschiedlichsten Formen und Manifestationen geben, ohne dass diese in ihrer Gesamtkonstitution den Merkmalen einer Utopie voll entsprechen. Für den Begriff 'Utopie' wird man indes unterstellen müssen, dass zumindest die konstitutiven Elemente auf allen Normierungsebenen des Begriffsrasters erfüllt sind" (Schölderle, 448; *emphasis in original*).

In his work *Wandlungen der Form in der Literarischen Utopie*, Hans Seeber establishes the same categories as Schölderle. For him, utopia is a historical literary genre that goes back to More's *Utopia* and Plato's *Politeia* (cf. Seeber, 4). It is characterised by a descriptive form, little action, and its author's critical intention. 'Utopisches', on the other hand, is a basic characteristic or motif which can be detected in all kinds of fiction and does not primarily aim at outlining an alternative society (cf. Seeber, 5). Fredric Jameson reaches the same conclusion and provides a fitting English term for 'das Utopische'. He suggests "to posit two distinct lines of descendency from More's inaugural text: the one intent on the realization of the Utopian program, the other an obscure yet omnipresent **Utopian impulse** finding its way to the surface in a variety of covert expressions and practices" (Jameson, 3; *author's emphasis*).

3.3   The Unresolved Quest for Utopia's Boundaries: Utopia versus a Utopian Impulse

In the following, it will be argued that the distinction between utopia and a utopian impulse made by Schölderle, Seeber, and Jameson can be related to Ruth Levitas' observation that the field of utopian studies is separated into descriptive and analytic approaches (cf. Levitas 1990a, 198-199). According to Levitas, descriptive definitions of utopia in terms of form, content, and function are faced by the problem of utopia's historicity, which accounts for the many changes in all three of these categories throughout the times. This creates major obstacles, which cause descriptive definitions to be rather narrow, and thus incapable of accommodating the great variety in utopian expression and too exclusive to find broad acceptance. However, narrow descriptive definitions are automatically generated in critics' attempts to establish a bibliography of utopian works, as such a task demands the stipulation of clear boundaries to other, non-utopian, material (cf. Levitas 1990a, 198). Thus, critics faced with this challenging task either explicitly develop constricted definitions of utopia in order to draw clear demarcation lines, or they at least imply their definition through their individual choice

of material[28]. Opposed to this approach stand analytic definitions of utopia. Due to their theoretical orientation, they are not primarily aimed at the selection of utopian material and thus are not faced with the functional problem of boundaries. Consequently, they are much broader than descriptive definitions and therefore more capable of doing justice to the great variety in utopian production (cf. Levitas 1990a, 179). Furthermore, broad definitions enable critics to perceive utopia from different angles by analysing the interaction between form, function, and content, and their relation to history and the social context (ibid). However, from a practical point of view, demarcation is a constant issue and cannot be ignored. Ruth Levitas proposes to remedy this by the inclusion of more detailed information about the principles underlying critics' choices of material in particular studies. "Conceptual clarity is not only a more attainable goal than conceptual convergence, it is also a more appropriate one" (Levitas 1990a, 199).

Due to their conceptual convergence, the author of this thesis proposes to relate the split in the field of utopian studies into descriptive and analytic approaches to the distinction between utopia and a utopian impulse. Descriptive definitions aim at establishing criteria for utopia as a distinct (mostly literary) form of expression, while analytic definitions describe utopia in very broad inclusive terms, i.e. as a utopian impulse, which is an implicit or explicit expression of desire for a better life observable within any kind of material. Critics are led by their personal research interests in their choice of one of the two approaches, as it is tightly bound to the question whether they aim at establishing a bibliography of utopian material, or whether they pursue a more theoretical string of questions. The terminological differentiation between utopia and a utopian impulse, and its application to descriptive and analytic approaches, is very

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[28] Such as the Manuel brothers, for example. In their historical-bibliographical work *Utopian Thought in the Western World*, they explicitly dismiss any attempt at a definition of utopia and instead aim at acknowledging the diversity in utopian production. Presupposing a utopian propensity in man, they try to "identify historical constellations of utopias with reasonably well marked time-space perimeters and common elements that are striking enough to permit framing generalizations, while still respecting the concreteness of the individual experience. The origin of the utopian propensity is, in an absolute sense, not knowable; its application and incorporation in given utopian configurations or constellations are" (Manuel and Manuel, 13). However, despite their assertion that they do not want to lay down any criteria for utopia, they implicitly do so by their selection of utopian works. Levitas remarks with regard to the Manuels's method: "Without such a definition, what is included, and what is given the most attention, can only be a matter of habit, tradition or personal preference. There is a vagueness of definition about the arrangement into constellations [...]", but they are blurred and arbitrary (Levitas 1990a, 159-60).

helpful in emphasizing the two different streams and their underlying motivations within the field of utopian studies. It clarifies the difference between the two approaches by awarding different names to the subject matters studied by them: utopia, the object researched by descriptive analysts, is not identical with the utopian impulse, examined in analytic studies. Such acknowledgement of the formal, contentual, and intentual differences between descriptive and analytic studies might take the edge off the discussion about their respective validity and lead to broader acceptance on both sides. For this thesis the differentiation between utopia and a utopian impulse is of prime importance in the establishment of Tolkien's work as utopian. Consequently, the terminological distinction just suggested will be applied henceforth.

3.4 "The Repository of Desire"[29] – Ruth Levitas' Definition of Utopia and its Applicability to Fantasy Literature

In her comprehensive work, *The Concept of Utopia*, Ruth Levitas arrives at the conclusion that only a broad, analytic definition of utopia is capable of doing justice to the great variety in utopian material and critical approaches (cf. Levitas 1990a, 179). Thus, though Levitas herself does not use the term, her subject of study can be identified as the utopian impulse as defined above. Deliberating the essence of utopia, Levitas reaches the conclusion that it "[…] seems to be desire – the desire for a different, better way of being" (Levitas 1990a, 181). She establishes that the source of utopia is the socially constructed gap between the equally socially constructed needs and wants within a particular society and the satisfactions offered by it (cf. Levitas 1990a, 181-182). From this, Levitas concludes that "there can be no universal utopia, not just because needs are differently perceived by different observers but because needs actually do vary between societies" (Levitas 1990a, 184). She thus refutes some critics' claim that utopia is a universal human propensity[30]. Similarly, she rebuts definitions of utopia as a depiction of 'the best possible world', as this evicts material that depicts wished-for worlds which are *im*possible to realise from the utopian canon

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[29] Levitas 1990a, 199.
[30] This is, for example, proposed by the Manuel brothers (cf. Manuel and Manuel, 5) and Martin Swales (cf. Swales, 220).

(cf. Levitas 1990a, 190). Thus, she criticises Bloch's definition of utopia as an expression of hope as being too restrictive, as hope can only be experienced for things which might really come to pass (cf. ibid). Desire, on the other hand, can be contained within any kind of expression and is completely detached from the question of real possibility. Consequently, Levitas defines utopia as an expression of desire: "Utopia expresses and explores what is desired; under certain conditions it also contains the hope that these desires may be met in reality, rather than merely in fantasy" (Levitas 1990a, 191). By defining utopia in such broad terms, she wishes to "include the utopian aspects of a wide range of cultural forms and behaviours. In other words, the subject matter is not defined in terms of form, but neither is utopia limited to a specific function" (Levitas 1990a, 192).

By removing the question of utopia's applicability, Levitas is able to include compensatory utopias, which do not aim at effecting change, in her definition. This way, she offers theoretical grounding for the inclusion of fantasy literature into the canon of utopian material, for utopia "may take the form of a myth of a golden age or an other-worldly or remote this-worldly paradise" (Levitas 1990a, 192). Though fantasy literature does not exclusively depict happy worlds such as that of *Cockaygne*[31] or *Nowhere*[32], elements of desirable utopian realms may be discovered in many fantasy works - Tolkien's among them, as will be shown in the course of this thesis. Levitas points out that the world of compensatory utopias is always located outside the real world, i.e. in remote lands, beyond death, or in the past "in order to explain why everyone is not there" (ibid). Though Levitas does not mention fantasy literature as such, her elaborations clearly apply to the genre's secondary worlds, as they are defined by Tolkien as fantasy worlds which lie outside our real world (cf. *On F-S*, 132). According to Levitas, the author's choice of an impossible world as the setting of his utopian desire is expressive of his belief that his desire is not a hope and therefore not realisable (cf. Levitas 1990a, 193). "Where utopia is not expected to be realized, one is constrained only by what it is possible to imagine, not by what it is possible to imagine

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[31] Cf. Morton, chapter I.
[32] Cf. Morris *News from Nowhere*.

as possible" (ibid). The only function utopia thus retains is that of criticism of the present and expression of desire (cf. Levitas 1990a, 196).

Levitas' very broad definition of utopia corresponds to that of the utopian impulse described above. It is meant to include any manifestation of desire - though Levitas only refers to literary works in her elaborations, thus implicitly drawing boundaries towards non-literary manifestations of desire. By including expressions that are solely compensatory, her definition of utopia is even broader than Bloch's. Such an inclusive definition is capable of accounting for a utopian impulse within fantasy literature and thus establishes the existence of a utopian impulse within Tolkien's work. In the course of this thesis, the utopian impulse within *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit* will be revealed and analysed as an expression of "the desire for a different better way of being" (Levitas 1990a, 181).

4　The Pastoral Tradition – Pastoral and Non-Pastoral Categories in Fantasy Literature

In order to analyse the pastoral and non-pastoral in Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit*, it is important to gain an understanding of the many facets of pastoral writing and the significance of their recurring application in fantasy literature. This chapter will first offer a concise overview of the different kinds of definitions of pastoral propounded by the critical community. This will be followed by a short detour in which three fundamental myths and concepts within the pastoral tradition will be depicted: the Golden Age myth, the biblical Garden Eden story, and the pastoral ideal of Arcadia. Knowledge of the history and meaning of these concepts is a necessary prerequisite for the study of the pastoral, as they have been inseparably bound to it from the beginning and constantly recur in pastoral writing.

This detour will be followed by a concise overview of the historical development of pastoral writing. Understanding of the different stages of pastoral writing is necessary to fully appreciate fantasy literature's use of traditional pastoral motifs and concepts. It will be shown under which circumstances the clearly defined boundaries of the classical pastoral convention dissolved in the 18th and 19th centuries and why the genre turned into a mode. This distinction between pastoral genre and mode will clarify fantasy literature's position within the long tradition of pastoral writing: being a genre itself, fantasy literature often draws on the pastoral mode but does not follow the strict convention of the pastoral genre.

In order to offer a theoretical ground upon which the intricate web of the pastoral, nostalgia, and the utopian impulse within Tolkien's mythology can be analysed in the second part of this work, nostalgia's importance as a central element within the pastoral will be examined and it will be shown that its nostalgic character renders the modern pastoral a powerful tool in dealing with the anxieties and problems characteristic of contemporary times. In addition, the pastoral's utopian impulse will be highlighted in order to show that the pastoral is a strong expression of desire for a better future.

The final sub-chapter will analyse the close relationship between fantasy literature and the pastoral tradition, offering theoretical footing for the findings in the analytical part

of this thesis. This will first be done by drawing on Tolkien's essay *On Fairy-Stories* to establish that both literature types share identical functions. Second, Phyliss Koppes' pastoral-heroic spectrum will be presented to highlight the significant interrelatedness of pastoral and fantasy literature. It will serve to show that the pastoral and the heroic ideals both express fundamental human desires and that they usually appear in combination within non-realistic fiction (cf. Koppes, 4-5). Koppes' pastoral-heroic spectrum will offer the main theoretical foundation for the analysis of the pastoral and the non-pastoral within Tolkien's work in the second part of this thesis.

4.1 Definitions of the Pastoral and their Applicability to Fantasy Literature

Like nostalgia and utopia, the pastoral evades clear definition. The difficulty of defining it precisely can be traced back on its long history and the various forms and shapes it has held since its creation in Greek Antiquity: "Over the course of its history 'pastoral' has been both noun and adjective, at times the whole substance, at other times a combining element in a compound that explores ideas only implicit in the original matrix" (Lindheim, 136). Consequently, 'pastoral' is a contested term, even though it is used widely (cf. Gifford 1999, 4). Closely tied to the lack of a clear definition of the pastoral is the impossibility of reaching consensus on a pastoral canon and vice versa, as "to describe pastoral literature, one needs to define the canon; to define the canon, one needs a description of the category" (Ettin, 2). In order to align fantasy literature with pastoral literature, it is necessary to distinguish between narrow definitions of the pastoral, which treat it as a clearly defined genre, and broad definitions, which understand the pastoral as a mode of writing detectable in all kinds of literary genres. Only the latter are applicable to the fantasy genre and therefore constitute the definitional grounding for the analysis of the pastoral in Tolkien's mythology, as will be shown in this sub-chapter.

Narrow definitions of the pastoral mainly rely on content and form. Traditionally, the pastoral is defined as an idealised depiction of a shepherd`s life: "A Pastoral is an imitation of the action of a shepherd; the form of this imitation is dramatic, or narrative, or mixed of both; the fable simple, the manners not too polite nor too rustic" (Pope). Similarly, Finney reduces her definition merely to contentual characteristics: "The

physical hardships of rural existence - the sowing and harvesting, the actual labor involved in herding animals - are ignored, as is the potentially deadening quality of life in the country, its boredom and loneliness" (Finney, 10). As will be shown in the sub-chapter on the historical development of the pastoral tradition, narrow definitions prescribe a number of characteristics based on which they establish whether a text is pastoral; most prominent among them is the contrast between the country and the city (cf. Chatton, 6; Lerner 1972, 39), the circular plot pattern of pastoral retreat and return (cf. Gifford 1999, 81), an idyllic country setting, and the shepherds' leisurely occupation with poetry and song. According to narrow definitions, one can speak of a text as pastoral as soon as all of these core characteristics are present within the text.

Since William Empson's very broad definition of the pastoral in the 1960s as a "process of putting the complex into the simple" (Empson, 22), the usefulness and accuracy of narrow definitions have been contested and the mutability and complexity of the pastoral have been widely acknowledged. Consequently, definitions relying on content and form have been supplemented with a great number of psychological and functional ones. Characteristics traditionally taken to be essential to the pastoral only appear sporadically in contemporary definitions and are broadened in their meaning and application[33]. Definitions of the pastoral based on content are often avoided nowadays due to their restrictive and arbitrary nature. Instead, the pastoral is perceived as a mode of thinking rather than a way of writing (cf. Edden, 18). Its escapist[34] function as a healing spring in modern times is widely acknowledged and emphasised. As will be shown in much more detail further down in this chapter, nostalgia is recognised as a fundamental emotion in the pastoral by most critics[35], and its utopian nature is

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[33] For example, the contrast between country and city, which is depicted as one of the central characteristics of traditional pastoral in narrow definitions, is still mentioned as a defining characteristic of the pastoral by contemporary critics. However, it has been broadened to mean any kind of contrast or antithesis. Thus it does no longer have to refer to place but can also refer to the contrast between children's and adults' imagination (as in *Alice in Wonderland*, cf. Lerner 1972, 39) or between "culture and nature, civilized and wild, imaginary and actual" (Greenberg, 443).

[34] 'Escapist' in this context is wholly to be understood in positive terms, following J.R.R. Tolkien's definition as "the Escape of the Prisoner", i.e. as a positive departure from reality that helps the reader to perceive of his world in new terms and to find comfort outside it (*On F-S*, 148).

[35] Cf. Ettin, 142; Gifford 1999, 36; Greenberg, 452; Lerner, 41; Marinelli, 9-12; Squires, 13.

frequently pointed out[36]. Pastoral's functions as a reaction to an unsatisfying present, criticism of it, escape from it, and as a psychological coping mechanism are mentioned by all those critics. Thus, the pastoral's apparent simplicity is unmasked and its complex critical properties are widely acknowledged. Nowadays, only very few critics still accuse the pastoral of being a superficial and naive art form too far removed from reality (cf. Gifford 1999, 2).

The broadness of most modern definitions of the pastoral, though taking into account its versatility and long history, creates difficulty. Many critics bemoan the modern application of the term to any kind of text dealing with nature or the rural as being too diffuse and all-inclusive (cf. Baker, 779; Alpers 1996, Preface). Broad definitions emphasising the pastoral's functions and recognising its versatility are imprecise when it comes to determining a corpus of pastoral works. Narrow definitions, on the other hand, are often too exclusive and inflexible to do justice to the pastoral's changeability. They are problematic as they fail to take account of any new versions of pastoral which the shifts and developments within the pastoral form throughout the centuries have continuously brought forth. As a result, advocates of a narrow definition of the pastoral have occasionally come to the conclusion that it died out in the 18th century, a time in which the pastoral began to outgrow its traditional form (cf. Lerner 1972, 39). Altogether, neither broad nor narrow definitions of the pastoral have proven useful in the attempt to formulate a coherent definition that embraces the entire range of pastoral manifestations from antiquity to today.

However, terminological and generic differentiation has been suggested by a number of critics to introduce more clarity and alleviate the debate. Some critics differentiate between the pastoral as a genre and the pastoral as a mode, claiming that the classical pastoral should be regarded as a genre due to its clearly defined form and content, while the modern pastoral should be considered a mode based on the various appearances of pastoral motifs within all kinds of literary genres[37]. Talking about works in the pastoral mode, Andrew Ettin states: "Not directly pastoral in their material, they nevertheless

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[36] Cf. Gifford 1999, 36; Kumar, 3-4; Poggioli, 28-29.
[37] Cf. Baker, 779; Ettin, 74; Lerner 1972, 39; Marinelli, 3-7; Squires, 37; Wilson, 174.

embody those attitudes and situations traditionally dealt with in the pastoral, and along lines familiar to the pastoral. [...] Any idyllic scene is at least a modal version of the pastoral" (Ettin, 65-66). Based on this distinction between genre and mode, the tensions between narrow and broad definitions of the pastoral can be resolved by acknowledging that narrow definitions describe the pastoral genre, while broad definitions understand the pastoral as a mode. With regard to this thesis, contemporary definitions of the pastoral as a modal expression of longing and desire will be most relevant, as Tolkien's work is consensually recognised as belonging to the fantasy (and not the pastoral) genre and contains the pastoral in modal form. At the same time, as the pastoral mode draws its material from the traditional convention, certain characteristics of the classical pastoral genre, such as the shepherd figure, the static bliss of pastoral life, and the contrast between pastoral and non-pastoral settings, will also be of great importance in the analysis of the pastoral within *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*.

4.2 The Golden Age, Eden, and Arcadia - Recurring Myths and Concepts within Pastoral Writing

When studying pastoral writing, it is necessary to become familiar with three myths and concepts which are constantly, both implicitly and explicitly, referred to in pastoral literature. The Golden Age and Garden Eden myths were established long before the inventor of the pastoral genre, Theocritus, took up his pen in the 3rd century BC. Depicting long-lost times and places of pastoral bliss, they are fundamental manifestations of mankind's perpetual nostalgia for a better life in the past. Their evocations of pastoral lifestyles, which show man in complete harmony with nature and his fellow men, were strong influences on the development of the pastoral genre. Consequently, they contain motifs and concepts which keep recurring within pastoral writing to this day. The third concept introduced within this sub-chapter is that of Arcadia. It is much younger than the Golden Age and Eden myths as it was first introduced by Theocritus and then expanded by Virgil. Like the two myths, it serves as a recurring concept within pastoral writing and is inseparably bound to the pastoral genre.

4.2.1 The Golden Age Myth

The oldest written document of the Golden Age myth known today was composed by the Greek poet Hesiod about 700 BC. In his poem *Works and Days*, he depicts a linear process of social and political degeneration, which seizes on mankind's general longing for a past time of wholeness and bliss that stands in stark contrast to an unsatisfying present. Hesiod depicts five ages, of which the Golden Age is the first and the Iron Age the last and always the contemporary. The Golden Age is characterised by unstinted happiness, innocence, and plenty. The people in that age

> "lived like gods without sorrow of heart, remote and free from toil and grief: miserable age rested not on them; but with legs and arms never failing they made merry with feasting beyond the reach of all evils [...] and they had all good things; for the fruitful earth unforced bore them fruit abundantly and without stint. They dwelt in ease and peace upon their lands with many good things, rich in flocks and loved by the blessed gods" (Hesiod quoted in Squires, 23-4).

The Golden Age knows no war, trade, or labour. Feelings such as shame, ambition, and pride are unknown, so that love can be exercised freely and people do not know competition or envy (cf. Marinelli, 15). The Golden Age is lost through a whim of Zeus and followed by a Silver Age, a Bronze Age, a Heroic Age, and an Iron Age. Each age sees further degeneration[38], such as the planting of crops beginning in the Silver Age, the start of war and trade in the Bronze Age, and, finally, the arrival of the unhappy status quo in the Iron Age (cf. Marinelli, 16).

4.2.2 The Biblical Story of the Garden Eden

Another myth, similar to that of the Golden Age and closely related to it, is the biblical story of the Garden of Eden. In the Old Testament, Genesis describes the creation of man and the world by God. He places the first man, Adam, in a garden situated in an eastern location called Eden. Like the landscape of the Golden Age, the garden contains lush vegetation that offers food in abundance. In its centre grow the tree of life, spender of eternal life, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Rivers flow through the

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[38] An exception from this rule is the Heroic Age, which sees a temporary recovery of some of the lost glory. Hesiod inserted this age into the process of degeneration to depict in it the time of the Mycenaean rulers, which is considered a time of glory and heroism in Greece (cf. Günther and Müller, 20).

garden and secure its fertility. Adam and his wife Eve (who is subsequently created by God) enjoy unlimited leisure, peace, and freedom; and feelings such as shame, envy, or pride are unknown to them. However, they are restricted in their freedom by one godly rule: not to eat from the tree of knowledge. This rule they break eventually, as the snake tempts Eve to pick a fruit from said tree and eat it together with Adam. As a consequence, they learn to feel shame and gain knowledge of good and evil. Having broken God's rule, they are evicted from the Garden of Eden and are cursed to endure pain and labour from that day on (cf. *Holy Bible*, Genesis 2-3). However, the Bible tells of a future urban version of Eden, which all those will be allowed to enter who have redeemed the Fall's sin throughout their lifetime by living righteously: the New Jerusalem. It presents what is nowadays known as 'urban pastoral'[39]. Urban pastoral includes urban settings in its idyllic landscapes and uses traditional pastoral motifs and themes in its depiction of the city[40]. In the Bible, Revelation 21-22 depicts the restoration of Eden as a holy city reigned by God. The New Jerusalem is made of gold and likened to pure and precious gems. It is lightened by God's glory and fed by clear waters from the River of Light. As in Eden, the tree of life, symbol of eternal life, grows in the New Jerusalem. And, as in Eden, negative emotions or actions are unknown in the city of God (cf. *Holy Bible*, Book of Revelation 21-22).

Both the Golden Age and the Garden of Eden myths attempt to explain life's trials and tribulations, but they reach different conclusions: While mankind in the Golden Age myth is irreversibly damned to endure in the Iron Age and has lost the Golden Age through a whim of Zeus, Adam and Eve are evicted from the Garden of Eden by their own conscious wrong-doing and can, through rightful behaviour in life, redeem themselves in a coming New Jerusalem. Thus, the Golden Age myth depicts an irreversible linear movement of degeneration while the Bible depicts the possibility of a

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[39] The term 'urban pastoral', though widely used, has not yet been officially defined. It is applied to depictions of urban spaces in pastoral terms, i.e. through the use of typical pastoral motifs and themes.
[40] A modern example of urban pastoral is William Morris' pastoral utopia *News from Nowhere*, which depicts London as an idyllic re-naturalised landscape and is a direct reaction to the urbanisation and industrialisation in the 19th century.

circular movement that gives rise for hope of a paradise[41] in the future (cf. Lerner 1982, 125). Furthermore, the Eden story is a moralising myth, functioning as a warning against wrong behaviour, while the Golden Age myth is fatalistic, presenting man as a pawn in the hands of the gods (cf. Lerner 1982, 125).

4.2.3 Arcadia

Many aspects of the Golden Age and Eden myth found their way into the pastoral convention and its depiction of Arcadia as a place of pastoral bliss. The real Arcadia is an isolated mountainous region in the heart of the Peloponnese, which was considered the home of Pan and other mythological creatures in ancient Greek mythology. Due to the roughness and low fertility of the land, Arcadia was regarded a savage and poverty stricken region populated with sheep and goats before its poetical conversion into a pastoral *locus amoenus* (cf. Kappa, 16). Having been introduced as a pastoral setting by the creator of the pastoral genre, Theocritus, in the 4th and 3rd century BC, Arcadia was turned into a highly idealised landscape by Virgil in the 1st century BC. He seized on the region's mythological heritage by presenting Pan as the inventor of the panpipe, whose play he teaches to lovesick shepherds, and by introducing other mythological creatures such as nymphs and fauns into the landscape (cf. Kappa, 16). Virgil established Arcadia as an imaginary world in which people lead simple, uncorrupted lives in harmony with nature and far away from the conflicts of the outside world. Thus, Arcadia became a universal, which would be used by subsequent writers for the projection of their ideals (cf. Marinelli, 41). Singing, relaxing, and playing music are the Arcadian shepherds' favourite pastimes, and the landscape responds to their actions and emotions, thus gaining human qualities:

> "[...] bestowing the shrubs, trees, and mountains [...] with human abilities of listening and singing showed the bond between psyche and nature, human and divine, and was rather 'an act of ensouling', [...]. Just as the soul is placed 'as a *tertium* between the perspectives of body ... and of mind', this [...] Arcadia mediates between culture and nature" (Greenberg, 446).

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[41] 'Paradise' is another term for the Garden of Eden used in Genesis 2 and 3 (cf. Livingstone, 'paradise'). Etymologically, the word comes from ancient Persian <*pairidaēza*>, meaning a royal pleasure garden or park (cf. Finney, 7).

Arcadia was a popular pastoral setting until the end of the 18th century, when the rise of realism dissolved the traditional pastoral genre and pastoral writing turned to real landscapes, as will be shown further down (cf. Marinelli, 54).

4.3   Historical Development of the Pastoral Tradition

The consensus among critics regarding the origins of pastoral writing is that the creator of the first pastoral was the Greek poet Theocritus (c. 316 – c. 260 BC), who wrote for the royal court in Alexandria. His *Idylls*[42] depict country life in his native home, Arcadia. Mixing realism with idealisation, Theocritus presents shepherds' simple life in the country as a contrast to the refined life of his audience in the city. Thus, the pastoral was, from its start, designed to meet the desires and longings of those living under non-pastoral conditions. At the same time, it grew out of Theocritus's personal recollections of life in rural Arcadia, thus being the product of his personal nostalgia. Other than in the pastoral convention, which was later established by Virgil's work, Theocritus's depictions were based on reality and touched upon the roughness and toughness of country life. Idealisation was introduced by depictions of the shepherds' singing contests and the Arcadian harvest festival; the latter of which Theocritus based on Hesiod's depictions of the Golden Age (cf. Gifford 1999, 17). This mixture of realism and idealisation, as well as the implicit contrast of country and city life formed the basis for the typical tension found in pastoral art throughout the ages (cf. Gifford 1999, 17).

Theocritus's pastoral work was taken up and developed by the Roman poet Virgil (70 – 19 BC). His pastoral *Eclogues*[43] were direct reactions to the socio-political troubles of his time. Land-ownership, which had been taken for granted by Roman citizens, came under dispute and Virgil himself was threatened by dispossession. Writing during this time of uncertainty and civil war, Virgil's pastoral nostalgia was for a time prior to political change, when his land was safely his and loss was not imminent (cf. Greenberg, 447). This way, in contrast to Theocritus, Virgil implicitly introduced

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[42] An idyll is "a short poem, descriptive or narrative, which possesses picturesque or idealistic quality" (Marinelli, 8).

[43] The term 'eclogue' was thus established by Virgil and has been used ever since to describe a pastoral poem which has the form of "a dialogue between two shepherds or neatherds. Often this dialogue is in the form of an argument or contest" (Baker, 780).

political and social issues into pastoral writing and used it as a means of expressing his criticism and discontent (cf. Alpers 1996, 161). Borrowing from his predecessor, he located his pastoral idyll in Arcadia; and in populating it with mythological creatures such as "fauns, satyrs, [and] nymphs, [...] Virgil created more than a setting for his characters. Arcadia became an emotive, mythic place where anything, including transformation, is possible. [...] Arcadia was no longer just a setting; it became a *character*" (Greenberg, 446; *emphasis in original*). Thus, pastoral landscape gained meaning as a mythical place which was dated back to a mythological time (cf. Greenberg, 459-460). At the same time, Arcadia served as a literary distancing device by which Virgil could voice his social and political criticism without direct reference to real circumstances (cf. Gifford 1999, 18-19). In his *Eclogues*, Virgil explicitly mixed strong pastoral nostalgia with utopian desire. This is most clearly shown in his fourth eclogue, which is set in the future and depicts a restoration of the Golden Age (cf. Gifford 1999, 20). Virgil's work established the pastoral convention, which was followed by a great number of classical writers after him and gained him the superior position within the pastoral tradition (cf. Greg, 18).

The classical pastoral convention was mainly defined by descriptions of the life of shepherds or goatherds in idyllic landscapes, who spoke to each other (usually in pentameter verse) about work and love; the plot movement was that of retreat and return, i.e. the retreat into a pastoral setting was traditionally followed by a return to the non-pastoral place from which the character had initially set out. This way, the pastoral experience was meant to have an effect on the non-pastoral sphere, real and fictive:

> "If the pastoral is successful, the audience will know that what is perceived to be happening in Arcadia has relevance for them in their own time and (urban) place, with its own anxieties and tensions. This is the essential paradox of the pastoral: that a retreat to a place apparently without the anxieties of the town, or the court, or the present, actually delivers insights into the culture from which it originates" (Gifford 1999, 82).

The chosen setting of classical pastorals was sometimes Arcadia, and the time was often the Golden Age; typical activities of the characters were the composition of poetry, the recital of verse, and singing – either solitary or in a contest; life was depicted as one of leisure, so that the characters enjoyed enough time for artistic creation; the negative sides of life were mostly omitted, but there could be mention of some of the pains of

country life, and death could be a topic (as in the pastoral elegies, for example) (cf. Mikics, 226). Altogether, though idealised, the shepherds' life contained tensions experienced in a real working country life: the contrast of the changing seasons, the passing of time, negative and positive emotions, labour and leisure (cf. Williams, 18).

The classical pastoral convention enjoyed great popularity up to the Middle Ages, when it was more or less lost. However, it survived its near demise and saw its glorious rebirth in the Renaissance. The convention was first revived by Petrarch and Boccachio in the 14th century in Italy, and it subsequently spread through France and Spain into England (cf. Greg, 24). Italian pastoral was a reaction against the time's rationalism and materialism (cf. Greg, 50-52). On this basis, Renaissance pastoral depicted nature in highly idealised tones and discarded classical pastoral's interests in aspects of real country life. This departure from depictions of real life aspects and the high level of idealisation led to an excision of the tensions in working country life found in classical pastoral (cf. Williams, 18). This meant that pastoral time was often suspended so that the shepherds enjoyed eternal spring and youth. In the Elizabethan Age (1558 – 1603), the pastoral became a dominant genre and no longer only appeared in the shape of the formal eclogue, but also in drama, prose fiction, as well as lyric and narrative verse (cf. Heath-Stubbs, 18). This, along with the invasion of non-pastoral characters such as courtiers into the pastoral world, softened the narrow boundaries of the pastoral convention and allowed for more variety (cf. Marinelli, 57). Like Theocritus's pastoral *Idylls*, Elizabethan pastorals were the product of and addressed to the court and the aristocracy. However, in opposition to their Greek models, they were explicitly based on the real-life interests of the court and gained new functions as a tool of flattery, flirtation and disguise (cf. Williams, 20).

> "[Pastoral] became a court plaything, in which princes and great ladies, poets and wits, loved to see themselves figured and complimented, and the practice of assuming pastoral names becoming almost universal in polite circles, the convention, which had passed from the eclogue on to the stage, passed from the stage into actual existence, and court life became one continual pageant of pastoral conceit" (Greg, 7).

Thus, the pastoral obtained an allegorical function as "[...] the shepherd [was] an idealised mask, a courtly disguise: a traditionally innocent figure through whom, paradoxically, intrigue [could] be elaborated" (Williams, 20)[44].

In the Baroque period (17th – 18th century), the pastoral retained its highly idealised Renaissance form. Alexander Pope's statement "We must therefore use some illusion to render a pastoral delightful; and this consists in exposing the best side only of a shepherd's life, and in concealing its miseries" is characteristic of the time's attitude (Pope). Romanticism brought about changes in the convention, however. After the 18th century, traditional pastoral gradually dissolved due to changes in perception, as the highly artificial and idealising pastoral genre could not be brought into accordance with the rise of realism. Thus, "[t]he pastoral impulse shed its outward and conventional form, became semi-realistic, and later – in the nineteenth century – took fiction as well as poetry for its linguistic embodiment" (Squires, 37). The novel, which became the leading literary form in the Victorian era and beyond, offered the means to present a mix of realism and pastoral (cf. Squires, 31). The introduction of realism into the pastoral and the dissolution of the pastoral form meant the end of the pastoral as genre and the birth of the pastoral as mode. Its themes and points of view broadened and its perspective gained complexity (cf. Calhoun, 6). Romanticism's main pastoral concerns lay with real natural phenomena and landscapes (cf. Calhoun, 7). Their destruction by industrialisation created heightened feelings of anxiety and nostalgic longing. However, the nostalgia expressed within 19th century pastorals was not only simple yearning for a better past, but a serious expression of the crisis created by modernisation and the clash between old values and modern circumstances (cf. Gifford 1999, 72).

Since the 19th century, the pastoral mode has appeared in a multitude of forms, themes, and expressions. Ecocritical and environmental concerns have created new versions of pastoral in recent decades and the 19th century's criticism of the destruction of the

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[44] One of Rennaissance pastoral's most famous representatives is William Shakespeare, whose pastoral dramas *As You Like It* and *A Winter's Tale* set pastoral worlds against the corruption of the court (cf. Heath-Stubbs, 34). More closely fashioned after the classical pastoral convention and of equal importance was Sidney Spenser's *Shepheardes Calender*, whose twelve eclogues describe the shepherd's life throughout the year and which was the first pastoral to be set in England (cf. Heath-Stubbs, 19; Marinelli, 49).

natural environment and the loss of man's close relationship with nature can still be found in 21st century literature (cf. Wilson, 147). Terry Gifford lists six defining characteristics that mark modern pastoral writing, which he terms 'post-pastoral': a humbling awe of nature, which puts nature in the centre of concern; the realisation that creation and destruction are continuous momentums in our universe (birth-death-rebirth, growth-decay, ecstasy-dissolution); the recognition that the workings of human nature are tied to external nature; the recognition that nature and culture are not separate things but overlap and sometimes are the same; the realisation that because we have consciousness we can take responsibility for our treatment of nature and its ultimate survival; and the realisation that environmental and social exploitation (e.g. the suppression of women and minorities) result from the same source and have to be ended in order to achieve the healing of the environment and social relations (cf. Gifford 1999, 152 – 165). As the resumé at the end of this thesis will show, *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* fulfil all of the characteristics listed by Gifford and can therefore be considered as modern pastoral works of fiction.

4.4 "[...] pastoral is an image of what they call the golden age"[45] – Nostalgic Longing and Utopian Desire within Pastoral Writing

As already mentioned above, the pastoral is strongly informed by nostalgic longing for a primordial home. As Poggioli states, "[t]he psychological root of the pastoral is a double longing after innocence and happiness, to be recovered not through conversion or regeneration but merely through a retreat" (Poggioli, 1). It should be noted that a difference has to be made between nostalgia in the pastoral genre and the pastoral mode. While both express extratextual nostalgia, i.e. the author's and audience's nostalgic yearning for a better past, the pastoral genre is usually devoid of intratextual nostalgia, whereas the pastoral mode often appears in conjunction with it, as will be elucidated in the following.

Extratextual nostalgia is very strong in both the pastoral genre as well as the pastoral mode. Especially in the pastoral genre, pastoral place is usually located in a distant

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[45] Pope.

mythological past, which is presented as preferable to an unsatisfying present. It is depicted as a natural space, in which the characters feel fully integrated. Nature is perceived as a generous friend who offers all possible comforts and necessities and "with whom [the characters] feel an easy equality" (Ettin, 135). The relationship between nature and man is uncomplicated and artless. "The pastoral place is defined by feelings of peace, contentment, belonging, and long association, as well as of easy possession" (Ettin, 129). Offering emotional comfort to its inhabitants, the pastoral landscape relieves them from the troubles of life, which are put into perspective against nature's magnitude (cf. ibid). Furthermore, it creates a feeling of belonging and continuity with the past, as the pastoral setting is usually tied to the experience of enduring communality and friendship. "The pastoral historical sense is personal, based on remembered songs, friends, and lovers, local gods and nymphs, passed from person to person as a direct legacy, often as a reward for some particular artistic performance" (Ettin, 131). The main feeling conveyed by this happy fusion between man and nature is that of home (cf. Ettin, 135). Thus, the pastoral is centred on the essence of nostalgic emotion: the longing for a long lost home. Its audience partakes of the pastoral characters' bliss and communality, thus satisfying their nostalgia for a better life in the past. The fictitious pastoral landscapes offers them relief from the troubles and concerns of their everyday lives by providing them with the yearned for home – at least for a short while. That loss and longing are fundamental emotions connected to the pastoral is recognised by most critics[46].

> "The notion of making time pause, even stop, or circle back to the beginning [...] is basic to the pastoral instinct for enclosure. Being absorbed in a moment of blessed, privileged time means being settled into an emotionally comfortable experience. Whether attained or not, the desire for that is at the heart of the pastoral. [...] For this reason, nostalgia is often an important temporal quality of pastoral literature" (Ettin, 142).

As mentioned in chapter 2.4 of this thesis, nostalgia serves as a psychological defence mechanism against the anxiety and discontent caused by historical, social, and political change in that it creates its own fiction of a glorious past. It is evident that the pastoral is a product of this nostalgia-mechanism, seeing that both Theocritus and Virgil created

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[46] Cf. Greenberg, 452; Lerner 1972, 41; Marinelli, 9.

the genre to deal with their burdensome non-pastoral realities. This function of the pastoral as a reaction to and comment on its writer's and audience's time and place has endured throughout the ages and can still be detected in the use of the pastoral mode today (cf. Marinelli, 12). The pastoral world functions as a model of human life, a microcosm in which values and emotions can be magnified (cf. Ettin, 30). Offering an ideal of life, it serves as compensation and critical contrast to real-life circumstances. It enables its readers to perceive their lives' faults more clearly and to imagine alternatives. The pastoral retreat has therapeutic functions as it creates an opportunity to deal with real-life issues in a secluded and confined space (cf. Marinelli, 11-12). In the pastoral world, man can acquire a feeling of wholeness due to "its unity and simplicity, its intimate communion with nature, and its freedom from sophistication" (Squires, 11).

Intratextual nostalgia, i.e. the nostalgic longing of fictional characters, does not usually occur in the pastoral genre, as its characters live in constant bliss and therefore do not longingly turn to a superior past. The static perfection of the pastoral world obviates the longing for a different time or place. As traditional pastoral characters do not know nostalgia, the cyclical plot structure of many traditional pastoral texts is no defining mark of intratextural nostalgia. Though the pastoral protagonist follows a cyclical movement which finally returns him to his original point of departure, his home, there is one significant difference between his return home and that of the nostalgic romance and fantasy hero: while the romance/fantasy hero is continually driven by his longing to return home and experiences home as superior to the landscapes of his journey, the traditional pastoral protagonist escapes from his home and finds perfect bliss and happiness within the pastoral retreat. Consequently, though the protagonist in the pastoral genre often returns to his place of departure at the end of the narrative, he does not do so with joy. Rather, he has experienced the pastoral retreat as his true home, in which he found communality and lived in a close and uncomplicated relationship with nature. His final return home is therefore not to be compared with the questing hero's return home in the romance novel and fantasy literature. As the hero's nostalgic longing and love for home are necessary requisites to speak of intratextual nostalgia, it follows that texts belonging to the pastoral genre in most cases do not contain intratextual nostalgia. However, with regard to the pastoral mode, intratextual nostalgia is possible, as the mode frequently appears within other literary genres and is not bound to the

narrow conventions of the pastoral genre. As the analysis in the second part of this thesis will show, *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit* both depict pastoral characters who display serious symptoms of nostalgic longing. As the pastoral appears in Tolkien's work in modal form, the texts do not depict the blissful unchanging worlds of the pastoral genre but a world that is characterised by change and corruption. The pastoral creatures' constant strain to protect and preserve their pastoral environments from processes of degeneration creates strong nostalgia within them. Thus, the use of the pastoral mode within other genres can combine the pastoral with intratextual nostalgia, presenting the fictional characters as mirrors of the author's and readers' extratextual nostalgia. The connection of the pastoral with intratextual nostalgia presents the pastoral world as fragile and transient, which the pastoral genre denies. By using pastoral elements, fantasy literature reflects mankind's timeless yearning for a superior mythological past and confronts it with the constant experience of change and fear of further degeneration. As will be outlined further down in chapter 4.5, both types of literature share a number of functions and are consequently highly compatible.

As shown in chapter 2.3 of this thesis, there is a multitude of triggers of nostalgia in modern society, such as the fragmentation of communities, fear of the future, and loss of religious belief. The use of pastoral motifs and themes in contemporary writing can be brought into direct connection with the anxieties and insecurities experienced within modern society. The destruction of nature and its conversion into highly industrialised and urban landscapes plays an important role in the modern use of the pastoral mode. "Now we have as much an interest in the welfare of Arden[47] as in that of its exiled inhabitants, as much interest in their interaction with Arden as in what they take back from it, as much interest in how they represent their interaction with it as in how their representations of themselves as its inhabitants have changed" (Gifford 1999, 148). Pastoral place now aims at putting man into harmony with "the natural world as much as [with] the social world" (Gifford 1999, 149). Thus, the traditional distinction between nature and culture has become contested and contemporary pastorals "convey an awareness of both nature as culture and of culture as nature" (Gifford 1999, 162).

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[47] In his play *As You Like It*, William Shakespeare introduced the Forest of Arden as pastoral place. Nowadays, like Arcadia, Arden generally signifies a pastoral landscape in common speech.

Furthermore, modern society's fear of a future which will probably see further destruction of the environment, climate change, and the exhaustion of natural resources, is highly facilitative of the use of the pastoral mode in contemporary writing. The backward glance is both soothing and cautionary. It expresses a lack of belief in the healing powers of progress, preferring an unspecific past in which time is suspended (cf. Plaschka, 27).

