

was shy of rendering them. Perhaps; but these drawings are equivalents of travel-book photographs; when exciting things are happening, the traveller is not going to manage a camera; it is when things are quiet that he will be able to compose a photograph. Whether Tolkien had travel-book photos in mind when he designed many of the pictures for *The Hobbit*, he might as well have had: in all cases, the pictures don't depict the most exciting sequences. The trolls are just sitting there, as if an artist drew them unobserved. Even the colour picture of Smaug is still, almost like a carefully composed travel-book picture of some Asian dragon sculpture. And, just as the typical travel book enticed readers with endpaper maps, so too do hardcover editions of *The Hobbit*.

The golden age of British literary travel ended with the beginnings (or resumption) of European war and then world war. The 'New Hobbit', the sequel to Bilbo's adventures, is, to be sure, a story of long journeys, but those journeys lack the open-air excursion feeling of the 1937 book, and *The Lord of the Rings* remains fantastic literature's greatest tale of war. The *Hobbit* is a classic for the generations and is also a book belonging to the interwar high-water mark of the travel book.

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Mallorn, Tolkien Studies, Mythlore, Beyond Bree and the *J R R Tolkien Encyclopedia*, edited by Michael Drout.

1. Waugh, E. *When the Going Was Good* (Little, Brown, 1947). In this 314-page book, Waugh included "all that I wish to reprint of the four travel books I wrote between the years 1929 and 1935", that is, the 1930, 1931, 1934 and 1936 titles included in *Waugh Abroad* (see ref. 7).
2. Byron, R. *First Russia, Then Tibet* (Penguin, 1985). Originally published 1933.
3. Fussell, P. *Abroad: British Literary Traveling Between the Wars* (Oxford Univ. Press, 1982).
4. Fleming, P. *Brazilian Adventure* (Penguin, 1957). Originally published 1933; reprinted in the Penguin Travel Library ca 1985. Another good Fleming travel book, not cited here, is *News from Tartary* (Abacus, 1995), originally published 1936.
5. Tolkien, J. R. R. *The Hobbit, or There and Back Again* (Ballantine, 1982). The text is that of the revised edition, but having drafted this article, I compared my citations to this text with that of a 1938 Houghton Mifflin printing in the collection of Mayville State University in North Dakota (acquisition date 24 October 1938). There are no differences.
6. Balfour, P. *Grand Tour: Diary of an Eastward Journey. Illustrated with Photographs Taken by the Author, Many of Which Are Unique* (Harcourt, Brace, 1935).
7. Waugh, E. *Waugh Abroad: Collected Travel Writing* (Everyman's Library, 2003).
8. Nelson, D. Where Are the Large Animals in Middle-earth? *Beyond Bree* (April 2010).
9. Greene, G. *Journey Without Maps* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1978). Originally published 1936.
10. Byron, R. *The Road to Oxiana* (Oxford Univ. Press, 1983). Originally published 1937.

The 'divine passive' in *The Lord of the Rings*

KUSUMITA PEDERSEN

In the narrative of *The Lord of the Rings*¹, God is never mentioned directly². At the same time, it is often observed that in this work, Tolkien does at times seem to refer to God, but in indirect ways. Tolkien acknowledges this. In a 1956 letter he appropriates the phrase of a critic who speaks of "that one ever-present Person who is never absent and never named" (*Letters* 192). In a slightly earlier letter to Father Robert Murray, Tolkien discusses in detail certain theological matters arising from "the mythology", but comments that in the book itself, "I have purposely kept all allusions to the highest matters down to mere hints, perceptible only by the most attentive, or kept them under unexplained symbolic forms" (*Letters* 156)³. This essay is concerned with these 'hints' and in particular with one very specific kind of 'hint' pointing to the divine presence. There is evidence that strongly suggests that Tolkien mentions God indirectly but deliberately by using what in biblical interpretation is called the 'divine passive'.

The subject of religion can be a sensitive one for those who care about Tolkien, so it is may be best to emphasize at the outset that, although references to the Bible unavoidably occur in what follows, I have no intention of trying to

prove that if Tolkien uses the divine passive he is referring to specifically Christian ideas. Nor am I seeking to advance an agenda about Tolkien as a 'Christian author' or some other kind of religious agenda. I am in agreement with Brian Rosebury, who states (referring to the text of *The Lord of the Rings* in itself): "Not only is Christianity not literally present, there is no surrogate for it or allegorical structure suggestive of it"⁴. This non-presence, however, does not rule out the use of a biblical rhetorical device. As the divine passive has been the subject of analysis and discussion by scholars of Scripture for more than a hundred years, Tolkien's employment of it may be a detail, but it is a significant one.

