

Spring 2014

Handicraft, Hobbitcraft and the Fires of Mordor: The Arts and Crafts Movement, Industrial Revolution and The Lord of the Rings

Gina L. Hewitt

Rollins College, ghewitt@rollins.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <http://scholarship.rollins.edu/mls>



Part of the [English Language and Literature Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Hewitt, Gina L., "Handicraft, Hobbitcraft and the Fires of Mordor: The Arts and Crafts Movement, Industrial Revolution and The Lord of the Rings" (2014). *Master of Liberal Studies Theses*. 51.

<http://scholarship.rollins.edu/mls/51>

This Open Access is brought to you for free and open access by Rollins Scholarship Online. It has been accepted for inclusion in Master of Liberal Studies Theses by an authorized administrator of Rollins Scholarship Online. For more information, please contact rwalton@rollins.edu.

**Handicraft, Hobbitcraft and the Fires of Mordor:
The Arts and Crafts Movement, Industrial
Revolution and The Lord of the Rings.**

*A Project Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Liberal Studies*

By

Gina L. Hewitt

April 2014

Mentor: Dr. Patrick Fleming

Reader: Dr. Scott Rubarth

Rollins College

Hamilton Holt School

Master of Liberal Studies Program

Winter Park, FL

Introduction

“Have nothing in your house that you do not know to be useful, or believe to be beautiful.” William Morris (Morris, Hopes and Fears for Art: The Beauty of Life)

The words of William Morris have echoed over generations of individuals who believe in the power of craftsmanship and the use of natural materials to produce timeless work that is not only beautiful, but functional, reliable and easily sustainable. This trend is visible historically and reemerges in the contemporary world, specifically in the arena of pop culture and literature. From the intimate nature of the characterization of an entirely new race of men-in-miniature and their home, where "peace and quiet and good, tilled Earth" (Tolkien 1) are held in the highest esteem, to the belching volcanoes, fires and lung-searing smoke of industry in the land of Mordor, J. R. R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* brings the vision of the Arts and Crafts Movement to life and delivers a cautionary tale of the highest order. This is accomplished by crafting a mirror image of the world in which the author lived, reimagining its social and industrial history. A close examination of the core belief structure of the Arts and Crafts Movement and the men who influenced this movement illustrate what they were trying to accomplish through their wholesale rejection of the Industrial Revolution. Examining this information alongside Tolkien's writings and appreciating the works attributed to these same Arts and Crafts leaders illuminates how these larger concepts and ideas have been translated and adapted into the three books which make up *The Lord of the Rings*. Through

understanding the lens by which the Arts and Crafts Movement focused, a clear and relevant picture is painted of a visionary creator and an idealized fantasy realm that encompasses and ultimately elevates that which is beautiful, useful, sustainable and purposeful while warning us against the horrors which could be brought about through rampant industrialization and the worship of material culture.

Behind The Arts and Crafts Movement

“A man at work, making something which he feels will exist because he is working at it and wills it, is exercising the energies of his mind and soul as well as of his body. Memory and imagination help him as he works.” William Morris (Morris, Useful Work Vs. Useless Toil)

Arts and Crafts was a movement that was, at its heart, about integrity. It was about respect for skill in craft as a concept and for the people who possessed these skills, and had worked their entire lives to attain them. It was about the materials themselves and how skilled craftsmen used these materials to create something worthwhile, lasting, useful and beautiful. It was about retaining a certain order in the natural world by respecting where these materials came from and the manner in which they were obtained. To understand the Arts and Crafts Movement and what its adherents were trying to accomplish, we must direct our focus to the socio-political and environmental atmosphere surrounding the Victorian Era in England. The Arts and Crafts Movement responded to what wealthy, higher born members of society thought and felt about the mass production of highly decorative, ornate clutter and meaningless, cheap pieces of what they considered to be faux finery. They viewed this faux finery as a tasteless imitation of their own well-made goods crafted by highly skilled and highly trained individuals. This viewpoint not only covered the areas of interior home products, but moved into the area of architecture, textiles, furniture, portraiture and landscape design. Indeed, the general

mood of the period was caught between vastly different ideologies and cultural practices which periodically brought even the most mundane of household issues into the limelight.

Examining the battlefield between the ideas of classicism and romanticism helps to bring this mood into focus, as these were the two basic constructs that comprised much of the Victorian worldview and were explored and referred to by people en masse. In a modern context, we normally reserve classicism and romanticism for examinations of literary works, but their applicability to art and general views of what was beautiful, and general sentiment is obvious.

Classicism is generally understood to be belief in what we would now see as a general, societal sense of reason and order based on the architecture, art and literature of ancient Rome and Greece (Blakesley 12). This includes, but is not limited to: emphasis on what is believed by society to be civilized; modern and sophisticated modes of life; a growing interest in urban society; realistic recognition of things as they are; impersonal objectivity; interest in public themes; emphasis on formal correctness, and the ideal of order. In architecture, classical design tends to lean heavily on the styles and designs developed by the Greeks and Romans during periods of classical antiquity (Francois 12). Some of the individual aspects of the style can be seen today in buildings that use columns, pediments, and/or domes, such as the White House, most state capitol buildings and others, like Congress, the National Archives and the Library of Congress.

Romanticism, on the other hand, implies emphasis on the primitive, medieval and natural modes of life (Blakesley 12). Romantic styles promote an interest in rural solitude; pre-occupation with the aesthetic and spiritual values of external nature; tendency of myth-making; perspective and revelation; popularity of image and symbolism, self-driven originality. All things considered, romanticism as a whole focused on the good of the individual and that minute perspective rather than focus on the group or society or culture as a whole that was common in the Classicist ideology. The Romantic style of architecture, in contrast with the Classical style is more rustic, relying heavily on the natural appearance of the material used in the building processes: exposed woodwork, rough-cut stone, buttressing of ceiling arches on the interior and flying buttresses on the exterior in order to support large stone walls and walkways (Frankl 297). Overall, instead of attempting to outdo nature or somehow master it, effort was put into blending in with and celebrating nature in all its glory, by tastefully and purposefully using materials in a way that highlighted it instead of hiding it. Some examples of specific buildings which embody this style would be Westminster Abbey, Chartres Cathedral and Canterbury Cathedral.

The differences between the ideologies of romanticism and classicism neatly outlines the struggle that was going on between the Arts and Crafts Movement proponents, who embraced the Romantic ideology; general society, who were participating in a type of socially sanctioned material envy, while yearning for the Romantic ideologies of times past and the rising establishment of industrialists who embraced the Classicist view – believing in the “improvement” of society through mass

materialism: providing for mankind itself, through mechanization and creation of goods as cheaply and quickly as possible to appease masses of people who were hungry for what they considered to be fine things. The use of pre-fabricated materials which were made or specifically tooled or manipulated to hide structural components of another, natural material was common in classical architecture; the Greeks and Romans themselves participated in this by covering the structural components of statues, temples and political buildings with marble, limestone, brass and/or gold on a regular basis. Those materials were more indicative of wealth and stability than wood or rough-cut stone, so it was common to want to hide how the material originally looked in nature before having been tooled or worked into its final state. This continues to be very evident and commonplace in contemporary architecture, as cheap foam columns to be used in residential construction are sold in place of those handmade from more sturdy, reliable materials. Never mind that the sturdier, more reliable materials increase the life-span of the building or residence in question – the purpose was, and remains, to create a structure that looks as if it is tasteful and beautiful, although it is simply a facade.

Again, the Arts and Crafts movement was one which that was, at its heart, about integrity. It was about having respect for skill in craft as a concept and as a reality. It was about the people who possessed these specialized skills, working their entire lives to attain them. It was about the materials themselves: where they came from, how they were processed and how these processed materials were used in conjunction with the skilled craftsman to become something worthwhile, lasting, useful and beautiful.

In this quest to respect the craftsman, special attention also needed to be paid to the human factor: the people doing the work. This focus on the craftsman as an individual, skilled specialist is what the rejection of mechanization was truly about: respect for the human element.

The period of time in British history known as the Industrial Revolution was a dark time for humanity; at least, it was a dark time to be poor. This is demonstrated for us by Rosalind Blakesley in *The Arts and Crafts Movement*:

A worker based in a textile centre such as Bolton or Lancashire was able to earn about thirty-three shillings a week in 1795, but about twenty years later, as factory owners introduced wage-cutting and machine labour to increase profits, his son would be struggling on less than half that sum. By the time his grandson took up the family profession in the 1830's, wages as low as five shillings and sixpence a week would have forced the young man's wife and children to seek employment as well. In the cotton mills, where the cheap labour of women and children sometimes constituted three-quarters of the factory workforce, a boy of seven might work a fifteen-hour day. Alternatively, the family income could be supplemented with work down in the mines, where the Children's Employment Commission of 1842 found children as young as four, 'so young they go in their bed gowns'. While the weaver's children pushed wagons of coal along seams too narrow for adults or ponies, their mother would pull heavier loads attached to chains between her legs, even when pregnant, and would probably suffer a couple of miscarriages as a result. At the end of the day, the family would return to slum accommodation which they shared with rats, sewage, cholera, and several other families. Britain's textile industry flourished, with the country's output of cloth growing from 40 million yards a year in 1785 to 2.1 billion in 1850. During the same period, half a million handloom weavers starved (Blakesley 11).

Children were among the most vulnerable members of this luckless community. Unable to pay their own way for the first few years of their life, they were a drain on their parents' limited resources, tricky to look after, and not guaranteed to repay even adequate infant care by surviving into adulthood. During this period in Britain, there existed a weary, bedraggled, repressed, disenfranchised adult population, and a younger population

whose early experiences must have been characterized by the literal or figurative absence of any figure that offered any sort of attachment or intimacy, and by work, and by hardship, and by cruelty. Many grown-ups had their own worries, or, in this context, along with depressing lives wrapped up in work and the surety of an early death, thirsts which were impossible to slake, or difficulties engaging effectively in social and commercial intercourse, all of which tended to distract them from the needs of their offspring.

