

TRIBHUVAN UNIVERSITY

Symbolism in J. R. R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*

**A Thesis Submitted to the Central Department of English
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Degree of Master of Arts in English**

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Kirtipur, Kathmandu

June 2008

Tribhuvan University

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Approval Letter

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I take this opportunity to extend my sincerest gratitude to Dr. Rebati Neupane for his painstaking contribution in guiding and making the thesis comprehensive and complete. I am obliged to him for his support and invaluable suggestions.

I am grateful to Dr. Krishna Chandra Sharma, Department Head, Central Department of English for providing me the friendly and co-operative environment during the working period.

I would also like to express thanks and appreciation to Dr. Shiva Rijal and Mr. Shankar Subedi, for this thesis has been benefited from many useful comments and suggestions provided by them.

I express my appreciation for various favours extended by my family especially my brother Puran, as he was always there to encourage and counsel me whenever I needed.

I cannot forget the whole-hearted help and tireless support provided by my friend Bishnu Khanal. Thanks to her. Similarly, I am also indebted to my friends like Saraswati, Night Moon and my other classmates.

Lastly, I want to express my thanks to Mr. Narayan Basnet of Resunga Computer Service, Kirtipur who proofread and printed my documents in an impressive way.

June, 2008

Kala Devi Rai

ABSTRACT

Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* has been read as a novel with symbolism. Tolkien chooses the symbolic images to visualize his core concept of good Vs evil in the novel. The present study has helped in foregrounding various symbols present in the novel. Most of Tolkien's symbols have been developed from his life-experiences and hence most of them are his private symbols. Similarly, Christian symbolism could also be found. Different objects, places and events have been presented and discussed as symbols. Places like Isengard, Mordor, Shire and Minas Tirith all carry their own symbolical significance. Objects like The Sword, Smoking pipe stand for good whereas the Ring and Towers are the representation of evil. By observing the novel with Symbolism as a theoretical tool, this thesis has justified how Tolkien has reinforced various symbols, which comes front with their own individual meanings.

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I. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Tolkien and his life

Born on January 3, 1892, in Bloemfontein, South Africa, J. R. R. Tolkien experienced the life of both peaceful and industrial places. The dichotomy between Tolkien's happier days in the rural landscape of Sarehole and his adolescent years in the industrial center of Birmingham would be felt strongly in his later works. Though he became parentless at the very early age, he attached to Catholicism, a faith that Tolkien followed throughout his life.

Tolkien earned a scholarship to Oxford University and enrolled in 1911, where he studied English Language and Literature. The Great World War had broken out on the continent while Tolkien was at Oxford, and after graduation he joined the army. He survived the Battle of Somme, one of the harshest battles of the World War I, and returned to England suffering from 'trench fever'. Millions of young men, including many of Tolkien's friends, did not return home.

In 1925, he returned to Oxford University as a professor of Anglo-Saxon where he proved to be an excellent teacher. His academic writing includes a translation of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knights* and his landmark essays "*Beowulf: The Monsters and the Critics*" and "*On Fairy-stories.*" Tolkien also enjoyed an active social life with his colleagues at the University. He became a founding member of a free group of like-minded Oxford friends called "The Inklings" who met for conversation, drinks and reading from their works-in-progress. Members of Inklings included many authors, most famously C. S. Lewis, who is the writer of popular *The Chronicles of Narnia*.

Apart from the academic career, Tolkien wrote a number of books, including *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*, which have become classics of literature. The

creation of Middle-Earth occupied Tolkien for sixty years. He created languages and socio-cultural contexts for these languages to develop. He based much of his myth-making on Christian, Celtic and Germanic sources to create his own cosmology.

1.2 His Age/ Literary Genre

The face of literary genres in English Literature was changing after the 40s. “It was during the forties that the school of writers sometimes called ‘Anglo-Oxford’ began to come to public attention. These writers had in common the profession of some form of Christianity and some sort of connection with Oxford University. [. . .] The most remarkable inventive achievement of this group was the sequence of stories called *The Lord of the Rings*” (Robson, 146-47).

Modernist writers tried to find many ways of getting inside the minds of characters, showing the reader what they were thinking as well as what they did. During the Second half of the Twentieth Century, ‘Fantasy Fiction’ has become one of the most productive and commercially successful of literary genres in English. J. R. R. Tolkien (1892-1973) had greatest influence of the fantasy fiction. His first published fantasy *The Hobbit* (1937) was written for children but its three volume successor *The Lord of the Rings* (1954-55) caught the attention for the first time of a mass adult readership and inspired generations of imitators.