The divine passive is the use in the Bible of the passive voice to indicate that God, who is not named, is the doer of the action⁵. The divine passive is not only a technical matter debated by scholars, but is also well known as part of the toolbox of exegesis used by Christian clergy and others involved in Bible study. The English term 'divine passive' was coined by Joachim Jeremias, whose 1971 *New Testament Theology: The Proclamation of Jesus* is the study most often cited; the device is also called the *divinum passivum* and the 'theological passive', especially by European scholars.

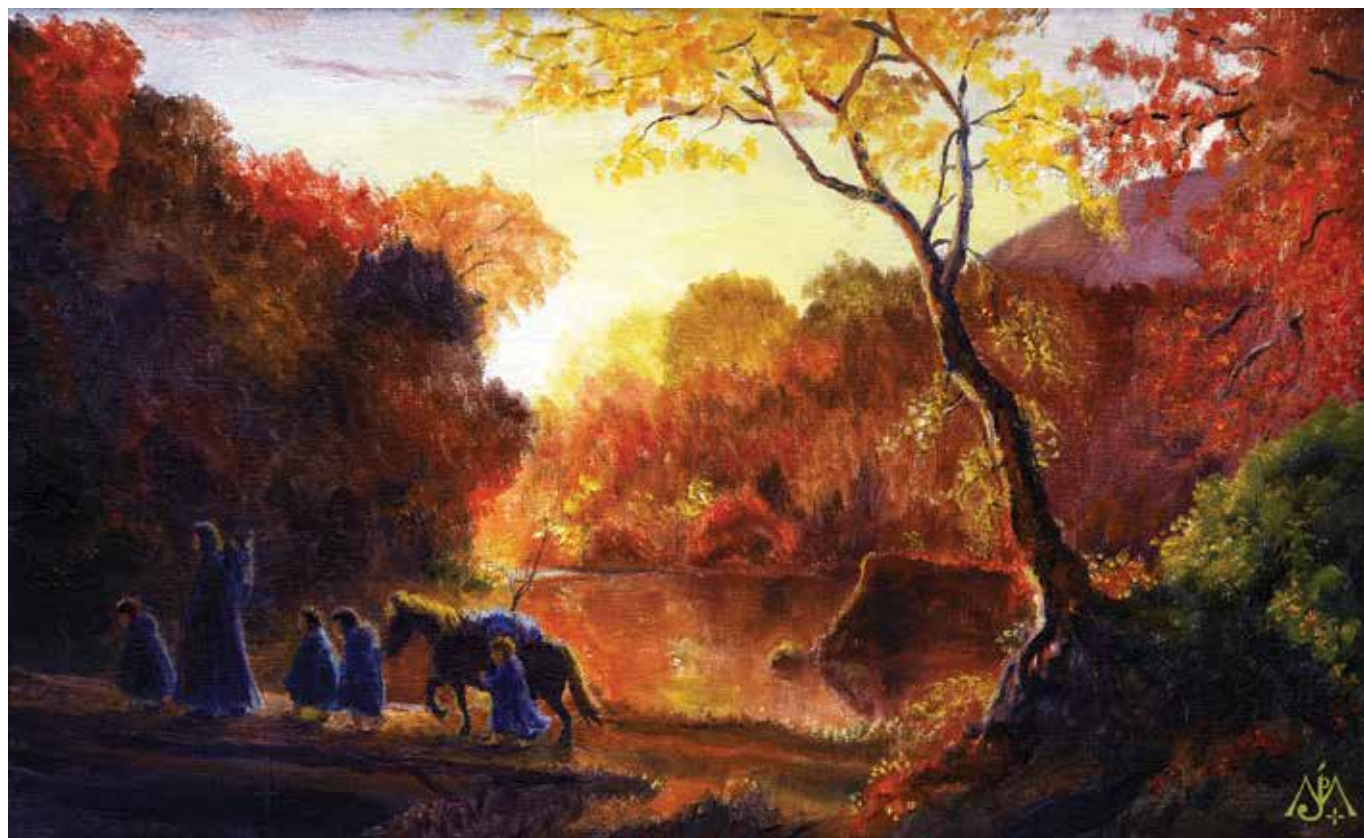
Not all agree on its distinctive nature or the degree of its importance, but Jeremias and others contend that the divine passive occurs frequently in the New Testament. It is also found in the Hebrew Bible. Some scholars believe that the divine passive derives from a Jewish reticence concerning mention of the divine name YHWH, a reticence that continues down to the present. To avoid misuse of God's name, the custom arose of often referring to God by means of circumlocutions⁶.