The environmental ramifications of the enormous growth in manufacturing begins to be laid out for us by description of how the decreased demand for wood as fuel in the wake of increasing consumption of coal increased the amount of open land which was available for farmers and boosted agricultural production (Drout 294). This allowed the areas in question to support (in theory) a larger work force and therefore allowed for production on an even greater scale. Kasa explains that “unconstrained exploitation of workers in factories and mines, abysmal housing and hygienic standards, as well as thickening black smog and soot from burning coal aggravated already-existing socio-environmental problems such as infections, respiratory problems, poisoning, and workplace accidents” and that such was the concern over human ailments and atrocities that not much attention was paid to the environmental effects of the booming economy (Kasa 70). In response to the huge manufacturing centers that belched black, vicious smoke into darkening skies over areas of England, many people grew concerned about the overall health of the community. The increasing numbers of people who grew sick and were either dead or dying did not go unnoticed. The deaths of children forced to

work and to live in workhouses did not go unnoticed by trade unions, medical doctors, and new laws and authorities (Blakesley 12; Kasa 71). Society knew that there was a larger problem going on and the slum conditions, rampant prostitution, out-of-control alcoholism and violence clearly demonstrated this. There simply was a general sense of people not knowing what to do about it, or how to begin to solve the problem.

It was with this in mind and as a background that the Arts and Crafts Movement as we now understand it began to form. It was an outcry against the blackened skies, the unheard-of fortunes that were being gained in the railroad and textile industries, the acute infant and child mortality rates and the life-expectancy of the working poor continuing to plummet; it was an outcry against the inhumanity that was becoming so evident into the infancy of the Industrial Revolution. Men like Augustus Pugin, John Ruskin, Gabriel Rossetti and William Morris saw the problems for what they were. These men spoke out in their communities and took a stance against what they saw happening in the world around them. Through differing modes of communication, they made their views known and fought against what they saw as the complete breakdown of human society through mechanization and industrialization.

Morris and Company: People With Big Ideas

Augustus W. B. Pugin (1812-1852) was born into an artistic family and his early writings promoted the Gothic Revival style and rejected industrialization (Blakesley 12). His writings helped open the eyes of British society and raised awareness of the plight of factory workers; awakening a degree of apprehension regarding a heavily industrialized nation. Pugin began his career as an architect and archaeologist under the guidance of his father, who was an instructor of architectural drawing (Parkinson). He spent much of his free time sketching some of the famous cathedrals in both England and France, such as Notre Dame Cathedral. Over time, Pugin came to champion the Gothic design and the medieval approach to architecture, rejecting the Hellenistic flavor of Classical design that was becoming prevalent during his time. Pugin believed that English society should celebrate its own style and materials, as opposed to copying the styles of others in the world.

The Gothic style of architecture was considered to be more English and more European than other versions of architecture that had been introduced by the Roman invaders. This is in addition to the widespread understanding and feeling that there was a more intense appreciation for art during the Gothic Period and that, "individual ways of working had been encouraged, with devout artists pouring their souls into rich, colorful illumination and good, solid craftsmanship" (Blakesley 14). Pugin's *Contrasts; Or a Parallel between the Noble Edifices of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries, and*

Similar Buildings of the Present Decay of Taste used political cartoons and other visuals from the popular press of the day to launch an attack on modern buildings, comparing them against those of Gothic design. This work also pointed out contrasting social organization and modes of work practices in the Middle Ages, citing how these could relieve some of the pressures that were being observed in the working classes of that period (Cumming 11). This, overall, demonstrates Pugin's belief that works of the Gothic and Medieval periods carry with them an underlying moral and ethical value, which he did not perceive during his own time.

Another gentleman who pioneered the Arts and Crafts Movement was John Ruskin (1819-1900), an art critic and theorist who, like Pugin, strongly advocated medieval design and architecture as the last remaining bastion for honest craftsmanship and artistic integrity. Ruskin's major contributions included his avowed dislike for Classical-styled works in buildings & art. Ruskin preferred the Gothic style, with its lack of symmetry and tendency to be rough and rugged, as the "new" ideal for art (Cumming 15). Along with William Morris, he was extremely critical of the new volume and force of industrialization taking place in Europe. His most radical idea was the complete and total rejection of any machine-produced products. He characterized all machine-made objects as "dishonest." He believed, along with Morris that handwork and craftsmanship brought dignity and integrity to labor. He further felt that the factory/industrial work of the age disrupted the natural rhythms of life by imposing artificial hours and conditions on workers (Blakesley 22). One of Ruskin's many publications, *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*, developed a series of requirements or axioms for architecture and its study.

The Lamp of Beauty, a detailed account of how natural motifs are central to architecture, Ruskin explains some of his philosophy on the matter: "all most lovely forms and thoughts are directly taken from natural objects and forms which are not taken from natural objects *must* be ugly" (Ruskin).

Gabriel Charles Dante Rossetti, who later changed the order of his names to stress his kinship with the great Italian poet, was born in London May 12, 1828, to Gabriele and Frances Rossetti. His father was a Professor of Italian at King's College, London and a scholar of the poet and family member, Dante Alighieri. Due to his father's calling, Rossetti was fluent in both English and Italian. He chose to attend Royal Academy at F. S. Cary's Academy of Art. In 1846, he was accepted into the Royal Academy but after only a year he became dissatisfied and left to study under Ford Madox Brown, the esteemed Pre-Raphaelite painter who had been educated at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts (Barrington 7). In 1848 Rossetti, with other like-minded young men who were all interested in the production and manner of artistic creation which focused on what was then considered to be more traditional means of expression, began to call themselves the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. This group attracted other young painters, poets, and critics who were just as concerned about the tendency in English art and architecture to move away from more traditional, romantic styles.

A commission to cover the walls of the Oxford Debating Union with Arthurian murals introduced Rossetti to William Morris and Edward Burne-Jones, in 1856 and 57 (Barrington 10). This chance assignment to complete a medieval period project was just

the catalyst for the joining of great minds, who began to work together to further establish the philosophical ideals of the Arts and Crafts Movement.

William Morris is believed and understood to be the father of the Arts and Crafts Movement in the United Kingdom, and by extension the movement in the United States, as well. According to Blakesley, “Morris was the most charismatic and influential designer of his age.”(29) But he was far more than a simple designer.

Morris was born in 1834 and was the third child and first surviving son of a London broker, William Morris, Senior and his wife, Emma Shelton Morris. William Jr. was one of eight children. Morris, Sr. died unexpectedly in 1847 leaving William Jr. as the oldest male in a single-parent family of nine, bearing the brunt of the responsibility for the family, although by modern standards, he was still a child. Due to his late father’s success as a broker, the family was still able to live in relative comfort, but it was not what they had become accustomed to. This “rude awakening” of sorts is credited with helping him develop his financial and business sense (Blakesley 29). In his writings, Morris constantly expounded on those things which inspired him in his work. These included: The Writings of Sir Thomas Mallory (*Le Morte d’Arthur*) and the study of Arthurian mythology alongside the history of Britain; the writings of John Ruskin; nature; Medieval design; Nordic myth and legend; traditional craftsmanship; natural materials; beauty; functionality; social justice; and the needs of the Working Class (Scoville 93). His interests stretched far and wide – many of these were multidisciplinary and encompassed all sorts of seemingly unrelated careers, hobbies and means of work. As Scoville writes, “So varied was Morris’ career – as a poet, designer, painter, architect,

gardener, socialist, translator from Greek, Latin, Old English, and Old Norse, and, not incidentally, the inventor of the fantasy novel — that getting a grip on his work is difficult” (Scoville 93).

Morris yearned to bring quality, beautiful, purposeful forms of handcrafted art to the masses at an affordable price. This was something that he had great difficulty realizing, however. Due to the high cost of producing quality handcrafted books and furnishings, most of what he was able to provide was out of reach financially for the very people he was trying to reach (Blakesley 51). He actually took the time and expended the energy in order to put those personal philosophies that had been formulated during his time with John Ruskin and the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood into practice, by taking the time and putting the dedication into teaching himself the various traditional production methods of what his companies and legions of workers in his employ manufactured, and he firmly believed that the artist should also be a craftsman. Collectively, the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood began writing about, producing and living with this more natural style of art and architecture and the Arts and Crafts Movement was born. The manner that they chose to follow in their movement applies more fully to Ruskin and his perspective but, as the name of the Brotherhood suggests, they wholeheartedly supported a return to a more traditional form of artistic expression and, like Pugin and Ruskin before them, largely rejected mechanical or “false” means of production.

The Brotherhood focused on craftsmanship and creating art by hand, as had been done in previous centuries, by artists who produced art before the time of Michelangelo and Raphael. According to Blakesley,

While contemporary critics and art historians worshiped Raphael as the great master of the Renaissance, these young students rebelled against what they saw as Raphael's theatricality and the Victorian hypocrisy and pomp of the academic art tradition. The friends decided to form a secret society, the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, in deference to the sincerities of the early Renaissance before Raphael developed his grand manner (57).

As loosely related members of the Arts and Crafts Movement, they were artists, architects, designers, craftsmen and writers. They tended to lean more towards Art Nouveau than pure Arts and Crafts in most of their works, but they shared many of the common ideals. They feared that industrialization and mass production was destroying the environment in which traditional skills and crafts could prosper, just as machine production had taken the pride, skill and design out of the quality of goods being manufactured. They believed that hand crafted objects were superior to those made by machines and that the rural craftsman had a superior lifestyle to those who slaved in the urban mills and factories, while living in slums, financially and often morally destitute. They were convinced that the general decline of artistic standards brought on by industrialization was linked to the nation's social and moral decline. This was expounded upon in a couple of different ways. Most noted of these was Pugin's work, *The True Principals of Pointed or Christian Architecture*, in which he highlighted three "true principals" that were essential to good architecture. 1) A building should show truth to purpose by demonstrating the use for which it was intended. 2) An architect must demonstrate structural honesty, so that the methods of construction are visible and any details should be appropriate to the architecture. 3) An artisan should stay true to his material by drawing on its inherent properties, rather than adopting methods better suited to another medium (Blakesley 15).