The Great World War marked the history of English Literature. The decades after World War I i.e. the Modern period gave birth to numerous symbolists. Writers like James Joyce, D. H. Lawrence, Dylan Thomas wrote about the social instabilities that the war had brought. During the 1920s, 30s till 40s, the literary scene was set in such a way that every new writer was coming up with their experiences on the impact of war upon the society. Due to the war effect, not only Britain or America, but almost all the nations all over the world had fallen into the prey of turmoil. People

yearned for their beautiful past and their peaceful country. As a result, the artists and writers of the time invented their works portraying the lives and instabilities utilizing the equipment of symbol in their novels, paintings, songs, etc.

Tolkien experienced and survived in the same age. He was an active witness of the calamities and destruction brought about by the two great world wars. These events did not easily fade away from the mind of the author and thus, the picture of his experiences would be seen ruling his literary work. The contemporary writers of his age were writing symbolic novels with fuller satisfaction. That might be the reason why Tolkien too embraced symbolism knowingly or unknowingly in his good Vs evil novel, *The Lord of the Rings*. It seems to be clear that Tolkien was influenced by the age he lived.

Most literatures for the adult from the end of Eighteenth Century onwards were 'realist' in intention. It was Tolkien's fantasy novel *The Lord of the Rings*, which is highly imaginative, heroic and at the same time symbolic created a profound change in the notions among the readers and the critics. It proved that a fantasy novel can so powerfully symbolize the social picture which otherwise were taken only as an imaginary work without any concern to the life and world. Being a fantasist, Tolkien wanted nothing to do with the modern realist adult literature, which tried to copy the existing world, rather than to recreate it. Realists sought to portray life as faithfully and accurately as possible whereas symbolists avoided direct stating their own ideas and emotions. Instead they tried to suggest meaning through the use of collection of symbols. And hence, they needed imagination to create various symbols for their work. Tolkien was a man of imagination and therefore he might have bent towards symbolism where his imaginative power would come at work.

Though Tolkien does not have any connection with the Symbolist Movement and neither does he fall under the category of Symbolists, Tolkien seems to be fascinated towards the projection of symbolism in his works which can be seen through his popular novel, *The Lord of the Rings*. More than one critic has smelled the essence of symbolism in this novel.

Mathewson goes on to categorize the “symbolism involved in taking a ring to be destroyed” as a sex symbol. Other critics in greater or less degree insist on the privilege of recognizing symbolism and of interpreting allegorically. Barber calls it a “fictional secondary world”. Blissett compares Frodo with Pogo and calls *The Lord of the Rings* “a parable of power for the atomic age” (Boswell, 191).

The Lord of the Rings was published in 1955-56. Though it was written and conceived as a single book, the book was divided into three volumes for the convenience of publication and to keep the price down. The three parts of the book are titled ‘The Fellowship of the Ring’, ‘The Two Towers’, and ‘The Return of the King’. The book focuses around the story of heroic struggle against evil. Two stories move forward concurrently in the novel. Frodo’s quest towards Mordor to overcome Sauron’s power is the one, for which different races of the Middle-Earth has taken their part. The other is the battle of Ents against Saruman. Both Sauron and Saruman are ill-natured and are hungry for power; power represented by the Ring in the novel. The story of *The Lord of the Rings* takes place in an alternate pre-history, the Third Age of Middle-earth. The lands of Middle-earth are populated by humans and other humanoid races such as Hobbits, Elves, Dwarves and Orcs, as well as many other real and fantastical creatures. The story revolves round the Ring of Power made by the Dark Lord Sauron for gaining the power over all the creatures of the Middle-earth. The Ring is not an ordinary ring but the strong power of Sauron and the object of

soaring temptation, which lures anyone who comes in contact with it and leads him to the path of destruction.

Tolkien invented a complete imaginary world in his novel. He had even projected his own imagined language, as he was a professor of Anglo-Saxon, who taught languages such as Old English and Icelandic. Tolkien was a professional philologist and he was always interested towards medieval languages and myths. Apart from that, influences on Tolkien's earlier work and on the story of *The Lord of the Rings* include industrialization and religion as well as his experiences in World War, "The World events of the twentieth century had a major impact on Tolkien's work. Tolkien lived through the two world wars, which disfigured twentieth century Europe, destroying millions of life" (Blake, 13).

In the beginning of the novel, Tolkien introduces the readers to a beautiful and peaceful countryside land called Shire, which at the end doesn't remain the same. From this land, the journey of the protagonist Frodo begins along with his friends towards the struggle to end the evil power. With the help of other characters reunited to take the march against evil, Frodo eventually becomes successful in destroying the ring by casting it into the Mount of Doom.