There are a number of such circumlocutions, of which the divine passive is only one, and of course not every use of a passive verb with an unnamed subject is a divine passive. There are three requirements for a genuine occurrence of the divine passive: the verb must be in the passive voice, it must be a transitive verb, and the context must indicate that God is the agent of the action. It is the third requirement that naturally gives rise most often to argument about identification. Jeremias holds that in the Gospels Jesus uses the divine passive about 100 times. Analysis by Jeremias and other scholars is highly specific and detailed. Here just a few examples will serve as illustrations (those not interested in biblical texts may wish to skip the next paragraph).

There are some instances in which, given the context, there seems to be no doubt that God is the 'implied agent' of an action. The 'basic term for forgiveness' in the Hebrew Bible is *salah*; when this verb is used God is invariably the agent who effects forgiveness and its passive "functions as a divine passive", according to John S. Kselman⁷. In the New Testament, the Gospel of John says, "The law was given through Moses" (*John* 1:17)⁸. In Matthew's Gospel

an angel tells the women at the tomb of Jesus "He is not here; for he has been raised" (28:6), and when Paul refers to the resurrection he also may use the divine passive (*1 Cor.* 15:4, 12, 16)⁹. The Beatitudes are very often mentioned as examples of the divine passive — "they will be comforted", "they will be filled", "they will receive mercy" (*Matt.* 5:4, 6-7). Scholars argue variously that the divine passive is used in accordance with the general reticence regarding the divine name, as an implicit but theologically charged reference to the Tetragrammaton or YHWH, as a veiled mention of God's action found especially in an apocalyptic context, or because of a wish to focus the reader's attention on the event itself or the object of the action, rather than the doer (ref. 5, Jeremias pp. 13-14, Reiser pp. 266-273; ref. 6, Soulen pp. 250-253).

None of the reasons the writers of the books of the Bible may have for using the divine passive need be attributed to Tolkien. Tolkien's reasons for keeping allusions to the highest matters confined to hints and symbolic forms" and for thus omitting from *The Lord of the Rings* "practically all references to anything like 'religion,' to cults and practices" (*Letters* 142) are his own. They are complex, ambivalent and multi-layered and call for a separate and in-depth treatment beyond the scope of this essay. Here let it just be said briefly that some, including Rosebury (ref. 4, p. 153), believe one reason for this concealment is that overt mention of religion could alienate unbelieving readers. Tolkien himself says, "Myth and fairy-story, as all art, reflect and contain in solution elements of moral and religious truth (or error), but not explicit, not in the known form of the



primary ‘real’ world” (*Letters* 131). He elaborates on why this is so in his essay *On Fairy-Stories*, where he states that to be seen clearly, things need to be “freed from the drab blur of triteness or familiarity — from possessiveness”. There are additional reasons that Tolkien prefers implicit modes of expression, including a wish to keep his distance from professional theology and philosophy as well as a reticence which was part of his character¹⁰. Given that he wishes to be indirect about religious matters in *The Lord of the Rings*, the device of the divine passive is well suited to his approach.