In this way, it is easy to understand how Morris, the Brotherhood and proponents of the Arts and Crafts Movement felt that the industrialization of England was dehumanizing art, but it was at the same time dehumanizing the workers... turning them into little more than expendable animal resources by which they were making their fortunes. Ruskin had previously used the term, "organic architecture" which, "demanded that architecture should evolve like a living organism, revealing the ground from which it developed, and relating every part harmoniously as a whole" (Blakesley 16). Morris, like those before him, believed that there should be pride and satisfaction in the work that any man accomplishes, and that there should be love for and of beauty in that work. Morris and those close to him, rejected the, "early Victorian vogue for Classical architecture in favor of a revival of medieval Gothic" and, indeed for the new Victorian technological, industrial advancements as a whole (Cummings 28).

Over his lifetime, Morris taught himself the somewhat lost skills of weaving, dyeing and printing of textiles, embroidery, weaving of tapestries, and typeface design. He wrote poetry and authored Gothic and Nordic epic romances and learned several languages – translating many Norse myths, even having some of them specifically bound at his printing company, the Kelmscott Press. He believed that a designer should not only conceive of and design the artwork – whether it was a wallpaper design, a painting, furniture, sculpture or a tapestry – but should actually be able to create it and train others to create it, as well. Morris was also an architect and had worked in several architectural firms after being briefly educated at Exeter and Oxford. Indeed, Oxford University appears to be a catalyst for imaginative, creative works for at least a few different authors

and artists. It was at Oxford that Morris met Edward Burne-Jones and Dante Gabriel Rossetti, embarking on what would be the formative years of his life. It was at Oxford that Morris became a member of an undergraduate aesthetic circle which was enamored of an idealized Middle Ages and came heavily under the influence of Tennyson's Arthurian poems, Carlyle's *Past and Present*, and Ruskin's *The Stones of Venice*. Again, these years were formative for the young Morris, who was already quite possessed by the feeling that he had been “born out of his due time”, came to know and fell in love with medieval art, architecture and with the medieval ideals of chivalry and of the idea of communal life (Scoville 95). There, too, Morris began to write poetry which was heavily stylized after the work of Tennyson, Keats, Browning, and, most of all, his beloved Chaucer. Although some of his peers did not think his work was worthy of much merit, Morris continued to write in his spare time, and in later years produced work which inspired authors in the modern era, including John Ronald Reuhl Tolkien, who had happened to spend a good bit of time at Oxford, as well. At this time of his life, though, Morris' main focus and concentration weighed heavily in the arena of bringing old world knowledge, craftsmanship and beauty to the masses of workers in England. His main focus was on the medieval craftsman and how he could bring some measure of that era back into being for the good of all of the workers of Britain. Although he was born into the very class which he was opposed to, Morris had a way of connecting to his workers. He wrote: "For first, as to the class of rich people doing no work, we all know that they consume a great deal while they produce nothing. Therefore, clearly, they have to be kept at the expense of those who do work" (Morris, “Useful Work vs. Useless Toil” 130).

Before the Industrial Revolution, craftsmen would spend their lifetimes perfecting their skills at particular types of work and it showed in the quality of the final product (Cumming 6). In the medieval landscape and social order which Morris held in high esteem and wanted society to emulate, craftsmen took on young pupils as apprentices. These apprentices lived and worked alongside their teachers, so as to be completely entrenched and indoctrinated into their area of expertise (Cumming 6). In Morris's opinion, this was the social ideal. Craftsmen were masters of their craft and that expert status could be seen in the quality of their work. There was an investment on the part of the artisan to ensure that their clientele not only had goods which functioned properly, but looked the part of a functional item, performed its function, and had a certain beauty in that functionality.

When mass production came along, the art of making things by hand and actually crafting a handmade piece of art slowly faded away in the face of “progress”. As a direct result of industrialization, the early 19th century was marked by a sharp deterioration in living standards and left people with a sense that their lives had changed for the worse. Many had given up their traditional rural lifestyle, "in England's green and pleasant land" for the sake of a job and hopes of a higher standard of living in the "dark Satanic mills", of England's Industrial Revolution (Clark 22). As a result, they lost that feeling of security and belonging which comes from living in smaller, closely - knit, farming and home-craft based communities. Overall, the hugely successful business model was borne on the backs of the working class of the period. As is now considered commonplace, the rich became richer and the poor became poorer – and were at the mercy of the rich

business owners. Men, women and children alike were subjected to tenement living standards. It was these very atrocities which Morris spoke of in his essay, "Useful Work versus Useless Toil". In this piece Morris speaks of two types of work:

You may be sure ... that it is of the nature of man, when he is not diseased, to take pleasure in his work under certain conditions. And, yet, we must say in the teeth of the hypocritical praise of all labour, whatsoever it may be, of which I have made mention, that there is some labour which is so far from being a blessing that it is a curse, that it would be better for the community and for the worker if the latter were to fold his hands and refuse to work (128).

Morris believed in the power of self-education, motivation and working with materials in such a manner as to maintain their integrity and honor. He genuinely believed and worked towards the goal of assuring that all items produced by his firm and workmen to be good, honest, reliable and beautiful. Along with other members of the Arts and Crafts Movement, he not only worked towards but lived his ideologies. Morris produced beautiful, useful, sustainable works – not only for his own personal use, but in his shops and for his friends. He frequented other craftsmen of this same ilk and practiced his belief systems on a daily basis. If it is to be maintained that the Arts and Crafts movement encompassed, more than anything, integrity, we need not look any further than the “Father” of the Movement, himself.

Tolkien and Morris Come Together

The side of William Morris that loved to delve into the land of fantasy and story was developed when he was a young man. He may have been an artisan and an activist, but he was also an artist and academic who lived and worked in the mid-late 19th Century. He was a philologist and translator, concerned mostly (though not entirely) with ancient Germanic sagas, which included but were not limited to ancient Nordic and Viking saga, early English epic poetry, Chaucer and dragon stories of the Middle Ages. He also wrote poetry; he illuminated and bound books through his publishing company, The Kelmscott Press. He was part of the Pre-Raphaelite movement; was considered to be the father of The Arts and Crafts Movement and wrote the odd bit of Nordic and Viking-styled fantasy from time to time. Books, languages and writing were always of great importance to Morris and he pushed hard to beautify and improve book printing and binding techniques over the entire course of his career. His translations of *The Volsung Saga*; *Three Northern Love Stories, and other tales*; *The Story of Gunnlaug the Worm-tongue and Raven the Skald*; and other works – such as Beowulf, were an influence on many scholars of the early and middle 20th century – most notably, scholars like J. R. R. Tolkien and C.S. Lewis. Indeed, Morris's works were so influential that Tolkien called them the “foundation of his work” (Tolkien). In a letter to his wife-to-be in 1914, Tolkien wrote: “Amongst other work I am trying to turn one of the stories [of the Finnish *Kalevala*] — which is really a great story and most tragic — into a short story somewhat on the lines of Morris’ romances with chunks of poetry in between” (Carpenter 7).

One of Tolkien's early works was quite similar to one of Morris' translations written in the style of *House of the Wolfings* (1890) (Drout 254). There is no doubt that both men shared a great deal of similar interests. Both of them were very interested in dragon mythologies and epic tales of medieval Europe. *Le Morte de Arthur*, *Beowulf*, and other mead-hall tales of Northern Europe fascinated both men. Both men were fascinated by languages and could not only speak, but write in a variety, with concentration on those of Nordic and Germanic origin. It is within these similarities that we find the connection between The Arts and Crafts Movement and John Ronald Reuel Tolkien. The key firmly resides in Tolkien's environment while growing up in rural England, his love of Nordic fantasy and language and William Morris. Drout elaborates on this:

Although Tolkien might not have appreciated Morris's role in the early socialist movement, in the arts the two had much in common. Morris was active in the British Arts and Crafts Movement, restoring the role of craftsman in architecture, decorative arts, and cabinetmaking. Furniture had to be individually built, rather than by factory workers making only a small part of a table or chair. You see that same craftsmanship in how the Elves of Middle-earth work precious metals, how the Dwarves shape stone and even in the love Hobbits have for the locally brewed beer. Morris and Tolkien agreed that we are on this earth to create beauty (439).

Various sources (Drout, Carpenter, Grotta, Walker, et al.) hint at just how marked the similarities are and how deeply rooted they seem to be in each man's personality, but it is within Tolkien's own letters and personal correspondence with his wife, son, friends and acquaintances, that we are given a glimpse of how he reacted to Morris' work. This is further evidenced in a letter from Tolkien to Professor L.W. Forster, in 1960:

The Lord of the Rings was actually begun, as a separate thing, about 1937, and had reached the inn at Bree, before the shadow of the second war. Personally I do not think that either war (and of course not the atomic bomb) had any influence upon either the plot or the manner of its unfolding. Perhaps in landscape. The

Dead Marshes and the approaches to the Morannon owe something to Northern France after the Battle of the Somme. They owe more to William Morris and his Huns and Romans, as in *The House of the Wolfings* or *The Roots of the Mountains* (Carpenter 303).

Looking back over the life of one of the greatest authors of all time, the development of the areas of interest are evident, as is how he came to appreciate the works of William Morris. When Tolkien was a young man, he had an affinity for knowledge and for languages, learning to read and write Latin, French and German by the age of seven. This expanded once he left home to attend grammar school, where he eventually learned Welsh, Finnish and Old Norse. Over time, he developed a love for ancient Norse and Viking stories. In 1914, after winning the Skeat Prize for English at King Edward's School in Birmingham, he spent some of his prize money on a translation of Norse romances written by none other than William Morris, whose deep seeded love for Norse legend and mythology had already been demonstrated (Grotta 43). Afterwards, Tolkien began collecting the works of Morris and in 1960, almost a half-century after spending his prize money on the books, "Tolkien, not known for crediting the works of other authors as sources for his own stories, confesses his debt to *The Roots of the Mountains* and *The House of the Wolfings* as his inspiration for the Dead Marshes in *The Lord of the Rings*" (Chance 195). Morris' tales of myths and legends of the Northlands, with their dragons, earth-spirits, elves, dwarves, wizards and warriors had captured the imagination of Tolkien. We see the result of this in his works.