In the novel *The Lord of the Rings*, Tolkien presents a journey of the main character named Frodo, who has been appointed the task of carrying the Ring (powerful and destructive) from his native place Shire up to the mountain of Mordor, where it was actually forged by the powerful dark Lord, Sauron.

Tolkien's Symbolism hides and reveals in his depiction of different characters, places as well as objects in the novel *The Lord of the Rings*. The characters like Gandalf, Frodo, Aragorn, Gollum, Galadriel, etc. are highly symbolic. Similarly, the events like Ent's attack on Isengard well symbolizes the resistance of natural world

towards industrialization and the environmental consciousness infused by Tolkien. In the similar fashion, there are other events and places that seem to be carrying symbolic representations in the novel, which we will be discussing in the third chapter, i.e. Textual Analysis.

Though, *The Lord of the Rings* being a highly imaginative novel falling in the Fantasy fiction genre, it is equally symbolic to the modern world dominated by Power and Industrialization. Tolkien, through his Symbolism portrays how the peace-loving people disliked the modern world, though they could not avoid its effects. The “Ring” itself is presented as a symbol of destruction in *The Lord of the Rings* by Tolkien. However, there are many more strong symbols throughout the novel.

II. SYMBOLISM AS A MOVEMENT

Symbol is used as a part of the language. In general sense, by 'symbol', we understand "some entity or thing which suggests or stands for something else. It is a sign or an object which gives meaning of something abstract" (Abrams, 311). The word 'symbol' has been derived from the Greek verb 'symballein', which means 'to throw together' and its noun 'symbolon', which means 'contract, token, insignia, and a means of identification'. A symbol is a sign by which one knows or infers a thing or that which suggests something else by reason of relationship, association, convention, etc.; especially, a visible sign of something invisible, as an idea, a quality; an emblem; as the lion is the symbol of courage. (Cuddon, 671)

It is a complicated process to trace the origin, development and differentiation of a symbol. Many are derived from the objects of nature, and others are artificially constructed in a process of intuitive perception, and emotional experience. The world today is occupied with lots of common symbols; a flag, a logo, a trademark, or a skull and crossbones. All these suggest things beyond themselves.

Literature inevitably uses symbols and can not run away from its influence. In Literature, Symbols are implemented and defined in various ways. "A literary symbol combines an image with a concept" (Cuddon, 671). Symbols clearly involve the use of concrete imagery to express the abstract ideas and emotions.

Defining symbol in general and literary sense, M. H. Abrams in his book, *The Glossary of Literary Terms* states:

A symbol, in the broadest sense of terms, is anything which signifies something, in this sense all words are symbols. In discussing literature, however the term "symbol" is applied only to a word or phrase that

signifies an object or event which in turn signifies something, or has a range of reference, beyond itself. (311)

Hence, a literary symbol is a powerful entity, which unites an image and idea or concept. It is the power of symbol that the representation and what is presented in constant mutual exchange, incite and constrain the mind to hang on to penetrate more deeply. Therefore, in literature, symbol is generally supposed to be a word or a set of words that signifies something else. A symbol might be an object whether animate or inanimate, which represents or stands for something. A dove for example, symbolize peace; a goat, lust; the lion, strength and courage; the bulldog, tenacity; the rose, beauty; the lily, purity; the stars and stripes, America and its states; the cross, Christianity and the like. Furthermore, actions and gestures are also symbolic. The clenched fist symbolizes 'aggression'. Beating of breast signifies 'remorse'. In the similar fashion, Arms raised denote 'surrender'; Hands clasped and raised suggest 'suppliance', etc. Moreover, most religious and fertility rites are rich with symbolic movements and gestures.

Occasionally, religion is regarded as the origin and the product of certain established symbols. The historical study of religions has shown that it is fundamentally the symbol that mediates and forms man's religious consciousness the reality and the claim of the holy. The origin of many symbols clearly indicates the identity that was assumed to have existed between the symbol and the sacred or holy. Eg., The Greek god Dionysus as a bull, the Greek goddess Demeter as an ear of corn, the Roman god Jupiter as a stone, etc.

In Christian theology, every sacrament is an outward and visible sign or symbol of an inward and spiritual grace. The forms of Christian ritual, and the fabric and architecture of churches are full of symbolical meaning. This sort of

representation of ideas by the use of symbols ushered the artistic movement called as a Symbolist Movement.