As shown previously in chapter 2.1, nostalgia, and hence the nostalgic nature of the pastoral, has a utopian dimension, for "the evocation of a past Golden Age has implications for the present, so this must also have implications for an ideal notion of the future. If this were not the case, the pastoral would lose its oppositional potential. It would not be able to imaginatively construct an alternative vision" (Gifford 1999, 36)[48]. As shown in chapter 3.2.2 of this thesis, a distinction should be made between utopia as a literary genre and a utopian impulse. While the traditional utopian genre is defined as a distinct literary form, the utopian impulse is an implicit or explicit expression of desire for a better life observable within any kind of material. This definition serves to prove that the pastoral automatically contains a utopian impulse, as its depictions of alternative landscapes and societies is based on a strong desire for a better life, as shown above. Considering that desire for a better world is the only defining characteristic of the utopian mode, the question of the utopian vision's applicability, which has been propounded repeatedly in discussions about utopia's definition and has reappeared in comments on the utopian nature of the pastoral, becomes irrelevant. Consequently, some critics' judgement that the pastoral cannot be understood as utopian due to its lack of concrete calls to action and change can be refuted[49]. However, though the use of the pastoral does not necessarily constitute a call to actively change the current state, it has the potential to change its readers' perceptions and arouse hitherto unknown desires in them, which might influence their actions. Thus, C.S. Lewis' statement about fantasy literature also rings true for the pastoral: "It stirs and troubles [the reader] (to his life-

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[48] A similar statement is made by Krishan Kumar: "Arcadia, as the myth of the Golden Age indicated, might exist in the past. But that did not prevent its being willed into existence, in some future time, as the conscious product of a utopian design" (Kumar, 3-4).
[49] Critics claiming this are, for example, Laurence Lerner (cf. Lerner 1982, 127) and Oliver Plaschka (cf. Plaschka, 25).

long enrichment) with the dim sense of something beyond his reach and, far from dulling or emptying the actual world, gives it a new dimension of depth" (Lewis 1985, 65). The following chapter will take a closer look at fantasy literature and the pastoral's shared functions, and the role of the pastoral mode in fantasy literature.

4.5 The Pastoral Tradition and Fantasy Literature

Like pastoral texts, fantasy texts are reactions to and involvements with their social contexts. Both literature types rely heavily on age-old myths and tales, which contain universal human longings and desires (cf. Attebery, 71). Consequently, they share many features and often appear in conjunction. Indeed, fantasy texts often make use of the pastoral mode to portray their fictional landscapes and peoples and present them in contrast to non-pastoral societies and environments. This way, they are able to delineate different types of relationship between man, society, and nature, which are usually tied to moral statements and serve to contrast the ideal with deterring models of life. The close relationship between fantasy literature and the pastoral tradition will be outlined in this sub-chapter, which will first draw on Tolkien's essay *On Fairy-Stories* to establish that both literature types share identical functions. Second, Phyliss Koppes' pastoral-heroic spectrum will offer very good insight into the significant interrelatedness of pastoral and fantasy literature. It will serve to show that the pastoral and the heroic ideal both express fundamental human desires and that they usually appear in combination within non-realistic fiction (cf. Koppes, 4-5). Koppes' pastoral-heroic spectrum and its theoretical implications for the analysis of the pastoral mode in fantasy texts will be of great importance in the analysis of pastoral and non-pastoral creatures in the second part of this thesis and will therefore be discussed in detail.

4.5.1 Recovery, Escape, Consolation - Shared Functions of Fantasy and Pastoral Literature

As Tolkien pointed out in his well-known essay *On Fairy-Stories*, fantasy texts influence their readers in three ways: First, they offer recovery from familiarity. The experiences and impressions conveyed through fantasy texts serve to renew their readers' awareness of their surroundings so that they are able to regain "a clear view" (*On F-S*, 146). In Tolkien's words: "We need, in any case, to clean our windows; so that

the things seen clearly may be freed from the drab blur of triteness or familiarity – from possessiveness" (ibid.). The aspect of recovery can also be found in pastoral literature's aim to influence its readers' own sphere, which it achieves by contrasting the non-pastoral with the pastoral world. In doing so, pastoral texts offer new perspectives to their readers and attempt to put real-life proceedings into a new light (cf. Gifford 1999, 82).

The second function Tolkien awards to fantasy texts is that they offer escape from a highly industrialised and denaturalised world in which man is estranged from nature (cf. *On F-S*, 148-151). This clearly echoes the ecocritical and psychological functions of modern pastoral texts, which have been outlined in detail in the preceding subchapter. By depicting archaic ways of life which show man in harmony with his natural environment, fantasy texts, like pastoral texts, dissolve the traditional separation of culture and nature and let them merge into each other. In Tolkien's understanding, escapism is a positive way of dealing with negative aspects of modern life. Likening contemporary man to a prisoner, he points out that the prisoner's attempt to escape his confinement and return home is a very natural and healthy reaction to his condition. Remarking that "[t]he world outside has not become less real because the prisoner cannot see it", Tolkien compares the fictional fantasy world to the invisible outside world the prisoner longs for (*On F-S*, 148). In doing so, he claims for the fictional realm the same validity and importance as the real world and states that the escape into the fictional world offers release from the burdens and anxieties of modernity, and a return home. Home, in Tolkien's simile, lies outside the real world and can only be found in the fictional realm. The prisoner's longing for home echoes the universal human longing for a long lost primordial home, which is fundamental to fantasy and pastoral literature and finds temporary alleviation through the escape into the fictional world. Thus, the escapist functions of both types of literature are inseparably tied to their highly nostalgic nature. As previously shown, the strong nostalgia detectable in both literature types is a critical reaction to real living conditions and has the potential to effect change by contrasting them with the fictional world, thus creating conscious desire for the improvement of the status quo. Consequently, fantasy and pastoral literature occasionally own the capability to give rise to change-inducing action, as "Escapism has another and even wickeder face: Reaction" (*On F-S*, 149). According to

Tolkien, the escapist's displeasure with modernity can be strong enough to rouse him, and through him others, to rebellious action against modern technology (cf. ibid).

The third function Tolkien awards to fantasy texts is that of consolation by means of a happy ending. This he regards as a typical characteristic of fantasy literature. Referring to the catastrophe at the end of drama, Tolkien coins two new terms, 'eucatastrophe' and 'dyscatastrophe', to distinguish a happy ending from an unhappy one. With regard to fantasy, he establishes that the eucatastrophe, i.e. "the good catastrophe, the sudden joyous 'turn'" of events reconciles the reader with life's burdens and tribulations (*On F-S*, 153). Likening it to 'evangelium', i.e. the proclamation of final redemption made in the Bible's New Testament, Tolkien's mention of the feeling of Joy as a result of a successful eucatastrophe refers to Christians' hope to enter the kingdom of God after death, which is founded on the biblical eucatastrophes of Christ's birth and resurrection (cf. *On F-S*, 155-57). With regard to pastoral texts, a distinction between the consolatory function of the pastoral genre and of the pastoral mode has to be made. In the traditional pastoral genre, a consolatory function can be detected, but it is created in different ways to the one depicted by Tolkien and is merely to be understood in secular terms. First of all, it is not tied to a eucatastrophic ending. As the pastoral convention did not prescribe a certain kind of ending[50], a sudden joyous turn of events towards the end of the action does not constitute one of its defining characteristics[51]. Instead, the pastoral genre offers consolation by a steady image of pastoral bliss, unity, and constancy. As shown in the preceding sub-chapter, the nostalgic backwards glance, the depiction of friendship and communality, the uncomplicated relationship between man and nature, and the unity and simplicity of the pastoral world induce feelings of belonging, wholeness, and comfort in the pastoral's readers. Being a strong expression of a utopian impulse, the pastoral genre has the potential to function similarly to what

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[50] Traditionally, the retreat-return pattern of the pastoral genre prescribed the characters' return to their non-pastoral place of origin at the end of the text. However, this return could also only be implied and did not have to be explicitly described in the text. 'Return' could also merely mean that the pastoral text returned some insights about their own lives to its audience (cf. Gifford 1999, 81).

[51] This does not mean that there cannot be a eucatastrophe within a pastoral text. Especially the use of the pastoral in drama has brought forth many examples that contain eucatastrophic ends, such as Shakespeare's pastoral comedies, which contain a joyous turn of events and end with their protagonists' marriages.

Tolkien terms Joy – though in a strictly secular sense, i.e. as a vision of a blissful future in this world. In contrast to the pastoral genre, the pastoral mode is much more flexible due to its usability in all kinds of texts and genres. Since it appears in a great number of fantasy texts, it can be highly conducive to a consolatory effect. As pastoral images are commemorative of a long lost blissful past, their use in fantasy texts can help to create the hope of future bliss. The cathartic feeling of Joy is then released by the eucatastrophic turn of events, but it heavily draws on, and is fed by, the pastoral imagery within the fantasy text. Altogether, the consolatory function of fantasy and pastoral texts clearly refers to their utopian dimension, which is expressive of, and conducive to, a feeling of hope for a better future (in this and another world).

The analytical part of this thesis will show that the pastoral is tightly bound to nostalgia within Tolkien's mythology, which conveys a strong utopian impulse. Thus, *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit* fulfil the three functions of fantasy literature especially through their use of the pastoral mode and nostalgia; offering the reader the opportunity to escape into blissful pastoral realms and cultures, they play upon his yearning for a better life and mirror this emotion within the characters' nostalgic longing for home, the past, and the paradisiacal island of the gods, Valinor. The texts' pastoral episodes serve to visualise ideal lifestyles in which nature and culture merge successfully. They are presented alongside non-pastoral depictions which outline deterring models of life based on the destruction and exploitation of the environment and other creatures. This way, the pastoral and non-pastoral in Tolkien's work serve to offer its reader recovery by confronting him with different lifestyles and their consequences for man and the environment. Altogether, readers are invited to consciously or unconsciously transfer these insights to the real world and gain new perspectives on their own lifestyles and cultures. However, due to the intratextual focus of this thesis and the boundaries of such a work, this aspect will not be taken into account in the following analysis. Future analyses of Tolkien's work might offer more detailed insight into its reception history and the effect of pastoral nostalgia and the utopian impulse on readers.

4.5.2   Phyllis Koppes' Pastoral – Heroic Spectrum

In her study of *The Child in Pastoral Myth*, Phyllis Koppes convincingly demonstrates the close relationship between the pastoral and the heroic impulse. Emphasising both

impulses' origins in myth and folktale, she comes to the conclusion that the pastoral "cannot be fully understood without the heroic impulse or ideal. [...] Both ideals play a role in human growth, the underlying subject of myth and folktale" (Koppes, 4). Due to their shared origins, the pastoral and the heroic ideal are often explored in combination within the same work of fiction. Though they are both basic human impulses, Koppes locates them on the opposite ends of a scale as "[...] the pastoral and the heroic ideals imply different relationships between the self and the other - nature and society being the two major representatives of the other - and different concepts of time" (ibid). Altogether, Koppes differentiates between two kinds of pastoral and two kinds of heroic ideals: the bucolic and the georgic pastoral ideals[52], and the regenerative and the degenerative heroic ideals. The bucolic pastoral and the regenerative heroic are the most extreme ideals and therefore located at the furthest ends of the scale. They are stark opposites (cf. Koppes, 5-6). The georgic pastoral and the regenerative heroic ideals are less extreme and move, on their respective sides, towards the middle of the scale (cf. Koppes, 12). They are closely related and distinguished only by their emphasis on either cyclical or linear action, as will be shown further down.

At first sight, the difference between the bucolic and the georgic pastoral appears in terms of content: The bucolic depicts the lives of shepherds, while the georgic discusses farm life (cf. Koppes, 11-12). However, a close examination of the two pastoral ideals reveals further dissimilarities. According to Koppes' definition, the bucolic portrays its shepherds as inactive and free. Living in unity with nature, they do not act on it in terms of farming or landscaping, but instead they are nourished by it and passive receivers of its generous bounty. The bucolic place and time are characterised by a sense of timelessness and stasis, as there is no mention of seasonal or diurnal cycles and the only interest is in the present. According to Koppes, man's and nature's state in these extreme pastorals is comparable to death, the ultimate state of stasis (cf. Koppes, 12). Usually, tension is introduced into the plot by a love theme and singing contests.

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[52] The terms 'georgic' and 'bucolic' are drawn from Virgil's two major pastoral works, the *Bucolics* (also known as the *Eclogues*) and the *Georgics* (cf. Koppes, 11-12). His bucolic eclogues are based on Theorcritus' pastoral poems and depict the conversations and songs of shepherds. In his *Georgics*, the subject is agricultural life and labour. Etymologically, 'bucolic' and 'georgic' are both derived from ancient Greek and mean 'herdsman' and 'agricultural' respectively (cf. OED).

However, "[s]ocial as well as love tensions are minimized as well as sublimated" so that they do not disturb the shepherds' leisure (Koppes, 14). Consequently, the bucolic pastoral ideal usually appears in lyric form as "[a]ction, time, tension – the basic stuff of plot – are absent or minimized" (ibid). Concerning its psychological functions, Koppes affirms the bucolic pastoral's underlying nostalgic longing for a primordial state of being. She likens its shepherd's state to that of childhood, coming to the conclusion that the shepherd's passive reception of sustenance, his dependent existence, his lack of a sense of time, and his naivety and unconsciousness are marks of a high degree of self-absorption. Even his love for others is narcissistic as only his own claims are of interest to him. Consequently, he does not have a family, but his responsibility is only to himself (cf. Koppes, 23-24). Altogether, the bucolic ideal is the result of man's longing to return to paradise, "a pre-lapsarian state before the self was 'born' into time, consciousness, action, and pain" (Koppes, 18).

The georgic pastoral is much less static and self-absorbed than its more extreme relative, the bucolic. The georgic hero develops through different stages, externally as well as internally. Koppes draws on Joseph Campbell's 'monomyth of the hero' in order to portray the different stages of this development: "The journey of the hero [...] is a rite of passage through which the hero attains maturity, through which he becomes a child again in order to be reborn. The pattern of this journey is cyclical: separation or departure, initiation, and return" (Koppes, 19). In contrast to the bucolic, which depicts the hero's refusal of action and adventure and presents this as the foundation for happiness and innocence, the georgic criticises self-absorption and inactivity. If the georgic hero refuses to follow his "call to adventure", he will fall into meaninglessness, refusing to give up his infantile ego (Koppes, 19). "For the georgic - and the regenerative heroic - ideal, this refusal of the call to adventure and regeneration creates a wasteland; for the bucolic ideal, it creates a pasture or a garden" (Koppes, 20). The georgic farmer experiences time and change, labour and pain; nature changes with the seasons, i.e. there is a cyclical series of births and deaths in nature, and man's relationship to nature is defined by work (cf. Koppes, 21). As Koppes remarks, the cyclical return of the seasons, though it constitutes perpetual action, also embodies a peculiar state of stasis, as "one constantly retraces one's footsteps" (ibid). The georgic hero's relationship with nature differs from the bucolic in that it is a reciprocal unity.

Instead of being the passive recipient of nature's bounty, the georgic farmer lives in cooperation with it. He "is modified by nature, but he also modifies it. Man is a part of nature, but nature's purposes are not limited to feeding or mirroring the self. The claims of both the self and the other are recognized" (Koppes, 23). Thus, in contrast to the bucolic, which is an individual ideal, the georgic is a social ideal. It depicts man in cooperation with his environment, his family and his neighbours (cf. ibid). His role as husband and father is another expression of the life – death cycle and, to adopt a term coined by Tolkien[53], man's sub-creating role. The cycle of rebirth and change plays a central role in the georgic ideal. Consequently, "[w]hile the bucolic abjures rites of passage because of the submission, work, and pain they involve, the georgic celebrates them because it knows that they are the only means to new birth and subsequent growth" (Koppes, 24).

Situated on the other side of the pastoral–heroic scale, but also close to its middle, is the regenerative heroic ideal. Like the georgic pastoral ideal, it emphasises the role of rebirth in life. However, while the georgic ideal treats time as cyclical due to nature's seasonal cycle and man's participation in it, the regenerative ideal is based on a linear time structure due to the unrepeatability of man's actions in time. "The georgic emphasizes the ways in which man fits into nature; the regenerative heroic emphasizes ways in which man makes his mark on nature" (Koppes, 36). All the same, the regenerative heroic ideal also recognises nature's cyclical timeline in the form of the birth and death of the hero (birth in this context means his education and development as a hero); as death triumphs over man's linear actions, nature's cyclical timeline clearly triumphs over man's linear timeline (cf. Koppes, 35). As the regenerative ideal emphasises man's unique actions, its plot typically has the pattern of a journey. The linear movement of the hero's journey can be presented against the background of nature's cyclical movement: the journey can be accomplished within the seasonal changes of a year or another time span, and the seasons can have a direct influence on its linear action (cf. Koppes, 36). "The difference between literary works on the georgic

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[53] According to Tolkien, the creation of a fictional fantasy world "is a natural human activity", based on God's creation of man in his own image: "Fantasy remains a human right: we make in our measure and in our derivative mode, because we are made: and not only made, but made in the image and likeness of a Maker" (*On F-S*, 144-45). Consequently, he terms human creation 'sub-creation' (cf. ibid).

side of the pastoral-heroic spectrum and those on the regenerative heroic side, therefore, is mainly one of emphasis, an emphasis reflected by a structure which is dominantly cyclical or linear" (Koppes, 37). While the georgic ideal usually depicts a short coherent cycle of time in which man acts, the regenerative ideal depicts a longer linear string of consecutive circles which make up the hero's life processes of second births and rebirths.
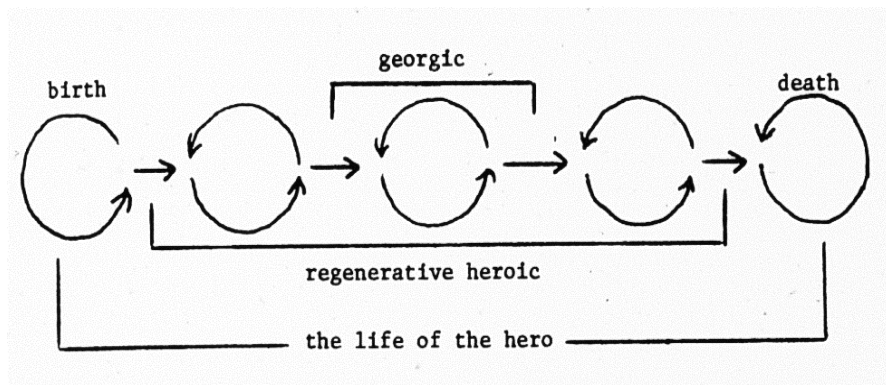
Fig. 3. The different time sections depicted in the georgic pastoral and the regenerative heroic ideals. Fig. by Phyllis Koppes, (Koppes, 38).

As they share many common features, characteristics of the georgic pastoral and the regenerative heroic can often be found within the same texts. Only the emphasis on either cyclical or linear time distinguishes the two ideals (cf. Koppes, 37).

On the opposite end of the scale from the bucolic pastoral ideal is its extreme counterpart, the degenerative heroic ideal. Its hero's egomaniac actions are aimed at subduing the natural and human other in order to gain perpetual life. Thus, while the bucolic ideal seeks to avoid being born, the degenerative ideal seeks to avoid death (cf. Koppes, 7).

> "The pastoral ideal arises from the human need to be a child in the relative safety of home - in both the bucolic and the georgic, nature is presented as man's home, his source and continuing sustenance. The heroic ideal arises from the human need to be a child in the world, to confront that world as an adversary, to be a hunter, in order to establish his individual independence and identity" (Koppes, 44).

The degenerative hero's attempt to deny the other, human and natural, is doomed for failure, as "the other will ultimately refuse to be molded to the self's purposes and will

kill the self if the self persists" (ibid). Like the bucolic ideal, the degenerative ideal does not believe in second births and rebirths. While the bucolic shepherd tries to avoid being born into the world and experiencing the work and pain of second births, the degenerative hero avoids rebirths as they remind him of his existence's dependence on nature and its final termination in death. Rejecting any idea of nature's cycle and its influence on him, the degenerative hero seeks to be completely independent and immortal. "The bucolic shepherd seeks to avoid both nature's circle and man's line; the degenerative hero asserts that man's line cancels nature's circle" (Koppes, 38). In contrast to the stasis of the bucolic shepherd and his complete unity with the other, the heroic protagonist is defined by his actions and his adversary relationship with the other. Trying to change the status quo, his actions are potentially tragic as they are susceptible to failure.

4.5.3   Pastoral and Non-Pastoral Categories in Tolkien's Work

Phyllis Koppes emphasises the advantages of fantasy literature for the presentation of the entire scale of pastoral and heroic impulses. Though her main interest lies with children's literature and the use of the fantasy genre within this category, her conclusion that fantasy literature offers an ideal frame for the portrayal of the pastoral and the heroic ideal is unconnected to questions of readers' age. Fantasy literature's depiction of a fictional world and a hero's adventurous quest render it one of the best-suited literary forms for the dramatisation of the two ideals:

> "In literary fantasy, the mythic imagination is directed toward symbolic representations of life rather than toward life itself. By portraying the pastoral and heroic ideals so frankly within a 'landscape of the mind', literary fantasy assigns these ideals to no one kind of human being or one stage in human life but rather suggests, to use and amend Tolkien's terms, that these ideals are 'desirable' and perhaps even symbolically 'possible' for all of us" (Koppes, 315-16).

The fantasy hero's development throughout his quest, which is based on several second births and deaths, is usually amply awarded at the eucatastrophic end of the plot (cf. Koppes, 306). His actions are often presented against the background of the changing seasons, thus alternating between the georgic pastoral and the regenerative heroic ideal. Koppes draws on Tolkien's *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* to exemplify the use of the two pastoral and the two heroic ideals within works of fantasy. Altogether, *The*

Hobbit and *The Lord of the Rings* are very good examples of the combined use of all the pastoral and heroic ideals within the same work of fiction, as the entire pastoral-heroic spectrum is represented within each of these two works (cf. Koppes, 328).

In this thesis, Koppes' two pastoral categories, bucolic and georgic pastoral, as well as her degenerative heroic category will be used to offer a much more detailed analysis of the pastoral and its counterpart, the non-pastoral, in *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit* than the one offered by her. They will serve to show that both works contain a number of bucolic and georgic realms and creatures, whose pastorality occupies a central place within Tolkien's mythology[54]. Koppes' definition of the degenerative heroic will serve to analyse the non-pastoral within Tolkien's works, as degenerative heroes are clearly juxtaposed in opposition to pastoral characters. However, Koppes restriction of the non-pastoral in Tolkien's work to the degenerative heroic does not take account of another group of non-pastoral characters, which is why the author of this thesis proposes to distinguish between two non-pastoral categories, which will be termed the antipastoral[55] and the unpastoral. The unpastoral is introduced as a new category, while the antipastoral is deemed a more fitting term for Phyllis Koppes' degenerative heroic category. Thus, antipastoral characters strive for absolute power and wish to subject every creature to their tyrannical will. Consequently, their suffocating influence is wholly destructive, which renders their environments barren and lifeless, while their subjects have the status of slaves. Characters of this category can be called *anti*pastoral, as they consciously and actively aim at the complete destruction of all pastoral creatures and landscapes. Their hatred of the pastoral is based on pastorality's emphasis on personal freedom, which runs contrary to their tyrannical ideology. In contrast to the antipastoral, unpastoral characters do not have a will to dominate and gain tyrannical power. They are creatures who once were pastoral, but who have been

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[54] The regenerative heroic category will not be of much importance in this analysis, as it does not offer much insight into either the pastoral or its opposite. Though regenerative heroic characters in Tolkien's mythology (for example, Aragorn, Gandalf, Faramir) are often closely tied to the pastoral, as they are supportive of the pastoral creatures, they are mainly distinguished by their heroic values as well as actions and are neither pastoral nor non-pastoral themselves.

[55] In this thesis, the term 'antipastoral' is not defined in analogy to its use in critical works so far. There, it refers to writing that consciously criticises pastoral representations by offering realistic and unidealised depictions. Antipastorals, in the general use of the term, seek to demystify traditional pastoral concepts such as Eden or Arcadia and challenge literary constructs (cf. Gifford 2012, 18-19).

corrupted and perverted by the evil influence of antipastoral agents, which have entered and changed their once pastoral world. Their unpastorality is expressed in their evil will towards others, and a generally hostile, dangerous, and treacherous character. Similar to antipastoral characters, unpastoral creatures are self-involved in their actions and thoughts, i.e. they mainly attend to their own interests and needs, not heeding the effects this might have on others. However, they are distinguished from antipastoral rulers by their disinterest in their role within the greater context and in exerting influence over others.

The following second part of this thesis will offer a detailed text-based analysis of the pastoral peoples and their environments in Tolkien's mythology. Though Koppes presents detailed definitions of the pastoral and the heroic categories, her analysis of Tolkien's work is rather short and superficial. Furthermore, her focus lies on the use of the heroic ideals, rather than on the pastoral. Consequently, Koppes' study of the bucolic and the georgic pastoral in *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit* is reduced to two short paragraphs in which she vaguely enumerates the elves' and the hobbits' pastoral qualities (cf. Koppes, 337-38). The following analysis will therefore fill the gap in current research and offer a detailed analysis of the bucolic and the georgic pastoral in Tolkien's works. It will be based on Koppes' definitions of the two pastoral ideals and will further extend them by pointing out characteristics of the bucolic and the georgic which are specific to Tolkien's texts. It will further show that there are two non-pastoral categories, the antipastoral and the unpastoral, which stand opposed to the pastoral ideals. After the analysis of the use of the pastoral mode in *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit*, it will be shown that nostalgia plays an important role within pastoral societies and that it is expressive of a strong utopian impulse. It will thus be argued that nostalgia is a strongly motivating force in the pastoral struggle for survival in Middle-earth, as it constitutes the strongest source of hope. To add more depth to the analysis and to highlight the importance of the pastoral and its nostalgia within Tolkien's work, its counterparts, the antipastoral and the unpastoral, will also receive due attention. It will be shown that the non-pastoral descriptions express dystopian impulses and that unpastoral creatures experience only very weak forms of nostalgia, if any, while antipastoral characters are completely free of nostalgic feeling.

Part Three:
❦ Analysis ❧

5 Introduction: Analysis of the Pastoral Mode, Nostalgia, and the Utopian Impulse in *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit*

The central focus in the second part of this thesis will lie on the pastoral peoples and places in *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit*. The following analysis will show in which ways Tolkien's epics draw their central motifs and themes from the pastoral tradition. In order to do justice to the great variety in which pastoral images and attitudes appear, a catalogue of questions proposed by Andrew Ettin will be taken as a basis for the analysis, as it covers a broad spectrum of important aspects. Thus, it will be attempted to establish "in what respects the material is pastoral, which of the possible pastoral elements it uses, and how it qualifies or characterizes them, what the structural use of the pastoral material is, [and] how close to the surface are the evocations of pastoral traditions and feelings" (Ettin, 56). Following the analysis of the pastoral creatures, this thesis will take account of the non-pastoral peoples and landscapes within the works, as they are presented in direct opposition to their pastoral counterparts. Including the non-pastoral into this analysis is necessary in order to do justice to the bipolarity which is constitutive of the pastoral. As both aspects, pastoral and non-pastoral depictions, are necessary to create the pastoral form, both have to be accounted for in this analysis. As Nancy Lindheim argues, the pastoral has to be defined "as a binary form: the whole bipolar poem is pastoral and not merely one part of it. Alternatives – often alternative visions – are the materials through which pastoral creates itself" (Lindheim, 140).

In a consecutive part, special emphasis will be placed on the expression of nostalgia within the pastoral scenes, its significance, meaning, and implications. As shown in the theoretical part of this thesis, pastoral art is inseparably tied to both extratextual as well as intratextual nostalgia. With regard to this work, only intratextual nostalgia, i.e. the nostalgia of the characters as well as the cyclical plot structure of some of their movements, will be of interest, as an analysis of extratextual matters would push the boundaries of this thesis. Subsequently, an attempt will be made to detect a utopian impulse in the use of the pastoral and nostalgia within Tolkien's two works. As shown in the first part of this thesis, nostalgia and the pastoral are strong forms of expression of

desire for a better life within an improved environment. Conversely, it will be shown that the use of non-pastoral landscapes and characters serves to express a dystopian vision, which stands in direct opposition to utopian pastoral desire. As argued in the theoretical part of this thesis, both visions, utopian and dystopian, complement each other as they stem from individual and collective anxieties and concerns and are thus manifestations of emotions pervading a society. As a detailed analysis of the reference of the political, social, and ecological criticism thus expressed in *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* to real-world issues would transcend the boundaries of this thesis, emphasis will be placed on elucidating the following questions: which forms of society and coexistence are presented as favourable and unfavourable through Tolkien's use of the pastoral, nostalgia, and the non-pastoral? Which attitudes towards the environment, fellow men, and other creatures are propounded as desirable/ undesirable? Which moral and ethical values are tied to this vision?

The following analysis will make use of the four pastoral and non-pastoral categories introduced and outlined in the preceding chapter 4.5.3. In summary, these categories were defined as follows:

	Bucolic Pastoral	Georgic Pastoral	Antipastoral (Degenerative Heroic)	Unpastoral
Characters' relationship to nature	unity with nature: • nature provides in bounty • passivity	reciprocal unity between characters and nature: • farming • active cooperation	fight against nature: • nature as enemy	lost unity: • estranged and hostile nature and creature
Time	• timelessness • stasis	• positive change • seasonal cycle • rebirths	rejection of time and change: • attempted stasis	negative change: • degeneration and loss
Social relations	self-absorption	community, family	egomania	self-absorption

Table 1: The different types of pastoral (partly based on Phyllis Koppes *The Child in Pastoral Myth*)

An important prerequisite for the recognition of pastoral and non-pastoral occurrences within the texts is the combination of people and landscapes that are distinctly interconnected. As the pastoral is always a depiction of men within their environment and of men and nature's reciprocal influence, only those creatures can be classified as pastoral or non-pastoral that are depicted within their personal, natural environment. Consequently, a character like Gandalf, who does not have a fixed abode and is thus unconnected to a specific environment, cannot be called pastoral in spite of his efforts for the preservation and protection of Middle-earth's pastoral peoples. On the other hand, forests like Fangorn, Mirkwood, and the Old Forest can be counted as unpastoral due to the anthropomorphisation of their trees, which render these forests inseparable fusions of creature and nature. A special case is found in Tolkien's men: though they are explicitly tied to their respective environments, they form a class of their own and can neither be classified as clearly pastoral nor non-pastoral. However, the history of the Númenoreans shows men's capability to be pastoral, though only for a while. As remnants of these men's lost pastorality can be found within *The Lord of the Rings*, chapter 6.3 of the following first part of this analysis will offer an examination of men's role in Tolkien's mythology and the consequences it has for their relation to the pastoral and the non-pastoral.

6 Golden Woodlands and Lush Fields - The Pastoral Mode in *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit*

6.1 Pastoral Creatures and Their Realms in *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit*

6.1.1 The Bucolic Pastoral

6.1.1.1 Elves

Of all landscapes and peoples in Middle-earth, the elves and their environments are most significantly depicted through the use of traditional pastoral elements and motifs. Elves are tied to the world by their immortality, which is why they are inseparably connected to their natural dwelling places and landscapes. Forced to endure in the world until its very end and uncertain of their fate after its final demise (cf. *Sil*, 36), the elves are focused on nature's life force, to which they are bound (cf. Campbell, 187). As Sam puts it: "Now these folk aren't wanderers or homeless […]: they seem to belong here, more even than Hobbits do in the Shire. Whether they've made the land, or the land's made them, it's hard to say […]" (*LotR*, 469). The elves' harmonious unity with their natural space blurs the boundaries between culture and nature: elvish culture is natural in the true sense of the word as it incorporates natural space. Through the elves' close relationship with it, which enables them to converse with plants and animals, nature is established as 'other', a partner whom the elves respect and whose needs they integrate into their cultural activities (cf. *Letters*, 236). Thus, elvish space and culture are inseparably entwined and fundamental to elvish identity. The connection is of such strength that the ghost of elvish presence still lingers in spaces they have long abandoned. In Gandalf's words, "[m]uch evil must befall a country before it wholly forgets the Elves, if once they dwelt there" (*LotR*, 369). This chapter will first outline general characteristics that mark all elven kinds as a highly bucolic people; subchapters will then offer in-depth analyses of the two elvish groups and their realms encountered

in *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit*: the High Elves of Lothlórien and Rivendell, and the Woodelves of Mirkwood[56].

As Tolkien emphasizes in *On Fairy-Stories*, the traditional classification of fairies (as he terms elves in this essay) as supernatural beings is erroneous, "unless super is taken merely as a superlative prefix. For it is man who is, in contrast to fairies, supernatural […]; whereas they are natural, far more natural than he is" (*On F-S*, 110). This naturalness, which is most prominently expressed in the unity of elvish culture and the natural world, clearly marks the elves as a bucolic pastoral people. Unlike men, dwarves, and non-pastoral creatures, elves do not seek dominion over Middle-earth or nature but "celebrate and eulogise both the beauty of the natural world and their own interconnected place within it" (Campbell, 187). Their interest in the world is, in Tolkien's words, "purely scientific", meaning that they seek understanding without any intent to make use of their knowledge (*Letters*, 236). This need to understand the world around them and converse with it as with an equal can be detected in many aspects of elvish culture and affects the creatures and natural objects which they maintain close relations with. Thus, they taught the ents to speak and also learned their tree-language in the First Age because, as Treebeard puts it: "They always wished to talk to everything" (*LotR*, 610). Their superior powers even enable them to animate and communicate with objects such as stones, which is why Legolas is able to hear the stones' lament in Hollin, a former dwelling place of the High Elves (cf. *LotR*, 369). Furthermore, animals gain wisdom and power through their interaction with elves. As Glorfindel tells Frodo: "[...] my horse will not let any rider fall that I command him to bear. [...] he will bear you away with a speed that even the black steeds of the enemy cannot rival" (*LotR*, 275). This elvish ability to converse with plants, objects, and animals emphasises the

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[56] Initially created as one people, the elves split into different groups in the First Age. The separation was effected by some elves' decision to move to Valinor; they are called the Eldar. The other group, who remained in Middle-earth, are known as the Avari. As not all of the Eldar reached Valinor, their group was split again into sub-groups, of which the most important is that of the Calaquendi, the elves who reached Valinor and lived there under the light of the Two Trees. They are also known as the High Elves. Those elves who never saw the light of the Two Trees as they never left Middle-earth are called the Moriquendi (cf. *Sil*, 49-51). The elves of Lothlórien and Rivendell belong to the group of High Elves, while the Mirkwood elves are Moriquendi.

elves' privileged unity with all of creation – a unity otherwise only found in highly pastoral tales such as the biblical Eden story or the Golden Age myth.

One of their primary characteristics is the elves' artistic and aesthetic interest in the world, which is most strongly expressed in their own beauty, that of their natural spaces, and of their products. This aesthetic quality of their appearance and interaction with nature is god-given, for elves were created by Illuvatar as "the fairest of all earthly creatures", who "shall conceive and bring forth more beauty than all my [Illuvatar's; *author's note*] Children" (*Sil*, 35). Being deeply perceptive of the nature and aesthetic quality of everything around them, the elves are capable of fashioning ideal products by endowing them with the highest qualities observable in nature. Thus, the elves for example explain their cloaks' natural hues and ideal properties as follows: "Leaf and branch, water and stone: they [the cloaks; *author's note*] have the hue and beauty of all these things [...] that we love; for we put the thought of all that we love into all that we make" (*LotR*, 482). As the elves' creative powers are superior to those of other creatures, their products appear magical to others. For example, their cloaks are capable of keeping their wearers warm or cool according to need, a small piece of their lembas bread suffices to nourish a grown man for an entire day, and their boats are unsinkable. As Tolkien points out in a letter to Milton Waldman, elvish "'magic' is Art, delivered from many of its human limitations: more effortless, more quick, more complete (product and vision in unflawed correspondence). And its object is Art not Power, sub-creation not domination and tyrannous re-forming of Creation" (*Letters*, 146). Due to their ideal interaction with nature and aesthetic abilities, the elves succeed in capturing creation's perfection and beauty in their sub-creative art. As this, to them, is a god-given ability and therefore not obtained through any conscious means, they do not understand the concept of what other creatures term 'magic'[57]. Christian Kölzer draws on Plato's doctrine of forms to explain the ideality of elvish products:

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[57] On being asked whether their cloaks are magical, one of the elves replies: "I do not know what you mean by that. […] They are Elvish robes certainly, if that is what you mean" (*LotR*, 482).

> "Aufgrund ihrer innigen, unmittelbaren Beziehung zur Schöpfung der Götter selbst, deren Erstgeborene sie sind, leben und wirken die Elben in Tolkiens Sekundärwelt in vollkommenem Einklang mit dieser Schöpfung, also auf einer Seinsstufe, die mit der Idee des Seins nahezu identisch ist. Deshalb sind auch ihre Erzeugnisse ideal und verkörpern nicht ungenügende Erscheinungen der Ideen von den Dingen, sondern die Ideen dieser Dinge selbst. So ist also ein elbischer Mantel der Inbegriff eines Mantels, ein elbisches Boot das Ideal eines Bootes" (Kölzer, 131).

The elves' artistic ability does not only find expression in their crafts but also in their poetry, tales, and music. Their focus on the creation and performance of these emphasizes their apparent detachment from pragmatic questions of every-day life, such as agriculture, trade, or logistics. Indeed, Tolkien's works mainly remain silent as to the sources of elvish food or details of their work[58]. The overall impression is that the elves' main occupations are arts and crafts, which are done voluntarily as a means of self-expression and satisfaction of the need for artistic creation. This locates the elves clearly within the bucolic pastoral tradition, as it implies that no effort and work is necessary in the elvish realms to obtain life's essentials, especially food. Instead, the elves seem to receive nourishments automatically through nature's generous bounty. As Dickerson and Evans point out, a faint hint that elvish food is not grown agriculturally can be found in *The Lord of the Rings* when the travelling hobbits chance upon High Elves in the Shire and are allowed to partake of their feast (cf. Dickerson and Evans, 97). The food is described from the hobbits' perspective as surpassing ordinary food: "[…] there was bread, surpassing the savour of a fair white loaf to one who is starving; the fruits sweet as wildberries and **richer than the tended fruits of gardens**; […] a fragrant draught, cool as a clear fountain, golden as a summer afternoon" (*LotR,* 107-08; *author's emphasis*). The reference to agriculturally produced fruits and to their difference from elvish ones, as well as the emphasis of the elvish food's unusually high quality faintly suggest that it is not obtained in ways known to the agrarian hobbits. Altogether, an impression is evoked of the elves' carefree existence in complete harmony with the natural world, which satisfies all their basic needs. With regard to the Woodelves of Mirkwood, however, *The Hobbit* offers additional information which reveals that these elves receive their wine and other goods in barrels that are sent "from

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[58] This has also been pointed out by other critics: cf. Dickerson and Evans, 95; Honegger, 322.

far away, from their kinsfolk in the South, or from the vineyards of Men in distant lands" (*Hobbit*, 165). The logistics of this trade are depicted in some detail as Bilbo and his companions use the barrels and the means of their transportation by water for their escape from the Woodelves' cave. However, no information is offered as to how the Woodelves' 'kinsfolk in the South' obtain the food and goods they send to Mirkwood. Altogether, it is said that the Woodelves do not "bother much with trade or with tilling the earth" (*Hobbit,* 157). This confirms the elves' bucolic passivity with regard to their food provisions.

Though elvish culture, abilities, and attitudes are presented as ideal and superior to all other earthly creatures, the elves are not free from fault. They are a fallen and exiled people since the Noldor's[59] rebellion against the Valar[60] and are not immune to conceit, pride, or greed. This is exemplified by Fëanor's forging of the Silmarills in the First Age or the High Elves' forging of the Rings of Power in the Second Age. Unlike the bucolic shepherds of classical pastorals, the elves cannot ignore the events that threaten Middle-earth; their bucolic realms are too much part of the earth's fate. Therefore, the elves lack the Arcadian shepherds' naivety and childlike unconcern. Having been forced to endure throughout all the Ages and witness the perpetual war between good and evil, the elves have deep knowledge of the world's history. Their repeated active involvement in the wars against evil has turned them into seasoned warriors and their kings and queens into important political leaders. However, at the time of the narrative, the elves have retreated into their pastoral realms and their final departure from Middle-earth is imminent. As the following analysis will show, the elves' doom is partly brought about by their pathological nostalgia, which induces them to fight change in order to heal the earth's wounds and prevent its slow progress towards final destruction. Their realms, where their power is strongest and most effective, therefore present bucolic pockets in which time has been arrested. Nevertheless, their endeavours are

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[59] A group of the High Elves, Galadriel among them, who dwelt in Valinor. Falling prey to Melkor's treacherous lies, the Noldor turned against the angelic Valar (see following footnote) and left Valinor after a bloody battle against their own kin. Consequently, they were exiled from Valinor and cursed by the Valar (cf. *Sil*, 92-95).

[60] Valar are angelic powers by whose music the world was created. For a more detailed account of the Noldor's history in Valinor and the effects of their exile in Middle-earth in terms of nostalgia proneness see chapter 7.1.1 of this thesis.

doomed to fail as progress is an integral feature of Middle-earth and therefore unavoidable. The following analysis of Lothlórien's, Rivendell's, and Mirkwood's bucolic qualities will show that the elvish realms in Middle-earth differ in their degrees of pastorality and therefore contain bucolic elements and motifs to varying extent.

6.1.1.1.1 "The Woodland Under Leaves of Gold"[61]: Lothlórien

Of all the realms in Middle-earth, Lothlórien is the most bucolic. Inhabited by the Noldor, an elvish group that lived in Valinor in the First Age and was exiled to Middle-earth after its rebellion against the Valar, Galadriel's realm offers the best possible impression of Valinorean life and nature in Middle-earth. As Valinor represents the most ideal and pastoral location in Tolkien's world Eä, its Middle-earthen copy, Lothlórien, is also characterised by a very high degree of bucolic pastorality. The High Elves are strongly characterised by the wisdom and craftsmanship they learned from the Valar, which renders their culture highly sophisticated and in close contact with divine nature. This is made evident in Lothlórien's pastoral, sylvan landscape, in which nature and elvish culture exist in complete harmony. To the hobbits, Lothlórien offers insight into the otherwise lost ideality of original creation. Their stay with the elves deepens their understanding of the natural world as well as of themselves. Being subjected to Galadriel's powers, with which she tests their steadiness and character, the members of the fellowship have to face their deepest hopes and fears. Furthermore, Sam and Frodo gain new perspectives when they see visions of "things that were, and things that are, and things that yet may be" in Galadriel's mirror, among them the return of Gandalf as White Wizard and the Scouring of the Shire (*LotR*, 471). His conversation with Galadriel further teaches Frodo what it means to be a ring bearer and what the consequences of his victory or failure will be to the elves and the rest of Middle-earth. This new knowledge and Galadriel's refusal to take the Ring deepen Frodo's realisation that the Ring's destruction cannot be effected by anybody but himself. Consequently, after this point in the narrative, he does not again offer it to anybody else but fully embraces his destiny.

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[61] *LotR*, 453.