Those familiar with *The Lord of the Rings* can now readily provide relevant passages. In the first two examples given here, Tolkien’s hint is a broad one. For the first, Tolkien actually confirms (although glancingly) in the first letter mentioned above¹¹ that the implied agent is God when Gandalf says, “There was more than one power at work, Frodo . . . there was something else at work, beyond any design of the Ring-maker. I can put it no plainer than by saying Bilbo was *meant* to find the Ring, and *not* by its maker. In which case you also were *meant* to have it” (emphasis in the original), and when Frodo cries, “Why was I chosen?” Gandalf affirms, “you have been chosen.” A second example: as the Council of Elrond assembles Elrond says, “That is the purpose for which you are called hither. *Called, I say, though I have not called you to me*, strangers from distant lands. You have come and are here met, in this very nick of time, by chance as it may seem. Yet it is not so. Believe rather that *it is so ordered* that we, who sit here, and none others, must now find counsel for the peril of the world” (emphasis added). Additional examples: Elrond adds later, “I think that this task is appointed for you, Frodo;” in the same vein, “‘It does not belong to either of us,’ said Aragorn, ‘but it has been ordained that you should hold it for a while;’” and Galadriel, “Maybe the paths that you each shall tread are already laid before your feet, though you do not see them.” In each of these passages the utterance is by one of ‘the Wise’, who know of the existence of the One (*Letters* 297). If these statements are divine passives, then God is implied as the agent who means, chooses, calls, orders, appoints, ordains and lays before their feet the paths of persons in the narrative.

It is thus not surprising that a great many of the apparent divine passives in *The Lord of the Rings* are spoken by Gandalf. An important example, as it is confirmed by Tolkien, is Gandalf’s statement “Naked I was sent back — for a brief time, until my task is done.” In the letter to Robert Murray already cited, Tolkien says, “He was sent by a mere prudent plan of the angelic Valar or governors; but Authority had taken up this plan and enlarged it, at the moment of its failure. ‘Naked I was sent back — for a brief time, until my task is done.’ Sent back by whom, and whence? Not by the ‘gods’ whose business is only with this embodied world and its time; for he passed ‘out of thought and time’” (*Letters* 156). Other statements by Gandalf that strongly suggest an unnamed divine agent are his words to the Lord of the Nazgûl, “Go back to the abyss prepared for you!” and to

Denethor, “Authority is not given to you, Steward of Gondor, to order the hour of your death.” To these passages may be added his references to “the time that is given us” and to “the succour of those years wherein we are set”; possibly his statement, “Also it is given to me to see many things far off”¹². Other examples could be given, but space does not permit an exhaustive inventory¹³.

These passages and others have been noticed by authors concerned with the religious dimensions of Tolkien’s works. In *The Battle for Middle-earth*, Fleming Rutledge provides a reading of *The Lord of the Rings* drawing out Tolkien’s biblical resonances and what she calls his “deep theological narrative”. She emphasizes the role of passive constructions and also discusses other locutions that seem to displace agency or will away from the characters to other, invisible entities. Rutledge avers that Tolkien’s story resembles the “tripartite drama” of the New Testament in that there are three sets of actors: characters like ourselves in need of redemption; active agents of evil, and God along with God’s instruments. Thus in *The Lord of the Rings*, in addition to the Free Peoples and the Enemy, there is an unseen, transcendent Power which works for the good and is referred to obliquely. Rutledge says: “Just as in Scripture, the passive voice denotes the working of another agency” and “The use of the passive voice . . . in the Bible is the model for Tolkien’s writing in the numerous places where he wants to suggest divine activity.” She mentions such use of the passive about 20 times, but never refers to it as the divine passive. In most cases she interprets the implied agency not as God, but in a more general manner which may also include the Valar as Ilúvatar’s intermediaries, and even Gandalf as their emissary. She uses such inclusive phrases as “providential, veiled Powers” or “unseen forces of good”. Matthew Dickerson, on the other hand, focuses on God’s agency as such in “The Hand of Ilúvatar,” the chapter in *Following Gandalf* in which he provides a fine summary of these aspects of the narrative (ref. 1, Rutledge, pp. 57, 63, 288, 106, 98; ref. 2, Dickerson Ch. 9).

We now turn to the question, did Tolkien in fact know of the divine passive so that he uses it consciously? To begin with the obvious, Tolkien had an expert knowledge of Greek and was well acquainted with the Bible¹⁴. To what extent did he know the biblical text in a technical sense, especially the New Testament, which is the main source for the divine passive? At King Edward’s School in Birmingham where Greek and Latin were central to the curriculum, the headmaster, Robert Carey Gilson, “encouraged his pupils to make a detailed study of classical linguistics”, Carpenter tells us¹⁵. In July 1910 one of the five examinations Tolkien took for the Oxford and Cambridge Higher Certificate was Scripture Knowledge: Greek Text¹⁶. It cannot be ascertained with certainty what Greek grammars Tolkien used to learn the Greek of the New Testament, nor what books on this subject were in Tolkien’s library later in his life, but the classic *Grammatik des Neutestamentlichen Griechisch* of Friedrich Blass, first published in 1896, was translated into English by H. St John Thackeray in 1898