One area in which they are not similar however, is in the area of political involvement. Whereas Morris was quite outspoken about the plight of workers in the newly industrialized English workforce, Tolkien remained silent. Throughout his

personal letters, writings and books, there is a vivid, obvious disconnection in the area of political intrigue. Many critics, the most notable of whom is John Garth, author of *Tolkien and the Great War: The Threshold of Middle Earth*, have attempted to interpret Tolkien's writings as an avenue into political discourse; statements about socialism, communism or colonialism; statements about World War I and II – comparing the Dead Marshes to the killing fields of France during the first World War – but Tolkien firmly refutes all of them. This refutation does tend to be a bit ambiguous when it is painfully apparent that at the very least, World War I and Tolkien's experiences as a signals officer in the Battle of the Somme provided key themes for his work (Garth 27). The issues of mortality and immortality, the war as a “national epic”, and the fact that even C.S. Lewis pointed out to Tolkien that “the war equipped him with the experience to write *The Lord of the Rings*”, aid Garth's argument very neatly (Drout 714). As one book reviewer states:

Tolkien was no political ally. He was a devout Catholic who moaned incessantly about the modern world – not capitalism, not exploitation, but modernity itself, which he saw as the triumph of a sinister 'Machine'. His was a profoundly backward-looking reaction, based on a rural idyll that never existed – feudalism lite. As socialists, we don't judge art by the politics of its creator . . . neither author was exactly a lefty. However, when the intersection of politics and aesthetics actually stunts the art, it's no red herring to play the politics card (Mieville).

Tolkien never refuted or denied being influenced by William Morris, in fact he admitted it freely. However, he never admitted, acknowledged or cited the Arts and Crafts Movement as part of what motivated his character development, ornate descriptions of artistic elements with the texts or even the way the original hardcover volumes of *The Lord of the Rings* were bound in hand-tooled leather. Although Morris is often called, the “Father of the Arts and Crafts Movement”, it remains unclear as to

whether Tolkien disconnected or distanced himself (and his work) from this association due to the political entanglements or whether there just didn't seem to be a need to associate it. Over the years since the original publication of all of Tolkien's works focusing on Middle Earth including but not limited to *The Hobbit*, *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Silmarillion*, his critics have certainly noticed this lack of association and speculated endlessly as to his motivations; the aforementioned John Garth and China Mieville are just the tip of the proverbial iceberg. There is no doubt that within the texts, one can clearly see elements of the Arts and Crafts mentality, style suggestions and how much simplicity, environmental consciousness, beauty, usefulness and sustainability truly meant to Tolkien; the man and the writer. As to his other motivations or inspirations, we are left to assign those purely to the realm of conjecture and individual analysis.

Beauty in Simplicity

There is something to be said for living one's life with simplicity. Both Tolkien and Morris grew up in what could be called, "genteel poverty" and neither one of them seemed any worse for it. Both young lads would describe running barefoot through gardens, taking long walks through the countryside and enjoying the open expanses of nature – uninterrupted by factories, motorcars, suburban subdivisions and social upheavals. They both described their childhoods as somewhat idyllic (Grotta 21, 23). It is this idealized childhood in the English countryside that embedded in them the love for nature and for beauty in simplicity. They both shared a love for nature and for being outdoors. Morris expressed this fondness for the outdoors through specially designed gardens at his home, Red House, which was designed in the Gothic style. It was his intent that the gardens be reminiscent of the disappearing English countryside and reflect the wildness and inherent beauty of nature, undisturbed (Blakesley 34). After he acquired Kelmscott Manor, which also had its gardens refurbished, Morris made it a point to furnish the interior with handmade linens and textiles which reflected floral patterning and images of nature, such as birds, trees and woody latticework (Blakesley 42).

Tolkien's homes included extensive gardens, but he had a particular fondness for trees – the older, the better – and was quite insistent about having his photograph taken next to one whenever possible (Drout 679, 680). Tolkien's affinity for nature goes a step further: his prose and the words which he uses to describe the natural world portrayed within his construction that is Middle Earth, bring every single bush and tree to life- but it goes so far beyond that. Steve Walker describes it best in his essay entitled, *Blade and*

Leaf Listening: “In Middle Earth, the kind of world where plants are not merely sentient but perceptive, a tree can be ‘considering you with the same slow care that it had given to its own inside affairs for endless years’ ” (Walker 41). Tolkien infuses the language describing his forests, trees and mountains with a vitality that is normally saved for descriptions of people and physical acts so much that, “the day itself might overhear” (Tolkien 607) how anthropomorphic characters interact with each other. It is also apparent that Tolkien has bequeathed, as it were, this love of nature and the environment into those characters that he creates to inhabit Middle Earth; each race of beings has its own particular manner in which they interact, intercede with or interfere with the natural world, which shall be explored in later chapters.

This environment-loving aspect of Tolkien’s biography is evident in his fantasy novels. Professor Tolkien once said of himself:

I am in fact a Hobbit in all but size. I like gardens, trees, un-mechanized farmlands, I smoke a pipe and like good, plain food – unrefrigerated – but I detest French cooking. I like – and even dare to wear in these dull days – handmade ornamental waistcoats. I'm fond of mushrooms out of a field, have a very simple sense of humor (which even my most appreciative critics find tiresome). I go to bed late and get up late, when possible (Harvey 92).

A journalist once described him as, "... a cross between Bilbo and Gandalf" (Grotta 10).

Through reading *The Lord of the Rings*, we are given such occasional glimpses into Tolkien's life. Some of these entirely subjective interpretations were contested by Tolkien; others are obvious and were reinforced by the author in his personal correspondence and later, his son Christopher. One of these events occurred early in Tolkien's life, as a young lad in South Africa, where he was born. Young John was

outdoors, playing in the garden, when he was stung by a huge tarantula. Tolkien recalled years later. "All I can remember is a very hot day, long dead grass and running. I don't even remember screaming" (Grotta 19). After that, however, Tolkien had a life-long fear of spiders, which he translated first into *The Hobbit* (1937) in the form of Bilbo's run-in with spiders of the Mirkwood and later into Frodo and Sam's battle with the giant spider, Shelob in *The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King*.

It was this desire to return to a level of simplicity on behalf of both authors and the evidence which supports this, that prompted Daniel Grotta's claims about Tolkien's formulation and construction of the natural order of Middle Earth. While J. R. R. Tolkien insisted multiple times that *The Lord of the Rings* was by no means a religious tale of any sort, he did agree that it was to be considered a pre-Christian world without the concept of Original Sin, so there was no need for a Christ. There was to be no gods or saints, and no religious rituals. In fact, while critics such as the aforementioned John Grant or Richard Hughes hint at there being undertones of Christianity throughout the works of Tolkien (and that the work lacks continuity and vitality without it), Grotta is one of few scholars who take this topic head-on and offers his own explanatory model positing that there is a natural symmetry and sense of moral order which is seemingly guided by a system of ethics which can possibly be considered to be Christian in everything but name. Although surely Tolkien would agree that there are certain characters specifically developed to represent benevolent races of creatures: Hobbits, humans, wizards, Ents, Fairies, Dwarves and even the semi-human individual that we know only as Tom Bombadil; there are also some individual characters which are constructed and inserted

into the work as a foil, and fall into categories which are considered and understood to possess malevolent features and are therefore not to be “trusted”. In this, there is a sense of balance which is most often observed in Tolkien’s beloved natural world, mirroring the one which we and Tolkien occupy. As to the claim that *The Lord of the Rings* is an allegorical work with strong Christian roots, Tolkien answered:

I cordially dislike allegory in all of its manifestations, and always have done so since I grew old and wary enough to detect its presence. I much prefer history, true or feigned, with its varied applicability to the thought and experience of readers. I think that many confuse applicability with allegory; but the one resides in the freedom of the reader, and the other in the purported domination of the author (Carpenter 120).

He reinforced this in a conversation with yet another reporter who asked the question: “It has no allegorical intentions, general, particular or topical, moral, religious or political.” And was forced to do so yet again when asked specifically, by yet another interviewer, about whether the “Scouring of the Shire” models postwar Britain: “It does not. It is an essential part of the plot... without, I need say, any allegorical significance or contemporary reference whatsoever” (Carpenter 121). This entire premise continues with the theme of being deliciously simple, beautiful in its own way and reliant on natural means by which to provide continuity to the system; therefore, utterly sustainable.

Leaving the discussion of allegory behind, there is most certainly a tendency towards color-coding and respect for natural materials in Tolkien’s Middle Earth, which becomes evident through close reading and even more blatant when observed visually through Peter Jackson’s big screen adaptation of Tolkien’s works. The coloring of clothing and the materials from which that clothing is made appear to be quite significant,

as much attention is paid to this, beginning in *The Fellowship of the Ring*, when Bilbo and Frodo are getting dressed for Bilbo's hundred-and-eleventh birthday party and continuing throughout the work.

Those articles of clothing which are dyed to earth-toned, naturally occurring hues; materials such as cottons, wools and bright silks tend to be worn by those individuals of any race who are deemed to be benevolent. These more naturally garbed individuals tend to wear leather as well, with buttons, fasteners and such made from what appears to be bone or ivory.

Individuals with poor intentions or are purely malevolent tend to wear materials which are of better quality; their garb is cleaner, brighter and has been sewn with or covered with strapping and buckles constructed via metalwork of some type. This does vary in the case of Orcs, Uruk-Hai and other peoples which tend to be in a position of subjugation. Both of these aforementioned groups raiment's tend to be made of natural materials such as leather straps, garments that are kilt-like in appearance and seem extremely durable. The predominant coloration of malevolence tends to be black, in some cases with the descriptive language used – an oily sheen is envisioned (from sweat or bodily oils) and an overtly ground-in-dirty description. Most often, when a character is portrayed as being manipulative, untrustworthy, or weaselly in any way, they are portrayed as unclean, having some sort of foul odor or physically unkempt. For example: the wizard Saruman of Isengard is “taken over” by the desire to wrest power from the Dark Lord, Sauron, in *The Fellowship of the Ring* and is described as looking “tattered, disheveled and unclean, as if he had slept too long in his normally sparkling white robes;

His hair has lost its luster and his eyes portray a certain level of madness, red and wide with obsession” (Tolkien 569).