The fellowship reach Lothlórien after their traumatic ordeal in Moria. Gandalf's unexpected death in his battle with the Balrog has left them bereaved and filled with grief. It is further endangering their quest, as Gandalf's wisdom and leadership had offered them important guidance in difficult and dangerous situations. As Galadriel points out during her first encounter with the travellers: "[...] your Quest stands upon the edge of a knife. Stray but a little and it will fail, to the ruin of all" (*LotR*, 464). Consequently, Lothlórien's appearance at this point in the narrative awards it great significance for the further run of events. Its bucolic pastorality offers the necessary peace and quiet for the healing of the company and the strengthening of their wills to further pursue their quest. Its recuperative powers become apparent as soon as the fellowship reach its borders. The river Nimrodel proves to have a healing effect, so that Frodo feels "that the stain of travel and all weariness were washed from his limbs" (*LotR,* 441) [62]. The musical sound of its cold water promises rest and forgetfulness in sleep (cf. ibid). Altogether, the river's depiction evokes an image of ideality, for it unites qualities such as cleanliness, a pleasant sound, and freshness. Lórien's ideal nature becomes even more apparent the further the fellowship advance into the woods. Upon entering its centre, the Naith of Lórien, Cerin Amroth, Frodo perceives a world long lost:

> "A light was upon it for which his language had no name. All that he saw was shapely, but the shapes seemed at once clear cut, as if they had been first conceived and drawn at the uncovering of his eyes, and ancient as if they had endured forever. He saw no colour but those he knew, gold and white and blue and green, but they were fresh and poignant, as if he had at that moment first perceived them. [...] No blemish or sickness or deformity could be seen in anything that grew upon the earth. On the land of Lórien there was no stain" (*LotR*, 456).

Having entered the elvish city with bound eyes, Frodo's perception is sharpened and the effects of Lothlórien's bucolic setting on him are enhanced. As Chris Brawley points out, Frodo's experience is akin to recovery, one of the functions Tolkien awards to fantasy texts[63]: "[...] this is the world not as it *is*, but as it was *meant* to be seen; it is a recovery of the sacramental vision" (Brawley, 299). Untainted by history and change,

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[62] Later in the narrative, Lothlórien's healing powers are emphasised again, as it is said that the fellowship are "healed of hurt and weariness of body" during their stay (*LotR*, 467).
[63] For a detailed account of Tolkien's theory of recovery see chapter 4.5.1 of this thesis.

the light and colours of Lothlórien are those of the world's first days, when creation was still young and unblemished. This becomes even more apparent when Frodo climbs up to a platform, from which he has an all-encompassing view of the elvish realm. Perceiving its capital city, Caras Galadhon, in the distance and the power and light coming out of it, his gaze is turned towards the eastern countries outside Lórien's borders: "[..] and all the light went out and he was back again in the world he knew. Beyond the river the land appeared flat and empty, formless and vague, until far away it rose again like a wall, dark and drear" (*LotR*, 458). Lothlórien's bucolic pastorality clearly sets it apart from the rest of Middle-earth, which has been subjected to change and degenerative progress.

Lothlórien represents unblemished nature associated with an initial pre-lapsarian state, which is clearly demonstrated by its flora, for its woods are remnants of the Elder Days, when great forests stretched across Middle-earth (cf. *Tales*, 245). Its preservation of the Elder Days' flora and fauna lends Lothlórien a timeless quality as progress and change have been prevented, which is a strong mark of the realm's bucolic pastorality. Upon entering the Naith, Frodo feels "that he had stepped over a bridge of time into a corner of the Elder Days, and was now walking in a world that was no more" (*LotR*, 454). Later, he perceives "that he was in a timeless land that did not fade or change or fall into forgetfulness. [...] Frodo stood still, hearing far off great seas upon beaches that had long ago been washed away, and sea-birds crying whose race had perished from the earth" (*LotR*, 457). A direct connection to the paradisiacal realms of Eressëa[64] and the fallen Númenor[65] is made by the great number of Mallorn trees that tinge the woods with gold[66], thus indicating Lothlórien's close relation with the flora of the Blessed West. The repeated emphasis of the golden colour of the Mallorns' leaves evokes associations with the Golden Age myth and man's blissful bucolic state therein. In the depiction of Lothlórien, this association is further heightened by the high frequency in

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[64] The elves' island in the Blessed West, which is situated next to Valinor.
[65] The lost island of men in the vicinity to Eressëa. For a short account of its fall and men's loss of pastorality, see chapter 6.3 in this thesis.
[66] The Mallorn trees' seeds came from the pastoral island Númenor and were brought to Lothlórien by Galadriel (cf. *Tales*, 456).

which the colour term 'gold' appears, so that it becomes a leitmotif[67]. Besides supporting an association of Lórien with the Golden Age state, the frequent use of the colour term 'gold' emphasises the realm's close connection with Valinor[68]. Before it is blemished by Melkor's evil, Valinor's pastoral perfection is most strongly expressed by its Two Trees, which represent the epitome of ideal nature and form the centre of the Valar's life. One of the trees has dark green leaves, whose underside is silver and which shed a silver light. The other has gold rimmed leaves of light green "like the new-opened beech" and sheds a golden light (*Sil*, 31). Lothlórien's Mallorns' golden leaves and their likeness to beech trees therefore connect them to Valinor's golden tree Laurelin – a connection further emphasised by Lórien's original name, **Laurelin**dórenan (cf. *LotR*, 608). Consequently, Lothlórien represents the earthly version of Valinor and therefore the highest possible state of pastorality in Middle-earth. This is also shown by its weather, which is reminiscent of the perpetual spring of Renaissance pastorals, as even winter feels "as if it were early spring", with perpetual sunshine and "a gentle rain that fell at times, and passed away leaving all things fresh and clean" (*LotR*, 466). Consequently, Lórien's flowers are in full bloom even in winter, and the evergreen Mallorn leaves form a golden roof all throughout the year.

The Galadhrim's[69] unity with their natural environment becomes most apparent in their architecture, which incorporates the elves' constructions into the natural landscape. Unlike any other elves, the Galadhrim dwell in the tops of their trees, into which they have integrated wooden platforms. These flets are roofless and have no walls or railings, so that the elves are always in touch with their natural environment and move within it as an integral part. The ideal unity between the elves and nature recalls man's blissful state in Eden or the Golden Age and affords Lothlórien's visitors new insights.

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[67] The fellowship first perceive the woods as "a golden haze" in the distance (*LotR*, 435); its original name was Laurelindórenan, "Land of the Valley of Singing Gold" (*LotR*, 608); the High Elves' hair gleams like gold (cf. *LotR*, 451, 461); golden flowers bedeck the Naith's green hill (cf. *LotR*, 456); golden lights hang in the branches of the city Caras Galadhon (cf. *LotR*, 459), to name the most prominent examples.

[68] The connection of gold and silver with Valinor and the elvish realms has also been pointed out by Dickerson and Evans. They conclude that "[...] it draws on an aesthetic system running through the whole of the Middle-earth canon, one that connects trees, green leaves, and the beauty of the environment with Elves and golden and silver light" (Dickerson and Evans, 110).

[69] Name of the High Elves of Lothlórien, meaning 'tree-people' (cf. *LotR*, 444).

Touching a Mallorn tree's trunk, Frodo suddenly perceives its texture and aliveness with hitherto unknown sharpness. This causes him to experience "a delight in wood and the touch of it, neither as forester nor as carpenter; it was the delight of the living tree itself" (*LotR*, 457). In this instance, Frodo comes to know the elvish perception of plants as living creatures in their own right, which deserve admiration and care without consideration of their utility as a resource. Lothlórien, like the Arcadia of classical pastorals, functions as a mediator between nature and culture. Its elves' lifestyle successfully unites natural space with highly sophisticated culture, which is best shown in their tree city, Caras Galadhon. Though it features architecture typical of a (medieval) city, like a fosse, a city wall, and city gates, it is embedded into the natural landscape with such perfection that it serves to enhance the scenery's natural beauty. Altogether, Caras Galadhon is most strongly defined by its impressive trees. Its skyline is shaped by gigantic Mallorns, which "stood up in the twilight like living towers" (*LotR*, 459). As there are no other constructions besides flets, the High Elves' lifestyle is a communal one, for private space can hardly be obtained on the open platforms and does not seem to be desired. Only Galadriel and Celeborn's house, which is situated in the lofty canopy of an immense Mallorn tree in Caras Galadhon, offers the king and queen private space and thus sets them apart from their people. The openness of the elves' living space enables a constant stream of communication among them, which is why the city reverberates with the sound of voices and "of singing falling from the high like soft rain upon leaves" (*LotR*, 460). The communality of the elves' lifestyle and their proneness to musical expression associates them with classical pastorals such as these of Virgil, which depict their shepherds amidst their companions, with whom they share poems and songs. Like the Arcadian shepherds, the elves are not disturbed in their communal bliss by tensions or conflict. As Sam observes: "It's wonderfully quiet here. Nothing seems to be going on, and nobody seems to want it to" (*LotR*, 469). This intended uneventfulness is necessary to maintain Lothlórien's static pastorality as tensions and incidents might induce unwelcome change.

Though Lothlórien's bucolic pastorality has been successfully preserved by the elves until the time of the narrative, it is under acute threat from the processes in the outside world. As will be outlined in detail with regard to the elves' nostalgia further down, the preservation of Lothlórien's timelessness is motivated by the High Elves' extreme

nostalgia for the Valinorean West and the Elder Days. It is entirely dependent on Galadriel's possession of her Ring of Power, with which she has fought change and progress successfully. At the time of the narrative, Lothlórien's doom is certain, as the High Elves are leaving Middle-earth to return to Valinor, and Frodo's quest will either be successful and effect the destruction of the Rings of Power, or it will fail and Sauron will regain control of the Rings. The slow decline of Lórien's bucolic bliss is detectable in a number of small things. The elvish realm is completely cut off from the outside world and there are no connections between the High Elves and the other free peoples of Middle-earth. As Haldir tells the fellowship, his kind "dwell now in the heart of the forest, and do not willingly have dealings with any other folk. Even our own folk in the North are sundered from us" (*LotR*, 446). The Galadhrim's complete retreat has been effected by their wish to remain untouched by the degenerative processes threatening the peoples of Middle-earth. This self-absorption is typical of the bucolic pastoral. Its consequences are rumours spread among the other peoples of Middle-earth of the elves' treacherous magic and hostility. Their isolation emphasises Lothlórien's fragility, which also becomes visible to the fellowship, for they perceive Galadriel and her realm as "present and yet remote, a living vision of that which has already been left far behind by the flowing streams of Time" (*LotR*, 486). That Lothlórien's peaceful pastorality was never safe from outside events can be inferred from the elves' architecture. Tolkien's fragmentary writings reveal that flets were originally intended to be outlooks for patrols and refuges in the case of an attack (cf. *Tales*, 245). Caras Galadhon, in which flets are most common, was initially a fortress (cf. *Tales*, 246). Therefore, their use as permanent abodes is unique to Lothlórien and developed due to its wealth in trees and lack of building materials other than wood (cf. *Tales*, 245). The association of flets with war and invasion adds an entirely new aspect to Lothlórien's architecture and turns the platforms into symbols not only of a pastoral and communal lifestyle, but also of the permanent threat under which the bucolic stands.

6.1.1.1.2 "The Last Homely House"[70]: Rivendell

Like Lothlórien, Rivendell gives the impression of an ideal world that is untouched and unharmed by evil. However, its pastorality is slightly less bucolic than that of the Golden Wood as Elrond's realm is described in terms more alike to the rest of Middle-earth. Unlike Lothlórien, which is mainly characterised by its bucolic nature and the elves' natural lifestyle, Rivendell is most strongly associated with Elrond's house and is defined as a place of sophisticated cultural activity. The differences between Rivendell and Lothlórien can be accounted for by its rulers' different experiences in history: though they are both High Elves and belong to the family of the Noldor, Elrond and Galadriel are of different generations and only Galadriel had personal experience of Valinor's bliss. Elrond, being born in Middle-earth after his ancestors' exit from Valinor, never laid eyes on the Valar's realm. Consequently, his own realm reflects a mixture of typical features of Middle-earth together with Valinorean qualities which have become deeply engrained in his people's culture. Rivendell's bucolic qualities appear in the shape of its natural beauty, the elves' carefree existence in harmony with their natural surroundings, and their continual performance of songs and poetry. Elrond is described as "a master of healing" and an important source of wisdom and counsel in questions of world politics (*LotR*, 288). His ongoing involvement in important historical events has prevented Rivendell's complete withdrawal from the world, which is why its elvish society lacks the high degree of self-absorption that defines Lothlórien's elves.

Perhaps most remarkable is Rivendell's repeated denomination as "the Last Homely House" (*Hobbit*, 49). In contrast to the depiction of Lothlórien as woods and nature, Rivendell is thus most strongly associated with a building that offers shelter from the wilderness. Accordingly, during the Rivendell episodes in *The Hobbit* as well as *The Lord of the Rings*, the focus lies on Elrond's domicile and hardly stretches beyond its adjoining gardens. This draws a different image of nature's and culture's unity than in Lothlórien, for the elves' architectural influence on the natural space is much more obvious in Rivendell. The house's gardens feature cultivated nature in the shape of fountains, trees, bushes, and flowers and are separated from the valley's natural

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[70] *Hobbit*, 49.

landscape. Altogether, Rivendell's natural spaces play a marginal role in the narrative and mainly function as a bucolic backdrop to the events. They offer the tranquillity and beauty necessary for the healing of the weary and injured travellers as well as the peace and quiet for their contemplation of their further quest. In the centre of the elves' daily life are cultural activities, such as the composition and presentation of songs and poems, feasting, silent contemplation, or the production of ornate objects. As *The Hobbit*'s narrator summarily states: "[Elrond's] house was perfect, whether you liked food, or sleep, or work, or story-telling, or singing, or just sitting and thinking best, or a pleasant mixture of them all" (*Hobbit*, 50). By this a picture of a highly sophisticated, courtly society is drawn, whose leisurely focus on artistic creation and unconcern with pragmatic questions of everyday life mark them as strongly bucolic. Offering room for all their diverse activities, Elrond's house is a spacious building with bedrooms, halls, and passages. The depiction evokes images of a palace or castle and is thus consistent with the elves' courtly lifestyle. The impression is moreover supported by the vast gardens surrounding the house, whose peace and quiet offer further space for the elves' leisurely activities. Nevertheless, Rivendell's elvish architecture, like that of the Galadhrim in Lothlórien, is not only expressive of their pastoral lifestyle, but also of their involvement in the ongoing battle against evil. Initially founded in the Second Age as a refuge and fortress against Sauron's attacks, Elrond's realm still serves as a stronghold against the upheavals in the outside world at the time of the narrative (cf. *Tales*, 238; *Sil*, 345). Rivendell's situation within a deep hidden valley and its house's solid walls are indicative of this.

Because of its serene natural beauty and the elves' close connection with the land, Rivendell is characterised as bucolic. Its location, which is best described in *The Hobbit*, emphasises its pastoral qualities, as they appear in direct contrast to the hostile and treacherous landscapes surrounding the valley. Having faced danger on their road, Bilbo's company experience the sound of running water, the scent of pine trees, and the warm summer air in Rivendell's valley as soothing and cheering. The elves that greet them in song are sitting in trees, thus indicating their unity with their natural surroundings. Rivendell's trees are ordinary ones which are also common outside the elvish realm – pine trees, beeches, and oaks (cf. *Hobbit*, 46). In contrast to Lothlórien, Rivendell's flora does not differ from the rest of Middle-earth and is not associated with

that of Valinor, although its High Elven inhabitants are related to the group of elves who once dwelt in the Blessed Realm[71]. Only the appearance of beeches and the occasional use of the colour term 'silver'[72] weakly associate Rivendell with the Blessed Realm, for beech trees are similar in shape to Mallorn trees, and silver is the colour of one of the Two Trees of Valinor, Telperion. The colour term is further commemorative of the Silver Age, which follows the highly pastoral Golden Age in Hesiod's mythology[73]. However, there are no concrete similarities between the depictions of Rivendell and Hesiod's second Age. Only Rivendell's slightly less bucolic character than the one found in Lothlórien can be brought in accord with the lower degree of pastorality expressed through the Silver Age. Altogether, Rivendell's ties to the blissful Elder Days are much less pronounced than those of Lothlórien: "In Rivendell there was memory of ancient things; in Lórien the ancient things still lived on in the waking world" (*LotR*, 454-5). Rivendell's mixture of bucolic and ordinary features is best summed up by Sam: "There's something of everything here, if you understand me: the Shire and the Golden Wood and Gondor and kings' houses and inns and meadows and mountains all mixed" (*LotR*, 1292). Unlike their Lórien kin, Rivendell's inhabitants are subjected to the ordinary weather of the outside world. Therefore, autumn and winter bring about the usual changes, such as the colouring and loss of leaves, snow, cold wind, and fog (cf. *LotR*, 311, 357). However, apart from the repetitive cycle of seasonal change, "time doesn't seem to pass [in Rivendell]: it just is" (*LotR*, 301). This timelessness is another mark of Rivendell's bucolic quality. Like Lothlórien, it is protected by one of the Rings of Power, with which Elrond has been able to keep away evil and processes of degeneration. His powers are closely tied to those of Rivendell's nature, with whose help he prevents the intrusion of evil invaders, such as the Nazgul[74]. Consequently, Rivendell has the appearance of a pastoral island within the inhospitable

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[71] Besides this implicit connection between Rivendell's elves and the Blessed Realm, a more direct mark of it can be found in the elves' art, for most of their songs and poems describe their Valinorean history, as will be outlined further down with regard to elvish nostalgia.

[72] For example, Elrond wears a silver crown (cf. *LotR*, 295), Arwen wears a silver cap (cf. *LotR*, 296), there is a silver morning mist (cf. *LotR*, 311), the light fades to silver (cf. *LotR*, 357).

[73] Cf. chapter 4.2.1 of this thesis.

[74] Elrond commands the flood of the river Bruinen to prevent the Nazgul from entering his realm and capturing Frodo. As Gandalf informs Frodo, "[t]he river of this valley is under his power, and it will rise in anger when he has great need to bar the Ford" (*LotR*, 292).

wastes of the surrounding countryside. Its effects on Bilbo's company in *The Hobbit* as well as on Frodo and his friends in *The Lord of the Rings* are these of recuperation and recovery: "[...] such was the virtue of the land of Rivendell that soon all fear and anxiety was lifted from their 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 [...]" (*LotR*, 356).

Unlike Lothlórien, Elrond's house is open to travellers and serves as a meeting place for all the good peoples of Middle-earth. At the time of Rivendell's founding in the Second Age, Elrond "gathered there many Elves, and other folk of wisdom and power from among all the kindreds of Middle-earth" (*Sil*, 357). Thus, it is an integral part of Middle-earth not only in its nature and seasons but also in its political significance. Elrond's descend from men and High Elves places him in an intermediary position and might be the cause for his active interest in the world's affairs and his realm's connection with the outside world. Apart from his endeavours to preserve his realm's pastorality, he has also attempted to preserve cultural and historical knowledge in order to use them in the war against evil. Thus, the songs and poems performed in his hall are renditions of the elves' historical deeds and their involvement in the world's history. His decision to bring up and house Isildur's heirs, and thus Aragorn, so that one of them may return as king of Gondor and play the great part appointed to him, marks him as a wise leader involved in world politics (cf. *Sil*, 357). At the time of the narrative, Elrond's wisdom and knowledge offer important counsel to all the representatives of Middle-earth's free people, who come together in Rivendell to decide the Ring's fate. As Tolkien explains in a footnote in one of his letters:

> "Elrond symbolises throughout the ancient wisdom, and his House represents Lore - the preservation in reverent memory of all tradition concerning the good, wise, and beautiful. It is not a scene of *action* but of *reflection*. Thus it is a place visited on the way to all deeds, or 'adventures'. It may prove to be on the direct road (as in The Hobbit); but it may be necessary to go from there in a totally unexpected course. So necessarily in The Lord of the Rings, having escaped to Elrond from the imminent pursuit of present evil, the hero departs in a wholly new direction: to go and face it at its source" (*Letters*, 153; *emphasis in original*).

In *The Hobbit,* it is said that the company's "plans were improved with the best advice" in Rivendell, especially by Elrond's deciphering of the dwarves' moon letters, which

later ensures the company's successful entrance into Smaug's lair (*Hobbit,* 50). In *The Lord of the Rings,* Rivendell offers the peace and quiet necessary for the Council of Elrond to form and decide what to do with Sauron's Ring. For Frodo, the stop in 'The Last Homely House' provides him with the insight that the Ring's destruction is his personal task, which is a fundamental turning point in the narrative as it sets off all subsequent events.

6.1.1.1.3 "[O]ver the Edge of the Wild"[75] – Mirkwood

Unlike the High Elves of Rivendell and Lothlórien, the Woodelves of Mirkwood are Moriquendi, i.e. they belong to the group of elves who never left Middle-earth and thus never saw Valinor. They consequently lack the High Elves' wisdom and power, which is best shown in their realm's degenerate state. The Mirkwood elves have been unable to retain their forest's original pastoral qualities, which is why it has an unpastoral appearance at the time of the narrative. Altogether, the Woodelves have a rather rustic pastoral lifestyle that is much less bucolic than that of their High Elven kin. Sauron's residence in Mirkwood shortly before the time of *The Hobbit*'s narrative has increased the forest's unpastorality, which is why the Woodelves are wary of strangers. Bilbo's party consequently experience hostility and mistrust from the Mirkwood elves and are taken captive by them. This strongly distinguishes the Mirkwood episode from these of the other elvish realms, as the Woodelves' clearing and caves are mainly presented through the captives' eyes as places of danger and hopelessness. However, traces of typical elvish characteristics, such as a natural lifestyle, feasting, and singing can also be detected and mark the Woodelves as bucolic pastoral.

Mirkwood forest is presented as dark and sinister. Unlike Rivendell and Lothlórien, it has not been protected from decay and the intrusion of evil creatures, which is why it little resembles the other elvish realms. Consequently, Bilbo's company experience their journey through Mirkwood in highly negative terms, suffering from darkness, hunger, thirst, and complete disorientation. The forest's trees, like its elves, have become hostile and wary towards strangers due to the forest's invasion by evil

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[75] *Hobbit*, 130.

creatures. Thus, the trees "leaned over them and listened" while the company try to find their way through the woods (*Hobbit*, 132). Its fauna is similarly threatening, as the company encounter huge black moths and bats, mysterious eyes in the dark, and a host of angry spiders. Warned by Gandalf not to eat or drink anything found in Mirkwood, the travellers quickly run out of provisions. As will be shown further down in the analysis of the non-pastoral, its darkness, threatening and stifling atmosphere, dangerous creatures, poisonous waters, and inedible plants render the forest highly unpastoral.

Having once been a part of the Elder Days' pastoral woods, Mirkwood is an example of the degeneration of Middle-earth's flora and fauna caused by the ongoing reappearance and devastating influence of evil. Sauron's use of the forest as hiding place before his return to Mordor has increased its decline. His evil spirit has spread so that "the trees strive one against another and their branches rot and wither" (*LotR*, 458). Unable to defend Mirkwood against evil intruders, the Woodelves seem to have retreated into that part of the forest in which the elven king's caves are situated. This is indicated by the positive effects of elvish habitation on this location, such as cleaner air and more light than in the rest of the forest (cf. *Hobbit*, 138). The trees in the elvish part of Mirkwood are beeches, which implies the Woodelves connection with the other elvish realms, for beeches are also common in Rivendell, and Lórien's Mallorn trees are beech-like in shape. However, these traces of the Woodelves' wholesome influence on their natural space are faint and even in their beechen hall the wind "had a sad sound" and a carpet of dead leaves signals the forest's relentless decay (ibid). Furthermore, the elves' forest is infested with giant spiders that try to kill the travellers and against which the Woodelves constantly have to fight (cf. *Hobbit*, 158).

In contrast to their high elven kin, who are perceived in positive terms by the travelling protagonists[76], the Woodelves are antithetically presented as both menacing and good.

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[76] In *The Lord of the Rings*, the High Elves' powers inspire the travellers with awe but are not perceived as threatening. Nevertheless, it becomes apparent that they can be terrible and menacing when challenged. In Rivendell, Sam observes about elves: "Some [are] like kings, terrible and splendid; and some [are] as merry as children" (*LotR*, 294). Also, Galadriel and her people unmercifully guard their realm against intruders and are said to be dangerous (cf. *LotR*, 440). However, the overall depiction of elves in *The Lord of the Rings* is a positive one as the fellowship are received warmly into the elvish realms.

Chancing upon the elves' beechen hall, Bilbo and his companions are first cheered up by its green light and fresh air, but then perceive the wind's sound as sad and the elves' far away laughter as disquieting. This paradox reaction to the Woodelves is repeated when the company feel that the elves' singing is "beautiful, but it sounded eerie and strange, and they were not comforted, rather they hurried on from those parts with what strength they had left" (*Hobbit*, 138). Lacking the power to effectively maintain a state of isolated self-absorption typical of a bucolic people, the Woodelves have grown wary of strangers. Consequently, the travellers' journey is impeded by an enchanted stream, with which the elves attempt to prevent intruders from entering their realm. Furthermore, they cause the starving travellers' complete loss of orientation as the lights of their feast lure them deep into the wood's wilderness. In spite of the elves' hostile behaviour, the company perceive them as beautiful and magnificent. Their singing and harping, their ornate clothes, and their attractive appearance are typical elvish features; and their opulent woodland feast is expressive of their bucolic lifestyle (cf. *Hobbit*, 143-5). Their unity with the natural world finds expression in their clothes, which are in the natural colours green and brown, while their king's crown is made of flowers, berries, and leaves. The Woodelves' bucolic pastorality is further indicated by their habit of dwelling in trees or simple buildings on the ground (cf. *Hobbit*, 157). Even the elven king's caves, though functioning as a prison, are perceived in rather positive terms by Bilbo, for they "were not like those of the goblin-cities; they were smaller, less deep underground, and filled with a cleaner air" (*Hobbit*, 160). Furthermore, their captivity saves the travellers from starvation, which is why "they were actually glad to be captured" (*Hobbit*, 159). During their imprisonment, the travellers are treated with kindness by the elves and receive food and drink. Consequently, the Woodelves unintentionally help the company by giving them the opportunity to recuperate and regain strength for the continuation of their journey. In this, the wood-king's cave gains a similar function to that of the high elven realms, though in much less positive terms, as the prisoners suffer emotionally from their captivity and have to escape in order to continue their journey.

Though the Woodelves are clearly bucolic pastoral, they show a few characteristics which distinguish them from their High Elven kin. Not only is the king's dwelling place simpler than Elrond's and Galadriel's halls in Rivendell and Lothlórien, but the

Woodelves' lifestyle is more rustic than that of the High Elves. Unlike the High Elves, who are vegetarians, the Woodelves eat roasted meat during their feast and hunt in the forest (cf. *Hobbit*, 143, 161). Further information is given concerning their procurance of food, as their trade with men and other elves is described in some detail. Also, Bilbo's company detect that the Woodelves have levelled the ground and cut down trees in their clearing in order to have space and sit on the tree stumps during their feast (cf. *Hobbit*, 142). This depiction of the Woodelves' trade, hunting, and forestry departs from the characterisation of elves in *The Lord of the Rings* and is expressive of the Woodelves' low level of bucolic pastorality, as it implies that they cannot completely rely on nature's bounty to survive. Conversely, at the same time they are said not to "bother much with trade or with tilling the earth", which clearly (and contradictorily) associates them with the carefree passivity characteristic of bucolic people (*Hobbit*, 157). In *The Lord of the Rings*, the Woodelves' ferocity and rusticity is somewhat softened as they are represented by their prince, Legolas, who is depicted in terms more alike to the High Elves. His ability to communicate with nature, his knowledge of traditional elvish lore, his loyalty to his companions, and his friendship with Gimli give him the appearance of a degree of wisdom and open-mindedness lacking in his father's people during the time of *The Hobbit*'s narrative. Altogether, a number of dissimilarities can be detected between the representation of elves in *The Hobbit* and in *The Lord of the Rings*, which are due to Tolkien's continuing development of his mythology between writing the two works. As will be elucidated in chapter 7.1.3 of this thesis, the earlier work differs from the later in the some respects, including the characterisation of elves. While the one offered in *The Hobbit* draws on traditional depictions of fairies as mischievous and clever (cf. American Heritage Dictionary, '*fairy*'), the elves in *The Lord of the Rings* show more gravity, and their history and culture have gained in complexity and meaning.

6.1.1.2   Tom Bombadil and Goldberry

Within the field of Tolkien studies, Tom Bombadil (and to a lesser degree his wife Goldberry) has inspired a great amount of critical analyses which are mainly centred on answering one question: what and who is Tom Bombadil? However, despite the great number of essays dealing with Tom and Goldberry's identity, none of the critics so far have identified them as pastoral creatures, let alone bucolic ones. This chapter will show

that their function in the narrative, as well as their lifestyle and behaviour, clearly characterise Bombadil and Goldberry as bucolic pastoral. Offering the hobbit protagonists shelter, aid, and knowledge right at the beginning of their dangerous quest, Tom and his wife fulfil functions typical of all the bucolic pastoral characters in Tolkien's mythology. Their bucolic lifestyle and deep knowledge of the earth, plants, and all creatures raises the hobbits' awareness of themselves and the natural world to a new level. Only after their stay in Bombadil's home do they possess the knowledge and understanding necessary to successfully pursue their quest and save Middle-earth.

The two sources in which Bombadil appears, *The Lord of the Rings* and the much earlier poem *The Adventures of Tom Bombadil*, offer a number of hints as to his identity but do not answer the question completely. Indeed, Tolkien stated in one of his letters that "even in a mythical Age there must be some enigmas, as there always are. Tom Bombadil is one (intentionally)" (*Letters*, 174). Despite Tolkien's professed intention to leave the question of Bombadil's identity unanswered, critics have reacted to the character as to a riddle and have brought forth a broad range of answers. The majority agree that Bombadil is closely related to the earth and nature, which is why he has been identified as a nature spirit (cf. Treschow and Mark Duckworth, 190), a representative of "the harmony of nature itself" (Campbell, 80), a "concrete embodiment of the natural world" (Dickerson and Evans, 19), a personification of natural forces (cf. Kölzer, 157; Niiler, 282), and the spirit of Arda (the earth) (cf. Jensen)[77]. Attempting to identify Tom as a member of one of the familiar groups of creatures in Tolkien's mythology, many critics have argued that he is one of the Valar or a Maia (cf. Arvidsson, 49; Hargrove 1986, 22). Others have related his character to creatures of popular mythology, such as the Green Man (cf. Campbell, 92-3; Kölzer, 161). In the same strive, Goldberry has been identified as a water spirit, nymph, or naiad[78], or the Vala Yavanna[79]. Altogether, none of the many answers to the question of Tom and Goldberry's identity has been deemed completely satisfying by the critical community, and most of them have been

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[77] In his letters, Tolkien also identifies Tom as a nature spirit when he calls him "the spirit of the (vanishing) Oxford and Berkshire countryside" (*Letters*, 26).
[78] Cf. Dickerson and Evans, 20; Kölzer, 155; Taylor, 148.
[79] Cf. Arvidsson, 49; Hesser, 245; Hargrove 2000, 671.

refuted repeatedly[80]. Tolkien himself was aware of the controversy but rejected it: "I don't think Tom needs philosophizing about, and is not improved by it. [...] In historical fact I put him in because I had already 'invented' him independently [...] and wanted an 'adventure' on the way. But I kept him in, and as he was, because he represents certain things otherwise left out" (*Letters*, 192). This statement is repeated in another letter, in which Tolkien writes that "Tom Bombadil is not an important person - to the narrative. I suppose he has some importance as a 'comment'. [...] he represents something that I feel important, though I would not be prepared to analyze the feeling precisely. I would not, however, have left him in, if he did not have some kind of function" (*Letters*, 178). In the following, it will be argued that the attempt to label Bombadil and Goldberry as beings already known to the reader is based on a misunderstanding of their true nature, as they are both unique creatures and therefore unconnected to any other class of beings within Tolkien's mythology. Furthermore, they can clearly be identified as bucolic pastoral creatures, thus falling into the same category as the elves and ents.

In *The Lord of the Rings*, the question 'Who is Tom Bombadil?'[81] is repeated three times, first rhetorically by Tom himself ("Do you know who I am?"; *LotR*, 157) and then twice by Frodo. The answer Tom gives to his own question is: "I'm Tom Bombadil" (ibid). The first repetition of the question by Frodo is answered by Goldberry, who simply states "He is"[82] (*LotR*, 162). According to Tolkien, Goldberry refers to "the mystery of *names*" (*Letters*, 191; *emphasis in original*), and Bombadil echoes this reference in his counter question to Frodo's second request to know his identity: "Tell me, who are you, alone, yourself and **nameless**?" (*LotR*, 172; *author's emphasis*). Both Goldberry's and Tom's answers imply that Tom Bombadil has no true name. His assertion that he is 'Eldest' and was in Middle-earth "before the river and the trees; [...] the first raindrop and the first acorn; [...] before the Dark Lord came from

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[80] For a convincing refutation of the speculations that Bombadil and Goldberry are Valar or Maia (or indeed any other known creature of Tolkien's mythology) see Jensen.

[81] As Tolkien notes in one of his letters, only Tom and Goldberry understand the question 'Who?' correctly as a question about the name. Frodo confuses 'Who?' with 'What?', the question about someone's nature, thus feeling that the answers he receives are unsatisfactory (cf. *Letters*, 192).

[82] This induced some of the early readers to speculate that Tom might be God as this answer seems to bear some resemblance to God's self-denomination as 'I am that I am' in the Old Testament (cf. Pirson, 15; *Letters*, 187). Tolkien refuted any such idea as "too serious, besides missing the point" (*Letters*, 191).

Outside" identifies him as the oldest living creature in Middle-earth (*LotR*, 172). His answer to Frodo can only be understood in light of this. It expresses that Bombadil was the only creature in Middle-earth ('alone') before the arrival even of the Dark Lord Morgoth/Melkor at the beginning of the world[83]; his primary singularity meant that he did not exist in relation to other beings ('yourself'); and he did not receive a name as nobody was there to name him and no name is required in complete solitude ('nameless'). Indeed, the foreword to the poem *The Adventures of Tom Bombadil* reveals that the name he uses in his dealings with the hobbit company was given to him by the hobbits of Buckland and is, therefore, not his true name (cf. *Realm*, 172). In the Council of Elrond, it is confirmed that Bombadil is known to different peoples by different names (cf. *LotR*, 345). His elvish name, Iarwain Ben-adar, means "oldest and fatherless" and thus also identifies him as the oldest being in Middle-earth and without ancestry (ibid). Having been created before any other being, Tom's initial identity could not be shaped by his exchange with others but was mainly constituted by his existence. Only after the arrival of other creatures did he receive names in order to be identified by them. The answer to the question 'Who is Tom Bombadil' is therefore most fully answered by Goldberry when she replies 'He is'.

Due to his namelessness, Bombadil is only identifiable through the question 'What is Tom Bombadil?', which refers to his nature. Bombadil's own answer to this question is: "Eldest, that's what I am" (*LotR*, 172). Goldberry states that "He is the Master of wood, water, and hill" (*LotR*, 163). Bombadil's authority over other creatures becomes obvious in his dealings with Old Man Willow and the Barrow-wights. However, in spite of his superior powers he does not seek ownership or profit[84]. As Tolkien explains in one of his letters, Tom is "a particular embodying of pure (real) natural science: the spirit that desires knowledge of other things, their history and nature, because they are

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[83] Melkor entered Middle-earth before Arda (the earth) was fully shaped, i.e. during Arda's intial darkness and emptyness. The Valar then wage war against him and only introduce light and plants to Middle-earth after their victory over Melkor (cf. *Sil*, 27-8).

[84] This is most clearly expressed in Goldberry's answer to Frodo's question if Tom is the owner of the Old Forest: "No indeed! [...] That would indeed be a burden" (*LotR*, 163). Tom's mastery is not one of possession but of knowledge. His unwillingness to take over responsibility for anything but himself has led some critics to call him amoral; an accusation convincingly refuted by Treschow and Duckworth, who argue that Tom's helpful support of the hobbits shows that he is on the side of the good (cf. Treschow and Mark Duckworth, 184).

'other' and wholly independent of the enquiring mind, a spirit coeval with the rational mind, and entirely unconcerned with 'doing' anything with the knowledge" (*Letters*, 192). Bombadil is his own master and wholly untouched by ambition or power hunger, which becomes most apparent when he inspects the One Ring. His reaction to it is merely that of curious interest and he lightly plays with it, thus proving that the Ring's powers cannot touch him. Indeed, Bombadil is the only creature that can wear the Ring without becoming invisible. As Campbell points out:

> "In effect the One Ring becomes a gauge: an object which when dealt with, considered or handled by a given character, betrays that character's true nature and his or her susceptibility to the seduction of power (either corrupt or well-meaning). When considered from this point of view Tom's dismissal of the Ring, his obvious control over it and the fact that it has utterly no control over him (even to the point that it doesn't make him disappear) is testimony to Tom's incorruptibility, his 'unassailable virtue' and perhaps more vitally (when considering the environmental significance of his character) his lack of desire to command, control or conquer anything in Middle-earth from the smallest plant to the deadliest beast" (Campbell, 82).

Unlike all other creatures in Middle-earth, which are sooner or later drawn into the War of the Ring due to their conservatory or destructive interests, Bombadil acts purely as an observer. As Dickerson and Evans point out, paradoxically, Tom's renunciation of control has lend him great power as "[t]he intimate knowing that Bombadil exhibits is even more potent than the superficial pursuit of power" (Dickerson and Evans, 23). Due to his knowledge of all creatures and the earth, Tom is master over them[85]. His explanation for his power over Old Man Willow is therefore simply: "I **know** the tune for him" (*LotR*, 157; *author's emphasis*). In his pursuit of knowledge and his interaction with his environment, Tom does not differentiate between good or evil, which is why his stories and actions are free of judgement. He therefore equally tells the hobbits about "evil things and good things, things friendly and things unfriendly, cruel things and kind things" (*LotR*, 170). Also, his behaviour towards Old Man Willow and the Barrow-

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[85] Tom even has some influence over the elements: he can walk through Goldberry's rain without getting wet (cf. *LotR*, 169). His mastery also includes hobbits, for Frodo's company "stopped short, as if they had been struck stiff" when Tom tells them to stop (*LotR*, 156). His knowledge of the Shire and its hobbits is vast – he even knows that the Shire's borders are protected by Aragorn's Dúndedain (cf. *LotR*, 190). As the poem *Bombadil Goes Boating* shows, he is friends with Farmer Maggot and visits him regularly in his Shire home (cf. *Realm*, 187-9). However, Tom's knowledge does not reach beyond his country and the surrounding lands (Bree and the Shire) due to his reclusive lifestyle; as he tells the hobbits: "Out east my knowledge fails. Tom is not master of Riders from the Black Land far beyond his country" (*LotR*, 192).

wights is as good-natured and jovial as his treatment of the hobbits. Though he is untouched by the Ring's power, he cannot aid in its destruction as "the question of the rights and wrongs of power and control [have] become utterly meaningless to [him], and the means of power quite valueless" (*Letters*, 179). Consequently, he would forget or throw away the Ring if it were given to him (cf. *LotR*, 346); and he would see no reason to travel to Mount Doom, the only place in which the Ring can be destroyed. However, despite Tom's disinterest in power and his non-judgemental behaviour, there are two indicators in the narrative for reasoning that he is capable of distinguishing between good and evil. As will be argued in the introduction to the analysis of pastoral nostalgia[86], Bombadil's nostalgic memories of a dead lady's beauty as well as his decision to remain within his country's borders and thus avoid the outside dangers are signals of this ability. The only possible conclusion that can be drawn from this is that Bombadil is non-judgemental by choice mainly. His disinterestedness in the Ring of Power and the ongoing war between good and evil is not the result of his natural disposition but of his conscious decision to remain neutral and renounce all interest in power. Bombadil's deep knowledge of his environment and his unbiased delight in every living thing clearly mark him as a pastoral creature. His neutral stance towards others and his complete renunciation of control distinguish him even from the elves and award him an exceptional position within Tolkien's works. This alone shows that he is a unique being and cannot be identified as any other creature within Tolkien's mythology.

Goldberry's identity is nearly as much a riddle as Bombadil's, though it has received less attention by the critics and is not explicitly discussed in *The Lord of the Rings*. In contrast to Tom, Goldberry has a true name and ancestry, for she is "the River-woman's daughter" (*Realm*, 175). This clearly associates her with natural water habitats and characterises her as a being with family ties. The terms in which her appearance is depicted confirm her aquatic affinity: her yellow hair 'ripples' like water, her gown has the colour of "young reeds, shot with silver like beads of dew", her golden belt is "shaped like a chain of flag-lilies", and her gown "rustle[s] softly like the wind in the flowering borders of a river" (*LotR*, 161). Furthermore, she sits enthroned in a chair

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[86] Cf. chapter 7 of this thesis.

with her feet in earthenware vessels filled with water and floating water-lilies. This echoes her original dwelling place in the river, which is described in the much earlier poem *The Adventures of Tom Bombadil* as being her mother's house deep in the water (cf. *Realm*, 176). The poem depicts Goldberry as a wild and merry "river-maid" who has to be caught by Tom in order to become his wife (*Realm*, 181). At the time of the narrative of *The Lord of the Rings*, she is fully established in Bombadil's house, but her water-filled vessels and water-lilies still characterise her as a water-bound creature. Indeed, Tom's song reveals that his collection of water-lilies in autumn ensures that Goldberry is surrounded by them throughout winter, until she can bathe in the river again in spring (cf. *LotR*, 165). This seems to indicate that her life-force is tied to a natural aquatic environment, without which she could not reside in Tom's house. Her actions further underline her association with water for she is closely connected to wet weather, singing a rain-song that tells of the river water's movement from spring to sea. On her "washing day", water is the predominant element, for there is dew and fog in the morning, and rain throughout the rest of the day (*LotR*, 169). The term 'washing day' indicates that Goldberry's household duties include the 'washing' of the natural environment. This characterises her as a caring housewife, whose 'household' comprises all of nature. It further reveals her complete knowledge of the water's movements and its restorative powers. Altogether, Goldberry's association with rivers and rain mark her as a deeply natural creature whose life is inseparably tied to the environment, on whose health and stability it depends.

While Goldberry is associated with water and the river-lands, Bombadil is associated with the land and its flora and fauna. His appearance is rustic and gay, in the natural colours yellow, blue, brown, and red "as a ripe apple" (*LotR*, 157). It mirrors nature's appearance, for Tom wears a crown of autumn leaves one evening and clothes "blue as rain-washed forget-me-nots" with green stockings after Goldberry's 'washing day' (*LotR*, 173). His knowledge of the natural world is deep and goes back to the earth's beginning. However, his unity with the earth is not only based on a detailed knowledge of it, but also on Bombadil's primal nature: having been created at the beginning of

time, his existence is more closely tied to the earth than that of any other being[87]. Unlike elves and men, who were created separately by Illuvatar and came into existence a long time after the creation of the world, Tom was created together with the earth in the first theme of the Ainur's music[88]. Consequently, and in contrast to the elves, Bombadil and his wife appear to the hobbits earth-bound and more tangible: compared to elvish music, Goldberry's singing creates delight "less keen and lofty [...], but deeper and nearer to mortal heart; marvellous and yet not strange" (*LotR*, 162). Bombadil's and Goldberry's constant singing, by which they have power over other creatures and the elements, seems to echo the Ainur's creation music, thus indicating their inseparable ties to the Ainur's creation. Being creatures of the river and the earth respectively, Goldberry and Bombadil represent Middle-earth's natural life-force, which is why the earth-loving hobbits perceive them as familiar in spite of their inexplicable identity. As Christian Kölzer remarks: "Auch hier besteht eine Verbindung zum schlechthinnigen Sein, zur tiefsten Ebene der Schöpfung selbst, die jedoch zugleich nicht elbisch-entrückt gedacht wird, sondern irdisch-direkt" (Kölzer, 157). In contrast to the elves, Tom and his wife do not attempt to influence and shape their natural environment, which is why they accept the Old Forest's slow deterioration and the Barrow-wights haunted existence in the downs. Their unity with nature and passive acceptance of its condition and development characterise Tom and Goldberry as bucolic pastoral creatures. However, their bucolic state is under threat as their fate is bound to that of the earth, which is why the victory of the antipastoral creature Sauron would gradually bring about their demise. As the elf Glorfindel points out "in the end, if all else is conquered, Bombadil will fall, Last as he was First; and then Night will come" (*LotR*, 346). It can be presumed that Goldberry would similarly die with the destruction of the rivers and water lilies, as her life force is bound to their existence.