with a second English edition in 1905. This grammar, still in print, does mention the divine passive¹⁷. There is as well another work that may well have influenced Tolkien directly or indirectly even when he was at King Edward's School, possibly through Gilson or another of his teachers. This is Gustav Dalman's *The Words of Jesus*, first published in German in 1898 and translated into English in 1902 (Blass refers to it), so seminal that it is still available in a 1996 reprint. In it Dalman does point out the use of the passive to refer to God as the implied agent of an action and he is cited down to the present in discussions of the divine passive¹⁸. There is every likelihood that Tolkien even at this early stage was aware of this special use of the passive voice in the New Testament.

At this point the reader may be thinking, as I have myself, but did Tolkien really have any need of Greek grammars or the findings of scholars to know about the divine passive? He knew and cared more about language than most people. The Bible was important to him all his life. With the wealth of examples in the New Testament, would not the divine passive have become obvious to him even unaided? Indeed, that he did not know of it seems extremely unlikely. The evidence that Tolkien deliberately uses the divine passive is circumstantial in the sense that there is no 'smoking gun,' that is, Tolkien does not seem to have stated plainly anywhere, "I use the passive voice as it is used in Scripture — to point to God as the unnamed Doer." That he consciously makes use of the divine passive thus cannot be demonstrated beyond all possible doubt, but its attested frequency in the Bible together with the many biblical resonances in *The Lord of the Rings* point to the probability that he does. This probability is strengthened both by the fact that Tolkien almost certainly was well aware of this device and by the comments already cited that he makes in his letters; these comments come close to a definite confirmation, at least in the case of the passages under discussion.

The evidence taken as a whole strongly suggests that when Tolkien uses the passive to indicate an unnamed agent, in some instances he is placing in words usually spoken by the Wise a reference not to unspecified agents and forces in an unseen world or even to the Valar, but to the One — Eru Ilúvatar. How does this affect our interpretation of *The Lord of the Rings*, if it does? First, as the references are indirect, the reader can pass them by, an occasion of 'applicability' and 'the freedom of the reader'. Also, as noted previously, the use of a biblical device does not in itself necessarily imply (contra Rutledge and others) a specifically biblical worldview or permit a uniquely Christian meaning to be injected into the text. Rather, if we accept that Tolkien is using the divine passive, this has the effect of validating a sense that some readers already have, a sense that the presence and action of the One is being intimated or tacitly recognized. It must still be remembered that a single supreme deity is not an idea limited to any particular religious tradition. Finally, this intentional although indirect manner of referring to God or Ilúvatar is one more of the many ways that Tolkien meshes *The Lord*

of the Rings with *The Silmarillion*. Tolkien held that *The Lord of the Rings* requires *The Silmarillion* "to be fully intelligible" (*Letters* 124). Should we wish to reflect on possible theological ramifications of the divine passive, whatever we think these might be, we must look for our sources not only in *The Lord of the Rings* but also in the whole body of myth and legend of all the ages of Middle-earth. M