All of these issues with coloration, clothing, and how they relate with the Arts and Crafts movement and why Tolkien may have chosen them come back to this need for simplicity and beauty in life and livelihood. Clothing, furnishings and colorations which are derived from nature are most likely handcrafted or even in the case of leather and/or metalwork, hand-tooled at some point in their existence. It is much more feasible in the context of Middle Earth to envision individuals’ hand-making and even repairing their own clothing items. In the case of outfitting armies and warriors, it is more likely that there is access to some level of mass production, such as the Uruk-Hai of Isengard or the Orcs of Mordor. Each race of beings in Middle Earth have certain qualities which are indicative of certain types of skill-sets, strengths or proclivities and those are discussed at length in the proceeding chapter, along with any detrimental effects inherent to these undertakings.

Of Tolkien's Middle Earth and Hobbits

J. R. R. Tolkien is truly masterful in constructing Middle Earth. As in any fantasy novel, there has to be some element of believability; the reader has to buy into this concept of an alternate reality that the author is attempting to construct. It is important that the new reality is just real enough so that the reader recognizes and can identify with the environmental characteristics, places, people or entities and situations that can and inevitably do arise within the context of story. By carefully including elements that readers see on a daily basis, like mountains, bushes, shrubs, trees, rivers, lakes, seas, a recognizable sky and even maps that look vaguely like areas we recognize (Europe), he substantiates and perpetuates the believability.

Even though many of the types of anthropomorphic figures in *The Lord of the Rings* are identified as non-human, humans do feature in the stories. An entire race of Men is present in the work, and although they are scattered, the basic, recognizable features of human societies are kept intact. In fact, as we are introduced to the main characters of the work, the race of Hobbits, we are informed that they have existed alongside of Men for multiple ages, and still do. In fact, it is impossible to ignore not only the humanity that has been injected into the Hobbits, but also the elements of the Arts and Crafts mentality that have been gently woven into the Shire, Hobbiton and the Hobbits themselves. This relatively simple, peaceful group of humans-in-miniature creates an overall sense of calm, peace and harmony with the natural world, which develops into a sense of nostalgia and longing for a less complicated time and place ... a simpler

existence. In this idealized imaginary period, we would have time to grow our own food, tend to our livestock and create beautiful, useful, and sustainable things which we could then use in our daily lives. This could separate us from the contemporary rat race of modernity, bring us a sense of wholesome, directed purpose again. This was Ruskin's and Morris's late-Victorian dream, and Tolkien depicts this in the Hobbits and their home in Hobbiton.

In the Prologue, we are introduced to the Hobbit: a small, unobtrusive, long-lost-relative of man, who embodies the basic ideology of the Arts and Crafts Movement and, indeed, personifies it. We are told that they are:

An ancient people, more numerous formerly than they are today; for they love peace and quiet and good tilled earth; a well-ordered and well-farmed countryside was their favourite haunt. They do not and did not understand or like machines more complicated than a forge-bellows, a water-mill, or a hand-loom, though they were skillful with tools (Tolkien 1).

Tolkien backs this up with yet more stylized depiction of Hobbits as simply being small humans in order to familiarize us with his characterization and hearken our imaginations back to a formative period in our own history:

They possessed from the first the art of disappearing swiftly and silently, when large folk whom they do not wish to meet come blundering by; and this art they have developed until to Men it may seem magical. But Hobbits have never, in fact, studied magic of any kind, and their elusiveness is due solely to a professional skill that heredity and practice, and a close relationship with the earth, have rendered inimitable by bigger and clumsier races (Tolkien 1).

He continues by describing their basic anatomical structure, and we are given the distinct impression that they are, in fact, just small, hairy people: "For they are a little people, smaller than Dwarves: less stout and stocky, that is, even when they are not actually

much shorter. Their height is variable, ranging between two and four feet of our measure. They seldom now reach three feet; but they have dwindled, they say and in ancient days, they were taller” (Tolkien 1).

The manner of Hobbits and their general description also includes a bit of psychology, as Tolkien goes to great lengths to bring the reader into who and what Hobbits really are, and to, in a manner of speaking, convince us of their humanity:

As for the Hobbits of the Shire, with whom these tales are concerned, in the days of their peace and prosperity they were a merry folk. They dressed in bright colours, being notably fond of yellow and green; but they seldom wore shoes, since their feet had tough, leathery soles and were clad in a thick, curling hair, much like the hair of their heads, which was commonly brown. Thus, the only craft little practiced among them was shoe-making; but they had long and skillful fingers and could make many other useful and comely things (Tolkien 2).

He goes on to describe, in this same detail, individual clans and families of Hobbits, each with their identifying physical, personal and personality-type attributes in order to further indoctrinate the reader into the Shire and its folk.

We learn that the Shire is located in a green, fertile valley bordered by woodlands and rivers. We learn that the Hobbits are farmers and craftsmen and that they never throw anything away, but instead that they have a storehouse of sorts, where all the items that are no longer needed are stored, so that others may come, find and use them if they have a need.

We learn that Hobbits tend to surround themselves with handmade gifts, of which they receive at least one per week, often from many members of the community, as Hobbits love to give and receive gifts. Family heirlooms are especially important to them,

as illustrated by Bilbo Baggins's near-worship of his grandmother's hundred-year-old dinnerware. In this description, all of the essential elements of the Arts and Crafts are woven into the very being of these small, happy, well-adjusted individuals who live together creating and surrounding themselves with that which is beautiful, useful and entirely sustainable.

By examining his background and childhood in the previous chapters, we've learned that Tolkien, himself, was a lover of wide open spaces and rural England. When he attended Oxford University in 1911, the Oxford he found had not changed significantly for centuries and was, "...surrounded by vast open fields and pleasant villages" (Grotta 72). And by the time the reader is done with the first section of the Prologue, we're friends with the Hobbits. We want to know them and hang out with them and even attend a party or two. We feel this way because Tolkien has taken the idea of the historical farmsteads of Europe and the green majesty of rolling countrysides and a simple life of work, love and those things which we have grown to see as honest and wholesome and given them a name; he's given them an identity. The Hobbits personify that which is simple, good, beautiful, wholesome and functional. They are, in many ways, what an idealized version of medieval period humans were: farmers, craftsmen, simple, wholesome and at peace with their environment. They illustrate the manner in which small medieval hamlets survived. They are our past. They are the practitioners of the Arts and Crafts Movement. Some could argue, of course that they are backwards, simply stylized dwarves of fairy tales and not of any real literary value and have no place in any world, let alone a modern one. They are what modern societies used to be, before the

fires of industry robbed us of our simplicity, our connection to the Earth and of our connections to each other and our communities.

Arts and Crafts and Elves

As further evidence of Tolkien's environmentalism and passion for nature, Tolkien's tale also introduces us to the imaginary race of Elves. There are several different groups of Elves, scattered about Middle Earth and while there are differences between levels of aggression and preference for solitude, overall they are much like Hobbits in their ways and attitudes. Particularly their concerns for and level of participation in the natural world and protection of the same. Tolkien's Elves act as the original "Green Movement", living in harmony with nature; appreciating, respecting and often harnessing its beauty and power, all while reflecting a sense of romance, enchantment and wonder in their artistic creations and beauty. This is reminiscent of the concept of Romanticism as a whole: emphasizing the primitive, medieval and natural modes of life; an interest in rural solitude; pre-occupation with the aesthetic and the spirituality of nature. Elves are often characterized as the makers of myth due to their longevity and lived historical knowledge. As a group, the Elves have been described throughout literature as being adept users of image and symbolism, while having a self-driven originality. However, they too, have their faults, which highlight their relationship to humanity and a tendency towards inherent imperfection. They are often distrustful of other groups in Middle Earth; whether these groups be Dwarves, Men, Hobbits or even Elves from outside groups. The Elves do have a tendency towards greed and a yearning to return to the past, which can be categorized as a form of avarice. Their greed is not so much focused on wealth, per se... but tends to be more in the area of land or territoriality, privacy and the retention of traditional value systems, i.e., a resistance to change over

time, which is again reminiscent of a Romantic quality to the Elves character development (Purtill 74).

In *The Lord of the Rings*, Tolkien confronts the problem of the Elven aggressiveness, and resistance to change at least three times. The feeling that elves are dangerous is expressed first by the human character, Boromir, who does not want to enter the Golden Wood of Lothlórien, and states that he prefers:

A plain road, though it led through a hedge of swords. By strange paths has this Company been led, and so far, to evil fortune. Against my will we passed under the shades of Moria, to our great loss. And now, we must enter the Golden Wood, you say. But of that perilous land we have heard in Gondor, and it is said that few come out who once go in; and of that few none have escaped unscathed (Tolkien 329).

Éomer of Rohan later uses the term "Elvish" to mean "uncanny," and also believes the Lady of the Wood to be some kind of witch or sorceress (Tolkien 423). Though both men are misinformed, there is a definite basis for their fear and suspicion, as the Hobbit, Sam Gamgee later points out. Not only is there the normal degree of fear involved with encountering something differing from the norm, but there is also a degree of generational, ancestral warning. Faramir, wiser than his brother, nevertheless hints that the Elf-Queen of Lorien, Galadriel must be "perilously fair," and expounds on his fear of Lothlorien and the elves within:

You passed through the Hidden Land, but it seems that you little understand its power. If Men have dealings with the Mistress of Magic who dwells in the Golden Wood, then they may look for strange things to follow. For it is perilous for mortal man to walk out of the world of this Sun, and few of those come thence unchanged (Tolkien 652).

Sam picks up the implied criticism and half-agrees with it:

I don't know about *perilous*. . . . It strikes me that folk takes their peril with them into Lórien, and finds it there because they've brought it. But perhaps you could call her *perilous*, because she's so strong in herself. You, you could dash yourself to pieces on her, like a ship on a rock; or drown yourself, like a hobbit in a river. But neither rock nor river would be to blame (Tolkien 654).

Galadriel, of whom they speak is a major character throughout the tale of *The Lord of the Rings*. She is one of very few Elven characters old enough and powerful enough to be one of four Elven bearers of a Ring of Power. Galadriel's personal imperfection is an insatiable temptation to be loved, "...uniquely and exclusively..."; a very feminine, voluptuous type of temptation when the obvious temptation should be one of "... power and preeminence...", which is what is experienced when discussing Ring-Bearers in the context of Men, Dwarves and yes, even Hobbits (Purtill 85). She oversees her land and the Elves within it with a controlled degree of ferocity and it is easy to see and understand why those who are not familiar with the ways of the Elves would fear her. She is beautiful, she is terrible and she is filled with a natural power over all things light.