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[87] This is implicitly suggested by Galdor's statement in Elrond's council that "power to defy our Enemy is not in [Bombadil], unless such power is in the earth itself" (*LotR*, 346).

[88] Though Bombadil is not mentioned in *The Silmarillion*, his statement that he "was [in Middle-earth] before the river and the trees; Tom remembers the first raindrop and the first acorn. [...] He knew the dark under the stars when it was fearless – before the Dark Lord came from Outside" explicitly shows that he existed *ab initio* (*LotR*, 172). Right after the earth's creation, the Valar come into it to further shape it. Among them is Morgoth/ Melkor, the Dark Lord Bombadil refers to (cf. *Sil*, 10). This shows that Tom was created as an integral part of the earth in the first theme of the Ainur's creation music (the second and third theme created later stages of the earth's history).

Despite their close ties to the earth and its natural world, Bombadil and Goldberry's home is situated within a cultivated space clearly set apart from the Old Forest and Barrow-downs' wilderness: the trees at the Old Forest's edge are cut neatly so that they form a hedge that borders the mown lawns leading up to Tom's house. A path, "well-tended and bordered with stone" leads up to the front door (*LotR*, 159). The house itself features several comfortable rooms and is surrounded by a kitchen- and a flower-garden. The house's cosy and inviting atmosphere stands in stark contrast to the Old Forest and the Barrow-down's hostility. As Tom and Goldberry repeatedly assure the hobbits, none of the dangerous creatures can enter their home, even though strange noises can be heard at night (cf. *LotR*, 164, 166). The house's inhabitants' closeness to the natural world finds expression in the rooms' furnishings, as they are exclusively made of natural materials and only display natural colours (cf. *LotR*, 162-4). The house and its neat grounds form the centre of Tom's country, whose borders he has determined himself and which he chooses not to leave. His self-imposed retreat into his country on the one hand signals Bombadil's detachment from the events threatening Middle-earth, while on the other hand it shows that he is aware of them and perceives them as threatening. His withdrawal from the world displays a high degree of self-absorption, which is also expressed by the scientific quality of his interest in others, as it is based on the wish to gain knowledge purely for knowledge's sake. Tom and Goldberry's isolation is a typical mark of bucolic pastorality and portrays them as a couple fully absorbed in their personal pursuits. However, like the Rivendell elves, they keep their house open for guests and treat the hobbit travellers with cheerful hospitality. They provide them with comfortable beds and serve them sumptuous amounts of fresh food such as "yellow cream and honeycomb, and white bread, and butter; milk, cheese, and green herbs and ripe berries gathered" (*LotR*, 163). The list of food indicates that not all of it has been produced by the couple themselves, as there is no trace of farm animals in their vicinity. However, as in all bucolic realms, the source of the food is not revealed and it simply exists in a quantity and quality surpassing that of food in non-bucolic spaces. Another mark of Tom and Goldberry's bucolic pastorality is the hobbits' complete loss of their sense of time during their stay with them. Upon approaching Tom's house, they "began to feel that all this country was unreal, and that they were stumbling through an ominous dream that led to no awakening" (*LotR*, 159). Later, Bombadil's stories put them into a state of trance-like enchantment, in which they

neither perceive the passing of time nor personal needs such as hunger or tiredness (cf. *LotR*, 171).

The hobbits' stay in Tom's house for the first time acquaints them with the world outside their sheltered Shire country and enlightens them in many respects. Listening to Bombadil's stories, "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" (*LotR*, 170). Tom's accounts of the Old Forest's history and its trees' reactions to the historical occurrences offer them hitherto unknown insights into other beings' motives and emotions, thus changing the hobbits' entire perception of their environment and their own place within it. By Tom's example they learn how to live in complete non-hierarchical harmony with the natural world (cf. Niiler, 282). In his house, Frodo has consciousness-expanding dreams, in which he has visions of things that are really happening at that time (Gandalf's flight from Orthanc) or will happen in the future (his own arrival in Valinor). In function thus similar to Galadriel's mirror, the magic of Bombadil's home widens the hobbits' horizons, offering them glimpses of things outside their waking perception. Having lived a sheltered life within the secluded confines of the Shire, the hobbits have to lose their naïvety and self-centredness in order to survive in the vast world. As their journey through the Old Forest shows, their insensitivity and ignorance is such that Tom's help and teaching is prerequisite to their survival and further pursuit of their quest: besides losing their way and being captured by the Old Willow, they incite the trees' anger by singing a song about the ending and failing of woods, and they finally attempt to fight Old Man Willow with fire and threats. The hobbits' transformation through Bombadil's influence is most clearly symbolised in their rebirth after death in the Barrow-downs. Having lost track of time and way due to carelessness, the hobbit company fall victim to the treacherous Barrow-wights and suffer death (or at least a death-like state) in one of their barrows. Only Tom's power over the wights releases the hobbits and restores them to life. Similar to their encounter with Old Man Willow, the hobbits have fallen into an evil being's trap due to carelessness and inexperience, and only Tom's interference saves them. After he has brought them back to life, Bombadil sends them running naked over the grass and frolicking in the sun. The hobbits' nakedness and their playful romping in a lush natural setting evoke images of man's primal bliss and clearly symbolise the hobbits'

transformation. Their encounter with Tom and Goldberry is their first step of many on a long journey of successive deaths and rebirths. Like the other bucolic pastoral creatures, the elves and ents, Bombadil and his wife offer the hobbits new knowledge of themselves and the natural world. This function in the narrative clearly marks Tom Bombadil and Goldberry as bucolic pastoral beings.

6.1.1.3 Ents

Within Tolkien's mythology, ents are the epitome of the classical pastoral 'ensouling' of nature. While Virgil and his contemporaries portrayed Arcadia as a landscape with human qualities and thus established it as a link between nature and culture[89], the concept is taken one step further in *The Lord of the Rings*. In the ents, nature and culture merge completely to create a highly bucolic creature whose individual person is nearly indistinguishable from its natural surroundings. What is more, in a fluid transition from one state of being into the other, from culture to nature and vice versa, ents can 'go tree-ish' and trees can acquire entish characteristics (cf. *LotR*, 609). Thus, the boundaries between the natural and the cultural are dissolved to a degree surmounting that found in the elves, who were created separately from the natural world, and even Tom Bombadil, whose domestic space is clearly set apart from the natural landscape. The ents' tree-ish origins, their natural homes, and their life-giving powers mark them as wholly integral parts of the natural world. Their self-absorption, which is clearly expressed by their isolated and withdrawn existence deep within Fangorn Forest, as well as their refusal to take sides in Middle-earth's struggles, further defines them as a bucolic people.

The ents' creation story clearly identifies them as guardians of the natural world, especially of trees. Afraid of the destructive influence of humans and elves on her beloved creation, the Vala Yavanna at the beginning of the world wishes for "trees [that] might speak on behalf of all things that have roots, and punish those that wrong them" (*Sil*, 40). Her wish is granted and ents come into being at the same time as men and elves. According to *The Silmarillion*, they are spirits "from afar" which enter some of Middle-earth's trees (*Sil*, 41). The fusion of spirit and plant lets the ents appear man-

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[89] See chapter 4.3 of this thesis.

like and tree-like at the same time, so that their indeterminable state as both a cultural and a natural creature immediately becomes apparent: seeing Treebeard for the first time, the hobbits perceive "a large Man-like, almost Troll-like, figure, at least fourteen foot high, very sturdy, with a tall head, and hardly any neck. Whether it was clad in stuff like green and grey bark, or whether that was its hide, was difficult to say" (*LotR*, 603). As Kölzer points out, ents are doppelganger: they are both flora and fauna at the same time (cf. Kölzer, 182). Especially the depiction of Treebeard's eyes by the use of similes that compare his mental abilities with nature images reveals both his conscious as well as his natural character:

> "One felt as if there was an enormous well behind them, filled up with ages of memory and long, slow, steady thinking; but their surface was sparkling with the present; like sun shimmering on the outer leaves of a vast tree, or on the ripples of a very deep lake. I don't know, but it felt as if something that grew in the ground – asleep, you might say, or just feeling itself as something between root-tip and leaf-tip, between deep earth and sky had suddenly waked up, and was considering you with the same slow care that it had given to its own inside affairs for endless years" (*LotR*, 603).

The association of consciousness terms such as 'memory', 'thinking', and 'considering' with nature terms such as 'sun', 'leaves', 'tree', 'lake', 'root-tip', 'leaf-tip', 'earth', and 'sky' relates Treebeard's wisdom and life experience to the entire natural world. Furthermore, the imagery suggests his all-encompassing and deep understanding of the world: "We see in Treebeard both wisdom and knowledge, both earth and sky, and both past and present" (Dickerson and Evans, 127). Living as an integral part of the forest landscape, he is wholly immersed in nature's cycles and processes. His humming and singing keep up a constant communication with the trees and the earth (cf. *LotR*, 624). Like Bombadil and Goldberry, Treebeard's propensity to sing seems to echo the Ainur's music with which they created the world, thus implicitly marking him as a being close to creation and possessing life-spending powers. As his name shows, his identity is inseparably bound to his forest, for 'Treebeard' is only another term for 'Fangorn'[90]. As

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[90] 'Fangorn' literally means 'beard-(of)-tree' in the elvish language Sindarin (cf. *LotR*, 1486).

"the oldest living thing"[91] in Middle-earth, he acts not only as the ents' chief representative but also as the personification of the entire sylvan realm (*LotR*, 729).

Like all bucolic pastoral interludes in *The Lord of the Rings*, the ent episode appears at a crucial moment in the narrative, in which the hobbits Merry and Pippin have just escaped grave danger and have sought refuge in Fangorn Forest. Though the forest has lost much of its original pastorality and displays a number of unpastoral characteristics[92] at the time of the narrative, it functions similarly to the other bucolic retreats by offering the questing protagonists temporary shelter, nourishment, and the acquisition of new knowledge. As in Bombadil's home and the elvish realms, Merry and Pippin gain a new perspective during their time in Fangorn, as Treebeard's natural wisdom and lifestyle offer them insight into the power and needs of nature. In addition, the ents' guardianship of the trees heightens the hobbits' sense for their own responsibility towards nature and offers them guiding principles in their behaviour towards it. This educative function of the hobbits' stay in Fangorn marks it as a bucolic pastoral realm. In a pattern mirroring the company's arrival and entrance into the other bucolic realms, Merry and Pippin enter the forest after their flight from their uruk-hai captors, in spite of having been warned against it. Though Fangorn appears to be strange and frightening, the hobbits soon chance upon a stream, whose clear, cold water has a healing and recuperating effect on them. Similar to Lothlórien's river Nimrodel, the Entwash's properties are ideal ones and clearly signal Fangorn's original pastorality. However, the direct comparison between Fangorn and Lothlórien reveals that Fangorn is in a state of decay which Lothlórien's woods have been protected against by Galadriel's preserving powers. Even worse than the Old Forest, many of Fangorn's

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[91] A few critics have noted the apparent contradiction of Bombadil's claim to be 'Eldest' and Treebeards denomination as 'the oldest living thing' (cf. Dickerson and Evans, 19). In order to solve this riddle, most have focused on the word 'living' in Gandalf's depiction of Treebeard and have come to the conclusion that Bombadil is not alive in the same sense as the ent. This has induced some to assume that Bombadil must be a Vala (cf. Hargrove, 22) or a spirit (cf. Campbell, 89), while Treebeard is alive in the biotic sense. However, as Bombadil cannot be labelled clearly as belonging in one of the known categories of beings (such as Vala, man, hobbit, dwarf, etc.) due to his enigmatic origins, any comparison between him and the ent must remain mere speculation. The apparent contradiction of Bombadil's and Treebeard's title as the oldest being mainly stresses that Bombadil stands outside any of Middle-earth's categories, so that he is not included in the calculation of its inhabitants' ages. Consequently, Treebeard can be counted as Middle-earth's oldest living creature without contradicting the claim that Bombadil was there from the beginning.

[92] See subchapter 6.2.2.3. of this thesis.

trees have reacted to the degenerative changes in Middle-earth by turning evil themselves (cf. *LotR*, 609). Being the last remnants of the vast forest landscape of the Elder Days, Fangorn and the Old Forest are prominent examples of Middle-earth's gradual decline and the loss of original pastoral bliss. Yet, in spite of Fangorn's general unpastoral state, the Entwash and those spaces associated with ents still speak of its original ideality. The clearing in which the hobbits chance upon Treebeard, his home, as well as the location of the entmoot are places of light, fresh air, clear water, and lush vegetation.

Treebeard's home, Wellinghall, is situated deep in the forest and is shaped like a natural hall. Like the ent himself, his home is a fusion of nature and culture in a degree unsurpassed by any of the other creatures in Tolkien's mythology. Evergreen trees guard its entrance and long lines of trees form its sides. Their upper branches come together in imitation of a roof. At the end of the hall, the young Entwash falls down from a high crevice, accumulating in a deep basin and spreading into the hall. Behind the waterfall, the rock-wall is hollowed back into a room, into which Treebeard has placed a stone table and a grass-covered bed (cf. *LotR*, 611-612). Apart from these two items of furniture, no trace of civilization is detectable in Wellinghall. At the same time, the shape of the hall and its tree-guards at the entrance clearly associate it with the architecture of elvish and human dynasties, thus expressing cultural sophistication and power. Only the elvish architecture found in Lothlórien is comparable to it in terms of its degree of naturalness, though the elvish city Caras Galadhon possesses many more cultural features than the ent's home. The appearance of evergreen trees in Wellinghall and also in Derndingle, the location of the entmoot, establishes a connection between the entish realm and the Valinorean West and is therefore a clear sign of the ents' highly bucolic pastorality[93]. Like Wellinghall, the Derndingle is a lush natural space. Its bucolic pastoral seclusion from the world is clearly perceived by the hobbits: "It seemed a very strange and remote place, outside their world, and far from everything that had ever happened to them" (*LotR*, 628). As in all entish spaces, there is a spring of clear water. The meaning of water in entish culture is based on its life-spending properties,

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[93] Evergreen trees could be found in Eressëa, the elvish island in sight of Valinor. From there evergreen trees also reached Númenor (cf. *Tales*, 167).

which Treebeard enhances through ritualistic action. Holding his hands over water filled bowls, he causes the water to glow with golden and green light "as if the sun of summer was shining through a roof of young leafs" (*LotR*, 612-3). When the hobbits drink of it, they experience its invigorating and life-giving powers, for they feel it course through their bodies so "that the hair on their heads was actually standing up, waving and curling and growing" (*LotR*, 613). The constant supply of water in entish homes ensures their pastorality as it feeds and invigorates the surrounding plants as well as the ents themselves. Furthermore, it underlines the ents' bucolic lifestyle, as they are constantly provided for by nature and revel in the forest's bounty.

Altogether, the ents are the most natural creatures in Tolkien's mythology. Their pastoral character is emphasised by their repeated denomination as "the Shepherds of the Trees" (*Sil*, 41) or "tree-herds" (*LotR*, 609), which establishes a direct link between them and the shepherds of traditional pastorals. Like the Arcadian shepherds, the ents have long enjoyed the pastoral bliss of their forest and have immersed themselves in deep reflection and general inactivity. As will be shown with regard to the entwives' georgic pastorality, another link between the ents and the classical tradition of pastoral writing can be found in Treebeard's song, whose structure, dialogue form, and content clearly mark it as an eclogue and connect it with Edmund Spenser's pastoral work *The Shepheardes Calender*. The song emphasises the ents' inactive self-absorption and its effects, for it has caused their estrangement with the female ents, who left the forest and vanished during the first great war against Sauron. Consequently, the ents' withdrawal from the world into passive contemplation has doomed them to extinction. Their bucolic retreat from the world is so complete that the other peoples of Middle-earth only know them from legend and are surprised to learn that they still exist at the time of the narrative (cf. *LotR*, 650-1). Only the hobbits' arrival and the deforestation of their home rouse them into fulfilling their appointed task of actively defending the trees. Using their own natural powers as well as those of the river, they drown Isengard and gradually turn it into a pastoral place: first into an orchard, then into an extension of Fangorn Forest.

6.1.2 The Georgic Pastoral

6.1.2.1 Hobbits

Of all landscapes and creatures in Middle-earth, the Shire and its hobbits are most commonly identified as pastoral by the critical community[94]. There is agreement that the hobbits' close ties to their environment, their love of well-farmed countryside, simple tools, and a rustic lifestyle are certain signs of their depiction's consistency with the pastoral tradition. All the same, most critics do not offer a definition of the pastoral but base their observations on a general understanding of it. Within the critical community, Phyllis Koppes' work thus stands out, as it offers a detailed definition of the pastoral and distinguishes between the bucolic and the georgic pastoral in Tolkien's works[95]. However, due to her focus on the presentation of the heroic in *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*, Koppes' mention of the Shire's georgic qualities is very superficial and only consists of a short enumeration of the hobbits' main georgic characteristics (cf. Koppes, 338). Another point often mentioned in critical analyses of Tolkien's mythology is the function of the Shire episode as a point of departure for the reader. Able to identify with the comfort loving hobbits and the Shire's agricultural lifestyle, the readers are taken on the Ring's quest alongside the hobbits and consequently perceive the wonders of Middle-earth through the Shire-folk's eyes[96]. In contrast to the bucolic realms, the Shire's georgic pastorality renders it closer to the real world, as it is less idealised and its hobbits show typically human character traits. Consequently, readers can easily identify with the hobbits, while their pastorality at the same time constitutes a desirable ideal. The Shire appeals "to the deep-rooted human desires for a more natural way of life, a simpler society, and a recovery of a sense of home - but it also does double duty by preparing for the contrasts that create meaning and intensify the appeal of the other lands" (Burger 1986, 153).

Following the tradition of the georgic pastoral, the hobbit heroes accept their call to adventure and leave their comfortable home to go on a quest during which they

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[94] Cf. Brawley, Brennan Croft, Brisbois, Burger 1986, Campbell, Niiler.
[95] See chapter 4.5.2 of this thesis.
[96] Cf. Borgmeier, 404; Burger 1986, 153; Honegger, 317; Kölzer, 146.

continually experience maturation through cycles of death and rebirth. As Koppes points out, a mark of the georgic quality of the narratives of both *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* is that the central action in both works stretches over one year, thus presenting it against the backdrop of the changing seasons. Furthermore, the plots offers a continual alternation "between stasis and action; the hero's adventures in the world alternate with renewing pauses within temporary homes away from home" (Koppes, 328). According to Koppes, Tolkien's works thus draw on both the linear plot structure of the heroic journey as well as the circular structure of the georgic hero's process of maturation (ibid). However, as pointed out in the theoretical chapter on intratextual nostalgia, in the case of Tolkien's mythology and many other fantasy works, the plot structure of the hero's journey is not linear but circular: leaving his pastoral home, he returns there at the end of his successful quest. All the same, Koppes' statement that Tolkien's works fulfil the criteria of georgic pastoral literature can be supported.

The main distinction between the bucolic and the georgic pastoral is the depiction of passive enjoyment of nature's bounty in the first, and the active agricultural cooperation with nature in the latter. A high degree of correspondence is detectable between the definition of the georgic pastoral and the depictions of the Shire and its hobbits. They are closely tied to nature, walking bare-footed and delighting in natural beauty. As the prologue to *The Lord of the Rings* states, hobbits "love peace and quiet and good tilled earth: a well-ordered and well-farmed countryside was their favourite haunt" (*LotR*, 1). The Shire therefore features well-tended agricultural countryside and many farms (cf. *LotR*, 120). Besides agricultural buildings, there are private homes as well as buildings associated with trade, such as mills and pubs. Members of the hobbit middle-classes, which are mainly craftspeople, live in wood, brick, or stone houses above ground. Only the ancient and rich 'gentlehobbits' (cf. *LotR*, 28) still reside in luxurious holes in the ground, while the poor lower classes dwell "in burrows of the most primitive kind, mere holes indeed, with only one window or none" (*LotR*, 8). Bag End, one of the comfortable upper-class holes, shows typical features of a stately home, such as a spacious hall, "bedrooms, bathrooms, cellars, pantries (lots of these), wardrobes [...], kitchens, dining-rooms", and many windows overlooking the grounds (*Hobbit*, 3). The Shire's architectural diversity as well as the different professions clearly indicate that the hobbit society knows a rather rigid social hierarchy such as it exists in the real

world. As Tom Shippey has pointed out, the lower hobbit class does not wish to change their social stratum but acknowledges the higher class' moral authority and financial and moral respectability (cf. Shippey, 290). Unlike the bucolic peoples, who know neither poverty nor bad housing, hobbits are subjected to the hardships of life in spite of their idyllic lifestyle. This clearly marks the Shire as a georgic pastoral realm. Only ancient upper-class families such as the Bagginses, the Tooks, and the Brandybucks are free from the restraints of labour, as their hereditary wealth ensures them a carefree lifestyle with all the comforts of a good home, servants, and leisure time. The rigidity of the Shire's social hierarchy becomes most apparent during the hobbits' journey to Mordor, as it is maintained even then: Frodo's gardener Sam remains his faithful servant throughout. Though the depiction of Sam as a true hero, whose actions are decisive for the quest's success, raises him in the eyes of the other characters as well as the readers, his status as Frodo's employee is never questioned. On the contrary, Sam's heroic qualities also consist in his unwavering loyalty to his master as well as his unswerving pride in his status as a gardener. The latter is not only based on a sound work ethic but also on the high reputation gardeners enjoy in the Shire (cf. *LotR*, 891). Knowledge of, and experience in gardening and farming, is highly rated by hobbits, as it maintains the Shire's lush and well-ordered countryside as well as ensures the production of food – a commodity of the greatest importance to hobbits.

The hobbits' lifestyle centres on simple pleasures: "And laugh they did, and eat, and drink, often and heartily, being fond of simple jests at all times, and of six meals a day [...]" (*LotR*, 2). In accordance with the georgic ideal, the hobbits' main occupation at the time of the narrative is the growing and eating of food (cf. *LotR*, 12). Their greatest and only cultural achievement is the invention of smoking, a leisurely and social activity (cf. *LotR*, 10-11). Altogether, hobbits are very communal, living under one roof with their extended family, and considering family ties and ancestry of great importance (cf. *LotR*, 10). As the behaviour of the hobbit protagonists shows, hobbits are capable of extreme loyalty and selfless action when called upon to aid and protect their families and friends. Their community spirit renders them attentive hosts and eager givers of presents on all occasions. Their fondness for parties further underlines the hobbits' leisurely georgic pastoral way of life as it emphasises their communal focus as well as their innocent enjoyment of life within a bountiful environment. However, the Shire's fertility and

peace do not only enable its inhabitants' pastoral lifestyle but have also given birth to conservative and narrow-minded attitudes. Typical of the georgic pastoral, the unity between the hobbits and their natural environment is a reciprocal one as both have been shaped by each other. While the hobbits' farming and gardening activities have maintained and even enhanced the Shire's agricultural landscapes, its fertility and isolated pleasantness have gradually turned the hobbits into a jovial and self-absorbed people wholly unconcerned with matters outside their personal sphere. This was not always the case as the hobbits' ancient history is one of migration and they have occupied the Shire only since the Third Age (cf. *LotR*, 5). However, knowledge of their pre-history is scarce as the hobbits' recorded history only began with their settlement in the Shire - another sign of their determination to forget the outside world and their own connections with it. At the time of the narrative, the hobbits have become self-absorbed to such a degree that they have forgotten most of their own history and are unaware of the world outside the Shire's borders – much as the outside world is unaware of their existence. Thus, maps in the Shire usually show "white spaces beyond its borders" (*LotR*, 57). Though their various movements and developments before their settlement in the Shire prove that change has always been a part of the hobbits' history, they have repressed this knowledge and refuse to acknowledge its existence. Especially historical incidents such as plagues and famines in the early centuries of their occupation of the Shire have been forgotten (cf. *LotR*, 6-7). One consequence of the hobbits' wish to be as ignorant of unpleasant and disrupting historical events as possible is their consideration of education as unnecessary and potentially harmful (cf. *LotR*, 31). The Shire's gradual development under their care into a country with qualities bordering on the bucolic – a mild climate, lush vegetation, and plenty of food – has bestowed upon them the propensity to be nearly as self-absorbed as bucolic creatures.

The hobbits' conservatism becomes most apparent in their codes of conduct, which centre on the concept of 'respectability'. Every hobbit that avoids actions which might induce change or upheaval is considered respectable and therefore worthy of social approval. Consequently, adventures are considered most unrespectable as they include unforeseen occurrences, which might endanger the status quo (cf. *Hobbit*, 6). The hobbits' conservative attitude ensures the Shire's peace and quiet, as war-like actions and conflict in general are avoided. Though weapons still exist within hobbit homes –

the heirlooms of bygone times – they are used as household and farm utensils and are generally blunt (cf. *Hobbit*, 21). The Shire's tranquillity and prosperity have turned its political offices into nominal ones, and its society functions of its own accord as hobbits usually "kept the laws of free will, because they were The Rules (as they said), both ancient and just" (*LotR*, 12). However, though most hobbits are generally considered modest and generous (cf. ibid), they have the capability to be greedy and power hungry, as the example of the Sackville-Bagginses shows. Furthermore, their narrow-mindedness finds expression in their mistrustfulness and prejudice against strangers from outside, as well as their suspicious attitude towards hobbit families from other regions of the Shire (cf. *LotR*, 29). Overall, though the depiction of the Shire is a romanticised one, its inhabitants' weaknesses and character flaws are strong indicators that neither the hobbits nor their environment are ideal. "Indeed although there is a general propensity to associate the hobbits with an idyllic existence living in unblemished harmony with nature, hobbit characters such as Ted Sandyman and Lotho 'Pimple' Sackville-Baggins [...] prove that hobbits may be just as quick to choose industry and ruination of the landscape over nature if it provides power or pecuniary reward" (Campbell, 218-9).

The Shire's seemingly perpetual peace is a treacherous misapprehension on the hobbits' side, for its borders have always been protected by Gandalf and Aragorn's Dúnedain. Thus, the hobbits are, "in fact, sheltered, but they had ceased to remember it" (*LotR*, 7). The existence of Bounders, hobbits securing the Shire borders from within, further underlines that the Shire's isolation is an artificial one, secured by an intricate system at work both within and without its borders. In spite of their strict avoidance of disrupting change, hobbits are quite capable of adapting to it, as the hobbit protagonists' prove on their quests. According to Koppes, the georgic hero accepts his call to adventure in order to avoid meaninglessness and degeneration (cf. Koppes, 19-20). This is especially true for Frodo and his companion's quest to save not only the Shire but all of Middle-earth from Sauron's degenerative influence. Pursuing their quest to destroy the Ring, the hobbits develop internally as well as externally. Frodo's experiences as ring bearer change him so deeply that a return to the innocent enjoyment of pastoral life in the Shire turns out to be impossible for him and he has to leave it for good. Merry and Pippin, on the other hand, have turned into knights, riding through the Shire in their armour and

having grown due to Treebeard's life-spending draughts (cf. *LotR*, 1341). Even Sam, the most steadfast of the four, has acquired new importance as a hero in song and tale, and becomes the Mayor of the Shire (cf. *LotR*, 1347). This changeability, which can be found in all hobbits despite their initial appearance of ignorant self-absorption, clearly marks them as georgic pastoral and distinguishes them from the bucolic peoples. Altogether, the hobbits' quiet enjoyment of the Shire's pastoral bounty is only a temporary one – as one of the High Elves remarks to the hobbit travellers: "Others dwelt here before hobbits were; and others will dwell here again when hobbits are no more. The wide world is all about you: you can fence yourselves in, but you cannot for ever fence it out" (*LotR*, 109). He is proven right when Saruman and his helpmates temporarily destroy the Shire's pastorality. Furthermore, the beginning of the Fourth Age also rings in a new phase in the Shire's history as it is included in Aragorn's Reunited Kingdom and loses its isolated and sheltered character (cf. *LotR*, 18). The hobbits' new interest in history and the outside world can be read two ways: either as a loss of the Shire's georgic pastorality (it becomes part of the greater world) or as a sign that the greater world has (for a while) become more pastoral due to Aragorn's ideal reign and that the Shire, therefore, does not need protection against it any longer.

6.1.2.2 Entwives

In contrast to the bucolic ents, the entwives are characterised as active agrarian creatures and therefore as georgic pastoral. Feeling much less interest in the forest than in the agrarian potential of the meadows next to Fangorn, the entwives leave their sylvan home in order to cultivate and farm the open lands. Like all georgic creatures, they are capable of change, which is why they quickly adapt to their new environment. They establish gardens, following their desire to actively influence and command nature. Preferring control and order over the ents' bucolic contemplative inactivity, they successfully farm their lands, turning them into lush fields and orchards which produce rich harvests. Due to their exposed situation within the open countryside, the entwives come into close contact with men, who honour them for their agrarian achievements and learn their craft (cf. *LotR*, 620). However, though their exchanges with men characterise the entwives as worldlier than the bucolic ents, they display the same high degree of self-absorption and self-interest as their male counterparts, being exclusively concerned with their agrarian success. Blind and deaf to each other's interests, needs, and

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achievements, the ents and their entwives are wholly immersed in their respective environments and pursuits. Thus, their estrangement gradually grows and finally leads to the ents' 'loss' of the entwives.

The differences between the bucolic ents and the georgic entwives are best expressed in the elvish song sung to the hobbits by Treebeard. This song presents an argument between a male and a female ent about their respective environment's superiority. It serves best to outline the differences between the bucolic and the georgic pastoral. Its dialogue form, the competitive nature of the interlocutors' argument, their highly pastoral nature, as well as that of their environments clearly mark this song as an eclogue. Thus, it follows in the classical Virgilian tradition of pastoral writing and characterises the male and female ents as directly related to the classical pastoral shepherds. Furthermore, the song's structure, which traces the seasonal cycle from spring to winter, connects it with Edmund Spenser's pastoral work *The Shepheardes Calender* (1579), which consists of twelve eclogues – one for each month of the year. Basing his work on classical and Renaissance pastorals of famous poets such as Theocritus, Virgil, Petrarch, Boccaccio, and Mantuan, Spenser was the first to write pastoral in the English language and to thus establish the English pastoral tradition (cf. Cheney, 81). Moving through the year, he uses the four seasons to represent man's life cycle (cf. McLane, 319; Hoffman, 79). This metaphorical connection is explicitly elucidated in the December eclogue by the protagonist, Colin Clout, who "proportioneth his life to the four seasons of the year, comparing his youth to the spring time [...], [h]is manhood to the summer, [...] [h]is riper years he resembleth to an unseasonable harvest, [...], [h]is latter age to winter's chill and frosty season, now drawing near to his last end" (E.K. in Spenser, 95). The *Calender* thus concludes with Colin's death in December. Like Spenser, Tolkien uses the seasons to depict the ent's and entwife's life cycle and the process of their estrangement. Though his eclogue is much shorter and more restricted in topic than the *Calender*'s eclogue cycle, he also presents the seasonal changes in nature as indicators for the entish speakers' emotional state. The dialogue presents both interlocutors' impressions of their respective environments together with repeated requests to be acknowledged as superior by the other. This competitive note illustrates their self-absorbed narcissism, which prevents them from finding and acknowledging each other in pastoral unity. The eclogue starts in spring, the season

representing youth and incipience. While the ent depicts the awakening of his forest and its trees, the entwife celebrates the awakening of her agricultural landscape. The stanzas clearly characterise the ent's forest environment as wild and untouched nature, while the entwive's environment is depicted as cultivated, consisting of orchards and fields bearing corn and blossoms (cf. *LotR*, 621). The summer stanzas present a heightened state of pastorality, as the landscapes are depicted as 'golden': in the ents' forest, the noon is swathed in golden light (cf. ibid), while the entwives' fields bear golden corn (cf. *LotR*, 622). Both interlocutors refer to the summer wind being in the West – another clear indicator for the Golden Age quality of their summer environments as the West in Tolkien's mythology always signifies Valinor, the paradisiacal island of the Valar. While the ent depicts his forest as peaceful and calm, the entwife's orchards and fields are bursting with fruits, corn, and honey, which are gathered and harvested by the active entish farmer. As Corey Olsen has pointed out, the ent's stanzas contain active verbs only with regard to actions of the seasons and nature, while the ent himself appears passive. In contrast, the entwife in her stanzas presents herself as an active agent shaping her natural surroundings (cf. Olsen, 42). This difference in their attitude towards nature, the ents' passive contemplation of the forest on the one and the entwives' active agricultural use of the meadows on the other hand, are clear indicators for the ents' bucolic and the entwives' georgic pastorality. In both the spring and summer stanzas, the interlocutors end their stanzas with requests and refusals: the ent wishes the entwife to return to him and acknowledge the superiority of the forest, while the entwife refuses to join him due to the superiority of her agricultural gardens. However, their self-absorbed enjoyment of their respective environments comes to an abrupt end after the summer stanzas, as the arrival of winter is discussed. The abruptness of the thematic change is underlined by the absence of autumn and shows that the ent and his entwife are aware of the imminent loss of the summer blessings they are enjoying. Their use of the future tense indicates that winter has not yet come at the time of their dialogue but that its future arrival is inevitable. As in *The Shepheardes Calender*, winter is the bringer of death and destruction. Now the wind is in "the deadly East", the cardinal direction opposed to the paradisiacal West and therefore connected with non-pastoral qualities (*LotR*, 622). Other than in Spenser's *Calender*, the winter death is supra-individual in the entish eclogue as it signifies the apocalyptic end of the entire world. Winter's destruction of their landscapes induces the ent and the entwife to

finally acknowledge each other's importance and reunite. It is significant that the ent now plays the active part and joins the entwife, while she waits for him in unfamiliar passivity (cf. Olsen, 49). This reversal of roles underlines their sudden willingness to give up their self-absorption and approach one another instead. Speaking the last two lines in unison, the ent and the entwife are finally united in the face of the inevitable loss of their beloved environments. Forced to give up their narrow-minded love for their contemplative and agricultural pursuits, they are joined in life after death. As Olsen has pointed out, the winter stanzas are not nihilistic, as the destruction of the temporal world "reveal[s] the true and everlasting world that lies behind it" (ibid). Going into the West, the ent and the entwife exchange their temporal pastoral homes for the ultimate home of the greatest possible pastorality.

As the analysis of the utopian and dystopian impulses in Tolkien's works will show further down, the eclogue expresses criticism of the pastoral peoples' failure to unite and create a unified pastoral world.

> "The failure of both Ent and Entwife to show the Entish humility that would allow them to get inside each other's perspectives and thus come together to form that perfect whole superimposes upon this encomium a caution against losing perspective and giving in to pride and self-absorption, even when the source of pride and the object of absorption is itself a good and beautiful thing" (ibid).

The price they have to pay is high, for the separation of the ents and entwives effects their final extinction. At the time of the narrative, the entwives are considered 'lost' by the ents: their fields and orchards were destroyed by Sauron in the last great war and they have disappeared. Thus they are lost in a double sense: first, in the sense that they are undetectable, and second, in the sense that they are without any chance of reunion with the ents.

6.1.2.3 Beorn

Like all bucolic and georgic pastoral creatures, the shape-changer Beorn offers the questing company shelter and respite on their dangerous journey. His appearance is restricted to the narrative of *The Hobbit*; in *The Lord of the Rings*, he and his descendants are only marginally mentioned as kin to the Rohirrim (cf. *LotR*, 560) and guardians of the lands between Mirkwood and the Mountains (cf. *LotR*, 298). Due to his shape-changing ability, Beorn is both man and bear, thus transcending the boundaries

between nature and culture. Etymologically, his name echoes this double identity as the Old English 'Beorn' means 'man, warrior', while the Old Norse 'Bjorn' means 'bear' (cf. Walsh, 56). Beorn's appearance in human and bear shape is impressive and fierce, underlining his predatory abilities. His farm animals, with which he can converse in their own language, mirror this blending of human and animal identity as they display human abilities when serving their master: carrying things, laying the table, setting up chairs, and serving food (cf. *Hobbit*, 118). Due to his intimate connection to the animal kingdom, Beorn refrains from eating meat and only consumes vegetarian produce from his farm. Though none of the critics[97] so far have identified him as pastoral, Beorn's agricultural lifestyle and closeness to the natural world clearly mark him as a georgic pastoral creature.

Like that of all the other georgic pastoral creatures in Tolkien's works, Beorn lifestyle is communal and reclusive at the same time. The situation of his farm within a hostile environment has isolated him and made him wary of strangers. All the same, he is a friendly and good-natured host once his initial mistrust is overcome. Being partly an animal himself, Beorn treats his farm animals like family and can therefore be understood as a communal creature. It is further mentioned that he is not the only shape-changer in Middle-earth and in close contact with his kin. Beorn's home represents a typical farm setting, which most prominently features bee-pastures (cf. *Hobbit*, 110-11). His lush garden is drenched in golden light when perceived by Bilbo (cf. *Hobbit*, 113). As in the other pastoral lands, the mention of golden light in the depictions of Beorn's farm establishes a connection of it with the blessed realm of the West, identifying it as a pastoral place. However, Beorn's home is a slowly waning pastoral island within an increasingly non-pastoral world, as is indicated by invading orcs at night-time. All the same, Beorn's hall offers the travellers shelter and comfort, thus fulfilling the function typical of the pastoral realms (cf. *Hobbit*, 127). As Paul W. Lewis has pointed out, the situation of Beorn's home in the vicinity of the unpastoral Mirkwood Forest suggests a literary relationship with Tom Bombadil's house, which is situated next to the unpastoral Old Forest (cf. Lewis 2007, 153). Other indications for such a connection are

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[97] Even Phyllis Koppes, in her analysis of *The Hobbit*, focuses on the heroic aspects of Bilbo's quest and ignores pastoral creatures and scenes in the book.

the disturbing nightly noises the questing heroes hear outside both houses as well as the strange visionary dreams they have there (cf. ibid). This lends both homes a mystical quality as reality and dream merge in such a way that the hobbits can no longer differentiate between either of the two. However, despite these similarities, as characters Beorn and Bombadil differ in many aspects: Beorn's active involvement in world politics (he joins the Battle of Five Armies and becomes an important political chief afterwards), his fierce and merciless fights against orcs, his distrust of strangers, his clear sense of good and bad, and his agrarian pursuits stand opposed to Bombadil's withdrawn, contemplative, and impartial interest in the world. Overall, these differences are based on the different types of pastoral to which Beorn and Bombadil belong, as the georgic pastoral typically depicts an active agrarian lifestyle, while the bucolic pastoral hero enjoys the passive contemplation of his environment. Furthermore, Beorn is lacking Bombadil's enigmatic quality, for his identity is clearly delineated and he is but one member of a greater clan belonging to the human kind.

6.1.3 The Bucolic and the Georgic Pastoral's Positions in the Texts: Functions of the Pastoral Realms

The bucolic and georgic pastoral's functions can be deduced from the pastoral interludes' positions in the primary texts. It is significant to note that all bucolic pastoral realms in both *The Lord of the Rings* as well as *The Hobbit* appear within the first half of the narrative[98], while the non-pastoral ones appear in the second. The reason for this is that the bucolic settings function as places of reflection and knowledge acquisition, which offer the travellers important insights for their quests[99]. Only after they have perceived and understood the value and beauty of a pastoral lifestyle can they effectively fight the non-pastoral. While in the bucolic pastoral realms, the characters

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[98]With the exception of Rivendell, which reappears within the last third of both narratives, when the hobbits retrace their steps in order to return to the Shire. However, only its first appearance in the first half of the narrative bears great significance for the plot as it provides the company with new knowledge and teaches the hobbits a deep understanding of nature and their position in Middle-earth. Towards the end of the narratives, the travellers stay only a short while in Rivendell to regain their strengths. Rivendell's reappearance towards the end of the books therefore merely functions as a short pastoral interlude which prepares the hobbit heroes for their return to the Shire.

[99] This function of pastoral place has been pointed out by a few critics only with regard to Tom Bombadil and his wife Goldberry, but it is equally true for the other pastoral realms, as will be shown in this chapter (cf. Campbell, 76; Taylor, 155; Treschow and Mark Duckworth, 180, 182).

are given the opportunity to reflect and observe without the fear of intrusion. Especially in *The Lord of the Rings*, an important reason for the early appearance of the bucolic in the narrative is that it serves to demonstrate to the hobbit protagonists, who have never before left the Shire and are therefore strangers in the world, what is at stake in the war against evil. Seeing the bucolic environments and encountering their inhabitants' natural lifestyles, the hobbits gain an understanding of the importance of environmental ethics and the disastrous consequences Middle-earth would suffer if its bucolic peoples were lost[100]. Thus, their encounters with the bucolic pastoral endow their quest with new meaning as they get to know themselves as well as nature. Though, in the end, the elves' final departure from Middle-earth and the ents' gradual extinction are inevitable, the hobbits are able to preserve some of their bucolic bliss by using Galadriel's soil and planting trees in the Shire. Thus, witnessing the bucolic peoples' pastorality has left the hobbits with an image of ideal nature and culture, which motivates them to endure the hardships of their quest and afterwards to concentrate their efforts on maintaining some bucolic pastorality in Middle-earth. Stepping back into the 'real' world of Middle-earth, their newly acquired insights motivate and guide them in their endeavours for a better world. This function of the bucolic in Tolkien's texts and the successive appearance of the bucolic realms during the fellowship's journey through Middle-earth bring to mind the retreat – return pattern found in classical pastorals: in a series of retreats and returns, the hobbit protagonists repeatedly leave their highly dangerous road to delve into a bucolic pastoral retreat.

Acting as counterparts to the landscapes of Middle-earth which have been degenerated and corrupted by evil, all bucolic retreats appear right after the travellers have faced great dangers and are in grave need of physical and mental recovery. A similar plot pattern can be found within all bucolic episodes, underlining their functional similarity in the narrative as well as their contentual relatedness. Having been warned against entering the bucolic realm due to its alleged perilousness, the hobbits are forced to forego the warning mainly because they or their companions see no alternative path

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[100] The same has been pointed out by Liam Campbell with regard to Tom Bombadil's function in the narrative (cf. Campbell, 76). Matthew Dickerson and Jonathan Evans have detected the same educative function in Treebeard's appearance in the narrative (cf. Dickerson and Evans, 134).

than through the bucolic lands. The mental and physical suffering they have been subjected to outside the bucolic realms is immediately relieved after their entrance. In most realms, water plays an important role in the hobbits' first recuperation: in Rivendell, the river Bruinen swells under Elrond's influence to drown the Nazgul and their horses; in Lothlórien and in Fangorn Forest, the clear cold waters of the rivers Nimrodel and Entwash offer refreshment and healing[101]. After their arrival, the travellers are taken into the heart of the pastoral lands, where they stay in the bucolic peoples' homes. Here, they acquire new knowledge as they watch and partake in their hosts' bucolic lifestyles. Furthermore, they are specifically taught about Middle-earth's history, their own position within it, and the meaning of their quest. Thus, they finally leave the bucolic realm with greater wisdom and regained strength, having been equipped with mental as well as physical provisions for the next stage of their journey.