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1. I would like to thank Konrad Raiser and Hans Ucko for first acquainting me with the divine passive and also to acknowledge my indebtedness to the work of Fleming Rutledge in *The Battle for Middle-earth: Tolkien's Divine Design in The Lord of the Rings*, Cambridge: William B. Eerdmans (2004).
2. "The One" is mentioned in Appendix A: "But when Ar-Pharazôn set foot upon the shores of Aman the Blessed, the Valar laid down their guardianship and called upon the One, and the world was changed." In addition, when Gandalf on the bridge of Khazad-Dûm says, "I am a servant of the Secret Fire," both Birzer (Birzer, Bradley. J. R. R. Tolkien's Sanctifying Myth: Understanding Middle-earth. Wilmington, Delaware: ISI Books [2003], p. 77) and Dickerson (Dickerson, Matthew T. Following Gandalf: Epic Battles and Moral Victory in The Lord of the Rings, Grand Rapids, Michigan: Brazos Press [2003], p. 190) recognize his words as referring to the Holy Spirit. This cannot be counted, however, as a direct reference to God; it is an indirect one, one of Tolkien's "unexplained symbolic forms." To construe Gandalf's words as a reference to God, the reader must at least know that fire is a symbol of the Holy Spirit (see Acts 2:1-4), perhaps have read "Ainulindalë," possibly also be aware that Tolkien told Clyde Kilby that "the Secret Fire," or "Imperishable Flame," is indeed the Holy Spirit (Kilby, Clyde S. Tolkien and The Silmarillion, Wheaton, Illinois: Harold Shaw Publishers, [1976], p. 59) and maybe even know that the early Quenya lexicon states that the word for "fire" (Sa) "is also a mystic name identified with the Holy Ghost" (as cited in Garth, John. Tolkien and the Great War, New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2003, p. 255). This information is thought-provoking but does not spell out the nature of the Holy Spirit or its role in the narrative, which can be construed and problematized in various ways. (All references to the Bible are to the New Revised Standard Version, hereafter NRSV.)
3. The letter continues, "So God and the 'angelic' gods, the Lords or Powers of the West, only peep through in such places as Gandalf's conversation with Frodo: 'behind that there was something else at work, beyond any design of the Ring-maker's'; or Faramir's Númenórean grace at dinner" (Letter 156).
4. Rosebury, Brian. Tolkien: A Cultural Phenomenon, New York: Palgrave MacMillan (2003), p. 153.
5. The following account is drawn chiefly from Jeremias, Joachim. New Testament Theology: The Proclamation of Jesus, tr. John Bowden. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons (1971), Reiser, Marius. Jesus and Judgement: The Eschatological Proclamation in Its Jewish Context. tr. Linda M. Maloney. Minneapolis: Fortress Press (1997 [1990]), and Mowery, Robert L. "What Does God Do? Divine Actives and Passives in the Gospel of Matthew." Paper delivered at the Annual Meeting of The Society of Biblical Literature (SBL), November 2002. A concise summary partly challenging Jeremias can be found in Reiser, pp. 266-273.
6. In the Second Temple period, following the Babylonian exile, Jews began to make a practice of not mentioning the Tetragrammaton or YHWH, "the personal proper name of the God of Israel" (Soulen, R. Kendall. "The Name of the Holy Trinity: A Triune Name." *Theology Today* 59 [2002]: 244-261, see p. 248) so as to avoid any possibility of its wrong use. Concerning the language used by Jesus, Jeremias says: "Even in the pre-Christian period, there was a prohibition against uttering the Tetragrammaton, to ensure that the second commandment [Ex. 20:7; Deut. 5:11] was followed as scrupulously as possible and to exclude any misuse of the divine name. Later on, but still in the pre-Christian period, there arose the custom of speaking of God's actions and feelings in periphrases. Jesus certainly had no hesitation in using the word 'God,' but to a large extent he followed the custom of the time and spoke of the action of God by means of circumlocutions" (p. 9).
7. Kselman, John S. "Forgiveness (Old Testament)" in *The Anchor Bible*