When in any land in which Elves dwell, whether it be Rivendell or Lothlorien, there is a sense of harmony and unity with nature. As discussed and referenced earlier, when it comes to Elves, "organic architecture" is the name of the game. That fact, in and of itself, would have made John Ruskin a quick fan of Tolkien's work. Entire colonies are built among the leaves of giant trees and encompassing waterfalls and rivers. Using these as a means by which to symbolize the overall health of the environment, different lands are, at different times, "sick" or in a state of "fall"; still categorized and

differentiated through a sense of the nature of the world around it and the nature of the place itself. (Isaacs)

The Elves, like the Hobbits, engage in limited levels of production. Most of their concentration appears to center around medicines and the performance of healing behaviors, but they also work with metals. Much effort is put into stressing the importance of the handicrafts of the Elves, as they are the producers of finely edged weapons – swords, knives, shields, and pikes. These weapons which are featured in *The Lord of the Rings*, like many weapons in Old English and Medieval literature have names and have been characterized with anthropomorphic qualities, which adds meaning and importance not only to the weapons themselves, but to their creators: the craftsmen who produced them. This is also recognized and a used literary throwback in the works of William Morris and indeed, is seen throughout the tales and mythologies of Northern Europe and Scandinavia, as well as in timeless tales such as Beowulf and Le Morte d'Arthur. There really is, for a student of literature, no way of forgetting Hrunting or Excaliber.

Some of the weapons that are specifically mentioned in *The Lord of the Rings* include: The sword Glamdring, or Foehammer, which was carried by Gandalf after it was discovered among the hoard of the three trolls in *The Hobbit*, and he continues carrying it throughout his journeys with Bilbo Baggins and again with Frodo during *The Fellowship of the Ring*. The weapon, Sting; although made by the Elves as a large knife, functioned well as a sword for the smaller race of Hobbits. Bilbo Baggins named the weapon after using it to fend off giant spiders in Mirkwood forest in *The Hobbit*, then later passed it on

to Frodo to use in his quest to destroy the One Ring. Sting would glow blue whenever orcs were nearby. The sword Narsil was originally forged by Dwarves in another Tolkien tale, but its shards are re-forged by the Elves of Elrond at Rivendell in *The Fellowship of the Ring*. After re-forging, Narsil gains a new identity and is renamed Andúril, the Flame of the West. Strider, also known as Aragorn, heir to the throne of Gondor, actually wears the broken blade of Narsil and shows it to the Hobbits when they meet at the Inn of the Prancing Pony in Bree. The following poem is attributed to the Shards of Narsil, as the sword is referred to in its broken state, and prior to being re-forged:

All that is gold does not glitter,
 Not all those who wander are lost;
 The old that is strong does not wither,
 Deep roots are not reached by the frost;
 From the ashes a fire shall be woken,
 A light from the shadows shall spring;
 Renewed shall be blade that was broken,
 The crownless again shall be king (Tolkien 241).

Even though it would be easy to overlook the production of this type and to even think of these inanimate objects as non-essential to the text; in the context of exploring traditional culture-specific handicrafts and the Arts and Crafts elements of *The Lord of the Rings*, these items are essential. Weapons of this type are not mass produced and there is no mention in the text of vast forges in the context of the Elves. The hands which crafted these weapons bear power and imbibe the weapons themselves with this power, in turn. Tolkien knew this, and expanded upon the idealized notion of weapons being names and possessing epic power in the hands of their bearers. Nordic mythologies have ascribed to this idea – the most famous of these is found in *Beowulf*. Hrunting was a

sword given to Beowulf by Unferth in the ancient Old English epic. Given that Tolkien was an avid reader and student of the Norse and Old English folk tales and epic poems, it makes sense that there is some connection.

Hobbits and Elves were not the only inhabitants of Middle Earth that are so artfully crafted in medievalist style or engaged in production. Other groups are also engaged in production of fine metalwork, masonry, monumental architecture, basketry, weaving and other types of handicrafts, which through the text, we can imagine to be just as beautiful as those seen in Peter Jackson's epic film translations.

On Dwarves and Men

Hobbits and Elves are not the only races of anthropomorphic figures inhabiting Middle Earth that are actively invested in production, protection, and the creation of beautiful, useful and sustainable items. Among these exist the Dwarves, a once highly successful group of producers. This group is not focused on as heavily in *The Lord of the Rings* as some of the others, but they do play a very large part in the mythology of Middle Earth, in the context of *The Hobbit* and *The Silmarillion*. The one Dwarf who is focused heavily upon over the course of the three books, *The Fellowship of the Ring*, *The Two Towers* and *The Return of the King* is Gimli, son of Gloin (who for his part plays a large role in *The Hobbit*), which is based around a group of thirteen dwarves. Our concentration is not so much on the individual character of Gimli so much as it is on the characterization of the group of individuals which identify themselves as Dwarves: how they came about procuring the materials for producing what they produced, the mistakes they made while performing this production, i.e., raping and plundering the depths of Middle Earth and awakening aspects of the preternatural and supernatural world which caused the destruction of their civilization and how the survivors of that cataclysmic event have learned from those collective mistakes.

According to Tolkien's mythological structure, (which hints at a history of engagement in deep industrial applications), the Dwarves tend to be miners, masons, metallurgists, and builders of monumental architecture. The epitome of this architecture that we are introduced to is the great Dwarf city at Moria, which also happened to

function as a mine. As one would imagine, the act of mining, the retrieval of elements from deep within the Earth is an invasive, destructive process. Over the course of the great quest covered by *The Lord of the Rings*, the group of travelers, the fellowship, is forced to travel through Moria (or what is left of it) at the end of *The Fellowship of the Ring*.

Dwarves themselves are portrayed throughout Tolkien's works as being supremely greedy and adept at satisfying that greed through their hoarding of gold and other treasures from deep within the Earth (Purtill 75). While *The Hobbit* focuses on gold and jewels, *The Lord of the Rings* focuses on other items ripped from the Earth: in the case of Moria, it was "Moria silver":

The wealth of Moria was not in gold and jewels, the toys of the Dwarves; nor in iron; but they did not need to delve for them: all things that they desired they could obtain in traffic. For here alone in the world was found Moria silver or true silver as some have called it: *mithril* is the Elvish name. The Dwarves have a name which they do not tell. Its worth was ten times that of gold, and now it is beyond price; for little is left above ground, and even the Orcs dare not delve here for it. The lodes lead away towards Caradhras, and down into darkness. The dwarves tell no tale; but even as *mithril* was the foundation of their wealth, so also it was their destruction: they delved too greedily and too deep, and disturbed that from which they fled, Durin's Bane. Of what they brought to light the Orcs have gathered nearly all, and given it in tribute to Sauron, who covets it (Tolkien 309)

This greed and the lengths to which the Dwarves will go to satisfy their craving for all that glitters is portrayed through the destruction at Moria. Moria is a vast cavern complex, carved out of a mountain. It is hinted that something lurks within Moria – something that was disturbed by the desperate single-mindedness of the Dwarves highly mechanized work. In the passage above, it is referred to simply as, "Durin's Bane". But this is not the only danger that awaits the Fellowship in the deep darkness of Moria: there are Orcs who

raid the abandoned city for wealth; there are the Uruks of Mordor and Isengard, who provide protection for the Orcs. There are also trolls which, naturally occupy mountains and caverns and have been enslaved by the Orcs and then there is the greatest danger of all:

A great shadow, in the middle of which was a dark form, of man-shape maybe, yet greater; and a power and terror seemed to be in it and to go before it. It came to the edge of the fire and the light faded as if a cloud had bent over it. Then with a rush it leapt across the fissure. The flames roared up to greet it, and kindled about it; and a black smoke swirled in the air. It's streaming mane kindled, and blazed behind it. In its right hand was a blade like a stabbing tongue of fire; in its left it held a whip of many thongs. (Tolkien 321).

Peter Jackson's imagination has illustrated the Balrog for us, so there is no need to interpret or imagine what the Balrog is and what it represents. The Balrog is a demon from the deepest recesses of the Earth and is known to only a few races in Middle Earth (Drout 123, 433). This demon was awakened by the industrious delving into the depths of the mountain by the Dwarves who, realizing their great error, simply abandoned their great city. At the time of Gimli's adventure through the abandoned city of Moria with the Fellowship, the text gives the impression that Dwarves now focus more on trade and have developed vast networks with men in order to survive; feeling a deep, cultural discontent when trapped beneath the Earth, therefore leaving the mining and digging behind them. This is a clear indication that although the Dwarves may have been a once great industrialized society based on mechanization and tool-usage, mistakes were made; lives were lost and there was a realization of the dangers that these productive behaviors carried. While there remains a great ancestral respect for the Dwarf forefathers, there is also a healthy sense of caution and recognition of the dangers faced when greed gets too

far out of control. Could this be a cautionary tale and a warning for industrialized societies? Absolutely.

From Tolkien's perspective, looking back on the destructive nature of the Industrial Revolution in Great Britain (its remnants still visible throughout industrialized cities and towns during his childhood) and the horrific state of human health due to cheap housing in the worst possible conditions with no drainage for waste materials, a chronic lack of hygiene, little knowledge of sanitary care and no knowledge as to what caused diseases. Sickesses such as cholera, and typhoid could be and ultimately were, historically, a devastating reality. As the cities became more populated, the problem got worse. People require housing, people require food, more people mean more waste to dispose of – all of these factors require increasing amounts of resources. In the contemporary era, we have crises of unemployment, poverty, people losing their homes and the emergence of diseases such as HIV, AIDS and the Ebola virus. And so modern human societies continue to “dig deeper”; much like the dwarves of *The Lord of the Rings*. How deep do we have to go before we destroy our livelihoods, our homes, perhaps even our entire civilization? What evils do we have to awaken before we stop “digging”?