Like the bucolic pastoral realms, the georgic pastoral landscapes in *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit* offer the protagonists safety and comfort in an otherwise hostile world. As the point of departure in both narratives, the Shire serves the hobbit protagonists as a source of identity during their dangerous quests. As the analysis of the hobbits' nostalgia will show, their memories of home provide them with important tools to deal with the constant threat of defeat and death. Furthermore, the Shire serves as the ultimate goal of the hobbits' journeys as their endeavours are aimed at the return to their homes. Thus, the appearance of the Shire at the beginning of the narrative underlines the hobbit protagonists' pastoral identity and serves both them and the reader as an important reference point on the hobbits' quests. For the reader, the Shire offers a means of identification, as the hobbits' comfort-loving lifestyle bears idealised features of the real world. Consequently, he experiences the adventures of their quest through their eyes. In *The Hobbit*, Beorn's home functions as a place of shelter and recuperation after the company's dangerous fights against orcs and wargs in the mountains. In their conversations with Beorn, Bilbo and his companions gain new knowledge of the region and are prepared for the next stage of their journey. Thus, Beorn's georgic pastoral hall

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[101] The rivers have the reverse effect only in Mirkwood and in Bombadil's Withywindle Valley, as Frodo is nearly drowned in the Withywindle, while Bombur is incapacitated by the enchanted stream. This inversion of the function of water in the bucolic realms underlines both the Old Forest as well as Mirkwood Forest's fallen bucolic state.

fulfils the same narrative purpose as the bucolic pastoral realms. Other than the Shire and Beorn's home, the georgic pastoral gardens of the Entwives have long been destroyed by Sauron at the time of the narrative of *The Lord of the Rings* and cannot, therefore, offer shelter and recuperation anymore. Only through Treebeard's tales and song do the hobbits and the reader learn of their past existence. Hence, they function as a warning symbol of the vanished pastorality of Middle-earth and the immediate threat to all remaining pastoral lands and creatures. Like the bucolic pastoral realms, the remaining georgic pastoral lands are under serious threat of infiltration by antipastoral agents.

6.2 Non-Pastoral Creatures and Landscapes in *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit*

6.2.1 The Antipastoral – Sauron, Saruman, and their Perversion of the Pastoral

As outlined in the theoretical chapter on the different categories of the pastoral and non-pastoral, the antipastoral is characterised by a desire for absolute tyrannical power. Perceiving every living creature as a potential threat, the antipastoral strives to suppress and enslave them. Its maniacal self-centredness is the result of its desire to gain perpetual life (cf. Koppes, 7). As the absolute counterpart to the bucolic pastoral, the antipastoral attempts to avoid death by confronting the world and subduing the natural and human other (cf. ibid). It perceives nature's cycle and life's rhythm of deaths and rebirths as highly threatening to its desire to be independent and immortal. While the bucolic pastoral tries to avoid being born into the world, the antipastoral attempts to avoid death. In contrast to the bucolic pastoral's complete unity with the other and its stasis, the antipastoral is characterised by its actions, which are invariably directed against the other (cf. ibid). As the term 'antipastoral' denotes, antipastoral agents especially strive to erase all pastorality from the face of the earth. Pursuing absolute power, their tyrannical ideology is at complete odds with pastorality's emphasis on personal freedom and the protection of all living creatures' interests. Consequently, the antipastoral perceives the pastoral as the greatest threat to its survival and success. As this chapter will show, the antipastoral agents in *The Lord of the Rings* and, implicitly, in *The Hobbit* are Sauron and his emulator Saruman.

In contrast to all other characters in *The Lord of the Rings*, Sauron does not appear in person or speech. Instead, he is characterised by the visible signs of his antipastoral actions and tyrannical ideology. His depiction as an ever-watchful fiery eye emphasises his lack of personality. As a creature wholly defined by his greed for absolute power, Sauron has lost all individuality. He is the personification of tyranny and is only perceived as an evil will whose attention is incessantly turned to the outside world in order to wage war against the other. As Rose E. Zimbardo has pointed out, Sauron "has only negative identity. He is a dark shadow, the negation of positive being itself" (Zimbardo, 73). Interestingly, like all creatures in Tolkien's mythology, Sauron was initially created as a good being, a Maia. Only through the evil influence of Melkor, the fallen Vala, was he corrupted and started to strive "ever for the dominion of Middle-earth, to become a king over all kings and as a god unto Men" (*Sil*, 319). As an antipastoral agent, Sauron is antithetically opposed to the Valar, which is why he is associated with the East, the negative counterpart in Tolkien's mythology to the Valar's highly bucolic pastoral dwelling place in the West (cf. ibid). His special attention is focused on the destruction of all pastoral creatures as their privileged ties to the Valar's island Valinor and their unity with nature and fellow creatures offend his yearning for absolute power. *The Silmarillion* recounts how he lures the Númenoreans into rebellion against the Valar and brings about the fall of their pastoral island. Furthermore, his hatred of the elves' power and beauty induces him to trick them into forging Rings of Power. Intended by the bucolic elves as powerful tools for the healing and adorning of the earth, the Rings are initially associated with a pastoral lifestyle and the protection of the natural world. However, Sauron uses his antipastoral powers to subject them to his One Ring and thereby to pervert their intent.

Being defined solely by his pursuit of absolute power, Sauron is incapable of any other emotion but egomaniacal self-centeredness. Thus, the fellowship succeed in deceiving him, as he cannot conceive that anybody would not share his yearning for absolute power and might willingly destroy the One Ring (cf. *LotR*, 648). Sauron's tyrannical ideology envisages his personal self-aggrandisement and the extermination of all natural, and especially pastoral, life. As Christian Kölzer has stated, antipastoral rulers "verfolgen auf der grundlegendsten Ebene das Ziel, die gestiftete Schöpfungsordnung zu zerstören und sich an die Spitze einer neuen Ordnung zu setzten, die nicht mehr auf

den ursprünglichen Schöpfer der Welt ausgerichtet ist" (Kölzer, 173). In other words, they aim at replacing Tolkien's god-figure Illuvatar and becoming supreme ruler over the entire world. Only Sauron's slaves and servants, who are wholly subjected to his will and live in perpetual fear of him, are included in his vision. They are perverted bucolic pastoral life forms, whom Melkor has shaped through years of torture and suppression. According to *The Silmarillion*, Sauron's main force, the orcs, were once elves who were caught by Melkor in the First Age and under his torture degenerated into their orcish shape and mindset (cf. *Sil*, 47). Likewise, trolls were made in mockery of the ents (cf. *LotR*, 633). As only Illuvatar is able to create life in Tolkien's mythology, his antipastoral counterparts have to make do with perverting and mocking his creation (cf. *LotR*, 1195). Sauron copies his master's work by enslaving human kings (among them three pastoral Númenoreans) to his will and perverting them into his most faithful servants, the Nazgûl. Their dark shapes, which induce dread and terror in all living creatures, are devoid of individuality. As mere puppets of Sauron, they have become walking dead, whose only purpose is to serve their master's antipastoral pursuits. Whereas the pastoral creatures in Tolkien's mythology are usually associated with light and brightness, the antipastoral and its agents are consistently associated with darkness and shadow[102]. In clear opposition to the pastoral creatures, who are closely tied to nature's life force and revel in its bounty and beauty, the creatures perverted by the antipastoral agents are associated with death and destruction. Christian Kölzer has pointed out that good and evil in Tolkien's mythology are significantly characterised by their treatment of Illuvatar's order of creation:

> "Gut ist also derjenige, der die gestiftete Schöpfungsordung [...] vertritt und sie zu bewahren sucht, wobei er sich selbst innerhalb des Seinskosmos verorten und mit diesem in Interaktion treten muss. Böse sind die Gegner dieser Schöpfungsordnung, die jedoch keine echte Alternative zu ihr vertreten, sondern lediglich deren Negation, das Chaos" (Kölzer and Marcus Roso, 184).

Having no place in Illuvatar's order of creation, the perverted creatures represent the unnatural and damned. There is no indication in Tolkien's mythology that they can hope

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[102] For example, Sauron is also named "the Dark Lord" or simply "the Shadow" (*LotR*, 67); Mordor is continuously called "the Black Land" (*LotR*, 319), "the land of shadow" (*LotR*, 1198); the leader of the Nazgûl is called "shadow of despair" (*LotR*, 1071), while it is said about the Nazgûl in general that "darkness went with them, and they cried with the voices of death" (*Sil*, 346).

for redemption (cf. Kölzer, 163). Instead, they are personifications of the antipastoral's destructive and perverting powers and as such have no right to exist (cf. Kölzer, 164).

Sauron's war for absolute power does not only include the perversion of creatures but also the destruction and exploitation of nature. The countryside in and around Mordor is characterised by barrenness, bleakness, and death. The area approaching the gates of Mordor is a vast desolate landscape without plants, animals, or rational creatures. This is the negative counterpart to pastoral landscapes, where nature is vibrant and lush and home to many. Upon perceiving the desolation of Mordor, Sam understands that "here neither spring nor summer would ever come again. Here nothing lived, not even the leprous growths that feed on rottenness" (*LotR*, 825). The perpetual absence of spring and summer in Sauron's antipastoral realm stands in clear opposition to the pastoral realms, where spring and summer are the predominant seasons and even winters have mild weather. Sauron's perversion of pastoral nature becomes most apparent in the area around Minas Morgul, the home tower of the Nazgûl. Once a highly pastoral dwelling place of the Númenoreans, the area still features Númenorean architecture and flora, but they have been turned into bestial copies of their pastoral originals:

> "So they came slowly to the white bridge. [...] Wide flats lay on either bank, shadowy meads filled with pale white flowers. Luminous these were too, beautiful and yet horrible of shape, like the demented forms in an uneasy dream; and they gave forth a faint sickening charnel-smell; an odour of rottenness filled the air. From mead to mead the bridge sprang. Figures stood there at its head, carven with cunning in forms human and bestial, but all corrupt and loathsome. The water flowing beneath was silent, and it steamed, but the vapour that rose from it, curling and twisting about the bridge, was deadly cold. Frodo felt his senses reeling and his mind darkening" (*LotR*, 921).

The scene is commemorative of Frodo's first sight of the heart of Lothlórien, where he perceives small golden, white, and green flowers that "glimmered as a mist amid the rich hue of the grass" (*LotR*, 456). The grass is depicted as fragrant and the scene is lit by the afternoon sun. Upon reaching the elves' city, the fellowship pass over a white bridge into a highly bucolic setting, where clear white water spills from a fountain (cf. *LotR*, 459-60). The depiction of the bridge and flats in front of Minas Morgul offers an antipastoral counter image to this pastoral scene. Bucolic nature has been perverted into a manifestation of negative creation. Even art, the purest form of secondary creation and a defining feature of elvish culture, has been mocked and has produced bestial shapes

which emphasise the antipastoral's creation-denying powers. The results of its negation of life are even more pronounced in Mordor, which is depicted as dark, black, rough, grim, accursed, and bathed in Mount Doom's red light, which "glared against the stark rock faces, so that they seemed to be drenched with blood" (*LotR*, 1176). The last remains of nature are hostile and at death's door. There are bushes with very long thorns (cf. *LotR*, 1199) and springs of bitter and oily water (cf. *LotR*, 1204), but in the main the earth is barren dust and "all seemed ruinous and dead, a desert burned and choked" (*LotR*, 1207). Instead of nature, Sauron's lands feature crude industrial and military architecture. As Liam Campbell has pointed out in his substantial analysis of Tolkien's ecocritical message, Sauron is aware "that by destroying and mutilating the natural world, he is, in effect, wounding and weakening the elves" (Campbell, 146). Furthermore, his destruction of Middle-earth's natural environment is a direct assault against the Valar, whose creation it is and whose position of power he means to undermine (cf. ibid). Sauron's antipastoral lands are therefore perceived as a serious threat by the pastoral and human peoples of Middle-earth. Mordor's mutilated landscapes inspire despair and hopelessness in good creatures[103]. Where pastoral realms offer recuperation, healing, and hope, the antipastoral landscapes of Mordor are places of perversion, death, and despair. They are examples of what Middle-earth would become if Sauron succeeded in his war for absolute supremacy.

Sauron's antipastoral warfare finds an emulator in Saruman, the head of the White Council. Though his initial vocation is the fight against evil, the wizard is susceptible to Sauron's tyrannical ideology. His hunger for power is blatantly visible in his appeal to Gandalf for support of Sauron's cause: "there will be rich reward for those that aid it. As the Power grows, its proved friends will also grow; and the Wise [...] may with patience come at last to direct its courses, to control it" (*LotR*, 338). In his narcissistic megalomania, which mirrors that of Sauron, Saruman believes that he can ultimately beat the Dark Lord and establish a tyrannical rule of "Knowledge, Rule, Order" (ibid). In direct opposition to pastoral creatures, who seek knowledge solely in order to

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[103] For example, upon approaching Mordor's gate, Aragorn's host of men and the members of the fellowship recoil from the dead countryside: "So desolate were those places and so deep the horror that lay on them that some of the host were unmanned, and they could neither walk nor ride further north" (*LotR*, 1160).

connect with the natural world and other creatures, Saruman desires to accumulate knowledge as a means of power (cf. Campbell, 100). His desire to rule and establish order is expressive of his tyrannical ideology, which does not allow for personal freedom or diversity. In an attempt to establish his absolute rule, the wizard copies Sauron's industrial landscapes of warfare and destroys Isengard's natural habitats: "whereas it had once been green and fair, it was now filled with pits and forges. [...] Over all his works a dark smoke hung and wrapped itself about the sides of Orthanc" (*LotR*, 339). Saruman's perversion of natural life even takes on new forms for he has not only corrupted already existing life forms but has blended orcs with humans to engineer a new species (cf. *LotR*, 616). His estrangement from original creation is expressed in Treebeard's statement that "he has a mind of metal and wheels" (ibid). The wizard's unreserved utilisation of natural life for his own purposes is a clear mark of his antipastoral character. Treebeard's choice of words suggests "a replacement of nature – both agriculture and wildness – with machinery" (Dickerson and Evans, 195). Typical of an antipastoral agent, Saruman perceives other life forms as threats to his claim for supremacy and therefore aims at their annihilation. His appraisal of nature and other creatures is solely based on their usability as slaves and resources (cf. Campbell, 102). However, despite his attempts at beating Sauron in the war for primacy, Saruman remains only a copy of the Dark Lord and is doomed to lose against him (cf. *LotR*, 724).

6.2.2 The Perversion of the Pastoral: Unpastoral Creatures and the Irretrievability of Lost Pastorality

As shown in the theoretical chapter on the pastoral and the non-pastoral, unpastoral creatures are shaped through the actions of antipastoral agents, who aim for the complete destruction of the pastoral. As no one but Illuvatar possesses the power to create life in Tolkien's mythology, his rebellious antipastoral antagonists can only mock his creation by manipulating and corrupting already existing beings (cf. *LotR*, 1195). Thus, unpastoral characters are defined as creatures who were pastoral once, but who have lost most of their pastoral culture and identity due to the destructive actions of the antipastoral. In other words, they are the victims of antipastoral agents. Having been perverted through torture and manipulation, unpastoral creatures are generally characterised by an evil will and hostility towards others. They are further marked by self-centeredness and a deceitful character. In this, they are similar to their antipastoral

oppressors. However, they still display remnants of their original cultural knowledge, which clearly indicate their pastoral past. Also, in contrast to antipastoral agents, unpastoral creatures do not seek political power and have no ideology. Their aims are egoistic on a small scale: in the main, they wish for personal comfort, security, and even peace. This clearly separates them from the megalomaniac vision of antipastoral characters. Indeed, though some unpastoral creatures serve the antipastoral agents in their war for total tyrannical domination, their relationship is marked by fear and dislike. As the following analysis will show, even the orcs' support of their antipastoral master is based on fear and their unfree status as slaves. Gollum, on the other hand, is manipulated by the powers of Sauron's Ring and becomes a slave to its will. He is torturously caught between love and hatred for the Ring. In the case of the unpastoral trees of the Old Forest and Fangorn Forest, the unveiled hatred towards the antipastoral agents and their slaves is motivated by the antipastoral's ongoing destruction of the natural environment and their policy of suppression and annihilation. The death and mutilation of their king fuels their hatred of the antipastoral, which is the cause for the trees' degeneration from pastoral to unpastoral.

6.2.2.1 Gollum – "as a hobbit might"[104]

Gollum's degeneration from pastoral creature of hobbit kind to the unpastoral creature he is at the time of the narrative of *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* has been effected by more than 400 years of his possession of Sauron's Ring of Power. Being inseparably bound to its creator's tyrannical aims, the Ring is antipastoral itself and exerts great power over its bearer. As Gollum's perverted state is the result of the antipastoral Ring's manipulations, he has to be categorised as an unpastoral creature. Upon perceiving the Ring for the first time, Gollum's fall is immediate and irredeemable: In contrast to the other Ring bearers, he gains possession of the Ring through murder. Unlike Bilbo and Frodo, Gollum thus shows moral weakness and a proneness to criminal action even before he has come under the Ring's full influence. Therefore, neither John Ellison's statement that Gollum's "moral deterioration, though real enough, is a very long-drawn-out affair" (Ellison, 23), nor David Callaway's

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[104] *LotR*, 72.

observation that "Gollum is not more evil in the beginning than either Frodo or Bilbo" (Callaway, 17) take account of the violence with which he seizes the Ring. His subsequent degeneration is not only of mind but also of body. Having become photophobic and possessed by the Ring, he retreats deep into a mountain. There, he endures ages in complete isolation, darkness, and frugality. Thus, his reality becomes the opposite of that of his pastoral kin or of the Shire hobbits, who value communality, bright fertile lands, and plenty of good food. In *The Lord of the Rings*, Gollum's physical perversion is expressed by repeated comparisons to insects, amphibians, and reptiles[105]. This underlines the unnaturalness of his unpastoral state as well as his isolation from the community of unperverted beings.

Like all unpastoral creatures, Gollum's motifs are not political and he does not display a tendency to seeking tyrannical power. Though the Ring lends absolute power to its bearer if he seeks it, Gollum uses it only for the satisfaction of his ordinary needs - mainly to catch stray orcs for food. Most of the time, however, he hides the Ring on an island in a small pool (cf. *Hobbit*, 77-8). Once Bilbo has obtained the Ring, Gollum pursues its retrieval merely in order to regain possession of it. As the Ring has a strong hold on his mind and has enslaved him to its power, Gollum can no longer endure life without it. His desires, which are always egoistic and small-minded, usually do not show the megalomaniac character that marks the antipastoral agents' visions. Only once in the narrative does Gollum express fantasies of absolute power: "Lord Sméagol? Gollum the Great? The Gollum! Eat fish every day, three times a day, fresh from the sea. Most Precious Gollum!" (*LotR*, 828). Gollum's vision is as pathetic as Sam's short fantasies about absolute power in Mordor. Both imagine inflated visions of small pastoral delights such as regular and fresh food, or the cultivation of great gardens. These fantasies have no connection to the antipastoral agents' visions of real political power and the suppression of all creatures. Consequently, John Ellison's observation that Gollum's hunger for tyrannical power develops over the course of the narrative of *The Lord of the Rings* has to be refuted (cf. Ellison, 23).

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[105] He looks "like some large prowling thing of insect-kind" (*LotR*, 800), falls from a cliff "like a spider whose descending thread is snapped" (*LotR*, 802), and he slithers like a snake and jumps like a frog (cf. *LotR*, 950-51).

Gollum's pastoral origins are repeatedly remarked upon in *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*. He was once a member of a well-to-do family of hobbit kind and lived in a community not unlike those found in the Shire. His behaviour during the time of the narrative of both works suggests that even after more than 400 years of possessing Sauron's Ring of Power, Gollum has retained detailed memories of his early life. During his first appearance in Tolkien's mythology, in *The Hobbit*, Gollum immediately shows the same cultural knowledge as the hobbit Bilbo. Bilbo's appearance in his underground cave reminds Gollum of his past interaction with his own kin. Thus, he remembers riddle games and suggests playing one with the stranger "until he found out more about the sword and the hobbit" (*Hobbit*, 70). Bilbo's motivation in accepting Gollum's proposition is the same – he "was anxious to agree, until he found out more about the creature" (ibid). The great similarity in both creatures' thinking underlines their closeness in kin[106]. Like the hobbit, Gollum has full knowledge of the riddle game and its rules as well as of the correct answers to the more common riddles. The game "brought up memories of ages and ages and ages before, when he lived with his grandmother in a hole in a bank by a river" (*Hobbit*, 72). In *The Lord of the Rings*, Gandalf refers to this scene when he says about Gollum: "There was a little corner of his mind that was still his own, and light came through it, as through a chink in the dark: light out of the past. It was actually pleasant, I think, to hear a kindly voice again, bringing up memories of wind, and trees, and sun on the grass, and such forgotten things" (*LotR*, 72). At the same time, Gollum's moral corruption is well advanced, which is why he asks Bilbo to stake his life in their game. Such an agreement perverts the pastoral riddle game by turning it into a gamble with one of the contesters' life. All the same, Gollum's pastoral cultural knowledge and also a basic sense of morality have remained intact. Thus, he does not cheat during the riddle game, as he is aware that it is

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[106] In *The Lord of the Rings*, there is repeated emphasis of Gollum's and the hobbits' kinship (cf. Callaway, 17). This serves to show that Gollum acts as counterpart to Frodo and Bilbo, the other Ring bearers of hobbit kind. As a negative counter image to the hobbits, he embodies the perversion and degeneration a Ring bearer has to endure if he is under the Ring's influence for a long period of time. Thus, he constantly reminds Frodo and Sam of Frodo's possible fate if the Ring takes too strong a hold on him (cf. Zimbardo, 72).

ancient and sacred in hobbit culture (cf. *Hobbit*, 76)[107]. One part of Gollum's identity is still connected with his former pastoral self, though the influence of the antipastoral Ring of Power constantly suppresses this connection. The long survival of a part of Gollum's original pastoral identity proves that hobbits, and creatures of closely related kin, are extremely resistant to antipastoral influence: "Even Gollum was not wholly ruined. He had proved tougher than even one of the Wise would have guessed – as a hobbit might" (*LotR*, 72). The growing division between his perverted unpastoral self and his original pastoral self gradually effects the development of a split personality. As many scenes in *The Lord of the Rings* show, Gollum's personality alternates between his original self, 'Sméagol', and his perverted self, 'Gollum'. Whenever Sméagol surfaces, his 'humanity' becomes apparent. For instance, he touches Frodo's knee in a caress while the hobbits are asleep:

> "For a fleeting moment, could one of the sleepers have seen him, they would have thought that they beheld an old weary hobbit, shrunken by the years that had carried him far beyond his time, beyond friends and kin, and the fields and streams of youth, an old starved pitiable thing" (*LotR*, 935).

As W.H. Auden emphasises, "Gollum's motives in guiding them are not wholly evil; one part of him, of course, is waiting for an opportunity to steal the Ring, but another part feels gratitude and genuine affection for Frodo" (Auden, 49). The struggle between Sméagol and Gollum becomes most apparent in their secret conversation, in which they debate whether they should lead the hobbits into Shelob's den. As Callaway has pointed out in his essay, Sméagol shines through repeatedly in the narrative; and he is only irretrievably lost after Gollum's capture by Faramir, which he understands as a betrayal of trust by the hobbits (cf. Callaway, 17). However, for as long as Sméagol still exists, there is a sliver of hope that Gollum might be cured. As Callaway points out: "For a creature to possess the Ring for this long and not yet be 'devoured' by the dark power and still have hope for a 'cure', or still have a fraction of good tucked away somewhere in his mind, shows strength of will, and it is this strength which earns Gollum the pity of those who understand what possessing the Ring can be" (Callaway, 16). Still, after the

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[107] Another sign of the survival of moral feeling in Gollum is that he feels guilt after murdering his friend Déagol and deals with it by inventing the lie that he rightfully obtained the Ring as a birthday present (cf. *LotR*, 74).

disappearance of Sméagol, all hope for a cure of Gollum is lost. At the end of the quest, on Mount Doom, Sam perceives Gollum as "a creature now wholly ruined and defeated, yet filled with a hideous lust and rage" (cf. *LotR*, 1234).

6.2.2.2 Orcs – "Like old times"[108]

Though orcs are clearly described in very negative terms in *The Hobbit*[109] and are strongly associated with the antipastoral antagonists Sauron and Saruman in *The Lord of the Rings*, their origins are bucolic pastoral. In the First Age of the world, Melkor, the fallen Vala, catches elves and corrupts them "by slow arts of cruelty" (*Sil*, 47). Enslaved and tortured, the elves gradually degenerate into orcs, becoming their original pastoral kin's greatest enemies (cf. ibid). As Melkor's actions are directed against the creator of the world, orcs thus become embodiments of the antipastoral's rebellion against Illuvatar; they are negative creation (cf. Kölzer, 163-4). At the time of the narrative of *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*, orcs are inseparably tied to the antipastoral characters' war for absolute power. As their slaves, orcs actively fight, threaten, torture, and kill in Sauron and Saruman's names. Thus, together with the Nazgûl, they are the main antagonists of the pastoral and the other good peoples of Middle-earth. Though orcs show signs of moral values that are consistent with good creatures' values (such as loyalty, family honour, and friendship), their actions usually betray those ideas. As Tom Shippey argues, orcs possess morality as it is a necessity for communal life. However, in the eyes of the good creatures, orcish morality is foul and cruel (cf. Shippey, 245). For example, the two orcs' in Cirith Ungol condemn the abandonment of a friend as a "regular Elvish trick" – elvish, from their point of view, being a derogative term for uncultured and savage. At the same time, they fondly remember finding one of their comrades in Shelob's fatal nets: "How we laughed! She'd forgotten him, maybe, but we didn't touch him" (*LotR*, 969). Consistent with their kin's usual cruelty in their dealings with each other, the two orcs do not show any conscience of the disloyalty and cruelty they had shown towards their friend. The orcs' mutual distrust and violent nature becomes even more apparent whenever different groups and breeds of orcs have

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[108] *LotR*, 965.
[109] Where they are called 'goblins'.

dealings with each other. Their arguments usually end in fights and killings[110].
Concomitant with their physical perversion, the orcs' morality has been corrupted.
However, the existence of values in their culture shows that they still possess a
rudimentary ability to distinguish between good and bad behaviour – though it does not
usually prevent them from choosing evil over good themselves. This ability is a residue
of the orcs' original pastoral nature, as their values are consistent with elvish and other
good creatures' values. Furthermore, they show a high degree of playfulness and a
strong sense of humour, which is usually a sign of good-naturedness (cf. Shippey, 247)
and is closely connected to pastoral culture[111]. However, in contrast to the pastoral
creatures' playfulness, orcs display a cruel sense of humour. Their "'fun' usually
derives from torture, their jokes are aggressively sarcastic, and their mirth comes from
seeing others (including their own comrades [...]) suffering or helpless" (Shippey, 247).
Like their morality, their original pastoral playfulness has been perverted in the course
of their corruption into orcs by Melkor.

Though they are fully perverted and without hope for a cure or redemption, orcs still
show characteristics that connect them with their original elvish kin. Besides showing
signs of morality and playfulness, they still possess healing skills, though their
treatments are very coarse and lack the elves' sophistication[112]. Furthermore, and most
importantly, orcs have retained the ability to experience nostalgia. This emotion, which
is of central importance in elvish culture, as will be shown in chapter 7.1, is expressed
by the orc Shagrat in his friendly conversation with his companion in Cirith Ungol.
Complaining about the war and their leaders, the two orcs envision their lives after
Sauron's victory. Expressing hopes for a better life without any superiors, Shagrat
exclaims: "Ah! [...] Like old times" (*LotR*, 965). The expression of nostalgia is a clear
sign of the orcs' elvish origins. Though their actions are highly egoistic, cruel, and

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[110] For example, the uruk-hai and orcs that capture Merry and Pippin turn against each other and start to kill each other as they cannot agree on the treatment and destiny of their prisoners (cf *LotR*, 582). Also, Sam and Frodo witness the killing of one orc by another in Mordor (cf. *LotR*, 1211).
[111] Especially the hobbits are characterised by their love of games, riddles, and fun (cf. *LotR*, 2). Furthermore, the Rivendell elves are described as playful and rhyme loving creatures in *The Hobbit* (cf. *Hobbit*, 47-48).
[112] The orcs' drink restores Merry and Pippin on their excruciating journey with them. Furthermore, the orcs heal Merry's cut, though a brown scar remains (cf. *LotR*, 584).

savage, they thus show emotions not unlike their pastoral antagonists. The reader even learns that orcs do not feel much love for the Nazgûl and their lord Sauron (cf. *LotR*, 965)[113]. Furthermore, they suffer from the war and feel fear and terror in the face of death: In The *Lord of the Rings*, it is explicitly said that they were "being driven unwilling to their Dark Lord's wars; all they cared for was to get the march over and escape the whip" (*LotR*, 1217). This clearly distinguishes them from their antipastoral master and marks them as unpastoral. All the same, the orcs encountered in the texts do not show any indication that they question their ruler's decisions and commands. Instead, they always obediently execute orders and identify with their master's policy and decisions, as the argument between Sauron's orcs and Saruman's uruk-hai shows (cf. Kölzer, 164). As Christian Kölzer points out, there is no hope of redemption for orcs, as they have no part in the godly order of creation (Kölzer, 162). Consequently, some critics' attempts to redeem orcs by pointing out that they show signs of morality and humanity (cf. Tally 2010, 20) is based on a misreading of Tolkien's mythology, which only allows for redemption of the unperverted beings created by Illuvatar. Despite their pastoral origins and some very basic remains of their original culture and knowledge, orcs are without hope of salvation and Tolkien's works never question the moral rightness of their slaying by the good peoples.

6.2.2.3 Trees - "I feel a great wrath about me"[114]

Trees own a special position in Tolkien's mythology. In contrast to the rest of Middle-earth's vegetation, they display anthropomorphic characteristics and are thus both fauna and flora at the same time. Often, the transition between tree and rational being is a fluid one. The ents as rational tree-beings are the epitome of the anthropomorphisation of trees. As Treebeard explains to the hobbits: "Most of the trees are just trees, of course; but many are half awake. Some are quite wide awake, and a few are, well, ah, well getting *Entish*. That is going on all the time" (*LotR*, 609). In a reverse process, ents can grow sleepy and slowly become 'tree-ish' (cf. ibid). Consequently, many of the trees of Mirkwood, the Old Forest, as well as Fangorn Forest, display behaviour akin to that of

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[113] Also, in the Silmarillion it is said that "the Orcs loathed the Master whom they served in fear, the maker only of their misery" (*Sil*, 47).
[114] Legolas in the Huorn wood in front of Helm's Deep (cf. *LotR*, 712).

rational creatures: they watch and listen (cf. *Hobbit*, 129), grasp, whisper, plot, move, attack, and feel (cf. *LotR*, 144). Some trees are further able to walk across great distances and to talk (cf. *LotR*, 737). The descriptions of trees in the texts repeatedly emphasise their anthropomorphic character through the use of active verbs: "[...] the boughs appeared to be bending this way and that so as to come above the flames, while the upper branches were stooping down; the brown leaves now stood out stiff, and rubbed together like many cold cracked hands taking comfort in the warmth" (*LotR*, 574). The texts' presentation of trees as half-rational or fully rational beings associated with individual landscapes allows for their definition as pastoral and unpastoral. As shown in the above analysis, the ents and entwives are clearly pastoral, as they live in close communion with their landscapes. The fusion of nature and culture is strongest in this tree-ish species. Like all other pastoral beings, anthropomorphic trees can degenerate into unpastoral beings through the actions of antipastoral agents. In his essay, *Tolkien's Imaginary Nature*, Michael Brisbois introduces the term 'wrathful nature', into which he includes the unpastoral trees in Tolkien's texts. Wrathful nature, according to Brisbois, "is aggressive and takes an often-violent role in *The Lord of the Rings*" (Brisbois, 208).

The forests encountered in *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* are remnants of Middle-earth's primeval great forest, which covered a vast expanse before Sauron's first war. In Treebeard's memory, the Elder Days' sylvan flora was deeply pastoral: "The woods were like the woods of Lothlórien, only thicker, stronger, younger. And the smell of the air! I used to spend a week just breathing" (*LotR*, 610). Except for Lothlórien, which is protected by Galadriel's Ring of Power, Middle-earth's forests are diminished and lose most of their pastorality through Sauron's antipastoral actions, who pursues two goals with his ecocidal policies: On the one hand, they are motivated by his need for natural resources for his armies and industrial warfare; on the other hand, they are part of his scheme to gain absolute power by suppressing and enslaving every independent life form. Thus, having to witness the death of their close kin and the diminishment of their home landscapes, the pastoral trees come under extreme emotional and ecological pressure to which they react with anger and violence. Though

they still contain pastoral dwelling places[115], most parts of the forests are inhospitable to strangers at the time of the narrative. In the Old Forest, the trees are reported to hem in travellers (cf. *LotR*, 145). Furthermore, they mislead the questing hobbits and cause them to lose their bearings. Old Man Willow, the malicious tree in the heart of the Old Forest, even tries to kill them. The trees of Mirkwood and Fangorn Forest show a similar degree of hostility towards the intruding protagonists. Similar to Frodo's fellowship in the Old Forest, Bilbo's company gets lost in Mirkwood. Furthermore, the travellers are threatened by starvation during their journey through the forest, as its hostility includes withholding nourishment from strangers: "Nothing wholesome could they see growing in the wood, only funguses and herbs with pale leaves and unpleasant smell" (*Hobbit*, 138). This clearly puts the unpastoral forests in juxtaposition to pastoral landscapes' natural bounty. In Fangorn Forest, Legolas detects watchfulness and anger (cf. *LotR*, 639). Surrounded by Fangorn's Huorns in front of Helm's Deep, the company "heard the creaking and groaning of boughs, and far cries, and a rumour of wordless voices, murmuring angrily" (*LotR*, 712). Only with Treebeard's hospitable help can the hobbits survive and prosper in Fangorn Forest. Tom Bombadil's stories confirm that the trees' cruel hostility is the result of the antipastoral's attack upon them and their kin: "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" (*LotR*, 170).

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[115] In Fangorn Forest, the ents still occupy lush and fertile homes, which provide them with nourishment and comfortable shelter. In Mirkwood, the Woodelves dwell within their caves and huts among the trees; as outlined in the analysis of their pastorality, their part of the forest still shows some characteristics of a pastoral place. In the Old Forest, Tom Bombadil occupies his pastoral home, which offers shelter from the dangers of the forest and provides its inhabitants and guests with wholesome meals.

6.3 Pastoral and Antipastoral Potential - Men's Special Position Within Tolkien's Mythology

In addition to the analysis of the clearly demarcated pastoral and non-pastoral within Tolkien's works, it is necessary to also examine the role of men therein and to elucidate why they cannot be classified as belonging to either of the two categories. Though some critics like Janet Brennan Croft or G.R. Brown have explicitly ranked Tolkien's men and their environments as pastoral, such classification is mainly based on these critics' diffuse or insufficient definition of the pastoral. Both Croft and Brown only use 'pastoral' as a vague term for being "in harmony with nature" (Croft 2004a, 34)[116] or belonging to the 'good people' (cf. Brown)[117]. This subchapter will therefore draw on the detailed definition of the pastoral given in the theoretical part of this thesis to show that the men in Tolkien's mythology form a class of their own that is neither clearly pastoral nor non-pastoral but has the potential to be both.

In order to understand men's special position within Tolkien's works, it is necessary to briefly look at their entire history and thus start with the time of their creation. In *The Silmarillion*, men have a peripheral role as their history starts much later than that of the elves, who are the First-born. Men, the Second-born or Followers, are thus born into a world already fully established and caught in ongoing conflict between good and evil. Though they are connected to the elves in that they are both 'Children of Illuvatar', and thus direct creations of him, men occupy a special position within Middle-earth: they are given the gift of mortality, which determines that their lives are linear and end after a short while on earth. Their destination after death is unknown and has not been revealed by Illuvatar. It is said, however, that they leave the world, which is why their entire being is much less strongly tied to it than that of the immortal elves, who call them Guests or Strangers (cf. *Sil*, 35-36). The result of men's comparatively short duration on earth is that they are mainly characterised through their actions and moral

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[116] Due to her broad definition of the pastoral, Croft classifies Minas Tirith and some of the dwarves' caves as pastoral (cf. Croft 2004a, 34). The Riders of Rohan, who, after all, live in close harmony with their horses and environment and should also be counted as pastoral based on her definition, are not mentioned by Croft.

[117] Brown describes the Rohirrim as pastoral, while he remains vague about Gondor's status (cf. Brown, 86).

decisions[118]. This clearly places them in the regenerative heroic category defined by Koppes and outlined in the theoretical chapter on the pastoral. Unlike the pastoral creatures, whose realms are strongly characterised by their natural landscapes, men have their main dwelling places within man-made environments. Thus, the Rohirrim and the Men of Gondor, the two human races mainly encountered in *The Lord of the Rings*, are most strongly attached to their respective cities, Edoras and Minas Tirith. The natural landscapes of their countries are much less significant for their characterisation and play a peripheral role in the narrative[119]. The same can be said for the men of Lake-town in *The Hobbit*, whose main places of residence lie within the sheltered confines of their town and whose only relation to their environment is their use of it for trade and agriculture[120]. Altogether, the depiction of cities as the hearts of the domains of men serves to underline men's separateness from nature and their pragmatic attitude towards it. Their regenerative heroic state is further expressed by their value system, which places great emphasis on warriors' valour and glory. Unlike pastoral peoples, who only treat war as a necessary evil to defend themselves, men define themselves through their heroic actions. This renders them especially susceptible to the treacherous influence of evil, as their craving for glory and fame is tied to a will for power for its own sake, which is lacking in pastoral peoples. This mixture in many instances leads to the corruption of otherwise good men, as is shown in Isildur, Denethor, Boromir, and, for a while, Theoden.

Besides being mortal and thus less bound to the earth and its nature than immortal creatures, men also form a class of their own on a moral level. As Illuvatar chose to give them more freedom than any other creature in his world, men are less bound to the

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[118] A point also made by Thomas Honegger (cf. Honegger, 326).

[119] The landscapes of Rohan and Gondor merely appear as settings through which the characters move on their journeys and against which some of the action is played out. Only Ithilien, a pastoral pocket within Gondor, occupies a special position, as it is an important means in the characterisation of the Númenoreans, the ancestors of Gondor's people.

[120] Though little is said of their agriculture, the men of Lake-town must have vineyards and wineries as their trade of wine with the elves of Mirkwood is recounted in some length (cf. *Hobbit*, 165).

initial music with which the world was created and which predetermines its fate[121] than any of the other creature. By this, men's detachment from the workings of providence and the effects of their mortality are emphasised. As Janet B. Croft has pointed out, men's freedom of choice in connection with their mortality lends their actions greater moral weight than those of immortal beings. Facing an unknown destiny after death, men's decision to risk their lives in the great battle against evil, which spans Middle-earth's entire history, "makes them even more effective actors in this battle, far more than mere weapons" (Croft 2010, 147). However, one consequence of their freedom is that men are more fallible than other creatures to make wrong decisions and be led astray, for their mortality troubles them and they run the danger of using their freedom for the wrong ends (cf. *Sil*, 35-36). As moral decisions, in Tolkien's mythology, are always closely related to environmental attitudes, men's choices for good or bad always determine the degree in which they can be related to pastoral or non-pastoral lifestyles. Based on the example of the history of Númenor, it will briefly be shown that men form a very heterogeneous group, whose members have the capability for both pastoral and antipastoral lifestyles and attitudes.

After their creation by Illuvatar, the majority of men soon fall prey to the deceptions and false promises of Melkor (then called Morgoth), who in Tolkien's mythology is the source of all evil and the most powerful opponent of Illuvatar. In the Great Battle that leads to the overthrow and banishment of Melkor from the world, men, therefore, fight on the side of evil and, after their defeat, live in unhappiness and darkness. Only a small

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[121] All other creatures are also capable of making personal decisions for good or bad, but it is repeatedly mentioned in Tolkien's works that fate and some remote power influence many of the main events in the narrative. Thus, for example, Gandalf tells Frodo that Bilbo was "*meant* to find the Ring, and *not* by its maker" (*LotR*, 73; *emphasis in original*). This clearly alludes to Illuvatar's design for the world and all its Ages, which was expressed in the music that created it. It is such, that the free actions of men and all other creatures, though they can change and disrupt the world's design and history for lengthy periods, never change the overall outcome of the Ages and the world's fate. The result of this is the overall development of the world towards a prescribed end. This way, even the most evil actions ultimately produce good, for every action, even the most evil, has its source in Illuvatar and thus contributes to the final completion of the world's destiny. As Illuvatar tells Melkor, Tolkien's equivalent of Satan: "And thou, Melkor, shalt see that no theme may be played that hath not its uttermost source in me, nor can any alter the music in my despite. For he that attempteth this shall prove but mine instrument in the devising of things more wonderful, which he himself hath not imagined" (*Sil*, 5-6). About men's fallibility, Illuvatar states: "These too in their time shall find that all that they do redounds at the end only to the glory of my work" (*Sil*, 36). For a more detailed analysis of free will, disobedience, and choice in Tolkien's mythology see Thomas Fornet-Ponse and Janet B. Croft 2010.

group of men joins the side of Illuvatar in the Great Battle and fights alongside his Valar and the elves. Accordingly, they receive a reward for their good deeds in the form of a new dwelling place situated in the ocean near Valinor and the Isle of Eressëa[122]: Andor, the Land of Gift, also called Númenor. In bringing men so close to the blessed land Valinor and the similarly pastoral island Eressëa, the Valar enable the human race to live in pastoral bliss and enjoy its comforts and beauty unimpededly. It is interesting to note that, thus, a small group of Tolkien's men gain a pastoral state through the gratitude of the Valar, who give it to them as a gift. This means that, unlike the elves, men are not pastoral creatures *ab origine* and cannot achieve a pastoral lifestyle by themselves. Conversely, they are neither created as non-pastoral creatures. Instead, their special status as free mortals lends them the potential to choose their lifestyle freely and to be individually changed in consequence. Due to the Valars' generosity, the men of Númenor develop new characteristics in their pastoral abode: their lives lengthen considerably, they grow taller than usual men, gain wisdom and glory, and know no sickness (cf. *Sil*, 311). Furthermore, they learn the elvish language and develop the elvish ability to communicate with horses in such a way that "their favourite steeds [...] could be summoned at need by thought alone" (*Tales*, 169). In contrast, the majority of men, who had joined Melkor and were therefore excluded from the Valars' gift, have to endure "the Dark Years of Men" in Middle-earth and have developed backward (cf. *Sil*, 312), so that they have "grown weak and fearful" (*Sil*, 314).