In the broadest sense, the term 'Symbolism' refers to the use of symbols to represent ideas or qualities, especially in art and literature. Symbol is one of the finest devices to represent emotions and feelings of the artist in art and literature. A symbol is a concrete entity that stands for an abstract idea. More generally, it is anything, event or expression which cannot be interpreted literally rather it must be understood in terms of broader issues of life and experience. The art of symbolism is the art of expressing feelings, not through direct description of definition, but by reacting feelings in the mind of the readers through the use of unexplained symbols.

In the process of creation of any work of art, an artist may confront with the problem of evoking his thoughts and feelings through direct words or the conventional language. Therefore, to make his thoughts and ideas flow out and reach his audience's or readers' mind and heart, an artist prefers the use of symbolism. In such a case, symbolism plays an important role in any genre of literature, whether it is poetry, drama or fiction.

When we try to dig out the history of Symbolism, we see that Symbolism as a literary movement came in the mid- nineteenth century in French Poetry. Symbolism emerged as the movement against naturalism and realism of the period:

There is plentiful symbolism in much 19th century French poetry. In *Ouvres Completes* (1891) Mallarme explained Symbolism as the art of evoking an object 'little by little so as to reveal a mood' or conversely, 'the art of choosing an object and extracting from it an 'etat d' ame'.
(Cuddon, 672)

Symbolism started in France during the second half of the nineteenth century. It started as a reaction against realism. In realism, common or ordinary events are presented as subject matter. Whereas, in Symbolism, these events are associated with emotional meaning. Objective world becomes no more realistic, but only reflection of some hidden meaning. Artist reveals reality through emotional and sensational response. Words are used as vehicle, by which an artist connotes the symbolic meaning. Charles Baudelaire is considered to be responsible to begin symbolism and he is often called as the father of symbolism. Symbolism developed from his concept of 'Synaesthesia'. 'Synaesthesia' means the use of term usually applied to one sense to describe sensations of another.

Simplifying the concept of Symbolism, M. H. Abrams in his book *Glossary of Literary Terms* classified symbols into two types. They are; "conventional" or "public" and "private" or "personal symbols". He states:

Some symbols are "conventional" or "public": thus "the cross," the red, white and blue" and "the good shepherd" are terms that refer to symbolic objects of which the further significance is determinate within a particular culture. Poets, like all of us, use such conventional symbols; many poets however also use "private" or "personal symbols". For example, the general association of a peacock with pride and of an eagle with heroic endeavor, or the rising of sun with birth and the setting sun with death, or climbing with effort or progress and descent with surrender or failure. (311)

The Symbolist Literary Movement began in France in the mid- nineteenth century. The Symbolist Movement in Literature has its root in '*Les Fleurs du mal*' (*The Flowers of Evil*) by Charles Baudelaire. The aesthetic was developed by

Stephane Mallarme and Paul Verlaine during 1860s and 70s. During the 1880s, the aesthetic was articulated through a series of manifestoes and attracted a generation of writers.

The group of French poets like Charles Baudelaire, Stephane Mallarme, Paul Verlaine and Arthur Rimbaud launched the Symbolist Movement. Later on, Jean Moreas published the definitive manifesto of 'Symbolism' in September 1886 in an article '*Le Figaro*'. Moreas was the one who founded the 'Symbolist School' whose ancestors were Baudelaire, Mallarme, Verlaine and Rimbaud. Moreas' version of Symbolism rejects all attempts to represent the observable world directly or instruct the reader straightforwardly. Moreas promotes allusive language that will allow the idea to be intuited by readers through a series of analogies. He makes clear that for Symbolism, the important subject matter lies beyond the observable world, "Baudelaire was the first to exalt the value of symbols; Verlaine used them instinctively, and Mallarme erected a metaphysic to explain and justify them. In his theory and his practice, Mallarme was the conclusion and crown of the Symbolist Movement" (Bowra, 1).

Symbolism also represent a reaction against Realism and Naturalism in Literature, which sought to accurately represent the external world of nature and human society through descriptions of objective reality. Symbolism left a profound influence on Twentieth-century literature, bridging the transition from Realism to Modernism. Symbolism strongly influenced the realm of arts, including theatre, painting and music.