The race of Man is represented in Tolkien's text by two great cities: Rohan and Gondor. Both of these cities are firmly trade-based and employ types of small industry: animal husbandry, blacksmithing, food production and farming, have an element of clergy-typed individuals and participate in record-keeping and tax collecting. All in all, they are the model by which we understand medieval societies as they existed in Europe during the Middle Ages. They handcraft beautiful decorative works, which are highly

useful and even without the benefit of a singular High King, have sustained themselves over millennia. Aragorn and his presence in the Fellowship are an indicator of humanity's readiness to move forward, to join the races of Middle Earth together and move forward, vanquishing that rising threat of impending industrialization and mechanization from Mordor and Isengard which threatens, again, the peace and prosperity that they have built and sustained.

Like the Dwarves, they too have learned a measure of caution from their ancestral past. Aragorn, or Strider as he is known when we are introduced to him at Bree, is the heir to the throne of Gondor and is High King of Middle Earth. As is normal in any sort of quest situation, Aragorn has something to prove before he can claim his birthright. He must make atonement for humanity's lack, or in this case, his ancestors' lack of mettle and prove that he is immune to the power of the One Ring, which was forged by Sauron in the fires of Mount Doom. The kings of the race of men were given nine ruling rings, with which to aid them in their rule of the human race of Middle Earth and were theoretically to help them sustain their leadership and cultural identity. In *The Lord of the Rings*, we see these previous nine kings, with nine rings, as Ring wraiths or "black riders". They are the epitome of a lack of sustainability, a lack of beauty and the lack of usefulness. They are the industrial world, anthropomorphized. They are blackness and death personified. They were consumed, body and soul by Sauron and the One Ring and as their descendant, it is up to Aragorn to turn the tide and to prove that humans are indeed worthy of the right to rule Middle Earth and to stand as High King.

Isengard, Mordor and the Machinery of War

“So long as the system of competition in the production and exchange of the means of life goes on, the degradation of the arts will go on; and if that system is to last forever, then art is doomed, and will surely die; that is to say, civilization will die.” William Morris (Art Under Plutocracy)

Tolkien's concern for humanity and nature echo throughout all three books of *The Lord of the Rings*, beginning with his construction of the Shire and Hobbiton and continuing throughout his description and creation of the race of Hobbits. He is just as precise with his development of the darker sides of Middle Earth, or what we are led to believe are the evil beings that inhabit this fictional land. These evil, darker inhabitants of Middle Earth dominate, twist and abuse nature in a bid to bolster their own personal power. Indeed, they are constructed with the modern world, as Tolkien knew it, firmly in mind. These darker, industrialized beings, focused on wealth, power and control of other groups are the personification of industrialization and deep disregard for the health and well-being of the natural world. In this, they are everything that the Hobbits and Elves are not. There is a certain air of filth and decrepitude about the manner in which the characterization of the inhabitants of Isengard and Mordor are developed, which becomes even more apparent in the film version of the novels.

Orcs are described and defined by their level of dishevelment and filth. They live among rats, vermin and sewage in a communal barrack-like arrangement. Female Orcs are not mentioned anywhere, nor are any children. The Orcs, and by extension, the Uruk-Hai are consumed by their work, by hardship and by cruelty. They are bedraggled,

depressed, violent, are completely disenfranchised and have no sense of compassion, intimacy or sense of social intercourse. They are the effect that industrialization and mechanization has had on society. They have no pride, they have no honor and they have no reason for being except to work, to produce and to consume. There are hints in the text and in later works, though, that Tolkien may have felt differently about the matter: “Aragorn shows mercy to Beregond in *The Lord of the Rings*, and in his later works on Orcs, Tolkien states that mercy must be shown even to Orcs who ask for it” (Drout 418, 419). In *The Lord of the Rings* itself, he is less kind (Tolkien 441).

Much of what makes Mordor and Isengard of significance in this context is environmental. Industry and the conditions for obtaining the tools and materials for industrialization take a heavy toll on the environment through levels of pollution and what some would consider the rape of the natural world. Throughout the Middle Earth saga (including but not limited to *The Lord of the Rings*) a thematic element suggests that advanced stages of mechanization or industrialization are preserved for those who are to be considered evil (Walker 49). While it is doubtful that small scale technological advances such as typewriters and word-processors would be problematic in this context, it is the oil wells, smoke-belching manufacturing facilities and factories, and large fossil fuel burning engines that prove to be problematic and unsustainable for future generations. Things that we ignorantly and stubbornly use when we very well could work with nature more closely to produce similar results at least in some instances, such as solar power, water-driven mills and salt-water burning engines and manufacturing processes are overlooked or undervalued because of a lack of time or financial costs

which are “too high”. Ultimately, the picture collectively agreed upon by Ruskin, Morris and Tolkien illustrates that anything or anyone that seeks to master nature (or control it) will fail and only through harmony with the natural world will anything of any substance or worth be brought forth (Blakesley 71). Though the peoples (various groups) of Tolkien’s world were set in a Euro-centric medieval “fantasy”, in many ways they are far more advanced than contemporary society believes itself to be. Particularly in the rejection of often mindless industry that has little worth to the long-term thinker and openly defies the idea of maintaining beauty, paired with a level of usefulness and sustainability.

In the third chapter of the third book in *The Two Towers*, Saruman, the head of the wizard order is turned corrupt by his need to be more powerful, more prolific and more in control of Middle Earth than the evil Sauron of Mordor. In his quest for this status, he devastates an ancient forest and strip-mines the area around Isengard for resources as he builds his bioengineered army of fighting Uruk-Hai, which are a focused, deliberate cross between Orcs and Men. "The forests will fall. A new order will rise. We will drive the machinery of war with the sword and the spear and the iron fist of the Orc." (Tolkien 442) Of the Uruk-Hai, we learn that they are motivated by the taste of “man-flesh” and are cannibals. It is this cannibalism which allows the Riders of Rohan to follow their trail through the Riddermark as they carry two captured members of the Fellowship back to Isengard. Of their Orc fathers, we learn through the character of Saruman that they have been taken by the evil of Mordor and twisted into something unnatural – something, "other": "Do you know how the Orcs first came into being? They were elves once, taken

by the dark powers, tortured and mutilated. A ruined and terrible form of life" (Tolkien 442). It is through descriptions like this that we are led to the realization that industrialization, technological "advancement" such as bio-engineering and mechanization lead to a twisting and negation of all of those aspects of humanity which make us human. It is through too much greed, too much yearning for knowledge and too much of any good thing that leads to something perverse. What is good, beautiful, useful and sustainable can indeed be too much if it is used in the wrong way, for the wrong purpose. It seems intentionality is key.

Although he was born in 1892, well after what is considered to be the onset of the Industrial Revolution, Tolkien most certainly witnessed the lasting effects of industry on the environment; first as a child in Birmingham and later, as an adult at Oxford. He saw the great factories belching out smoke, darkening the sky and poisoning the air around wherever they were. He saw the working-class men, women and children coming and going from these factories. He experienced the horrors of battlefields, with mass-produced machines of death and the destruction of the environment during World War I, where he served as a second lieutenant. He saw, first hand, what machines and industrialization does to mankind.

If the lands of the Elves are defined by their natural surroundings, certainly then, too, is the land of Mordor defined by that which is unnatural. Boromir informs us during the Council of Elrond, "One does not simply walk into Mordor. Its black gates are guarded by more than just Orcs. There is evil there that does not sleep. The great Eye is

ever watchful. It is a barren wasteland, riddled with fire, ash, and dust. The very air you breathe is a poisonous fume" (Tolkien 261).

It has been posited by Tolkienists that Tolkien's fabrication of the land of Mordor harkens back to his childhood in Birmingham, which borders on an area of England known as, "The Black Country" (Clark 125). It is called this due to the large number of iron and steel manufacturing centers that existed in the area during the 18th and 19th centuries. Whatever its boundaries could have or would have been, the "Black Country" was certainly something that would dismay Tolkien and nature lovers anywhere. Great iron foundries and abominable structures abounded, just as the open-cast quarries and deep mines scarred the lands of both Mordor and Isengard. Grim and black indeed: certainly the Mordor amongst us. Several sources tell of it being, "Black by day and red by night" (Drout 434), which certainly fits the description.

With respect to Mordor, the use of the word, "black" and the idea of filth, death and decomposition which come to mind when visualizing this color or shade in a natural context is appropriate. Indeed referring to the usage of language itself, the writings and spoken language of Mordor is called, "The black speech", and even a powerful wizard such as Gandalf chooses not to utter it when the writing is confirmed upon the One Ring (Tolkien, 49). One proposed etymology is the Old English word, *morthor*; which means "mortal sin" or "murder" (Chance 100, Drout 332-343). It is extremely common for names in Tolkien's fiction to have relevant meanings in several different languages, both those that were invented by Tolkien, and "real" languages, which both Tolkien and

Morris studied at length. *Mordor* is also a name cited in some Nordic mythologies referring to a land where its citizens practice evil without knowing it (Zimbardo 107). Tolkien's use of language in the naming of Mordor brings together these elements and solidifies them for us.

These darker, industrialized beings, focused on wealth, power and control of other groups are the personification of industrialization and deep disregard for the health and well-being of the natural world. In this, they are everything that the Hobbits and Elves are not; they are everything that humanity is not. They are what happens when greed, vanity and materialism are allowed into a beautiful world. The idea of usefulness falls by the wayside, beauty is hoarded and sustainability becomes an afterthought.