The Island of Númenor is described in highly pastoral terms: created by the Valar, it is untouched by the evil that is harming Middle-earth. Instead, it is "a country fair and fruitful" that the men see "shimmering in a golden haze" upon arrival (*Sil*, 311). Shaped like a five-pointed star, Númenor is separated into six regions. Especially the centre, Mittalmar, is described in terms highly commemorative of the classical pastorals of Theocritus and Vergil, for it is a region of grasslands and pastures. In its centre stands the tall mountain Meneltarma, whose summit is used by the king as a place of worship of Illuvatar. Only few trees grow in Mittalmar and the grasslands, especially those in the

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[122] The Island near Valinor and dwelling place of the Eldar (the High Elves) who had originally been banished from Valinor, but who were allowed to return into the West after they had fought against Melkor in the Great Battle.

south-west, are the regions of the Shepherds[123]. The landscape's lush fertility and gentle slopes appear in contrast to the rough mountain (cf. *Tales*, 165-167). This description seems to bear some resemblance to ancient pastoral depictions of Arcadia, whose mountainous landscape was also portrayed as a mixture of lush pastures and rough countryside in which the shepherds tended their flocks. Another similarity is the landscape's association with god or, in the case of ancient Greece, the gods, for Arcadia was traditionally considered to be the home of Pan and other mythological creatures, while Númenor's mountain, Meneltarma, provides a direct link to Illuvatar. This is also expressed in its name, which in English means 'Pillar of the Heavens' (cf. *Tales*, 166).

Another highly pastoral feature of Númenor is the Bay of Eldanna in the far west of the island. In Tolkien's mythology, the West signifies goodness and pastorality, as the Blessed West is the location of Valinor and thus the dwelling place of the Valar. Conversely, the East is associated with non-pastoral creatures and evil. Thus, the Bay of Eldanna's western location already marks it out as being associated with the highest possible level of pastorality, Valinor. In fact, facing towards Eressëa, the haven of Eldanna is frequently visited by elvish ships and thus functions as the main link between the High Elves and the Númenoreans. Númenor's near-paradisiacal state also finds expression in Eldanna's flora: through the generosity of the elves, trees from Eressëa have found their way to the Land of Gift and now grow abundantly in its western region. Most special among them are the Mallorn trees, which in shape resemble beech trees. Their bark is silver and their leaves are "pale green above and beneath [...] silver, glittering in the sun; in the autumn they did not fall, but turned to pale gold" (*Tales*, 168). In spring and summer, the Mallorn trees bear golden blossoms and lose their leaves, so that during these two seasons, the Mallorn groves are "carpeted and roofed with gold" (ebd.). As pointed out above with regard to Lothlórien's flora, the Mallorn trees are strong symbols for bucolic pastorality within Tolkien's world, as they represent the blissful, unblemished state of the western countries. The repeated emphasis of the golden colour of their leaves and flowers, which produce golden-

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[123] It is interesting to note that Tolkien capitalises 'the Shepherds', while he does not use capital letters for other occupational titles. This seems to lend the shepherds of Númenor a special significance, though Tolkien only mentions them in passing and does not offer any further depiction of their lives and occupations.

coloured groves in spring and summer, is commemorative of Hesiod's term 'Golden Age', which uses the metal's name to express the unsurpassable virtue of this age and its people. Númenor's unblemished pastoral state is further emphasised by the elves' gift of another tree which has even more symbolic significance than the Mallorns: Nimloth, the White Tree. Nimloth's parentage directly goes back to Galathilion, the White Tree that grows in the elves' city in Valinor, whose image was fashioned after Telperion, one of the Two Trees of Valinor. The Two Trees of Valinor have special significance in Tolkien's mythology as they symbolise superlative creation unblemished by evil. Consequently, the elves' gift of Nimloth underlines the Númenoreans' untainted pastorality most explicitly and establishes a direct link between Númenor and the highly bucolic elvish dwelling places in Valinor and Eressëa.

In contrast to the biblical Eden story or the Golden Age myth, life in Númenor is defined by the men's active occupation in their respective crafts. Though nature is lush and fertile, and therefore eases the burden of human labour, food has to be obtained through agricultural and maritime work (cf. *Tales*, 168-170). However, in accordance with a pastoral lifestyle, work is hardly mentioned and when it is, it is depicted as a means of self-expression rather than a burden. Furthermore, men's agricultural endeavours are aided by Númenor's beneficial weather, which is "ever apt to the needs and liking of Men" and thus another indication of the island's pastorality (*Sil*, 331). Work is a means of self-fulfilment, which is shown in the craftsmen, who have learned most of their skills from the elves and make swords only in order to preserve the craft, for there is peace for long ages and weapons are not used. Also, fishing and seafaring are popular occupations, as the Númenoreans take delight in the sea and hold rowing and sailing contests purely for their enjoyment (cf. *Tales*, 171). This is another motif which connects the depictions of Númenor to the pastoral tradition, as the Númenorean aquatic contests have resonances of the Arcadian shepherds' singing contests.

Númenor's pastoral bliss is eventually lost due to the men's insatiable hunger for benefits beyond their reach. Their dwelling in the Land of Gift is bound to the rule never to sail further west than within sight of Númenor's coast. Thus, they are not allowed to reach Eressëa or Valinor. The reason for this is the Valar's fear that men might become dissatisfied with their mortal state if they perceive the unchanging lands and their immortal inhabitants. However, this ban eventually induces anger and

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dissatisfaction in many of the Númenoreans, as they yearn to travel west and desire "to escape from death and the ending of delight, grew strong upon them; and ever as their power and glory grew greater their unquiet increased" (*Sil*, 315). Thus, the special position of men within Tolkien's mythology finally causes them to destruct their own pastorality, for their mortality scares them and they fall prey to their voracity for immortality and even greater power. Slowly, this change in the men's hearts is reflected in Númenor's culture and landscapes, which eventually lose their pastorality and become antipastoral. Under Sauron's[124] tutelage, the men of Númenor begin to worship Melkor and gainsay Illuvatar's existence (cf. *Sil*, 325). They further turn against the elves and sever all their connections with them. Númenor's pastorality is thus irretrievably lost, which is most strongly expressed in the final felling of Nimloth. In its antipastoral state, the Land of Gift becomes the reverse of its original state, for men kill each other in their agony and the weather becomes violent and rough (cf. *Sil*, 328, 331-2). Finally, the Númenoreans sail into the forbidden West to wage war against the Valar and attain immortality by force. Thus, their actions are antipastoral twofold, for not only do they destroy and pervert their own pastoral lifestyle and environment, but they also aim at subjecting and destroying the epitome of pastorality, Valinor. Their megalomania induces Illuvatar to destroy their fleet and the isle of Númenor. He severs Valinor and Eressëa from the earth so that they are "removed from the 'physical' world, and not reachable by material means" (*Letters*, 186). Thus, the blissful pastoral lands of the West become inaccessible for all creatures living in Middle-earth, except the High Elves, who are still allowed to sail there, though without the possibility of returning to Middle-earth. For men, the end of Númenor means the loss of their opportunity to lead truly pastoral lives.

Altogether, the history of Númenor clearly illustrates men's great potential to shift their position on the pastoral – non-pastoral scale. Fear of their mortality makes them especially fallible to evil's seductions, which is why "it seems to the Elves that Men resemble Melkor most of all the Ainur[125]" (*Sil*, 36). However, some men are capable of steadiness and of refusing the lures of evil, which is exemplified by the Faithful

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[124] Melkor's disciple and one of the Maiar, who are helpers of the Valar.
[125] Another name for the Valar.

Númenoreans, the ancestors of Aragorn's Dúnedain and the Men of Gondor. Keeping steadfast to Illuvatar and the Valar, they renounce the Númenoreans' rebellion and, instead, sail to Middle-earth. They bring with them a seedling of Nimloth, whose fruit they had obtained before it was cut down. In Middle-earth, they found the kingdom of Gondor and build proud cities. Nimloth's seedling is planted in the king's court, where it flowers until Gondor's glory begins to fade. Gondor's process of slow degeneration is due to a number of reasons, the main being continuing wars against its neighbour Sauron, its king Isildur's decision to keep the One Ring after he has cut it from Sauron's finger, the Númenoreans comingling with other men, and Aragorn's exile in the North. Consequently, at the time of the narrative of *The Lord of the Rings*, Gondor is under acute threat from Mordor and is "falling year by year into decay; and already it lacked half the men that could have dwelt at ease there" (*LotR*, 984). Thus, the High Men of Númenor have degenerated into ordinary men, Middle People, who value war for itself and live far removed from the elves, "but with memory of other things" (*LotR*, 887). The Gondorians' pastoral past can only be detected in Ithilien, "the garden of Gondor", though it is occasionally invaded by creatures from Mordor, who have left signs of antipastoral destruction and mutilation (*LotR*, 850). However, the remains of its flora's pastorality have a reviving effect on Frodo and Sam, who "breathed deep, and suddenly Sam laughed, for heart's ease not for jest" (*LotR*, 850-1). In the Third Age, only Aragorn and his Dúnedain still bear a strong resemblance to their Númenorean ancestors. In Aragorn, the Númenorean unity of elvish and human culture is re-established, for he grows up in Rivendell and is thus deeply influenced by elvish culture. Therefore, his return to Gondor and his reign, for a while, re-establish some of Númenor's pastoral bliss in Middle-earth, which is symbolised by the newly flowering seedling of the White Tree, Nimloth's descendant. Aragorn's pastoral qualities are reinforced by his marriage to Arwen, who, together with other elves, supports the establishment of the highest possible level of pastorality during that Age. Thus, Gondor is turned into an urban pastoral[126] for some time, as it "was made more fair than it had ever been, even in the days of its first glory; and it was filled with trees and with fountains, [...] and all was healed and made good" (*LotR,* 1268-9). Ithilien is turned into

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[126] For a definition of urban pastoral see chapter 4.2.2 of this thesis.

a pastoral garden under Faramir's rule and with the help of the Woodelves who come to live there for a while. "The days that followed were golden, and Spring and Summer joined and made revel together in the fields of Gondor" (*LotR*, 290). However this state, whose description as 'golden', fertile, and warm is reminiscent of man's state in the Golden Age, is only a passing phase in the history of Middle-earth. As Tolkien's posthumously published attempt at a sequel to *The Lord of the Rings* shows, men are not capable of preserving their pastoral bliss due to their, in Tolkien's words, "quick satiety with good" (*Letters,* 344). The short narrative, which was never completed as Tolkien decided that it was "[n]ot worth doing", is set 150 years after Sauron's fall and shows that Gondor's society is declining again (ibid). A secret society is at work and reintroduces evil. Only the small number of inhabitants who still remember the days before Aragorn's reign can perceive the danger of this development; the younger Gondorians damage the environment and "played at Orcs" (*Peoples*, 412). Thus, the pastoral interludes in human history are very few and short-lived as "[d]eep indeed run the roots of Evil. [...] Let men hew it as often as they may, it will thrust up shoots again as soon as they turn aside"[127] (*Peoples*, 411). According to Tolkien, man is incapable of maintaining a state of pastoral bliss as he "in times of peace, justice and prosperity, would become discontented and restless" and thus open for evil thoughts and deeds (*Letters,* 344).

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[127] That evil cannot finally be defeated in Tolkien's mythology is due to it being interwoven with the music of the Valar, with which the world was created. One of the Valar, Melkor, starts to include themes of his own into the theme given to the Valar by Illuvatar. He thus starts "a war of sound" whose disharmonic music creates the world (*Sil*, 5). This way, evil is woven into the world's history and will only end with the world's end.

7   Pastoral Longing and Homesickness: Intratextual Nostalgia of the Pastoral Creatures in *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit*

Pastoral writing is strongly tied to nostalgia[128]. It satisfies its audience's nostalgic longing for a better life by offering them ideal worlds that are usually located in a mythological past. By consuming pastoral literature, the readers are thus able to escape their unsatisfying present and discover a new sense of communality, natural beauty, and comfort. The close ties between man and nature, which underlie pastoral art, convey a feeling of home, which promises compensation for the audience's real-life circumstances. Thus, pastoral art is an important means of expressing and satisfying nostalgic longing for a better way of life. As shown in the theoretical chapter on nostalgia, the nostalgic longing of the writer and their audience should be termed extratextual nostalgia, as it establishes a connection between reality and the fictional text. Additionally, the theoretical chapter on the pastoral argued that extratextual nostalgia is usually the only type of nostalgia detectable in the pastoral genre, whereas the pastoral mode can also easily appear in conjunction with intratextual nostalgia. Intratextual nostalgia is the nostalgia experienced by fictional characters and is also constituted by a circular plot pattern, which follows the hero's departure from home to his final return there. This chapter will analyse in how far the pastoral mode is bound to intratextual nostalgia in Tolkien's mythology. It will look at the different pastoral creatures' nostalgia proneness and the different types of nostalgia they experience. Furthermore, the functions of nostalgia in pastoral cultures and individual pastoral creatures will be elucidated.

With regard to the second characteristic of intratextual nostalgia, the cyclical plot structure, it can be established that it is an important feature in the narrative, as the hobbit protagonists' quest leads them in a cyclical movement away from the Shire and back again. As Donald Beecher has pointed out concerning the nostalgic structure of Renaissance romance, the hero's cyclical journey is complemented by his strong yearning for home (cf. Beecher, 285). The same is true for the hobbit heroes, as their

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[128] Cf. chapter 4.4. of this thesis.

longing for the Shire serves as a constant source of motivation and courage. Only through the powers of their personal nostalgia do they succeed in their task to destroy the Ring and defeat the antipastoral. With regard to the elves and ents, there is no cyclical plot structure. While the elves are split into different groups with individual histories of migration, exile, and settlement, the entire population of ents has always been settled in Fangorn Forest. Even the High Elves' return to Valinor does not complete a cyclical movement, as their initial point of departure was Middle-earth, from whence they departed to Valinor, returned to Middle-earth, and then depart to Valinor again at the time of the narrative or shortly after.

As the following analysis will show, the degree of nostalgia proneness varies between the different pastoral groups. In the case of the hobbits, it also varies among the individuals. With regard to the two different types of pastoral, georgic and bucolic pastoral, the findings do not suggest that differences in nostalgia proneness can be related to these two categories. Both, the georgic pastoral hobbits as well as the bucolic elves and ents display strong symptoms of nostalgia. All the same, it is interesting to note that the bucolic creatures' nostalgia has a historical dimension while the georgic hobbits' longing is solely directed to their own recent past. However, these differences can be explained in terms of content and do not seem to be connected with differences between the bucolic and the georgic pastoral as such. As the ents and elves have very long life spans, their memories of the past stretch back to the First Age of the world. Consequently, their nostalgia is directed to the Elder Days, during which they experienced the highest possible level of pastorality. In contrast, the hobbits have a much shorter life span and avoid knowledge of the historical past. They therefore turn their nostalgic memories to their more recent past. As their knowledge of the world is reduced to the Shire, their longing is directed to their own pastoral homes, which in their experience offer them the greatest possible comfort in terms of commodities, lifestyle, and social life.

The varying degrees of nostalgic longing found among the different pastoral creatures have led to the exclusion of Beorn and Tom Bombadil from the following analysis. Beorn is the only pastoral creature in the two primary works who does not show any sign of nostalgia. Though it is impossible to prove why this is so, there are strong indicators that suggest that his complete lack of nostalgic longing can be explained by

the confinement of his appearance to *The Hobbit*. Tolkien's early work shows a distinctly different treatment of nostalgia than its successor, *The Lord of the Rings*. As will be shown in the following chapter, this becomes most apparent with regard to elvish nostalgia. Though it is a leitmotif and of central importance in *The Lord of the Rings*, elvish nostalgia does not appear in *The Hobbit*. The only nostalgia detectable in *The Hobbit* is the personal nostalgia of Bilbo, who repeatedly voices the wish to return to his secure and comfortable Shire home. There is no sign in this narrative of historical nostalgia for the Elder Days or other past times of high pastoral quality. Consequently, Beorn's complete lack of nostalgia is explicable by *The Hobbit*'s general lack of this kind of nostalgia.

Another pastoral creature excluded from the following analysis due to his un-nostalgic nature is Tom Bombadil. Though he tells the hobbits long tales about the past, his accounts are completely free from emotion and judgement. As shown in the analysis of his bucolic pastorality, Bombadil is mainly a passive witness of historical events and retains the memory of all things since the creation of the world. His un-nostalgic attitude arises from his objective stance. As nostalgia is based on the perception of the present as inferior to a superior past, Bombadil's non-evaluative attitude generally prevents him from feeling such an emotion. The same accounts for his wife, Goldberry. However, there is one instance in which Bombadil shows emotions akin to nostalgia and which therefore appears to be at variance with his general behaviour: finding a brooch in the Barrow-wights' hoard, he recalls its original wearer, remarking that she was fair and shall be remembered by him and Goldberry (cf. *LotR*, 190). The notion of remembering lost beauty contains nostalgia and implies that Bombadil is able to evaluate historical processes despite his general appearance of objectivity. As nostalgia can only be felt by creatures who can distinguish between positive and negative states of being, the only possible conclusion from this is that Bombadil's disinterestedness in the Ring of Power and the ongoing war between good and evil is not the result of his natural disposition but of his conscious decision to remain neutral and renounce all interest in power. With regard to nostalgia, his choice means that he does not usually turn to the past to find relief from the ills of the present. His neutral acceptance of historical development and even degeneration in most cases enables him to recount the past without nostalgic sentiment.

7.1 "Tears unnumbered ye shall shed"[129] – Elvish Nostalgia Culture

Many critics mainly draw their observations about elves from *The Lord of the Rings* and tend to disregard their description in *The Hobbit*[130]. In view of *The Hobbit*'s light-hearted shortness and *The Lord of the Rings*' epic depth, this is no surprise. As a result, however, the differences in the depiction of elves in the two works generally remain unnoticed or are considered of too little importance to be pointed out. Most importantly, critics thus fail to detect that there is a complete lack of elvish nostalgia in *The Hobbit*, despite its importance as a leitmotif in *The Lord of the Rings*. This chapter will argue that this lack can be explained by the texts' genesis, as *The Lord of the Rings* was written at a later time than *The Hobbit*. Though critics generally explicitly or implicitly remark upon the centrality of the nostalgia motif in elvish culture[131], they do not distinguish between different types of nostalgia and the fine variations in nostalgia-proneness within the different elvish groups. This chapter will fill this gap in current research by showing that, though nostalgia is a central part of all elves' culture and lifestyle, there are differences between the types of nostalgia they experience due to their different histories. Furthermore, it will be proven that the frequency and strength of elvish nostalgia slightly varies between the two main elvish groups, the Calaquendi and the Moriquendi, due to their different histories within and outside of Middle-earth. As elvish nostalgia is mainly directed towards Valinor, the blessed realm of the Valar far in the world's West, it is influenced by the manner of the elves' connection to this land. The Calaquendi, better known as the High Elves, base their longing on their personal experience of Valinor as they lived there during the First Age and are therefore living witnesses of its ideality. As a result, they show strong personal nostalgia for this time. As will be expounded below, the most prominent examples of elves who lived in Valinor and belonged to the elvish group that rebelled against the Valar and went into exile in Middle-earth are Galadriel and her husband Celeborn. The younger generations of High Elves, which were born in Middle-earth after their ancestors' departure from Valinor, have had no personal experience of the West and consequently base their

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[129] *Sil*, 94.
[130] Examples of this are: Brawley, Campbell, Honegger, Kölzer.
[131] Cf. Brawley, Dickerson and Evans, Kölzer, Schweicher .

nostalgic longing for it on their relatives' tales. Their nostalgia for Valinor is historical as it is directed to a time and place outside their personal experience. Examples of these younger generations of High Elves are Elrond and his daughter Arwen. Besides the High Elves, there are a great number of other elves who never left Middle-earth and therefore rely on the High Elves' narratives of the Blessed Realm and its merits. These elves' nostalgia is historical as they direct their longing towards a time and place outside their personal experience. The only example of this group of elves in *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* are the Mirkwood elves and their prince Legolas. As all elvish groups have been living in seclusion for a great part of the Third Age, the Mirkwood elves have been cut off from the High Elves and their memories of the West for many centuries. Consequently, they show a different degree of nostalgic longing than their High Elven kin. Though nostalgia is deeply engrained in their culture and psyche, it has to be triggered by exterior occurrences, as will be shown in the following analysis. Overall, this chapter will show that elvish culture is informed by nostalgia to such extreme degrees that it should be termed 'nostalgia culture'.

7.1.1   The Doom of the Noldor: The Source of Elvish Nostalgia

Elvish nostalgia is mainly directed towards Valinor on the island Aman, which is the highly pastoral dwelling place of the Valar. Aman lies in the far west of the world and became the Valar's home after Middle-earth was attacked by their foe Melkor at the beginning of time. Watching all their ideal creations in Middle-earth fall prey to Melkor's vicious might, the Valar endow their new realm with things of the highest possible degree of ideality:

> "In that guarded land the Valar gathered great store of light and all the fairest things that were saved from the ruin; and many other yet fairer they made anew, and Valinor became more beautiful even than Middle-earth in the Spring of Arda; and it was blessed, for the Deathless dwelt there, and there naught faded nor withered, neither was there any stain upon flower or leaf in that land, nor any corruption or sickness in anything that lived; for the very stones and water were hallowed" (*Sil*, 30).

This sub-chapter will show that the elves' constant fight against change in Middle-earth is motivated by their strong nostalgia for Valinor, which is why their culture is a nostalgia culture as defined above. As the analysis of elvish pastorality in this thesis has shown, the High Elves especially are obsessed with the desire to preserve their realms'

blissful initial state and fend off the change and decline Middle-earth is generally subjected to. The epitome of elvish conservationism presents itself in Lothlórien, Galadriel's realm, which harbours the otherwise long-lost landscape of Middle-earth's primeval times, enriched by Valinorean flora. Apart from the loss of Valinor and the elves' long exile in Middle-earth, the High Elves' nostalgia is founded in their immortality, which binds their lives to the world's fate. As such, the long slow process of Middle-earth's decline is a constant reminder to the elves of their uncertain fate after its end. Fearing the future, the High Elves thus yearningly turn their minds back to their blissful Valinorean past.

The *Silmarillion* gives a detailed account of the High Elves' history in Valinor and their exile in Middle-earth, thus offering the background story necessary for the full appreciation of elvish nostalgia in *The Lord of the Rings*. Invited by the Valar to share their Valinorean bliss, a considerably large group of elves, subsequently known as the High Elves, leave Middle-earth in the First Age and travel to Aman. Their relationship to the Valar is a close one and they live in a white city so close to the Valar's home that the Two Trees growing in Valmar, Telperion and Laurelin, bathe it in their light (cf. *Sil*, 59). As the epitome of ideal creation, the Two Trees represent Valinor's pastoral perfection and unfallen state[132]. Thus, the elvish city's close vicinity to the Valar's city, its pure white colour, and its illumination by the Trees' light clearly signal its flawlessness and characterise it as an integral part of Valinor's perfect pastorality. This is underlined by the Valar's gift of a tree fashioned after Telperion, which is planted in the elvish city (cf. ibid). Everyday life in Valinor offers the elves complete freedom and the chance to pursue their hearts' desires. However, their insatiable hunger for knowledge in some elves turns into hunger for power and the wish to control and possess the greatest of Valinor's treasures, the light of the Two Trees. Thus, the elves' fall is initiated as one of their most powerful members, Fëanor, forges the Silmarills, two gems filled with the Trees' light (cf. *Sil*, 68). To his ambition to possess the light is added the wish to preserve it. As the following history of the elves will prove, these two motives, the yearning for knowledge and power, as well as for preservation, are the

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[132] As Peter Wilkin shows in his essay, "Valinor and Eressëa have strong resonances with the biblical Eden through their use of tree-symbolism" (Wilkin, 52).

elves' greatest weaknesses. Recognising this, Melkor succeeds in creating a rift between the elves and the Valar (cf. *Sil*, 69). When Melkor attacks Valinor and destroys the Two Trees, Fëanor refuses to hand the Silmarills to the Valar, thus destroying any chance to restore Valinor's ideal pastorality (cf. *Sil*, 83). Believing Melkor's lies, one group of elves, the Noldor, rise in a rebellion against their hosts. In their frenzy to leave Valinor and return to Middle-earth, they slay a great number of elves who attempt to hinder their flight (cf. *Sil*, 93). The Noldor's sin of kinslaying and rebellion in Valinor is punished with a curse which the Valar lay upon the departing elves. This 'Doom of the Noldor' foretells the misery and regret the elves are to experience during their long exile in Middle-earth: "And those that endure in Middle-earth [...] shall grow weary of the world as with a great burden, and shall wane, and become as shadows of regret [...]" (*Sil*, 95). As further punishment for their crimes, Valinor will be shut to them and the Valar will not heed any of their pleas for mercy or support. Another source of misery for the elves will be their immortality, which will keep them in an endless state of endurance either in Middle-earth or, in case they are slain or die of grief, in Mandos, the halls of the elves' immortal spirits in Valinor (cf. ibid). It is interesting to note that an extreme state of grief is one cause of elvish 'death', i.e. the loss of the body and the journey of the spirit to Mandos. As grief in this regard refers to the elves' suffering in the face of the world's constant degenerative change and their own inability to preserve the blissful past, it is synonymic with nostalgia. Consequently, it is the elves' nostalgic yearning which can become fatal to them if it becomes too extreme. Thus, nostalgia is a central effect of the Valar's curse. Its beginnings are already detectable during the Noldor's departure from Valinor, for some of them "often [...] looked behind them to see their fair city, until the lamp of the Mindon Eldaliéva was lost in the night. More than any others of the Exiles they carried thence memories of the bliss they had forsaken, and some even of the things that they had made there they took with them: a solace and a burden on the road" (*Sil*, 91-2).

For many centuries the High Elves live in exile in Middle-earth and establish their realms there. However, the Valar are merciful and pardon them after the elves have successfully fought besides them in the Great Battle at the end of the First Age, during which Melkor is finally defeated and evicted from the world (cf. *Sil*, 305-6). Nearly all of the Noldor elves who had once lived in Valinor thus return there, satisfying their

nostalgic yearning for homecoming. Galadriel and her husband Celeborn are two of just three Noldor elves with personal Valinorean experience who decide to remain in Middle-earth as they have grown too fond of their realm and political power to give them up (cf. *Letters*, 151-2). Even though the elves' love for Valinor is unsurpassed, many of the younger generations of High Elves stay in their Middle-earth homes and attempt to protect them from change and decay. Thus, the elves retain their strong nostalgia for Valinor's perfection even though the Valar's curse has been lifted. "[T]hey were not at peace in their hearts, since they had refused to return into the West, and they desired both to stay in Middle-earth, which indeed they loved, and yet to enjoy the bliss of those that had departed" (*Sil*, 344). Nostalgia has become so deeply engrained in High Elven culture by then that it hardly makes a difference whether it is personal or historical. Wishing to install and preserve the same amount of static ideality in Middle-earth as exists in Valinor, the elves strive to arrest the earth's decline. However, their efforts are doomed to fail as the earth is fated to degenerate over time and to lose its initial pastorality (cf. *Sil*, 306). Over the ages, the elves' struggle to preserve their earthen realms' beauty and arrest the processes of change natural to Middle-earth thus gains in intensity and turns into their predominant occupation.

> "They thus became obsessed with 'fading', the mode in which the changes of time (the law of the world under the sun) was perceived by them. They became sad, and their art (shall we say) antiquarian, and their efforts all really a kind of embalming - even though they also retained the old motive of their kind, the adornment of earth, and the healing of its hurts" (*Letters*, 151-2).

The elves' preservationism is used by Sauron, Melkor's disciple and the greatest remaining evil power in the world, to lure them into forging Rings of Power. With the help of their Rings, the Noldor elves wish to fulfil their desire for "understanding, making, and healing, to preserve all things unstained" (*LotR*, 350). However, Sauron betrays them by secretly forging One Ring to rule all the others. Thus, the Noldor's wish to preserve and rule leads them astray a second time. Though with their Rings' help they achieve to sustain a high level of original pastorality in their own realms (especially in Lothlórien), the Rings' power is inseparably bound to the One Ring's lifetime and will expire with its destruction. Thus, the elves' nostalgia for Valinor, which is at the basis of their attempt to introduce the same bliss and ideality in Middle-earth, proves to have as destructive an effect as if the Valar's curse was still in effect.

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Instead of healing Middle-earth from the signs of its slow degeneration, the forging of the Rings only heightens the elvish ring bearers' longing for the West and exposes them to Sauron's despotism (cf. *Tales*, 237). Aiming to preserve the past, the elves have produced the very objects which will eventually lead to their downfall in Middle-earth and the irretrievable loss of their own pastoral realms.

The elves' nostalgia for Valinor reaches a new climax after the fall of Númenor in the Second Age as the Númenoreans' sins induce Illuvatar to remove Aman from the world and move "it into the realm of hidden things" (*Sil*, 334). Thus, Valinor becomes utterly unreachable to all but the High Elves, who are still allowed to sail there (cf. *Sil,* 338, 342). However, feeling bound to Middle-earth, which they love, a great number of elves still remain in their earthen realms. Knowing that Valinor's beauty and pastorality have been entirely lost to the world, they feel the earth's gradual decline even more keenly than before. Their failure to preserve Middle-earth's past state and introduce some Valinorean ideality into their earthen home only heightens their nostalgic longing. The more they are dissatisfied with the earth's state and the longer they have to bear its decay, the more they long for Valinor's unchanging beauty. As Dickerson and Evans point out: "All the longings the Elves feel for Valinor may be reinterpreted as a recollection of and a desire for transcendent beauty that can no longer be fulfilled in this world. This explains the particularly sharp poignancy of their desire and the source of their sadness" (Dickerson and Evans, 116). Consequently, by the time of the narrative of *The Lord of the Rings*, which is set at the end of the Third Age, the elves' suffering has increased to such degrees that they have entirely withdrawn into the preserved pastorality of their realms, aware that the end of their time in Middle-earth is drawing near and that their preservationist endeavours have been in vain. As Galadriel wearily remarks: "[...] through ages of the world we have fought the long defeat" (*LotR*, 464).

Apart from their loss of Valinor, the elves' strong nostalgia is caused by the implications of their immortality. Doomed to live as long as the world is in existence and uncertain of their fate thereafter, they perceive the world's long and slow process of degeneration as a constant reminder of their looming end. Though elves can always be slain or die from extreme nostalgic longing, their souls remain within the world and are contained in the halls of Mandos in Valinor, from whence they can be reborn. Thus, the elves "remain until the end of days, and their love of the Earth and all the world is more

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single and more poignant therefore, and as the years lengthen ever more sorrowful" (*Sil*, 36). Depending entirely on the world's well-being, the elves' attempts to preserve Middle-earth and arrest its degenerative progress represent their fierce fight for survival and are strong expressions of their fear of the future. Thus, they turn their minds to the past, in which they experienced the greatest possible amount of bliss and beauty. As they point out to the mortal men, who envy them for their immortality, "a dread of ultimate loss, though it may be indefinitely remote, is not necessarily the easier to bear if it is in the end ineluctably certain: a burden may become heavier the longer it is borne" (*Letters*, 325). Altogether, the elves' fear of the world's end, their uncertainty as to their fate thereafter, and their painful loss of Valinor alongside the Valar's curse in the First Age constitute the foundation of their nostalgia culture. Resorting to the past as soothing compensation for an unsatisfactory present and frightening future, elves experience "memory [as] more like to the waking world than to a dream" (*LotR*, 493).

7.1.2 "We still remember, we who dwell in this far land beneath the trees, the starlight on the Western Seas"[133] – The Ubiquity of Nostalgia in the Elvish Realms and Art

As pointed out in the analysis of the elves' pastorality, the two High Elven realms, Lothlórien and Rivendell, are both marked by the elves' strong nostalgia for Middle-earth's primeval pastoral state as well as Valinor's unchanging bliss. Especially Galadriel's and Celeborn's realm is deeply influenced by its rulers' personal experience of Valinor and the Elder Days. By the use of her Ring of Power, the Noldor queen has preserved Lothlórien's original nature and has heightened its bucolic qualities by introducing plants from the Western realms. Thus, the Mallorn trees, which are Lothlórien's predominant floral feature, establish a direct link to Valinor and its golden tree Laurelin. Altogether, Lothlórien represents the earthly version of Valinor and therefore of the highest possible state of pastorality in Middle-earth. Arresting time within the confines of her realm, Galadriel has, at least for a while, succeeded in her fight against Middle- earth's long slow decline and has turned Lothlórien into a living shrine to the Elder Days and the Valinorean West. Like Valinor, Lothlórien's woods do

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[133] *LotR*, 1345.

"not fade or change or fall into forgetfulness" (*LotR*, 457). Its light and colours have retained the sharpness and poignancy in which they were first created (cf. *LotR*, 456). In addition, Lothlórien's flora possesses the same ideality as that of Valinor as it is entirely untainted by "blemish or sickness or deformity" (ibid). Here, the High Elves' nostalgia culture has created a sheltered pocket in which their bucolic past is still alive. Due to Galadriel's preservationist powers, the present and future seem expunged from Lothlórien's pastoral landscape. Walking through the woods, Frodo has the impression "that he had stepped over a bridge of time into a corner of the Elder Days, and was now walking in a world that was no more" (*LotR*, 454).

Like Lothlórien, Elrond's realm in Rivendell is characterised by timelessness: apart from the changing seasons, "time doesn't seem to pass [there]: it just is" (*LotR*, 301). As shown in the analysis of Rivendell's pastorality, the realm is a little less bucolic than Lothlórien. Other than Galadriel's realm, it only features ordinary vegetation and is affected by Middle-earth's weather. Thus, it is a copy of Middle-earth's pastoral Elder Days rather than of Valinor's ideality. This is in accordance with Elrond's personal history, for he was born after the Noldor's flight from Valinor and consequently does not share Galadriel's personal experience of the Valar's realm. However, Rivendell's lower level of bucolic pastorality does not mean that its High Elven inhabitants are less nostalgic than their Lothlórien kin. In Lothlórien as in Rivendell, the elves' highly bucolic lifestyle is one indication of their nostalgia culture, as it mirrors the one they (or their ancestors) experienced in Valinor; they are free to pursue their personal interests in arts and crafts, live in complete harmony with the natural world, and enjoy the leisure of a life in natural bounty. Their culture is deeply influenced by the wisdom and craftsmanship they learned from the Valar during their years in Valinor. However, at the time of the narrative of *The Lord of the Rings*, it is apparent that the High Elves' preservationist powers are waning and will be lost regardless of the outcome of the war against Sauron. The failure of the elves' nostalgia culture in Middle-earth has to be read as strong criticism of their nostalgic attempts to fight the world's predetermined fate. The isolation of Rivendell and especially of Lothlórien towards the end of the Third Age shows that the elves' nostalgia has induced them to become a self-centred species whose focus on the past has separated them from Middle-earth's other peoples and realms. As Haldir of Lothlórien tells the fellowship: "[...] we dwell now in the heart of

the forest, and do not willingly have dealings with any other folk. Even our own kindred in the North are sundered from us" (*LotR*, 446). Despite its great beauty and bliss, Lothlórien has an antiquarian atmosphere as most of its flora and fauna have long been lost in the outside world and their appearance in Galadriel's realm only heightens the sense of loss which underlies all elvish culture. Thus, even the elves' temporary success in preserving the Elder Days' and some of Valinor's pastoral bliss in their earthen realms is tarnished by the constant reminders of its irretrievable loss in the outside world. Frodo's impression of Valinor as a ship quickly falling behind and vanishing out of sight is therefore a most fitting one, as it expresses the realm's complete detachment from the rest of Middle-earth and its looming loss: "Lórien was slipping backward, like a bright ship masted with enchanted trees, sailing on to forgotten shores, while they sat helpless upon the margin of the grey and leafless world" (*LotR*, 491).

Despite being a constant source of suffering and regret, the elves' nostalgia is not wholly to be regarded as a weakness and a curse for it produces much beauty and joy in Middle-earth. Not only does it create and preserve the untarnished realms Rivendell and Lothlórien, but it has also brought forth a great number of highly sophisticated songs and poems. Fated by Illuvatar to create more beauty in the world than any other species, the elves draw heavily on their artistic abilities to express their nostalgic emotions (cf. *Sil*, 35). Consequently, each of their songs and poems in *The Lord of the Rings* revolves around their grief for the loss of Valinor and the sadness of their longing for a return there. The poignancy of their grief lends their art an elegiac tone, which runs through their songs as a constant undercurrent. This way, the elves use art in order to express the strongest of their emotions and to keep their memories of Valinor alive. Furthermore, by producing songs and poems, they translate their nostalgic yearning into words and images which have the power to recreate some of Valinor's pastoral bliss in the elves' Middle-earth homes. The strong effect of their songs becomes most apparent when Frodo and his company take refuge in Rivendell.

> "Almost it seemed that the words took shape, and visions of far lands and bright things that he had never yet imagined opened out before him; and the firelit hall became like a golden mist above seas of foam that sighed upon the margins of the world [...] until he felt that an endless river of swelling gold and silver was flowing over him [...]" (*LotR*, 304).

The elves' music thus invokes visions of Valinor and transports its hearers into the golden- and silver-lit bliss of the Valar's realm. As Bilbo remarks, art is as sustaining for elves as food is for hobbits: "They seem to like [music, poetry, and tales] as much as food, or more" (*LotR*, 309). Indeed, the first glimpse the readers and the hobbits catch of elves in *The Lord of the Rings* is preceded by a song about the elves' love of the stars and their creator, the Vala Elbereth. This song repeatedly refers to Valinor and its great distance from Middle-earth. Thus, the earth is twice denoted a "far land", while Valinor is described as being "beyond the Western Seas" (*LotR*, 104). The repeated use of the word 'far' to describe Middle-earth emphasises the elves' grief about being cut off from their Valinorean home and their longing to return there. Describing the earth as a "world of woven trees" in which they need the light of Elbereth's stars to find their way, the elves imply that the earth is characterised by darkness and confusion, whereas Valinor and the Valar's creations contain a beauty "bright and clear" (ibid). The last two lines of the song directly refer to the elves' nostalgic act of remembering Valinor as a place of ideal beauty and light: "We still remember, we who dwell in this far land beneath the trees, Thy starlight on the Western Seas" (ibid). The active verb 'remember' underlines that the High Elves' memory of Valinor is based on personal experience and hence that it draws on the older elves' personal nostalgia. Thus, the elves are introduced into the plot by means of their art, and their nostalgia for Valinor is instantly emphasised. Furthermore, almost as soon as they start talking to the hobbits, the elves identify themselves as exiles in Middle-earth: "We are Exiles, and most of our kindred have long ago departed and we too are now only tarrying here a while, ere we return over the Great Sea" (*LotR*, 105).

The High Elves' near pathological nostalgia finds even stronger expression in the song Galadriel sings at the fellowship's parting from Lothlórien. Remembering the beauty of the golden Tree Telperion in Valinor and its close vicinity to Tirion, the elves' city, she contrasts Middle-earth's slow decay with the Blessed Realm's static beauty. Her repeated use of the word 'golden' in her depictions of Valinor clearly underline its strong pastorality and the elves' blissful state therein. Against this stands Middle-earth's harshness and changeability: "The Winter comes, the bare and leafless Day; The leaves are falling in the stream, the River flows away" (*LotR*, 485). While winter symbolises death and barrenness, the flowing river indicates the passage of time, which slowly

wears away Middle-earth's pastoral beauty. Even Lothlórien will eventually be subjected to Middle-earth's degenerative processes, which is acknowledged by the elven queen in her repeated ejaculation "O Lórien!" (ibid). Having suffered the loss of Valinor, the High Elves are now about to suffer the loss of their pastoral realms in Middle-earth: "Too long I have dwelt upon this Hither Shore and in a fading crown have twined the golden elanor" (ibid). Lothlórien and its inhabitants are fading, and hopelessness has been spreading among the elvish exiles for as Galadriel cries: "What ship would bear me ever back across so wide a Sea?" (*LotR*, 486). Thus, as in the High Elven song in the Shire, Galadriel's song clearly contrasts an unsatisfying present and a frightening future with a nostalgically remembered past. The elves' longing for their region in Valinor, which is called 'Eldamar', meaning 'Elvenhome', is heightened by the elves' slow demise in Middle-earth. Though the elves are eventually returning to Valinor and thus find fulfilment of their nostalgic longing, the looming loss of their pastoral homes in Middle-earth creates new pain. As the narrative of *The Lord of the Rings* ends with the elves' departure from Middle-earth, the reader does not learn how they fare in Valinor. Thus, the text ends on a strong note of irreparable loss with regard to the elves' fate.

7.1.3 Nostalgia of the High Elves and the Moriquendi: Differences between 'The Hobbit' and 'The Lord of the Rings'

In Tolkien's mythology, the elves are split into different groups with different histories and characteristics. Having originally been created as one coherent group, they are first separated in the First Age when a group of them decide to follow the Valar's invitation and move to Valinor. These are the High Elves and as shown above, they are the most important group with regard to elvish nostalgia. The group that remain in Middle-earth is known as the Moriquendi. Due to their decision to forfeit the Valar's invitation to Valinor, the Moriquendi develop a culture less sophisticated than the High Elves. Having had no personal experience of the ideality encountered by the High Elves in Valinor and having never been subjected to its loss, the Moriquendi's culture is less deeply steeped in nostalgic longing than that of the High Elves. However, the following analysis of Moriquendi nostalgia will show that their longing for Valinor is easily triggered as it holds a central position within all elvish culture and psyche.

The only group of Moriquendi encountered in *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* is that of the Mirkwood elves. They appear most prominently in *The Hobbit*, where they are depicted within their forest home. In *The Lord of the Rings* they are only represented by their prince Legolas. As the above analysis of their pastorality has shown, the Mirkwood elves are characterised by a rustic lifestyle and a much lower level of bucolic pastorality than the High Elves of Rivendell and Lothlórien. Having never been taught by the Valar or experienced Valinor's ideal nature and lifestyle, they lack the power and knowledge to preserve their realm's original pastorality and prevent the slow process of deterioration natural to Middle-earth. In *The Hobbit*, all reference to the Woodelves is utterly devoid of nostalgic sentiment or any allusions to the past. At first sight, this can also be ascribed to their unfamiliarity with Valinor, the main object of elvish nostalgia. Having never suffered the pain and grief effected by Valinor's loss, the strongest catalyst of the High Elves' nostalgic longing, the Moriquendi do not appear to share the High Elves' yearning for a better past. However, this line of reasoning has to be abandoned after a look at *The Lord of the Rings*, in which Legolas voices strong nostalgic sentiment on several occasions, thus proving that the Woodelves of Mirkwood are capable of the emotion and do experience it. The young prince's nostalgia for the times during which his people resided in Lothlórien is historical as they predate his own lifetime. Thus, it is not based on Legolas' personal experience but solely on his older relatives' personal nostalgia for their own biographical past. This personal nostalgia of the older Woodelves is detectable in Legolas' accounts of his people's longing reminiscences of Lothlórien's past beauty[134]. They contain "tales of Lothlórien that the elves still kept in their hearts, of sunlight and starlight upon the meadows by the Great River before the world was grey" (*LotR*, 441). The phrasing 'before the world was grey' emphasises the highly nostalgic quality of these memories. It refers to an ideal past, which is contrasted with an unsatisfying present with post-lapsarian qualities such as twilight and decay. Interestingly, Legolas' nostalgia is not only directed towards his

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[134] The realm Lórinand, later known as Lothlórien, is originally inhabited by Moriquendi and thus Legolas' ancestors. When Galadriel reaches it in the Second Age, the Lórinand Woodelves are enjoying carefree lives and are ruled by no one. Galadriel then takes up rule and many High Elves follow her (cf. *Tales*, 236-7). Though it is not explicitly stated in Tolkien's mythology, the Moriquendi must have left Lothlórien a long time before the time of the narrative of *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* as they are then firmly established in Mirkwood, while Lothlórien is inhabited by High Elves only.

people's past in Middle-earth, but also towards the West, i.e. Valinor, which is unknown to his people. This nostalgia is entirely historical as it is solely based on the tales of the High Elves and is directed towards a place outside any of the Mirkwood elves' personal experience. Despite their unfamiliarity with the Valar's blissful realm, Legolas and his people have nonetheless developed a strong desire to travel to the lands of the West and find an ideal home there. This is shown by Legolas' reaction to his first sighting of gulls during his and Aragorn's battle in Pelargir, which he recounts at a later time:

> "Look! [...] Gulls! [...] Never in all my life had I met them, until we came to Pelargir [...]. Then I stood still, forgetting war in Middle-earth; for their wailing voices spoke to me of the Sea. The Sea! Alas! I have not yet beheld it. But deep in the hearts of all my kindred lies the sea-longing, which it is perilous to stir. Alas! for the gulls. No peace shall I have again under beech or under elm" (*LotR*, 1143).