- Dictionary, Volume 2, edited by David Noel Freedman. New York: Doubleday, 1992: 831-833.
8. See Hans Ucko. "Full of Grace and Truth: Bible Study on John 1:14-18," *Ecumenical Review* 56 (2004): 342-347.
 9. In the same chapter in verses 42-45 Paul says that the body "is sown" and "is raised"; the chapter also includes explicit mention of God as agent; see also 2 Timothy 2:8.
 10. I have explored this topic more fully in "Concealing 'Religion,' Revealing Truth," a paper presented to the Tolkien 2006 Conference, University of Vermont at Burlington, April 2006.
 11. After mentioning "the Other Power" who is "the Writer of the Story" and "that one ever-present Person who is never absent and never named," Tolkien tells his correspondent to "See Vol. I, p. 65," which Carpenter notes is in fact this same passage (Letter 192), and see Tolkien's mention of "Gandalf's conversation with Frodo" (Letter 156), already referred to in Note 3 above.
 12. See also the narrator's description, shortly before this, of Gandalf looking out from the walls of Minas Tirith after the Battle of the Pelennor Fields: "And he beheld with the sight that was given to him all that was befallen."
 13. As in the Bible, not all of Tolkien's uses in *The Lord of the Rings* of the passive voice with an implied agent necessarily point to God as the doer. In Appendix A, Thorin says to Gandalf, "Master Gandalf, I know you only by sight, but now I should be glad to speak with you. You have often come into my thoughts of late, as if I were bidden to seek you." Gandalf's answer, "I have thought of you also," indicates that it is likely that Thorin's experience results from Gandalf's thinking of him and not from divine action. Another interesting example of ambiguity occurs when Eowyn says of Aragorn, "Fey I thought him, like one whom the dead call," and Theoden replies, "Maybe he was called," shifting the "call" away from "the dead" but leaving the caller unnamed.
 14. See Walton, Christina Ganong. "Bible," in J. R. R. Tolkien Encyclopedia: Scholarship and Critical Assessment, edited by Michael D. C. Drout, New York: Routledge, 2007: 62-64.
 15. Carpenter, Humphrey. J. R. R. Tolkien: A Biography, New York: Houghton Mifflin (2000 [1977]), p. 42.
 16. Scull, Christina and Wayne G. Hammond. *The J. R. R. Tolkien Companion and Guide. Volume One, Chronology*. New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2006, see p. 19. Scull and Hammond also note that when Tolkien was at Oxford, University students had to take a compulsory examination in Holy Scripture which included the text of two of the Gospels. They surmise, "We have found no record of Tolkien having taken this examination; it may be that his passing mark in Scripture Knowledge...in 1910 fulfilled the requirement" (p. 777).
 17. Blass, F. and A. Debrunner, *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature. A Translation and Revision of the ninth-tenth German edition incorporating supplementary notes of A. Debrunner, by Robert W. Funk*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press (1961). See Sections 130.1, 313, 342.1.
 18. Dalman, Gustaf. *The Words of Jesus, Considered in the Light of Post-biblical Jewish Writings and the Aramaic Language*. Eugene, Oregon: Wipf and Stock Publishers (1997), [Die Worte Jesu I, 1898, trans. D. M. Kay, 1902], pp. 224-226. As already noted, this particular term for such use of the passive did not come into use until seven decades later, when it was created by Jeremias.

Ending the dualism of nature and industry in *The Lord of the Rings*

SARAH J SPROUSE

Tolkien's world relies upon the intertwining threads of nature and industry, although they cannot function merely as two opposing forces. A Buddhist reading of the text demonstrates the balancing act inherent in *The Lord of the Rings* as well as the importance of stewardship over dominion. It is clear in the text that overwhelming attachment to industrial power leads to suffering, not just for the individual but for the whole of Middle-earth. Here I attempt to demonstrate through a close reading that *The Lord of the Rings* contains major tenets of Buddhist philosophy through its contemporary and relevant examination of industrial power and its effects on Middle-earth as a whole. Previous scholarship has examined Buddhist figures in the text, but I have not seen any articles that specifically examine the sweep of *samsāra* and suffering as it relates to the imbalance of nature and industry.

A simplistic reading of *The Lord of the Rings* might entail a study of the binaries good and evil or the dualism between nature and industry. However, these perspectives cast the text into basic black-and-white terms. Rather than seeing nature and industry as dual and opposing threads, they need to be perceived as a careful balancing act. Saruman disturbs this balance by means of his ongoing search for power through heavy industry. The disruptive characters of the novel attempt to dominate their environments, and in

this act of seeking extreme power they alienate themselves and further instigate dualities.

"Sauron and Saruman, like Gollum," write Loy and Goodhew¹, "no longer have any goal but power itself — the power that is the Ring. With them Tolkien shows the suffering that results from a quest for power lacking a moral dimension."

The two major ideologies in conjunction with nature in Middle-earth are the advocacies of stewardship and, conversely, dominion. Michael Brisbois writes:

Tolkien advocates stewardship over dominion in LotR. The tree-herd Ents, the Elves, and the Hobbits all live in a relationship of stewardship with nature. (ref. 2)

In arguing that the evils of Middle-earth cling to power, Tolkien wrote an epic Zen novel. Zen, a form of Buddhism derived from the Indian Dhyana tradition, is practised in accordance with nature by attempting to let go of attachments and prevent harm. Attachment causes harm because all things are impermanent and changing.

Zen stone gardens seem very simple — just a few stones and raked gravel. But ... the more we explore and sit with them, watching the light change, the more we see how all the elements are constantly changing. (ref. 3)