Rings of Power

The Rings of Power present a bit of a problem when arguing that fine workmanship, functionality and beauty in handmade things would be anti-Mordorian in concept when put into the context of the Arts and Crafts. In Tolkien's fantasy, there are a total of twenty Rings of Power forged by Sauron in the fires of Mount Doom in the Land of Mordor. It is stated within the text and within much of the Tolkien literature and criticism as being forged in the Elven tradition, which makes sense since there is an aura of magic and mystery about them. They are indeed beautifully made by a master craftsman. They definitely fulfill a function and were specifically made to fulfill a purpose. We are shown that in at least of few of the cases, they are sustainable... but they are sustained by a form of parasitism. The Rings feed off of and, over time poison their hosts. The only race of beings in Middle Earth capable of surviving this long term parasitism are the Elves, who have managed their Rings quite effectively for millennia. The only ring (besides the One Ring carried by Frodo) which we have any exposure to over the course of the novel, is that of Galadriel, the Lady of Lorien. It is only very briefly mentioned within the text:

She lifted up her white arms, and spread out her hands towards the East in a gesture of rejection and denial. Earendil, the Evening Star, most beloved of the Elves, shone clear above. So bright was it that the figure of the Elven-lady cast a dim shadow on the ground. Its rays glanced upon a ring about her finger; it glittered like polished gold overlaid with silver light, and a white stone in it twinkled as if the Elven-star had come down to rest upon her hand. Frodo gazed at the ring with awe; for suddenly it seemed to him that he understood. 'Yes', she said, divining his thought, 'it is not permitted to speak of it, and Elrond could not do so. But it cannot be hidden from the Ring-bearer, and one who has seen the eye. Verily it is in the land of Lorien upon the finger of Galadriel that one of the

three remains. This is Nenyà, the ring of Adamant, and I am its keeper (Tolkien 355, 356).

This lone symbolic reference to the three rings of power that were gifted to the Elves serves as a reminder that there is much more than One Ring and one people at stake in this saga. The greater story of how Sauron meant to enslave all of the peoples of Middle Earth is told through the Rings and this simple poem:

Three Rings for the Elven-kings under the sky,
 Seven for the Dwarf-lords in their halls of stone,
 Nine for the Mortal Men doomed to die,
 One for the Dark Lord on his dark throne.
 In the Land of Mordor where the shadows lie,
 One Ring to rule them all, One Ring to find them,
 One Ring to bring them all and in the darkness bind them,
 In the Land of Mordor where the Shadows lie (Tolkien 49).

Over the course of *The Lord of the Rings*, we learn that the Dwarves have over time lost their rings to when the dragons came South out of the Northlands to plunder their wealth (see *The Hobbit*). The aforementioned rings that were granted to the race of men were granted to the Kings of Middle Earth and they changed the men to whom they were given – to a point where they were no longer human. These Ring wraiths or “black riders” feel only the presence of the One Ring and are drawn to its power. This is why they seem to be able to “smell” the Ring of Power whenever they are in any proximity to Frodo during his long quest to Mount Doom, where the One Ring is to be destroyed.

This loss of rings by the Dwarves and Men leaves only the ring in the keeping of Lady Galadriel and the One Ring available or attainable in Middle Earth during the period in question. There seems to be no question or issue with the ring of the Lady of

Lorien. It has been and continues to be in her safe-keeping. At the end of *The Lord of the Rings*, she passes over the sea, into the West, to the Undying Lands of her ancestors, taking the ring with her.

Although the Rings of Power are handcrafted by skilled craftsmen, they are described as being poisonous and detrimental, not only to those who hold them, but also to the entire environmental structure of Middle Earth. They are indeed beautiful, as Tolkien describes them as such. They are indeed functional, as they serve a function – but the function is to enslave the bearer. It is a negative manifestation of the thought process and guiding principles of the Arts and Crafts Movement. The Movement was, at its heart, about integrity: the integrity and knowledge of the craftsmen, the integrity of the materials, the nature of the materials, the skill and love by which those materials were assembled to make something of beauty and usefulness to its owner. None of this necessarily applies to the rings; any of them. Even though Lady Galadriel is able to control the ring – or rather – allow it to *not* control her, there is something otherworldly about her character, beyond that of her being Elvish. Her age, her level of knowledge and her ability to manipulate and use light in order to aid those she supports, protect her people in Lorien or defeat her enemies, give weight to the inevitability of the rings long-term effect on her; indeed on any Ring-bearer, regardless of gender or racial profile.

Conclusion

The Arts and Crafts Movement was, at its heart, about integrity. It was about respect for skill in craft as a concept, the people who possessed these skills, and had worked their entire lives to attain them. It was about the materials themselves and how these materials were used in conjunction with the skilled craftsman to become something worthwhile, lasting, useful and beautiful. Arts and Crafts was about people and their meaningful place in the world; building beautiful things; imagining beautiful places and about respectability. J. R. R. Tolkien, through his crafting of *The Lord of the Rings*, has brought us closer to what and who The Arts and Crafts Movement was about. The words of William Morris have echoed over generations of individuals who believe in the power of craftsmanship and reliable construction through the use of natural materials and the production of timeless, beautiful work: “Have nothing in your house that you do not know to be useful, or believe to be beautiful” (Morris, *Collected Works of William Morris* (1910-1915)). He reminds us that beauty must have function and there must be function in the beauty. In his later writings, he expands that into that which is not only beautiful, but functional, reliable and easily sustainable. This trend is absolutely visible historically – we are reminded of this as Tolkien takes us back into a highly, detailed stylized Middle Earth: filled with tradition, simplicity and Medieval European spirit.

This tradition, spirit and simplicity re-emerges in the contemporary world from time to time, through different phases in popular cooking, home-gardening and crafting. It arises more specifically in the arena of pop culture: in works of literature, in the film

and television industry and in the realm of fantasy. From his constructed reality of Middle Earth and the intimate nature of the characterization of entirely new races of beings and their homes, Tolkien finds us and teaches us. In this fantasy world where this same idea of Old World tradition is held in the highest esteem, Tolkien finds us and teaches us. In the belching volcanoes, fires and lung-searing smoke of industry in the land of Mordor, J. R. R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* brings the vision of the Arts and Crafts Movement to life through the text and through the imaginings of Peter Jackson, they find us and teach us through the big screen. Tolkien accomplished all of this by crafting a mirror image of the world in which he and his ancestors lived – through the social and industrial history of his beloved England. By examining the core belief structure of The Arts and Crafts Movement, we are reminded of the beauty and peace of simplicity. By examining the men who influenced this movement and their wholesale rejection of the Industrial Revolution, we learn why this simplicity is important and what traditional roles, values and work have to teach us about who we are and what we are becoming. Viewing these alongside Tolkien's appreciation and collection of the works of William Morris, we remember what it is like to find an author whose works we really appreciate and can build on those thoughts, beliefs and ideas; making some of it our own. Reading and experiencing the manner in which all of these works have been translated into text and film over time and how these ideas have survived reminds us of the cyclical nature of life itself and a clear picture is painted of a visionary creator, with visionary inspiration and an idealized fantasy realm which encompasses and ultimately elevates that which is beautiful, useful, sustainable and has clear purpose.

Index of References

- Barrington, Tim and Smith Alison Rosenfeld. *Pre-Raphaelites: Victorian Art and Design*. London: Tate Publishing, 2012.
- Beowulf. *Beowulf*. Trans. Lesslie Hall. Project Gutenberg, 2005. Ebook.
- Blakesley, Rosalind. *The Arts and Crafts Movement*. New York: Phaidon Press, 2006.
- Carpenter, Humphrey. *The Inklings*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1978.
- . *The Letters of J. R. R. Tolkien*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1981.
- Chance, Jane and Siewers, Alfred K. *Tolkien's Modern Middle Ages*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009.
- Chance, Jane. *Tolkien and the Invention of Myth: A Reader*. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2004.
- Clark, George and Timmons, Daniel. *J.R.R. Tolkien and His Literary Resonances: Views of Middle-earth*. New York: Praeger, 2000.
- Cumming, Elizabeth and Kaplan, Wendy. *The Arts and Crafts Movement*. London: Thames and Hudson, 1991.
- Dickerson, Matthew. *A Hobbit Journey*. Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2012.
- Diriez, Colin. *Tolkien and C. S Lewis: The Gift of Friendship*. New Jersey: HiddenSpring, 2003.
- Drout, Michael D. C. *J. R. R. Tolkien Encyclopedia*. New York: Routledge, 2007.
- Frankl, Paul. *Gothic Architecture*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001.
- Gabriel, J. Francois. *Classical Architecture for the Twenty-first Century : An Introduction to Design*. New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 2004.
- Grotta, Daniel. *The Biography of J. R. R. Tolkien*. New York: Grosset and Dunlap, 1978.
- Isaacs, Neil D. and Zimbardo, Rose A. *Tolkien: New Critical Perspectives*. Lexington, KY.: The University Press of Kentucky, 1981.

- Kasa, Sjur. "*Industrial Revolutions and Environmental Problems*". Oslo, 5 April 2014. Document.
- Kelvin, Norman. *William Morris: On Art and Socialism*. New York: Dover, 1999.
- Morris, William. *Collected Works of William Morris (1910-1915)*. London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1884. Document.
- . "Hopes and Fears for Art: The Beauty of Life." n.d. *The William Morris Internet Archive*. Web-based Archive. 27 April 2014.
- . "Useful Work Vs. Useless Toil." *William Morris: On Art and Socialism* 16 January 1884. Document.
- Parkinson, Henry. *The Catholic Encyclopedia*. 19 December 2013. 5 January 2014. <<<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/12558b.htm>>>.
- Pinkney, Tony. *We Met Morris: Interviews with William Morris*. New York: Spire Books, 2005.
- Purtill, Richard L. *J. R. R. Tolkien: Myth, Morality and Religion*. San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1984.
- Scoville, Chester N. "Pastoralia and Perfectibility in Wilaim Morris and J. R. R. Tolkien." Chance, Jane and Siewers, Alfred. *Tolkien's Modern Middle Ages*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005. 93-103.
- Shippey, T. A. *The Road to Middle Earth*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1983.
- Shippey, Tom. "Light-elves, Dark-elves and Others: Tolkien's Elf Problem ." *Tolkien Studies* (2004): 1-15.
- Stankewicz, Mary Ann. "From The Aesthetic Movement to the Arts and Crafts Movement." *Studies in Art Education* (1992): 165-173.
- Thompson, E.P. *William Morris: Romantic to Revolutionary*. Oakland: PM Press, 2011.
- Tolkien, J. R. R. *The Lord of the Rings*. Great Britian: HarperCollins, 1994.
- Waggoner, Diane. *The Beauty of Life: William Morris on Art and Design*. New York: Thames and Hudson, 2003.
- Walker, Steve. *The Power of Tolkien's Prose: Middle Earth's Magical Style*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2009.

Zimbardo, Rose A. and Isaccs, Neil D. *Understanding The Lord of the Rings*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2004.