The repeated use of exclamation marks and the ejaculation 'alas' clearly signal the highly emotional state in which Legolas recounts this episode. Furthermore, the capitalisation of the noun 'Sea' shows that it refers to Valinor and is used synonymously for it. As the only way to the Valar's realm leads along a secret path across the sea, the ocean is a constant reminder of Valinor's hidden existence and the difficulty of reaching it. Thus, the sea has become a symbol for the elves' long and grievous abode in Middle-earth and their yearning for the blissful West's pastorality. Legolas' first sighting of gulls therefore triggers extreme longing for Valinor and fundamentally changes him as his new-found nostalgia for the West will henceforth dominate his life in Middle-earth and render it unsatisfactory in comparison with life in the ideal realm: "Alas for the wailing of the gulls! Did not the Lady [Galadriel; *author's note*] tell me to beware of them? And now I cannot forget them" (*LotR*, 1146). It is interesting to note that Legolas' strong nostalgic reaction is created only by the wailing of the gulls and not by a glimpse of the sea itself. This shows that the yearning for Valinor is so deeply engrained in all elvish creatures that even a small trigger will release it. As Legolas points out, the longing for the West is contained within all elvish hearts, even that of the Moriquendi Woodelves. Drawing on the reports and nostalgic tales of the High Elves that once lived in Valinor, the image of the ideal realm has pervaded all elvish consciousness and culture. The elves' longing for Valinor is such a central motif in Tolkien's work that the term 'nostalgia culture' seems to denote elvish

culture most fittingly. Nostalgia culture can be defined as a culture in which every activity is motivated and influenced by nostalgic longing: in the case of the elves, these activities include arts and crafts, architecture, lifestyle, landscaping, political decisions, and education. Despite the term's applicability to all elvish culture, it should be noted that there are slight variations in the degree and frequency of nostalgic feeling between the two main elvish groups: While the High Elves' culture and consciousness is continuously pervaded by their nostalgia for Valinor (as shown in the preceding chapter), the Moriquendi require an external trigger in the shape of gulls or the sea in order to reach the same level of nostalgic longing as the High Elves. Before Legolas' encounter with gulls, his nostalgic reveries are solely directed to his people's past in Middle-earth. Only after seeing and hearing gulls in Pelargir does he voice nostalgia for the West. From the ease with which it is triggered, it can be concluded that the nostalgic longing for Valinor is also deeply engrained in the Moriquendi's culture. Appropriately stirred, it gains the same force as the High Elves' nostalgia and cannot be suppressed again. As Legolas sings towards the end of the narrative: "To the Sea, to the Sea! [...] I will leave, I will leave the woods that bore me; for our days are ending and our years failing. [...] Sweet are the voices [...] in Elvenhome that no man can discover, where the leaves fall not: land of my people for ever!" (*LotR*, 1253).

From the above observations follows that the complete lack of the Woodelves' nostalgia detectable in *The Hobbit* should not be taken as a general statement about the Moriquendi's un-nostalgic mindset, but is primarily to be attributed to the text's position within Tolkien's canon. As mentioned in the introductory part to this chapter 7.1, it is of importance to generally distinguish between the depictions of elvish culture in *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* as they are fundamentally different - especially with regard to elvish nostalgia. In the earlier work, *The Hobbit*[135], both the High Elves of Rivendell and the Mirkwood elves do not show any signs of nostalgic reverie. While the songs and conversations of the High Elves of Rivendell and Lothlórien in *The Lord of the Rings* are heavily fraught with nostalgic longing for their Valinorean past and Middle-earth's early days, those of the Rivendell elves in *The Hobbit* are merely filled

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[135] *The Hobbit* was first published in 1937; *The Lord of the Rings* followed in 1954.

with cheeky and ridiculing comments on current events (cf. *Hobbit*, 47; 272-3). Similarly, while *The Hobbit*'s depictions of the Mirkwood elves are completely devoid of nostalgic sentiment, their prince Legolas in *The Lord of the Rings* occasionally expresses strong nostalgic longing for Middle-earth's early days as well as the Valinorean West. Based on these obvious differences in the depictions of elvish culture within the two works, it can be concluded that elvish nostalgia was only developed as a central Leitmotif in Tolkien's later work, *The Lord of the Rings*. Tolkien himself stated in one of his letters in 1951: "The generally different tone and style of *The Hobbit* is due, in point of genesis, to it being taken by me as a matter from the great cycle susceptible of treatment as a 'fairy-story', for children. Some of the details of tone and treatment are, I now think, even on that basis, mistaken" (*Letters*, 159). From this does not necessarily follow that the lack of elvish nostalgia in *The Hobbit* was considered by Tolkien to be one of these 'mistakes'. However, his statement shows that the genesis of the different works within his mythology had contentual and stylistic consequences and might thus account for the different treatment of the elves in *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*.

7.2 "Why, O why did I ever leave my hobbit-hole!"[136] – The Hobbit Heroes' Longing for Home

In contrast to the elves' highly nostalgic culture, hobbit culture as such is not characterised by the longing for a lost time and place. Convinced that the less knowledge a hobbit has of history the better, the Shire folk have no tendency to take any notice of the past. At the time of the narrative of *The Hobbit* as well as *The Lord of the Rings*, every-day life in the Shire is comfortable, peaceful, and prosperous to such degrees that the hobbits have no cause to long for lost times. In contrast to the elves, they have experienced history as a process of improvement: gaining the Shire as home and overcoming harsh times of disease and scarcity over the centuries, they have established a tight-knit community with a comfortable lifestyle (cf. *LotR*, 6). Their isolation and rustic mindset enable them to suppress and forget their past and instead to

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[136] *Hobbit*, 64.

pretend that their present state has always been and will always be unchanged. Their happiness with the status quo is such that they attempt to avoid change of any kind and preserve the present bliss of their georgic pastoral homes – hence their adversity to strangers and disrupting events such as adventure[137]. Consequently, no nostalgic reminiscences can be found in the Shire episodes of the two narratives. However, this absence of nostalgia in hobbit culture entirely depends on the isolated security of the Shire and the hobbits' successful suppression of knowledge of history and the world. Once they are forced to leave their pastoral homes and face the outside world, as is the case with the hobbit protagonists in both primary works, they start to develop a strong longing to return to their Shire homes.

Losing the comfort and security of the Shire, the hobbit heroes experience anxiety and insecurity in the face of danger and the unknown. To this they react with the nostalgic longing to return to their comfortable Shire homes and lifestyle. Altogether, their nostalgia is directed towards their autobiographical past and private sphere. Consequently, it is purely personal and there is no mention of historical nostalgia. Hobbit nostalgia is a manifestation of nostalgia's original meaning, as it was put down by Johann Hofer in the 17th century: the fighting soldier's longing for home during his frightening and overwhelming experience of hitherto unknown countries and war. However, in contrast to the original conception of nostalgia as a potentially fatal illness, the homesickness of the hobbit protagonists has a positive function as it motivates them to successfully complete their quest by constantly reminding them of its aim: to return home and to protect the Shire against Sauron's evil machinations. Thus, their homesickness is inseparably tied to their journey's cyclical nature, which ultimately returns them to their point of departure: home. Consequently, the hobbit protagonists' quests in *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* fulfil a defining mark of intratextual nostalgia as they follow a cyclical plot structure.

During their quests, the hobbits experience memories of home as sources of strength, courage, and hope. As will be expounded in the following, hobbit nostalgia thus possesses the positive psychological functions Wildschut et al, as well as Fred Davis

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[137] Cf. subchapter 6.1.2.1 of this thesis.

have outlined in their work (cf. chapter 2.4 of this thesis). The triggers of hobbit nostalgia are the painful experience of separation from the familiar and a complete loss of security. On their quests, all hobbit heroes face war, destruction, and the unknown. As the following analysis will show, especially Bilbo and Sam react to this experience with recurring bouts of nostalgia, drawing strength and courage from their memories of home. In contrast, Merry and Pippin show very few signs of nostalgia and are usually able to talk about the Shire and their lives there without any sign of homesickness or longing. Under the Ring's and Mordor's influence, Frodo's nostalgia is gradually replaced by hopelessness and despair. Overall, hobbit nostalgia appears in more variations and degrees in *The Lord of the Rings* than in *The Hobbit*. Other than Bilbo, the four hobbits in *The Lord of the Rings* in many cases encounter danger without resorting to nostalgic memories of home: instead of longing to return to the security of the Shire, they focus on their quest and the importance of its success for all of Middle-earth. Knowing that the Shire will only be preserved if Sauron is defeated, they are aware that the final return home will only be possible once the Ring is destroyed. However, positive memories of home and a nostalgic longing to return there offer the hobbit heroes the necessary psychological mechanism to cope with the vicissitudes of their quest. Thus, their success and the rescue of Middle-earth ultimately depend on the hobbits' abilities to draw strength from nostalgic memories.

7.2.1 Bilbo's Nostalgia as Psychological Coping Mechanism in *The Hobbit*

In *The Hobbit*, Bilbo's nostalgia serves as an important psychological coping mechanism in his confrontation with the harsh outside world and its dangers. Once he has, rather reluctantly, left the Shire, homesickness is his main motivation to successfully complete the quest and return home. As Wayne Hammond has pointed out, the return to Bag End is the true purpose of Bilbo's quest: "His personal goal is a treasure he already had but did not fully appreciate: his own home, not merely for its material benefits [...], but because it is home and all the good things that that concept embodies (or seems to): order, stability, security" (Hammond, 30). Images of his comfortable Shire home arise in his mind as immediate reactions to seemingly hopeless situations of danger and discomfort. Thus, the first wave of homesickness overcomes Bilbo soon after the company has left the Shire. Facing the dull dreariness and bad weather of the Lone Lands, Bilbo wishes to be back "at home in my nice hole by the

fire, with the kettle just beginning to sing" (*Hobbit*, 31). Upon perceiving the Misty Mountains and feeling "that danger was not far away", the hobbit "was thinking once again of his comfortable chair before the fire in his favourite sitting-room in his hobbit-hole" (*Hobbit*, 44). He has similar thoughts after having been captured by goblins (cf. *Hobbit*, 57) and after having fled from pursuing goblins (cf. *Hobbit*, 64). When hungry, "[h]e thought of himself frying bacon and eggs in his own kitchen at home" (*Hobbit*, 66). The narrator's observation that this "was not the last time he wished that", which is repeated after each of Bilbo's nostalgic thoughts in varying formulations throughout the entire narrative, emphasises the hobbit's nostalgia proneness (*Hobbit*, 31). It further serves to comically stress the naivety and inexperience with which he encounters the outside world. Having been intended as a children's book, *The Hobbit* thus offers its young readers a character for identification. Like an innocent child, Bilbo's encounter with the greater world is dominated at first by feelings of being overwhelmed and powerless. However, though Bilbo's homesickness is a mark of his fear and helplessness in the face of danger and the unknown, it also emphasises his rootedness and the strength and courage he draws from it. His memories of home repeatedly remind him of his pastoral identity, thus presenting him with a positive self-image, which helps him to overcome feelings of inadequacy. Driven by his longing to return home, the hobbit gradually discovers his hitherto unknown powers and matures into a true hero. His nostalgia motivates him to put all his strength into succeeding in his tasks as burglar and to endure the deprivations and dangers of the road. By picturing the comforts of his hobbit hole, Bilbo finds solace and compensation for the deficiencies he experiences on the quest. These psychological functions of the hobbit's nostalgia correspond to Wildschut et al's and Davis' findings regarding the importance of nostalgia for mental health, which were elaborated on in the theoretical chapter 2.4 in this thesis. Images of his pastoral home and ordinary life remind the hobbit of his identity, thus enabling him to deal with his anxieties in the face of danger. As Fred Davis has pointed out, nostalgia "is deeply implicated in the sense who we are, what we are about, and (though possibly with much less inner clarity) whither we go" (Davis 1979, 31). As a reminder of our past selves, it serves to create a feeling of self-continuity, thus fending off threats of change and feelings of insignificance: "[...] it reassures us of past happiness and accomplishment and, since these still remain on deposit, as it were, in the bank of our memory, it simultaneously bestows upon us a

certain current worth, however much present circumstances may obscure it or make it suspect" (Davis 1979, 33-34). Whenever a person's positive self-image is threatened, for example when experiencing anxieties or when facing uncertainties, nostalgic recollection offers the securing feeling that life is meaningful and significant (cf. ibid). This is clearly the case with regard to Bilbo's recurring bouts of homesickness. As Arndt and his team have shown, these positive aspects of nostalgia protect against depression (cf. Arndt 2008b, 235), which supports the above observation that Bilbo's nostalgic reminiscences of home have a motivating impact on the hobbit as they protect him from thoughts of despair and death. In this context, it is striking to note that Bilbo's nostalgia abates for a lengthy period after he has come into possession of the Ring. With the help of the Ring of Power the hobbit succeeds in escaping his goblin prisoners and impressing Gandalf and his dwarf companions. Thus, the hobbit is transformed by the Ring's magic into a hero and for a while does not need to resort to nostalgic memories in order to deal with the vicissitudes of the quest and his own anxieties. However, in the caves of the Woodelves, the Ring ceases to offer Bilbo a solution to being trapped in the elven king's home. Though it renders him invisible, the Ring cannot provide the hobbit and his companions with immediate means to escape their captivity. Thus, Bilbo develops nostalgic thoughts again: "This is the dreariest and dullest part of all this wretched, tiresome, uncomfortable adventure! I wish I was back in my hobbit-hole by my own warm fireside with the lamp shining!" (*Hobbit*, 163). Similarly, he voices the wish to be back in his home when trapped in the Lonely Mountain with Smaug on the look-out for him and his company. Again, the Ring is of no immediate help in this situation, as the dragon is able to detect intruders by smell alone, which is why invisibility does not suffice to trick him. Bilbo's deeply felt longing for home becomes very prominent again on his journey back to the Shire. Though he enjoys Beorn's and Elrond's hospitality and appreciates the beauty of their realms, he is driven on by his homesickness (cf. *Hobbit*, 271, 277). Only the arrival in his beloved Shire for a while cures Bilbo of his nostalgic longing, even though he finds his home under acute threat, as it is about to be auctioned off. Furthermore, his adventures have left a mark on him and he becomes an outsider in the hobbit community. In his neighbours' eyes, "[y]ou can say what you like, [...] but Bag End's a queer place, and its folk are queerer" (*LotR*, 31). Having travelled into the greater world, Bilbo perceives the Shire in a new light: "[...] he no longer sees it as a large geographical unit with his hobbit-hole at the center,

but as a small unit within a vastly larger geography where roads seem to go on forever" (Hammond, 30). Thus, Bilbo's return home is not really a return into his old life. As his fate in *The Lord of the Rings* shows, the hobbit has lost his initial contentment with the Shire's confined pastoral stasis. His experience of the outside world as well as his possession of the Ring of Power have effected changes in him and leave him restless. Thus, after decades in the Shire, he decides to go on a journey again. Unlike his fellow hobbits, he has developed nostalgic memories of the outside world's beauty and longs to escape the confines of the Shire: "I want to see mountains again, [...] – *mountains*; and then find somewhere where I can *rest*. In peace and quiet, without a lot of relatives prying around, and a string of confounded visitors hanging on the bell" (*LotR*, 42).

7.2.2 The Diversity of Hobbit Nostalgia in *The Lord of the Rings*

In *The Lord of the Rings*, hobbit nostalgia is less frequent and more diverse than in *The Hobbit*. The differences in the hobbit heroes' nostalgia proneness show that Tolkien's later work gained in complexity. While Bilbo in *The Hobbit* has easy access to nostalgic thoughts of home, the four hobbit heroes in the later work experience greatly varied degrees of homesickness. Memories of home are no longer only simple coping mechanisms but also function as powerful weapons in the war against the antipastoral. In contrast to Bilbo's task to support the dwarfs on their private quest for a lost treasure, the four hobbit protagonists in the *Lord of the Rings* are burdened with the much greater task to save all of Middle-earth from destruction. Thus, their motivation to leave their Shire homes and endure the unknown dangers of the road differs from that of Bilbo. The great scope of their quest ensures their complete devotion to the task, as they are aware that its success is paramount to their future enjoyment of their homes. Consequently, memories of the Shire usually serve as reminders of their quest's importance and do not necessarily trigger nostalgic longing. Furthermore, the variation in their nostalgia proneness characterises the hobbit protagonists in *The Lord of the Rings* as more complex than Bilbo in *The Hobbit*. While Bilbo's recurring bouts of homesickness unchangingly characterise him as naive and lend his adventure a comic quality, the hobbits' various reactions to danger and the unknown in the later works serve to show their individuality and differing degrees of adaptability.

Especially Pippin and Merry show very little homesickness: talking about life in the Shire on several occasions, they do not voice regret about their absence from home, or longing to return there (cf. *LotR*, 998; 1036). Also, they face dangerous situations without resorting to nostalgia as a psychological coping mechanism: for example, during their captivity by the uruk-hai or the battle of Minas Tirith, Merry and Pippin do not think of home once (cf. *LotR*, 497-8; 1098 fff.). However, there are a few instances during which the two hobbits voice longing to return home or regret to have left it. In Lothlórien, Merry states: "I have never been out of my own land before. And if I had known what the world outside was like, I don't think I should have had the heart to leave it" (*LotR*, 454). On his journey with the Rohirrim host, Merry feels "borne down by the insupportable weight of Middle-earth. He longed to shut out the immensity in a quiet room by a fire" (*LotR*, 1036). On both occasions, Merry implies the wish to be back in his Shire home. Similarly, in the battle before the Gates of Mordor, Pippin implicitly longs to return to the Shire's pastoral beauty as he wishes he "could see cool sunlight and green grass again" (*LotR*, 1168). A scene shortly after the fellowship's departure from Rivendell and their frightening ordeal on the mountain Caradhras is the only instance in which Pippin explicitly wishes he had returned to the Shire (cf. *LotR*, 388). Like the two other hobbit protagonists, Merry and Pippin here react to the harshness and danger of their quest by voicing longing for their home. However, in view of their repeated exposure to threats of death, violence, and destruction, they show surprisingly few signs of homesickness. Having twice freely chosen to accompany Frodo on his quest – first in the Shire and then again in Rivendell – the two young hobbits consciously seek adventure and the unknown. Instead of continually looking back to their lost homes and yearning for the Shire's comfortable security, they accept every new twist and turn of their journey and react to them with open-minded curiosity and courage.

While Bilbo's repeated bouts of homesickness in *The Hobbit* have a comic quality as they characterise him as naive and awkward, Merry and Pippin's want of nostalgic longing portrays them as serious heroes whose loveable rustic traits cannot entirely conceal their iron wills and unwavering toughness. Like Sam and Frodo, Merry and Pippin in the course of their quest obtain a new perspective of the Shire and their own position in the world (cf. Hammond, 32). Acknowledging that their home offers them

the rootedness necessary for their identity, they are able to broaden their minds and perceive the Shire as only a small part within Middle-earth's greater scope. As Merry remarks to Pippin: "It is best to start somewhere and have some roots, and the soil of the Shire is deep. Still there are things deeper and higher; and not a gaffer could tend his garden in what he calls peace but for them, whether he knows about them or not. I am glad that I know about them, a little" (*LotR*, 1139).

In contrast to their two friends, Frodo and Sam repeatedly experience varying levels of homesickness. Upon starting his journey in the Shire, Frodo already experiences sadness to leave his home and doubt whether he will ever be able to return. Looking back to Hobbiton and Bywater, he wonders "if I shall ever look down into that valley again" (*LotR*, 93). Aware of the dangers of his quest and the powers of his opponents, Frodo is from the start conscious of the possibility that he might never return home again: "It is going to be very dangerous, Sam. [...] Most likely neither of us will come back" (*LotR*, 113). Altogether, his attitude is a sacrificial one, as his decision to leave the Shire and travel to Mount Doom is motivated by his desire to protect his country and community: "[...] I am a danger, a danger to all that live here. I cannot keep the Ring and stay here. I ought to leave Bag End, leave the Shire, leave everything and go away. [...] I should like to save the Shire, if I could [...]" (*LotR*, 82). Thus, Frodo chooses danger and the possibility of irreversible homelessness in order to ensure that his fellow hobbits will continue to enjoy the comforts and security of their homes. He finds solace in the thought that the Shire will remain unharmed and a safe haven within the confusions and dangers engulfing Middle-earth: "I feel that as long as the Shire lies behind, safe and comfortable, I shall find wandering more bearable: I shall know that somewhere there is firm foothold, even if my feet cannot stand there again" (ibid). Though he may never return there himself, Frodo feels that his knowledge of the Shire's existence and memories of it will support him on his quest. As Simon Malpas points out in his essay on the concept of home in *The Lord of the Rings*: "The Shire is presented here as a foundational space, an ontological ground for the Hobbit's identity, that lies securely outside of the conflict he is about to enter" (Malpas, 96). Like Bilbo, Frodo's memories of home provide him with a sense of identity and rootedness, from which he can draw strength and hope. Thus, he implicitly acknowledges the identity awarding and comforting functions of nostalgia.

During the first stage of his journey, Frodo experiences a wave of homesickness upon realising the impact of his departure from the Shire and the great weight of his task: on Weathertop he "for the first time fully realized his homelessness and danger. He wished bitterly that his fortune had left him in the quiet and beloved Shire" (*LotR*, 246). Upon suffering the Nazgul wound, he is cut off from his old life entirely and experiences incisive change. Though he dreams of the Shire after the attack, his vision of home is faint (cf. *LotR*, 265). Furthermore, in Rivendell, he suddenly perceives news of the Shire as unimportant and far away compared to news of the rest of the world (cf. *LotR*, 296). This clearly shows that the experiences of his journey have already changed and broadened his perspective and have not only separated him from home physically but also psychologically. However, he enjoys talking about the Shire with Bilbo and Sam, though their conversation is not marked by nostalgic longing. On the contrary, Frodo mentions a wish to stay in Rivendell for a long time or even forever (cf. *LotR*, 354), while Sam wonders where they will live after their adventures (cf. *LotR*, 356). Again, this clearly shows that the hobbits doubt that a return home will ever be possible for them. All the same, Frodo suffers from strong homesickness again in Moria. Recognising that his mithril coat marks him as something special, he remembers Bag End and his life with Bilbo: he "wished with all his heart that he was back there, and in those days, mowing the lawn, or pottering among the flowers, and that he had never heard of Moria, or *mithril* – or the Ring" (*LotR*, 414). As on Weathertop, Frodo's sudden realisation of the impact of his quest on himself triggers strong nostalgia. Like Bilbo in *The Hobbit*, Frodo in these two instances resorts to memories of his home and his past self in order to deal with the anxieties and insecurities aroused by his new role as Ring bearer and its implications.

However, unlike Bilbo's, Frodo's memories of the Shire are not always idealised as he, for example, tells Faramir that "[n]ot all is well there" (*LotR*, 891). In this instance, his memories of home are not clouded by nostalgic longing but he has gained a new and rather detached perspective of the Shire during his travels. As Simon Malpas has shown in his essay, the hobbits' initial "vision of home as a stable space whose redemptive efficacy is inexhaustible is dissipated by encounters with the foreign that radically transform its resonance" (Malpas, 96). A string of events – from the elf Gildor's comment on the Shire that it was inhabited by others before the arrival of the hobbits to

the import of Mallorn trees after the Shire's restoration – embed the Shire into history and the greater world, transforming the hobbits' perception of home (cf. Malpas, 96-97). While home had appeared to be always available as a source of identity at the beginning of their quest, the hobbits soon learn that it has to be obtained anew through their active efforts (cf. Malpas, 97). However, in Frodo's case, images of home are not only contested and changed but gradually abate as the Ring's hold on him grows and hopelessness begins to infiltrate his thoughts. Upon entering Mordor, Frodo's memories of the Shire are slowly lost until he cannot access them anymore:

> "No taste of food, no feel of water, no sound of wind, no memory of tree or grass or flower, no image of moon or star are left to me. I am naked in the dark, Sam, and there is no veil between me and the wheel of fire. I begin to see it even with my waking eyes, and all else fades" (*LotR*, 1226).

The loss of nostalgic memory simultaneously means the loss of hope. The Ring gains influence over Frodo's mind and cuts him off entirely from his home and his pastoral identity. At Mount Doom, Frodo therefore fails to destroy the Ring and instead claims its ownership (cf. *LotR*, 1237). Only after the destruction of the Ring does he become himself again and then reconnects with the Shire and his past: "And there was Frodo, pale and worn, and yet himself again [...]. There was the dear master of the sweet days in the Shire" (*LotR*, 1239). However, Frodo's experience of being cut off from his past self and home has been too incisive and formative to enable him to truly return to his old life. Unlike his companions, he is unable to fully return to the Shire and settle there. Thus, Frodo's journey ultimately does not follow intratextual nostalgia's typical cyclical structure. Home, indeed, has been lost to him.

Sam's regret to leave his home is already triggered when crossing the Brandywine River: "his old life lay behind in the mists, dark adventure lay in front. He scratched his head, and for a moment had a passing wish that Mr. Frodo could have gone on living quietly at Bag End" (*LotR*, 129). In contrast to his master, Sam's nostalgic memories of home become more frequent the more dangerous and antipastoral his road becomes. More than any of the others, Sam retains hope to return home and draws on it as a source of strength, especially in the face of Mordor's bleak desolation. His fierce love for the Shire and his family causes him to be homesick several times during his journey with Frodo; especially after he has seen visions of the Shire's destruction in Galadriel's

mirror (cf. *LotR*, 472). Only his loyalty and love for his master as well as his awareness of the importance of their quest, motivate him to continue on their journey. Though he at times adopts Frodo's hopeless view that a return home will in all probability not be possible for them (cf. *LotR*, 816; 832), Sam's general attitude is a hopeful one. Resorting to nostalgic memory, especially when confronted with the horrors of Mordor, he draws on nostalgic images of home, cultural knowledge, and social ties in order to deal with his experience of the antipastoral. As a gardener, he is deeply connected with the natural world and it seems that this results in even stronger ties to the Shire and its pastorality than those displayed by his hobbit companions. Thus, in the Tower of Cirith Ungol, Sam unintentionally begins to sing old hobbit songs:

> "He murmured old childish tunes out of the Shire, and snatches of Mr. Bilbo's rhymes that came into his mind like fleeting glimpses of the country of his home. And then suddenly new strength rose in him, and his voice rang out, while words of his own came unbidden to fit the simple tune" (*LotR*, 1188).

Without conscious effort, the images and tunes of home rise into Sam's mind, lending him strength and hope by reminding him of his true identity. In this instance, the songs of the Shire function as an effective counterforce to the antipastoral powers of Sauron's realm. Though they have no immediate effect on the orcs, they strengthen Sam's determination to rescue Frodo and thus enable him to proceed into the tower.

In the plains of Mordor, Sam once again resorts to nostalgia in order to deal with the land's inhospitable features and the constant threat of discovery and failure. Though he has for a moment lost all hope of ever returning home, he remembers Bywater and his friends and relatives there: "There could be no return. [...] '[...] Well, if that is the job then I must do it. But I would dearly love to see Bywater again, and Rosie Cotton and her brothers, and the Gaffer and Marigold and all" (*LotR*, 1221). The memories of his social ties have a positive effect on Sam:

> "But even as hope died in Sam, or seemed to die, it was turned to a new strength. Sam's plain hobbit-face grew stern, almost grim, as the will hardened in him, and he felt through all his limbs a thrill, as if he was turning into some creature of stone and steel that neither despair nor weariness nor endless barren miles could subdue" (ibid).

As Wildshut and his team have shown, nostalgia can provide a sense of social connectedness, thus lessening the impact of feelings of loneliness and meaninglessness

(cf. Sedikides et al., 1023). Their findings prove that nostalgia is a deeply social emotion, whose positive effects include the conveyance of a sense of being loved and protected in people with nostalgia proneness (cf. Arndt et al. 2008a, 306). Upon finding himself within the confines of Mordor's desolate bleakness and in the face of Frodo's complete despair and psychological defeat, Sam draws on nostalgia's positive powers to maintain his psychological health. Remembering his true pastoral self, he is able to deflect thoughts of death and despair: "He felt the cool mud about his toes as he paddled in the Pool at Bywater with Jolly Cotton and Tom and Nibs, and their sister Rosie. 'But that was years ago,' he sighed, 'and far away. The way back, if there is one, goes past the Mountain'" (*LotR*, 1228). Feeding his determination with images of home, Sam is able to carry Frodo to Mount Doom, thus ensuring the successful completion of their quest.

Ultimately, the Ring's destruction is effected by Sam's ability to retain nostalgic memories of home and thus his own sanity until the very end. It is no surprise, therefore, that the narrative ends with Sam's final return home. Though Merry and Pippin also manage to settle in the Shire and establish new lives for themselves there, Sam is the only one of the four hobbit protagonists who really achieves to establish a truly pastoral life after his return home. While Merry and Pippin have become extraordinary public figures in the hobbit community, who tell tales of foreign lands, wear their mail-shirts, and appear altogether like lordly knights, Sam gets married, starts a family, and takes over responsibility for the Shire as Major (cf. *LotR*, 1341). Following his vocation as gardener, he effects the Shire's restoration by planting new trees and spreading Galadriel's soil after the Shire's Scouring. True to his role as a good georgic pastoral hero, he thus focuses all his energy on communal life and the enhancement and maintenance of nature's pastorality. Having never lost the memory of home throughout his quest, Sam's happy homecoming and its position at the end of the narrative emphasise the centrality and importance of the nostalgia motif in Tolkien's mythology. The cyclical structure of his quest and his vital importance in the Ring's destruction mark Sam as the true pastoral hero in *The Lord of the Rings*.

7.3 "Those were the broad days!"[138] – The Ents' Longing for the Entwives and the Elder Days

At the time of the narrative of *The Lord of the Rings*, the ents are doomed to extinction. The permanent disappearance of all female ents has led the race into a dead end from which there is no return. As the above analysis of Treebeard's song has shown, the ents' bucolic passivity led them to disregard the implications of the entwives' departure from the woods for their future. Wrapped up in their contemplative enjoyment of Fangorn Forest's pastoral beauty, they neglected to prevent the estrangement from their female counterparts and finally lost touch with them. Furthermore, over the Ages, the ents passively watched the gradual decline of their woods. Though they are propelled into action by the hobbits' arrival and the imminent threat of destruction by Saruman's forces, they are aware that this effort will not rescue them. As Treebeard tells the hobbits: it is "likely enough that we are going to our doom: the last march of the Ents. But if we stayed at home and did nothing, doom would find us anyway, sooner or later" (*LotR*, 634). The sorrowful note in Treebeard's remark also resounds in his comment that "[f]orests may grow [...]. Woods may spread. But not Ents. There are no Entings" (*LotR*, 1284). The impossibility to produce offspring due to the loss of the entwives has reduced the entish population to a small group of ageing individuals. Of the ents who were created in the Elder Days, only three have survived. Out of these, only Treebeard has remained more or less unharmed (cf. *LotR*, 618). Younger ents have suffered similar fates: "What a pity there are so few of us! [...] Some have died from inside, as you might say. Some have fallen in the evil chances of the long years, of course; and more have grown tree-ish. But there were never many of us and we have not increased" (ibid).

The ents' gloomy present and future are the source of their nostalgic longing for the Elder Days, during which they were united with their wives and Middle-earth's natural world was untainted. Treebeard's memories are tinged with nostalgic longing:

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[138] *LotR*, 610.

"Those were the broad days! Time was when I could walk and sing all day and hear no more than the echo of my own voice in the hollow hills. The woods were like the woods of Lothlórien, only thicker, stronger, younger. And the smell of the air! I used to spend a week just breathing" (*LotR*, 610).

A younger ent similarly idealises the Elder Day's flora in his elegiac song about the old rowan-trees of his childhood, which were hewn down by orcs in later days. Describing them as 'fair', 'bright', 'light', and 'soft', he paints an emotional picture of loveliness and goodness, which is contrasted with the trees' dead stillness in the second stanza (cf. *LotR*, 630). The use of the compound adjective 'golden-red' to depict the rowan-trees' crown connects their ideal sylvan beauty with the Golden Age qualities of the Elder Days (cf. ibid). The ents' nostalgic memories of the Elder Days' pastoral bliss are repeated in the elvish song which describes the history of the ents and entwives[139]. The spring stanza deals with the awakening of nature and the aboriginal wildness of the woodland stream. The male interlocutor sings about his long walks through nature and breathing the fresh air (cf. *LotR*, 621). Treebeard's retrospective idealisation of these days is closely tied to the unity the ents and entwives enjoyed then: "When the world was young, and the woods were wide and wild, the Ents and the Entwives – and there were Entmaidens then: ah! the loveliness of Fimbrethil, of Wandlimb the lightfooted, in the days of our youth! – they walked together and they housed together" (*LotR*, 619). The ents' primal unity and youthful beauty is reflected in nature's original harmony and youthful freshness. Treebeard's reminiscences are clearly nostalgic, as they idealise both nature and creature in retrospect. As in his memories of Middle-earth's natural bliss during the Elder Days, the frequent use of exclamation marks in the ent's nostalgic observations underlines their highly emotional quality. Knowing that the re-establishment of past bliss or the rediscovery of the enwives are impossible, Treebeard feels sadness in the face of change and degeneration. His nostalgia has a dual function: his memories of the past on the one hand bring back to him images of past unity, joy, and bliss, while they on the other hand painfully mirror to him what has been lost. By

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[139] Having been composed by elves, the song expresses entish as well as elvish nostalgia. Specifically elvish are the references to the West in the summer stanza and at the close of the poem. The ents themselves do not voice such longing. However, the nostalgic depictions of the landscape in the spring and summer stanzas clearly echo Treebeard's and the young ent's memories of the Elder Days, thus reflecting not only elvish but also entish nostalgia.

remembering the ents' early days, Treebeard is reminded of his pastoral identity and the close unity in which the ents have always lived with the natural world. Comparing the Elder Days' unimpeded natural wildness and beauty with the destruction and decline of the natural spaces in the present, Treebeard awakens from his people's age-old lethargy. The bitter-sweetness of his nostalgic reminiscences is strong enough to propel him and the other ents into action. Thus, the nostalgic look back has a motivating impact on Treebeard as it sharpens his perception of his environment as well as his own position within it.

On a second level, the nostalgic memories of the entwives' beauty and their original unity with the ents increase Treebeard's yearning for their reunification and his awareness that it will never take place. However, instead of regretting his own and the other ents' passive acceptance of the entwives' departure from Fangorn and the competitive attitude of both sides, which gradually led to their estrangement, Treebeard only bemoans the impossibility to see the entwives again. His nostalgic memories do not create feelings of remorse or contrition in him; rather, he still sees the entwives as rivals, boasting of the ents' superiority by pointing out: "Yet here we still are, while all the gardens of the Entwives are wasted" (*LotR*, 620; cf. Olsen, 44). Consequently, Treebeard's nostalgia does not arise from or trigger the wish to have acted differently in the past. His decision to rouse the ents and become active agents in the war against Saruman does not arise from the wish to correct past wrongs. Rather, it results from the ents' hopeless future. Having no chance of survival and therefore nothing to lose, the ents finally decide to fulfil their original task of protecting the natural world from exploitation and destruction (cf. *Sil*, 41). As Treebeard explains: "[...] we may help the other peoples before we pass away" (*LotR*, 634). Yet, despite his acceptance of the ents' ultimate fate, his thoughts remain steeped in nostalgic longing and the sadness of its futility:

> "Still, I should have liked to see the songs come true about the Entwives. I should dearly have liked to see Fimbrethil again. But there, my friends, songs like trees bear fruit only in their own time and their own way: and sometimes they are withered untimely" (*LotR*, 634).

8 Pastoral Desire and the Degeneration of the World: Utopian and Dystopian Visions in *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*

As the theoretical chapter on utopia has shown, a distinction has to be made between utopia as a clearly defined literary genre and a utopian impulse, which can find explicit or implicit expression within all kinds of literary and non-literary creation. Ruth Levitas' very broad definition of utopia as "the desire for a different better way of being" (Levitas 1990a, 181) was merged with Frederic Jameson's term 'utopian impulse' and offered the theoretical grounding for the inclusion of fantasy literature into the canon of utopian material. Fantasy worlds usually contain visions of desirable utopian realms, which function as compensation for the troubles and shortcomings of the real world. Based on Ruth Levitas' work, it was pointed out that the question of the utopian visions' applicability, which has traditionally been used as a defining mark of utopia, is superfluous with regard to the utopian impulse due to the broadness of its definition. Its only function is that of criticism of the present and expression of desire (cf. Levitas 1990a, 196). Levitas' choice of the word 'desire' over that of 'hope' results from her observation that hope can only be experienced for things which might really come to pass, while desire is completely detached from the question of real possibility (cf. Levitas 1990a, 190). In using Levitas' definition, the impossibility of fantasy worlds' realisation in the real world thus does not present an obstacle to their containing visions of desire, and consequently a utopian impulse.

This chapter will argue that Tolkien's mythology contains a strong utopian impulse, which is set against the texts' overall dystopian vision of the world's degeneration towards an apocalyptic end. As the focus of this thesis lies on the pastoral element in Tolkien's works, only the utopian visions of the pastoral creatures will be considered. Therefore, among the good creatures, men and dwarves will not be accounted for,

although they also possess utopian hopes and desires for the future[140]. The following chapter will show that a strong utopian impulse is expressed through the pastoral creatures' nostalgia: their longing gaze into the past automatically implies a vision of desire for the future. This utopian vision, which originates from the longing to regain what has been lost and to protect the last pastoral remains, is the driving force behind the pastoral creatures' war against the non-pastoral. At the same time, Tolkien's mythology clearly states that the recovery of primal beauty and ideality is impossible, as the world's fate is predetermined as a process of degeneration, to which the non-pastoral is inseparably tied. Consequently, the pastoral creatures' efforts are doomed and can only achieve temporary victories. The mythology's overall vision is therefore a dystopian one. The pastoral creatures' strong nostalgia is indicative of this, as it is intensified by the mounting difficulty with which they struggle to protect and maintain their pastoral homes. At the end of the narrative of *The Lord of the Rings*, the loss of the pastoral in Middle-earth is inevitable. Men take over the rule and, as the preceding analysis has shown, their pastoral potential is only minimal, as it is usually superseded by their desire for power and glory.

8.1 The Utopian Desire for Pastorality and the Question of its Feasibility in Tolkien's Mythology

Desire for a better life is a strong emotion in Tolkien's mythology, and it is the main underlying driving force for the perpetual conflict between good and evil. Though the fate of the world is a dystopian one due to its inevitable gradual degeneration towards an apocalyptic end, Tolkien's pastoral creatures are driven in their actions by their personal and collective visions for a better future. Their utopian design of a pastoral world, in which every creature and plant can thrive in their own fashion, stands in direct opposition to the non-pastoral creatures' dystopian strive for dominance and exploitation. The great contrariety between the positive and negative visions of the good

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[140] The desires of men are tightly bound to concepts of honour and knightly valour, including the vision of an ideal king whose rule is characterised by justice, truth, and humanity. For a while, this utopian vision of Tolkien's men comes true during the reign of Aragorn. The utopian desires of dwarves are aimed at power and wealth. In *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit*, their vision is shown to fail, as the two major dwarven cities, Erebor and Moria, have fallen and are in the hands of evil creatures at the time of the narratives.

and the evil creatures is the cause for their ongoing war, by which they wish to realise their respective desires for the future. As shown in the above analysis of the pastoral and its nostalgia in Tolkien's texts, especially the bucolic pastoral creatures are motivated in their private and public actions by their desire for an ideal world. Their visions for the future mainly grow from their nostalgic recollections of a highly bucolic past, which has been irretrievably lost. Nostalgia, as pointed out in chapter 2.1, automatically expresses utopian desire, as it implicitly contains criticism of the present and offers images of the world as it should preferably be. By remembering the world in an idealised past state, the pastoral creatures implicitly express a wish for its retrieval in the future. However, utopian vision is not only based on nostalgia. Pastoral creatures such as Beorn, Tom Bombadil, and the entwives, who do not voice nostalgic sentiment, express their visions of ideal life through their lifestyles, actions, and values. Their active war effort shows that these creatures harbour the wish to protect and maintain their pastoral homes and living conditions for a better future in which the non-pastoral threat has been banished. As nostalgic memory and lifestyles vary from culture to culture due to their different histories and interests, every pastoral culture possesses their individual vision of ideality. However, there are great similarities between the visions detectable within the bucolic and the georgic group, which is why the author of this thesis proposes to sum them up as the bucolic and the georgic utopian impulse.

8.1.1 The Bucolic Utopian Impulse

The bucolic utopian impulse is implied in the elves' and ents' nostalgic longing for an ideal past, which they experience as highly superior to the present. Due to the longevity, and in the case of the elves immortality, of both bucolic races, some of their members are living witnesses of the ideal Elder Days, possessing personal memory of Middle-earth's primeval past. Thus, they are both inseparably tied to the world's initial bliss and beauty, which only existed at its beginning and already started to degenerate soon after creation. In the case of the elves, their associations with the most ideal of creation even surpasses the experience of Middle-earth's Elder Days, as a group of them dwelt in Valinor, the Valar's highly bucolic island, whose pastoral ideality is even greater than Middle-earth's primeval beauty. This experience of the highest quality of creation and

of the pain inflicted by its loss laid the foundation for the emergence of their nostalgia culture[141] in Middle-earth. As shown in chapter 6.1.1.1, the elves have developed a lifestyle that is mainly founded on their desire to maintain and re-establish the bliss of primeval times. Similar to the elves, the bucolic ents often display nostalgic symptoms, though their deeds and culture are much less strongly influenced by longing than those of the elves[142]. In contrast to the elves, their experience of the highly bucolic Elder Days is restricted to Middle-earth. However, their memories of the times when the earth was covered in lush woodland and when they were still united with the entwives contain a strong utopian impulse, despite the ents' knowledge that the pastoral past is irretrievably lost. Due to being inseparably bound to Illuvatar's creation in its primeval, and therefore purest, state, the bucolic vision is the highest ideal in Tolkien's mythology. Despite the fallibility and weaknesses of the bucolic pastoral, it represents the epitome of natural health and beauty, and its final loss in Middle-earth is the greatest of all losses.

Though Tom Bombadil and Goldberry do not actively participate in the war against the non-pastoral and do not voice nostalgia, their efforts to help the hobbits on their quest can be taken as implying a desire for a better life in the future. By educating and rescuing the protagonists, the couple support the quest for a pastoral future. Although their general attitude is a neutral one, their actions imply a wish for the re-establishment of past peace and freedom. Bombadil's and Goldberry's dependence on a sound and well-functioning ecosystem suggests that their mentality is similar to that of all the other pastoral creatures. As Gandalf speculates, Bombadil might be "waiting perhaps for a change of days" so that he can safely leave his country again (*LotR*, 346).

The utopian impulse implied in the bucolic creatures' nostalgic memories of an ideal past contains all the characteristics of the world's highly bucolic state in primeval times. Thus, the vision is a purely bucolic one and draws heavily on the pastoral motifs and images pointed out by Phyllis Koppes and in the above analysis of the bucolic in

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[141] The term 'nostalgia culture' was introduced in this thesis, denoting a culture in which every activity (political, social, and cultural) is motivated or influenced by nostalgic longing (cf. chapter 7.1 of this thesis).
[142] Cf. chapter 7.3 of this thesis.

Tolkien's texts[143]. Altogether, the bucolic utopian impulse envisions a world in which every being lives in close harmony and understanding with nature and fellow creature. There is no clear distinction between the two; instead, they are inseparably entwined and, in some cases, even indistinguishable from one another. Consequently, the creatures' behaviour towards the natural world is defined by respect, love, and care, as they perceive it as a constitutive part of themselves and are aware of its importance for their own happiness and survival. The natural world is wholly unspoilt and provides food and accommodation for all in bountiful abundance. Hence, all creatures are able to enjoy life without the necessity to work or fight for resources. Instead, their time is filled with contemplation, artistic creation, and the tending of nature. There is no decline, as processes of change are nonexistent. Instead, timelessness and stasis ensure the infinitude of this ideal state. This relieves all creatures from the pressures of change and adaptive difficulties, enabling them to live in complete security and harmony. Altogether, the bucolic vision is a self-absorbed one, as personal needs are usually given precedence. However, group ties are cherished and considered important. Furthermore, as the behaviour of the elves during the First Age shows, intercultural exchange is usually experienced as rewarding and friendships are established with members of different cultures (e.g. with men).

8.1.2 The Georgic Utopian Impulse

After the bucolic utopian impulse, the georgic pastoral vision of an ideal future is the second highest ideal in Tolkien's works. It is only inferior to the bucolic ideal in that it solely draws its vision from Middle-earth's past and therefore lacks a direct link to the paradisiacal spheres of the Valar. The georgic utopian impulse finds expression in the lifestyle and longings of the hobbits, Beorn, and the entwives. In *The Hobbit*, Beorn's active fight against orcs and wargs is expressive of his wish to maintain and protect his georgic pastoral home. His efforts are directed towards a future in which non-pastoral creatures have been driven away and the lands' pastorality has been fully restored. Thus, a utopian vision is implied in his actions and lifestyle, even though he does not voice either nostalgic longing or utopian desire. For a while, his wish becomes reality,

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[143] Cf. chapters 4.5.2 and 6.1.1 of this thesis.

as the orcs and wargs are driven away by the protagonists' victory over the dragon and "a new peace came over the edge of the Wild" (*Hobbit*, 271). The entwives, who are only indirectly represented through the ents' tales, similarly do not shown any signs of nostalgia. However, their desire to establish lush gardens and a georgic lifestyle, which drives them out of Fangorn Forest and induces them to found their own georgic homes in the plains, can be understood as a utopian vision. Like Beorn's vision, the entwives' utopia for a while becomes reality, as they successfully cultivate their gardens until their destruction by Sauron.

As shown in the preceding analysis, the hobbit protagonists show strong signs of nostalgia in the original sense throughout their quest[144]. This means that, in contrast to elvish and entish nostalgia, which is directed towards a long lost past, hobbit nostalgia is directed towards their immediate past and signifies homesickness. Consequently, the utopian impulse contained within their homesickness mainly consists of visions of an ideal Shire, to which the hobbits wish to return after their troublesome and harsh journey through Middle-earth. At the end of the narrative, their vision comes true for a while, as the Shire is restored to its old pastoral glory. By using Galadriel's soil, Sam even achieves to introduce a heightened state of pastorality into the country, as bucolic elements are added to the Shire's georgic landscapes. The fact that both the entwives' as well as the hobbits' georgic utopian visions come true for a while shows that georgic pastorality can be achieved temporarily through hard work and endurance. In contrast, bucolic pastorality is tied to ideal creation and therefore to the world's initial state. It cannot be achieved through work, but is given by a higher power at the beginning of time.

Altogether, the georgic utopian impulse contains the vision of a world in which nature and creature exist in a reciprocal unity. The creatures are active agents who shape and cultivate nature in order to obtain food and resources. At the same time, their caring and appreciative actions enhance the beauty of the countryside and plants. Nature, in its turn, returns the creatures' cares by supplying them with rich harvests and bountiful produce. Though change exists in the shape of the seasons and of births and deaths, this

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[144] Cf. chapter 6.1.2.1 of this thesis.

change is cyclical and does not bring real alteration to the georgic lifestyle and landscape; loss and renewal perpetually follow each other and are always only temporary. In contrast to the bucolic creatures' self-absorption, the georgic is focused on relationships and puts the community into the centre of its attention, as the hobbit protagonists' sacrificial and loyal attitude towards each other shows.

8.2   The Dystopian Transience of All Things - The Failure of the Pastoral Utopian Visions

Tolkien's mythology presents the reader with a world whose fate is pre-determined in the design of its creator. *The Silmarillion* gives a detailed account of Illuvatar's creation of the Valar, who sing the world into existence according to his design. Though one of the Valar, Melkor, of his own accord changes and thus perverts the melody of his prescribed creation tune, Illuvatar stresses: "[...] no theme may be played that hath not its uttermost source in me, nor can any alter the music in my despite. For he that attempteth this shall prove but mine instrument in the devising of things more wonderful, which he himself hath not imagined" (*Sil*, 5-6). The predetermination of the world's overall fate by one divine being raises the question whether the creatures in Illuvatar's world are given the choice of free will or whether their personal fates and actions are predetermined in their creator's design as well. In answer to this question, Thomas Fornet-Ponse has argued that Tolkien's creatures possess free will and are capable of making decisions that disagree with Illuvatar's design (Fornet-Ponse, 185). Though the world's overall fate is pre-determined, "Illuvatar can allow discordances and unforseeable interludes without endangering the final result" (ibid). Illuvatar's design for the world and all its Ages, which was expressed in the music that created it, is such that the free actions of men and all other creatures, although they can change and disrupt the world's design and history for lengthy periods, cannot change the overall outcome of the Ages and the world's fate. The result of this is the inevitable development of the world towards a prescribed end. This way, even the most evil actions ultimately produce good, for every action without exception has its source in Illuvatar and thus contributes to the final completion of his design for the world. In this mixture of godly predetermination and personal free will, the hopes and desires of all

creatures function as catalysts of action, as they lend the motivation and perseverance necessary in their struggles for final fulfillment and happiness.

The function of both pastoral utopian visions in the narrative lies in their effect on their owners. Though the world is caught in an irreversible degenerative process, the actions of the pastoral heroes are inspired by their personal utopian desires; remembering their highly pastoral past, they are motivated in their struggles by their wish to restore its bliss and beauty in the future. Thus, they repeatedly succeed in holding the antipastoral and unpastoral at bay and in slowing the world's degeneration towards an apocalyptic end. Their efforts introduce periods of peace and happiness into an otherwise negative process. As Mathews points out,

> "[t]he real challenge in *The Lord of the Rings*, [...], is not how to be reborn into heavenly bliss but rather how to sustain a fallen world and, through sacrifice, partially redeem it. The past can never be fully recovered, but consistent with his own Catholicism, Tolkien shows in his story that great faith and sacrifice in a fallen world can indeed limit the power of evil" (Mathews, 69-70).

However, at the time of the narrative of *The Lord of the Rings*, i.e. towards the end of the Third Age, the pastoral utopian visions have lost the greater part of their power, as most of the pastoral creatures have come to realise that their restorative efforts in Middle-earth are either about to fail or have failed already. Especially the two bucolic groups, the elves and the ents, acknowledge that their time in Middle-earth is running out and that their ideal landscapes of the past cannot be restored. As the elf Haldir remarks to the fellowship: "I do not believe that the world about us will ever again be as it was of old, or the light of the Sun as it was aforetime" (*LotR*, 454). Acknowledging the end of the ents' time in Middle-earth, Treebeard parts from Galadriel with the words: "It is sad that we should meet only thus at the ending. For the world is changing: I feel it in the water, I feel it in the earth, and I smell it in the air. I do not think we shall meet again" (*LotR*, 1285). Gandalf confirms the looming disappearance of pastorality from Middle-earth: "For though much has been saved, much must now pass away [...]. [...] For the time comes of the Dominion of Men, and the Eldar Kindred shall fade or depart" (*LotR*, 1272). Especially the loss of the highly bucolic elves, who are connected to ideal creation through their personal experience of Valinor, is a benchmark of Middle-earth's incessant process of degeneration from a highly bucolic environment to its final apocalyptic destruction. As Christian Kölzer points out,

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"[d]as Schwinden der Elben aus Mittelerde ist also nicht nur ein physisches, sondern betrifft auch ihr Wirken, ihr Wissen, ihre Kunst, überhaupt ihre gesamte Kultur. Das neue Zeitalter der Menschen, so viel ist schon in der Jetztzeit des Romans klar, wird die elbische Kultur allenfalls schwach widerspiegeln, viel eher aber überlagern und in die Sphären des Legendären verdrängen. Der Unsterblichkeit der Elben steht somit die Vergänglichkeit ihrer Kultur in Mittelerde gegenüber [...]" (Kölzer, 114).

The elves' utopian vision has failed due to their self-absorbed refusal to accept the irreversibility of the world's fate of continuous change. In their case, the realisation of their efforts' futility effects their rather passive attitude in the war against Sauron at the end of the Third Age. Though they support and help the good agents with advice, shelter, and provisions, most of them do not actively participate in the battles but rather remain in the background of events. Adversely, the ents are activated by their realisation that their race has been diminished and will die out. Although they acknowledge the impossibility of their utopian desire for the Elder Days' restoration, they hope to rescue some of Middle-earth's nature and to bequeath as much of its beauty and bliss to the following generations as possible: "[..] we may help the other peoples before we pass away" (*LotR*, 634). Their utopian desire is now directed to post-apocalyptic time, in which they hope to be reunited with their entwives: "We believe that we may meet again in a time to come, and perhaps we shall find somewhere a land where we can live together and both be content. But it is foreboded that that will only be when we have both lost all that we now have" (*LotR*, 620-1). With regard to the georgic pastoral creatures, doom has already fallen on the entwives, whose gardens were erased by Sauron at the end of the Second Age and who have in all likelihood died out. The only prospering pastoral culture at the time of the narratives of both *The Hobbi*t and *The Lord of the Rings* is that of the Shire hobbits. However, their security and prosperity is solely based on an intricate system that shields the Shire from the outside world. Consequently, and as shown by the events in *The Lord of the Rings*, their pastoral culture and country is as fragile as that of all the other pastoral peoples in Middle-earth. Its fragility is proven towards the end of the narrative, when Saruman subjects the Shire to his rule without effort. Although the Shire's pastorality is re-established and even heightened at the beginning of the Fourth Age, it is implied that its new bloom is only temporary – in the 'Prologue' to *The Lord of the Rings*, it is explicitly stated that "[t]hose days, the Third Age of Middle-earth, are now long past, and the shape of all

lands has been changed; but the regions in which Hobbits then lived were doubtless the same as those in which **they still linger** [...]" (*LotR*, 2; *author's emphasis*).

The information that hobbits still exist in the readers' world and time connects Tolkien's mythology with reality and presents the fictional events as history. In consequence, readers of the text are made aware of the Shire's absence in their modern world. Though hobbit culture can in some aspects be related to British culture, it is obvious that today's Great Britain is at best a poor version of the georgic pastoral Shire. Judging from this, the Shire's fate becomes apparent; like all pastoral realms, it is doomed to ultimately lose its pastorality in the overall process of degeneration. The signs are already visible at the dawn of the Fourth Age, despite a beginning period of heightened pastorality: after the war against Sauron, the Shire is included in Aragorn's Reunited Kingdom and loses its isolated security. Along with this, the hobbits develop an interest in history, thus acknowledging their ties to the greater world. Like the four hobbit heroes, the entire community of Shire hobbits has come to realise that a return to their old lives and pseudo-static seclusion has become impossible after the disrupting events of the war against Sauron. As Dickerson and Evans have pointed out, "[...] the Shire is not portrayed as perfect at the end of the story, just as the Shire before Saruman is not meant to be understood as perfect. [...] Though it is now undergoing a process of restoration and environmental healing, it is a place that has been damaged and broken in many ways" (Dickerson and Evans, 215).

The pastoral creatures' awareness of their pending doom in Middle-earth creates a sense of loss, which pervades the narrative as a leitmotif. The loss is that of home, of innocence, of beauty, and generally, of pastorality. The leitmotif is already introduced in the 'Prologue' to *The Lord of the Rings*, where it is explicitly stated that the blissful time of the Shire's Third Age is long past and that the lands have been utterly changed since (cf. *LotR*, 3). Furthermore, the elves' final departure from Middle-earth is explicitly described as an event of irreparable loss: "and with [the last elf] went the last living memory of the Elder Days in Middle-earth" (*LotR*, 21). The world's demystification, which is witnessed by the readers of the mythology and related to their own real-life experience, creates a strong sense of melancholy:

"Die melancholische Grundstimmung des *Herrn der Ringe*, [...], wird also einerseits erzeugt durch das Miterleben des aussichtslosen Kampfes der Elben gegen ihr von den Göttern auferlegtes Schwinden und ihre Sehnsucht nach dem Paradies hinter der See, aber noch viel stärker durch das Verlustgefühl der Hinterbliebenen in einer nun endgültig entzauberten Welt, zu denen sich die Leserinnen und Leser im Rahmen der Geschichte zählen müssen" (Kölzer, 116).

The pastoral creatures' attempts to ignore and supersede the rules of change Middle-earth is subjected to are doomed to fail due to the impossibility of changing Illuvatar's design for the world. Even the highly bucolic elves of Lothlórien and Bombadil with his wife, who have retreated into their realms as absolutely as possible, cannot evade the grasp of change and have to bear the consequences of the world's slow degeneration. Altogether, the departure of the elves, the looming extinction of the ents, the fragile dependence of Bombadil's survival on the health of nature, and the ease with which Saruman suppresses the Shire hobbits all show the negative results of pastoral isolation and stasis and how they are not conducive to survival in a world doomed to progress. As shown in the analytical chapter on pastoral nostalgia, the strong longing for the past detectable in pastoral, and even non-pastoral, cultures is a direct consequence of the creatures' awareness of the continual process of loss. Instead of accepting change and attempting to define it positively, the pastoral creatures' stasis, passivity, and self-absorption lay the foundation for their failure to survive. Pastoral timelessness turns out to be an illusion. However, the fading of the pastoral is part of Illuvatar's design and an important benchmark in the world's degeneration towards an apocalyptic end. This leads to the conclusion that, even if the pastoral peoples had acted differently, their fate to fade would have remained unchanged. A different attitude towards change and other ways of reacting to its challenges might only have lengthened their time in Middle-earth, but they could not have secured their ultimate survival as they could not have changed Illuvatar's overall design.

Despite the impossibility of the pastoral creatures' victory over change and degeneration, Tolkien's mythology does not propagate hopelessness and passive acceptance of fate. Instead, the protagonists' sacrificial fight for their utopian visions and their willingness to die for them are presented as ideals. Drawing on their nostalgic memories of highly pastoral homes, they succeed in introducing periods of peace and happiness into an otherwise negative process. In a pre-determined world, individual

freedom thus lies in every creature's choice how to react to and deal with the given situation. It is a test of character, as only those with strong utopian visions are able to stand up in the face of the seemingly hopeless fate of the world. Nostalgia serves as a powerful tool in this psychological war against loss and degeneration. As the above analysis of the pastoral creatures' nostalgia has shown, the longing look back inspires hope for the future restoration of bliss and thus serves as a source of strength and courage. As Mathews has pointed out, Tolkien's mythology shows that "the purpose of present existence is not to build an improved city of God but merely to prevent the fragments and ruins of the old city from disappearing completely" (Mathews, 70). Although there is no return into an ideal past, every creature is challenged to actively participate in the struggle to maintain as much of Middle-earth's pastorality as possible. Overall, Tolkien's mythology propagates the active use of free will in order to shape the world according to one's own desires and values. It is a central characteristic of his good creatures that they are free and able to make their own decisions based on their values and experience. In contrast, non-pastoral creatures are usually characterised by their servitude and dependence on a tyrannical master. Their actions are bound to Melkor's perverted tune, as they promote the world's degenerative processes by destroying and subjecting pastoral landscapes and cultures. Consequently, they are inseparably bound to the mythology's dystopian vision of the world's slow decay towards final destruction. Especially the unpastoral creatures, who were pastoral once, are living reminders of the threat of doom under which the pastoral exists. As evil cannot be banished from the world, the war against it is a perpetual one. However, it is the moral and ethical duty of each being to put their best effort into subduing it. In Gandalf's words:

> "Other evils there are that may come; for Sauron himself is 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 succour 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" (*LotR*, 1150).

Though this is not mentioned in *The Hobbit* or *The Lord of the Rings*, besides the georgic and bucolic utopian visions of the pastoral creatures in Middle-earth, Tolkien's mythology proffers a distinct utopia, which will come to fulfilment after the apocalyptic destruction of the world. *The Silmarillion* announces the creation of a new world, whose

creation songs will not be disturbed by any disharmonic tunes, and which will, in consequence, be utterly without fault:

> "Never since have the Ainur made any music like to this music, though it has been said that a greater still shall be made before Illúvatar by the choirs of the Ainur and the Children of Illúvatar after the end of days. Then the themes of Illúvatar shall be played aright, and take Being in the moment of their utterance, for all shall then understand fully his intent in their part, and each shall know the comprehension of each, and Illúvatar shall give to their thoughts the secret fire, being well pleased" (*Sil*, 4).

Without the influences of the non-pastoral, this second world will be highly pastoral. As in Christian faith, final redemption and perfection can only be experienced in a new world which does not possess the faults of our present existence.

9 Tolkien's Works as Modern Pastorals

One of the central findings of this thesis was that the pastoral mode possesses great importance in Tolkien's mythology. It was shown that, through the use of pastoral elements and their interplay with nostalgia, the texts contrive a vision of ideal life which is projected into the future. The frictions between ideal pastorality and the non-pastoral create tensions that are part of the world's dystopian fate to change and degenerate. As shown in the theoretical part of this thesis, this contrast between ideal and deterring modes of life is a defining characteristic of pastoral literature. It was further argued that fantasy literature is closely related to pastoral writing as both share identical functions and most works of fantasy contain pastoral elements. The centrality of pastoral elements and motifs in Tolkien's texts leads to the conclusion that they can be defined as modern pastorals. According to Terry Gifford, one of today's most prominent critics in the field, modern pastorals are defined by offering answers to some of the following six questions:

1. Can awe in the face of nature (e.g. landscapes) lead to humility in our species, reducing our hubris?
2. What are the implications of recognising that we are part of nature's creative-destructive processes?
3. If our inner nature echoes outer nature, how can the outer help us understand the former?
4. If nature is culture, is culture nature?
5. How can consciousness, through conscience, help us heal our alienation from our home?
6. Is the exploitation of our planet aligned with our exploitation of human minorities?

(Gifford 2012)

Based on this definition of modern pastorals, which Gifford terms 'post-pastorals', and on the findings of this thesis, it is possible to establish that *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* belong into this category. Their ecological focus, which examines all

creatures' relationship with nature, allows for the ecocritical approach proposed by Gifford.

Tolkien's texts certainly convey a feeling of awe with regard to nature. Especially the hobbit protagonists, who perceive of Middle-earth's natural diversity for the first time during their quests, are struck by the different landscapes and their flora and fauna. They lose their egocentric worldview and learn to perceive of themselves as only small agents within vast and complex ecological and cultural systems. Their confrontation with the natural world and its forces is humbling, as the hobbits are repeatedly forced to acknowledge their own limits and fears in the face of them. As shown in this thesis, the hobbits are most efficiently educated during their stays in the pastoral realms, where they are taught the importance of Middle-earth's natural environment and its protection. The pastoral creatures further support the protagonists in their personal development, so that they gradually lose their initial ignorance and mature into heroes capable of responsible action. As argued in this thesis, the hobbits' realisation that they are part of a complex world is tied to their experience of repeated deaths and rebirths during their quests. This process of maturation mirrors nature's creative-destructive processes, thus emphasising the fact that a rational creature's fate is inseparably tied to nature's cycle of birth and death. Tied to this is the dystopian insight that the world's fate to slowly degenerate towards an apocalyptic end cannot be changed by any of its inhabitants. As shown with regard to the utopian impulse in Tolkien's works, the pastoral creatures' actions can only temporarily improve the earth's state. Overall, they are tied to the world's changes. This recognition also slowly reaches the ents and elves, whose attempts to break free from the creative-destructive mechanism fails. The ents are forced to acknowledge their looming doom, while the elves give up their attempts to protect their realms from change and leave Middle-earth. The drastic results of the ents' and elves' wilful ignorance of change show that attempts to avoid natural processes by separating oneself from them or ignoring them cannot be successful. The bucolic creature's final acknowledgement of their connectedness with Middle-earth's fate to change and degenerate comes too late. In contrast, the hobbit protagonists are able to productively use their new insights and thus introduce a phase of peace and recuperation after the devastating occurrences in the Third Age.

The pastoral creatures' knowledge that inner and outer nature are inseparably tied to each other puts the protection and preservation of nature into the centre of their concerns. Part of this is the realisation that the ability to act consciously entails responsibility for the treatment of nature and its ultimate survival. Thus, the hobbits' maturation and growing consciousness during their quests teach them that they are inseparably tied to the earth's fate and have to actively take over responsibility for its fate in order to secure their future. Similarly, the ents suddenly take active part in the war against the non-pastoral once the hobbits have convinced them of their connectedness to Middle-earth's overall fate. The recognition that ecological change cannot be avoided also includes acceptance of personal change. Thus, the elves finally accept the loss of bucolic pastorality in Middle-earth and their own attachment to its fate. The fusion of nature and culture in the pastoral realms, which was pointed out in this thesis, emphasises this inseparable bond between inner and outer nature. Especially the elves and ents successfully unite their lifestyle and culture with the needs and conditions of their natural environments. In stark contrast to this fusion of nature and pastoral creature, the antipastoral agents are focused on the exploitation and suppression of all life forms. Social and environmental exploitation go hand in hand in Tolkien's mythology, as they are both part of the antipastoral's tyrannical ideology. The pastoral creatures' attempt to exterminate all non-pastoral agents is based on the recognition that only this will effect freedom, peace, and the healing of the environment. Thus, Tolkien's mythology proposes radical action, through which all sources of exploitation are hoped to be expunged. However, at the same time, it is emphasised that the non-pastoral will always be a part of the world and cannot be completely erased from its face. As argued in the chapter on the utopian vision in Tolkien's works, the overall message gained from this recognition is that the fight against exploitation should be continued nonetheless, as it can introduce phases of peace and ecological recuperation. As Gandalf teaches the hobbits:

> "Other evils there are that may come; for Sauron himself is 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 succour 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" (*LotR*, 1150).

Part Four:
❦ Conclusion ❧

10 Conclusion

The main aim of this thesis was to gain new insight into J.R.R. Tolkien's well-known texts, *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*, by analysing the pastoral, its nostalgia proneness, and the expression of a pastoral utopian vision. Leading questions in the analysis were: Which position does the pastoral occupy in the texts? What are its characteristics and in how far are they related to traditional pastorals? Which function does the pastoral have in the narrative? In how far is the pastoral connected with nostalgic longing? What role does nostalgia play in pastoral cultures? Which functions does it have? Which utopian vision do the pastoral and its nostalgia convey? In how far does the rest of the narrative support or refute this vision? Though the field of fantasy studies in general, and of Tolkien studies in particular, is rather wide, the analysis of Tolkien's work from such an angle was promising as it had not been taken before. In order to develop a theoretical foundation for the analysis, the three fields of interest, nostalgia, utopia, and the pastoral tradition, were depicted and defined in the theoretical section of this work. They were shown to be closely interrelated, and their importance and functions in fantasy literature were pointed out. Thus, the theoretical chapters served to formulate definitions of nostalgia, utopia, and the pastoral applicable to fantasy literature of the type of Tolkien's mythology. In a consecutive second part, the primary texts were analysed to address the role of the pastoral, nostalgia and the utopian impulse in Tolkien's mythology. First of all, it was shown that Tolkien's work is very closely related to the pastoral tradition. Furthermore, it was found that pastoral depictions are inseparably entwined with strong nostalgia. Based on these findings, pastoral utopian visions could be detected and were located within the mythology's overall dystopian outlook. This chapter will present a summary of the central findings of this thesis and an outlook with questions for further study. At its end, a short resumé will show that Tolkien's works can be defined as modern pastorals.

10.1 Summary of the Central Findings of this Thesis

10.1.1 Part I: Theory

With regard to nostalgia, Barbara Stern's two categories of nostalgia, **historical** and **personal nostalgia**, were chosen as relevant for this thesis. They are respectively

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defined as the longing for pre-autobiographical past, and the longing for autobiographical past. In addition, two new terms (**intratextual** and **extratextual nostalgia**[145]) were coined based on Donald Beecher's observations about the nostalgic structure of the Renaissance romance, of which only intratextual nostalgia was of relevance for this thesis: the personal and historical nostalgia of the fictional hero as well as the circular plot pattern, which leads him away from home only to finally return there, of a text. For the analysis of Tolkien's mythology, Beecher's definition of nostalgia in romance texts had to be broadened to include not only the protagonist's personal nostalgia for his home, but also the personal and historical nostalgia expressed by all the other characters within a text. It was argued that the two types and levels of nostalgia are detectable in fantasy literature. Nostalgia's function as a psychological coping mechanism was then outlined based on the work of Arndt, Wildschut, and Sedikides. Their studies found that personal nostalgia is a meaning-providing mechanism that counteracts negative emotions and deflects threats to the self in order to preserve mental health. Drawing on Patrick Wright's work, it was pointed out that historical nostalgia fulfils the same psychological functions as personal nostalgia, albeit on a supra-individual level.

The second theoretical chapter of this thesis showed that fantasy literature conveys a **utopian impulse**, which has to be distinguished from utopia as a clearly defined literary genre. The term was taken from Fredric Jameson's work and was merged with Ruth Levitas' broad definition of utopia as the desire for a better life. By using the word 'desire', Levitas detaches her definition from the question of real possibility and presents the theoretical grounding for the inclusion of fantasy literature into the canon of utopian material. It was shown that her inclusive definition is capable of accounting for a utopian impulse within fantasy literature and therefore laid the theoretical foundation for the analysis of the utopian impulse in J.R.R. Tolkien's mythology.

With regard to the pastoral tradition, a distinction between the pastoral as genre and as mode was introduced based on the work of a number of critics. The pastoral genre is

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[145] Extratextual nostalgia: the personal and historical nostalgia of the author and readers of the text, which influences the text and is influenced by the text (reciprocal influence).

defined as classical pastoral literature that adheres to a number of characteristics laid down in narrow definitions. The **pastoral mode** embraces all kinds of pastoral appearances, including traditional pastoral themes and attitudes, within any literary genre. It was argued that the fantasy genre often contains the pastoral mode, which can easily appear in close conjunction with intratextual nostalgia. Altogether, it was shown that the pastoral, nostalgia, and utopia are closely connected: the pastoral's orientation towards an idealised past, which is nostalgically remembered, automatically contains a utopian impulse, as the lost ideality of past times is wished to be preserved and restored in the future. In order to develop pastoral categories and terms for the analysis of Tolkien's mythology, Phyllis Koppes' pastoral-heroic spectrum was introduced and expanded by new categories. In essence, the following terms and definitions were set down:

	Bucolic Pastoral	Georgic Pastoral	Antipastoral (Degenerative Heroic)	Unpastoral
Characters' relationship to nature	unity with nature: • nature provides in bounty • passivity	reciprocal unity between characters and nature: • farming • active cooperation	fight against nature: • nature as enemy	lost unity: • estranged and hostile nature and creature
Time	• timelessness • stasis	• positive change • seasonal cycle • rebirths	rejection of time and change: • attempted stasis	negative change: • degeneration and loss
Social relations	self-absorption	community, family	egomania	self-absorption

source: author of this thesis

The first two categories, the bucolic and the georgic pastoral, were taken without modification from Phyllis Koppes' work. The definition of the antipastoral is a modification of Koppes' 'degenerative heroic' category, while the unpastoral was introduced and defined by the author of this thesis.

10.1.2 Part II: Analysis

10.1.2.1 The Pastoral Mode in *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit*

The analysis revealed that the elves, ents, and Tom Bombadil and his wife Goldberry can be identified as bucolic pastoral creatures. It was pointed out that, with the exception of Rivendell, all bucolic pastoral realms appear in the first half of the narrative of both primary works, as they serve to prepare the protagonists for their battle against the non-pastoral. By functioning as places of reflection and knowledge acquisition, the bucolic realms and their inhabitants endow the hobbits' quest with new meaning, as they learn to know themselves as well as nature. Furthermore, an important characteristic of all bucolic places is that they offer the protagonists shelter and recuperation on their dangerous road. It was shown that the bucolic realms always appear in a series of retreats and returns, which bring to mind the retreat-return pattern of traditional pastorals. The analysis revealed that all bucolic episodes in both primary texts show a similar plot pattern, which underlines their functional and contentual relatedness. Tolkien's mythology further draws on central motifs of Renaissance pastoral, the Garden Eden story, and the Golden Age Myth by ignoring all logistic and pragmatic questions of everyday life in the bucolic realms. As in these ancient accounts of ideal life, the primary works depict nature and culture as inseparably entwined. The analysis showed that all bucolic creatures are united in their self-absorbed attitude and withdrawn lifestyle.

With specific regard to the different bucolic creatures, the ents were identified as the most bucolic pastoral beings in Tolkien's mythology. In their creation, the classical pastoral 'ensouling' of nature is taken one step further, as nature and culture are merged completely. Characterised as 'tree-herds' and 'Shepherds of Trees', a direct link between them and the Arcadian shepherds of classical pastorals is established. It was shown that the elves are likewise significantly portrayed through the use of traditional pastoral elements and motifs, though the elvish realms show differing degrees of pastorality and therefore contain these elements and motifs to varying extent: the analysis revealed that the High Elves of Lothlórien possess the highest level of elvish bucolic pastorality, followed by the Rivendell High Elves, and the Mirkwood Woodelves. Especially the sylvan landscapes of Lothlórien feature the lost ideality of

original creation and thus evoke associations with traditional pastoral myths. The differing degrees of pastorality among the elvish groups were accounted for by the differences in their history. The final bucolic pastoral creatures discussed in this thesis were Tom Bombadil and his wife Goldberry. The analysis clearly identified them as bucolic pastoral and argued that they cannot be regarded as belonging to a known group of creatures – as is suggested by many critics – but have to be treated as unique beings.

The hobbits, Beorn, and the entwives were identified as georgic pastoral creatures. It was shown that they display all the characteristics laid down by Phyllis Koppes for this category. They live in lush and friendly environments, which they use agriculturally. Though they enjoy a communal lifestyle, their interest in the world outside their homes is limited. In contrast to the bucolic beings, the georgic pastoral creatures are able to change and develop. With the exception of the entwives' gardens, which were destroyed long before the time of the narrative, the georgic pastoral realms offer the protagonists safety and comfort. The Shire, as the point of departure and ultimate goal of the quest, further obtains the special function of serving the hobbits as a source of identity and reference point. This thesis added to Phyllis Koppes' very superficial analysis of the hobbits' georgic pastoral character by giving a detailed account of the Shire's pastorality. It then outlined the entwives' georgic pastoral characteristics based on the elvish song presented by Treebeard in *The Lord of the Rings*. It was shown that the song follows the Virgilian tradition of pastoral writing as it is in eclogue form. Similarities to Edmund Spenser's *The Shepheardes Calender* were pointed out, thus relating the song to one of the best known pastoral works in the English language. Besides identifying the skinchanger Beorn as the third creature belonging to the group of georgic pastoral beings in the two primary works, it was argued that, though there is a literary relationship between Beorn and Tom Bombadil, the two characters differ in many aspects, most prominently in the type of their pastorality.

In answer to some critics' statement that the men in Tolkien's work have to be considered as pastoral, this thesis showed that such classification is based on diffuse and insufficient definitions of the pastoral. With reference to the tale of Númenor, it was shown that men occupy a special position in the mythology, as they possess the choice of free will and are capable of both pastoral and non-pastoral lifestyles. In general, men are chiefly characterised by their heroic actions and moral choices, which clearly places

them in the regenerative heroic category defined by Phyllis Koppes. Though the Númenoreans and their descendants in Middle-earth are examples of pastoral men, humanity in general has a tendency to be fascinated by the non-pastoral, as Tolkien's posthumously published attempt at a sequel to *The Lord of the Rings* shows.

In order to analyse the pastoral mode in the two primary works in full, the analysis also had to take account of non-pastoral creatures and landscapes. Based on the definition of the antipastoral given in the theoretical part of this thesis, it was shown that Sauron and Saruman fulfil all the characteristics of antipastoral agents in the two primary works. They are presented as the antithesis of pastoral life. It was shown that the antipastoral landscapes of Mordor and Isengard are negative counterparts to pastoral landscapes. Strong parallels between the depictions of Frodo's arrival in Minas Morgul and in Lothlórien were highlighted to underline this observation. In the second part, it was argued that Gollum, orcs, and some of the woods and trees of Middle-earth fulfil the characteristics of unpastoral creatures. As the products of antipastoral action, they have lost their original pastoral features and instead display characteristics not unlike their masters. However, it was shown that they have retained small shreds of their initial pastorality, which can sometimes be glimpsed through their unpastoral demeanour. Also, in contrast to their antipastoral masters, they lack the will for absolute power and are mainly driven by fear and the cruel methods of their suppressors. It was argued that some of the anthropomorphic trees in Tolkien's mythology fulfil Michael Brisbois' definition of 'wrathful nature' and became unpastoral due to the antipastoral agents' ecocidal actions. It was shown that this is especially true for the Huorns of Fangorn Forest, and the trees of Mirkwood and the Old Forest, especially Old Man Willow.

10.1.2.2 Intratextual Nostalgia of Tolkien's Pastoral Creatures

As this part of the analysis showed, the pastoral mode is tightly bound to intratextual nostalgia in *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit*. Because Tolkien's works depict a time in which the ideality and pastorality of the world's beginning have in the main been lost, especially his bucolic pastoral creatures are under constant strain to prevent the ultimate loss of their once idyllic homes. Their nostalgia is directed to the Elder Days, during which they experienced the highest level of pastorality. In the case of all pastoral creatures, nostalgia is a reaction to unsatisfactory circumstances and feelings of

threat. The analysis showed that it is used as a psychological coping mechanism to deal with their experience of danger and change, thus drawing on nostalgia's psychological functions as outlined in the theoretical part of this thesis. Experiencing time as a constant process of decline and facing threatening foes on their quests and in their homes, the pastoral creatures turn to the past as a source of identity and for terror management. Especially the hobbits repeatedly reconfirm their pastoral identity by remembering their Shire homes and thus deflect thoughts of death and despair. In remembering Valinor and attempting to preserve some of its highly pastoral features within their earthly realms, the elves similarly deal with the terror of their unknown fate after the world's end. The term **'nostalgia culture'** was coined with regard to the elves, denoting a culture in which every activity (political, social, and cultural) is motivated and influenced by nostalgic longing. In the case of the ents, the backward glance is triggered by the ongoing destruction of their natural home, Fangorn Forest, as well as by their awareness of their impending doom. Their nostalgia has an activating impact, as it motivates them to support the other pastoral creatures in their war against the antipastoral. It was shown that the elves' and ents' nostalgia is either personal or historical, while the hobbits' nostalgia is purely personal. Altogether, the analysis showed that pastoral nostalgia is a positive and necessary tool in the pastoral creatures' struggle against the non-pastoral. However, in the case of the elves, nostalgia also gains negative meaning as it is first given as a curse. By their example it is shown that an excess of nostalgic longing can be a source of sorrow, as it is a constant reminder of what has been lost, thus leading to perpetual unhappiness with the status quo.

With regard to the cyclical plot structure, which is another defining mark of intratextual nostalgia besides the fictional characters' nostalgia, it was pointed out that only the hobbits' quests in both primary works show a circular structure. *The Hobbit* ends with Bilbo's successful return home, while *The Lord of the Rings* presents Sam as the true pastoral hero able to successfully establish himself in the Shire after the hobbits' return.

10.1.2.3 Utopian and Dystopian Vision in the Primary Works

The analysis showed that Tolkien's mythology contains a strong utopian impulse, which stands in contrast to the mythical world's inevitable dystopian fate. Following the focus of this thesis, the utopian visions of all pastoral creatures were outlined. It was argued

that most of them implicitly express desires for the future through their nostalgic longing for their highly pastoral past. Furthermore, pastoral utopian visions can be detected in creatures' lifestyles, actions, and values. Two types of utopian vision were identified by the author of this thesis and terms were introduced for them: the **bucolic utopian impulse** and the **georgic utopian impulse**. The most prominent representatives of the bucolic utopian impulse are the elves and ents, whose strong nostalgia for the Elder Days implies a highly bucolic utopian vision. It imagines a world that features all the aspects outlined with regard to the bucolic pastoral. The bucolic vision is the highest ideal in Tolkien's works, as it is directly linked to the paradisiacal spheres of Valinor. The georgic utopian impulse finds its strongest expression in the hobbits' homesickness and hopes for the Shire's future. Beorn and the enwives further imply utopian visions in their georgic lifestyle and actions. It was argued that the georgic utopian impulse represents the second highest ideal in the mythology, being inferior to the bucolic vision only in that it solely draws its vision from Middle-earth's past. The georgic utopian impulse shows all the characteristics laid down in the theoretical section of this thesis for the georgic pastoral. In contrast to the bucolic utopian impulse, which is solely tied to the world's ideal state during its First Age, the georgic vision can be temporarily achieved at any time through hard work and endurance. It was argued that the pastoral utopian visions stand in stark contrast to the non-pastoral creatures' dystopian desire for dominance and destruction. Both visions function as triggers for the war between the pastoral and the non-pastoral, as each strive to realise their respective desires for the future. Altogether, it was argued that the utopian vision's motivating impact on the pastoral creatures is crucial to their struggle against the non-pastoral. Although the world's fate is predestined and cannot be altered, the good creatures are able to introduce periods of peace and pastorality into the dystopian process of degeneration. Consequently, the pastoral characters' active use of free will is presented as meaningful and commendable. Apart from utopian impulses, the mythology contains a distinct utopia, which promises the creation of an ideal new world after the apocalypse of the first. This promises final redemption and unblemished pastorality.

10.1.2.4 Tolkien's Works as Modern Pastorals

The final chapter related Tolkien's texts to Terry Gifford's definition of modern pastoral writing. The centrality of pastoral elements and motifs put Tolkien's works in the

tradition of pastoral expression. It was shown that *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit* are deeply concerned with the issues Gifford lists as the six defining questions treated in 'post-pastoral' texts. Furthermore, the two fantasy texts were connected with main ecocritical concerns, such as the relationship between nature and culture as well as man's place within the natural world.

10.1.3 Outlook: Questions for Further Study

This thesis offered a text-based investigation of depictions of pastorality, nostalgia, and utopian desire in Tolkien's works, ignoring contextual aspects due to the boundaries such an analysis requires. Consequently, future research might make use of the findings gained in this thesis and connect them with contextual aspects, such as the historical circumstances within which they were created, in order to add to the picture. Though Tolkien's use of real historical elements and his literary sources has already gained much attention in critical examination[146], especially the detailed analysis of the relationship between extratextual nostalgia and the intratextual nostalgia revealed in this dissertation would afford important new insights. Such a work might, for example, research the importance and meaning of nostalgia in British society at the time the texts were created and ask whether a connection between their intratextual nostalgia and extratextual nostalgia can be established. It could further ask which effects intratextual nostalgia has on readers, whether the texts' ongoing popularity can be attributed to this impact, and whether it has changed over the decades. Similar research could be conducted regarding the pastoral mode and utopian impulse in Tolkien's mythology. Findings of such analyses might account for the ongoing popularity of Tolkien's mythology on the one hand and afford new insights into its relationship with its historical context on the other.

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[146] For example, cf. Alonso; Alvarez Faedo; Bates; Burger 1984; Burns 2005; Chance and Siewers; Flieger; Huttar; Manni; Pettit; Sebok; Veldman; Whetter; Wicher.

11 Glossary of Terms

- ❖ **antipastoral*:** antipastoral characters strive for absolute power and wish to subject every creature to their tyrannical will; they are associated with the wilful destruction of nature and pastoral creatures (based on Phyllis Koppes' definition of the degenerative heroic ideal; cf. Koppes, 38, 44).

- ❖ **bucolic pastoral:** highly idealised depiction of man's life in unity with nature; man is passive, free, and the receiver of nature's generous bounty; the bucolic place and time are characterised by timelessness and stasis (cf. Koppes, 11-14).

- ❖ **bucolic utopian impulse*:** utopian vision explicitly or implicitly expressed by bucolic pastoral characters; contains all the characteristics of the bucolic pastoral defined above and projects them into the future.

- ❖ **extratextual nostalgia***: the personal and historical nostalgia of the author and readers of a text, which influence the text and are influenced by the text (reciprocal influence).

- ❖ **georgic pastoral:** idealised depiction of farm life; reciprocal unity between man and nature; man and nature are subjected to change and development; man knows labour and pain; seasonal change and the passage of time appear in cycles of death and rebirth (cf. Phyllis Koppes, 19-23).

- ❖ **georgic utopian impulse*:** utopian vision explicitly or implicitly expressed by georgic pastoral characters; contains all the characteristics of the georgic pastoral defined above and projects them into the future.

- ❖ **historical nostalgia**: longing for pre-autobiographical past, i.e. a past time and place before one's lifetime or outside one's personal experience (cf. Stern, 13-14).

- ❖ **intratextual nostalgia***: the personal and historical nostalgia of the fictional characters and the circular plot pattern (which depicts the protagonist's departure from home and his final return there) of a text.

- ❖ **nostalgia culture***: a culture in which every activity is motivated and influenced by nostalgic longing: in the case of the elves, these activities include arts and crafts, architecture, lifestyle, landscaping, political decisions, and education.

- ❖ **personal nostalgia**: an individual's or group's longing for autobiographical past, i.e. a past time and place they experienced personally (cf. Stern, 16).

- ❖ **unpastoral*:** unpastoral creatures were pastoral once but have been corrupted and perverted by the evil influence of antipastoral agents; their unpastorality is

expressed by their evil will towards others and a generally hostile, dangerous, and treacherous character; unlike antipastoral characters, they do not strive for tyrannical power.

- ❖ **utopian impulse**: desire for a better life in the future (definition adopted from Levitas, 181; term adopted from Jameson, 3).

*: terms introduced by the author of this thesis

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