In '*The Symbolist Movement: A Critical Appraisal (1967)*', Anna Balakian explains:

While Symbolism was technically a literary school that flourished in Paris in the 1880s and '90s, publishing manifestoes and gaining worldwide attention, its broader influence on European Literature involved these major conventions or characteristics: ambiguity of indirect communication; affiliation with music; and the 'decadent' spirit. (Spaeth, 12)

The credit for beginning Symbolist Movement goes to French writers. However, it was an American Romantic writer Edgar Allan Poe, whose writings provided fuel to gear up the art of Symbolism. The discovery of Poe by Baudelaire marked as the event of significance in the early history of the Symbolist Movement. Baudelaire "experienced a strange commotion" in Poe when he first read him in 1847. Poe's critical writings provided the first scriptures of the Symbolist Movement[. . .] (Wilson, 12)

Though, Symbolism as a literary movement took birth in the French Mud, later on its fruits or the technique flourished throughout English and American land. The poets and novelists of these places were immensely influenced by the tools and technique of Symbolism. Therefore, it seems to be fruitful to discuss the Symbolist Movement by categorizing it according to the place, different writers belong to:

The French Symbolist Movement

The Symbolist Movement flowered from France by Charles Baudelaire, and along with him other poets like Stephane Mallarme, Paul Verlaine and Arthur Rimbaud. Supporting them, came other writers with the similar implementations in their works. They were Paul Valery, Jean Moreas, Gustave Kahn, Paul Fort and so on.

French Symbolism affected international literature of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The Literature of Russia, Germany, Great Britain, Japan, the

United States, and Turkey was influenced by Symbolism. From France, Symbolism spread worldwide- notably to Russia, and had great influence on the shaping of the Twentieth century literature.

Anna Balakian sees in French Symbolism, “a catalyst which enabled poets of Britain, Germany, Hispanic lands and the most original of all, those of Russia, to discover and assert their own inspirations” (McCormick, 54).

Though poetry dominated the Symbolist Movement, great works of fiction and drama were also written by the supporters of Symbolism.

Charles Baudelaire’s (1821-67) poetry greatly influenced the Symbolists, whose *Les Fleurs du mal* (1857; *Flowers of Evil*) embodied many of their literary ideals. In Paris, he first began to write as a critic and translator, introducing the works of Edgar Allan Poe to Europe through translations that have since become French classics:

Although Baudelaire did much of his writing as a critic, his critical pieces tended toward painting, where as the major contribution he would make to poetry developed from the significant pattern of the repetition of images in *Les Fleurs du mal*, which turned them into complex poetic symbols. (Betz, 131)

The Symbolist Movement of the Nineteenth century in France was fundamentally mystical. It protested against the scientific art of an age which had lost much of its belief in traditional religion and hoped to find a substitute in the search of truth. Symbolists protested against the scientific realism and their protest was mystical, Baudelaire believed in ‘ideal beauty’, which he contrasted so poignantly with his own life. For him, the ideal of the ‘beautiful’ gave force and purpose to his tortured and disordered soul. Baudelaire’s poems are filled with subtle tones and with

almost painfully delicate suggestiveness, "For Baudelaire, the visible and sensible world was full of symbols which fills man's heart with joy and sorrow and convey him through scent, colour, and sound to raptures of the spirit" (Bowra, 6).

Moreas' description of Symbolism refers most directly to Baudelaire's poem "Correspondences" from his volume *Les Fleurs du mal* (1857, expanded 1861; *The flowers of evil*) a work that became a touchstone for symbolist artists and writers.

Stephane Mallarme (1842-98) is one of the precursors or initiators of the Symbolist Movement. As Baudelaire developed the pattern of complex poetic symbols, it was Mallarme to exploit and codify the use of such symbols. Mallarme was the first poet completely discontent with the ordinary language of communication; he attempted to interpret an entirely separate language of poetry far more consistently than older cultivations of "poetic diction".

Paul Verlaine's (1844-96) *Romances without words* contribute significance to the Symbolist Movement. Poets of the movement of Symbolism were at first known as the "decadents", and Verlaine was willing to accept the term. The name "Symbolists" was suggested by Jean Moreas and the school derived primarily from Charles Baudelaire's poem "Correspondences", where nature is described as a "forest of symbols".

Another prominent symbolist writer is Arthur Rimbaud (1854-91) whose works like *A Season of Hell*, *The Illuminations*, etc. are remembered as his valuable works.

Paul Valery (1871-1945) is the true successor of Mallarme. He wrote a poem *La Feune Parque* under the influence of Mallarme. The poem shows many signs of a highly talented individual, which had been possible for Valery only by mastering the principles of Mallarme's art:

When Mallarme died in 1898, the movement of which he was the high priest and the foremost practitioner seemed to die with him. In the next few years French poetry found distinguished exponents in Jean Moreas, Francis Jammes, Henri de Regnier and Paul Claudel, but not one of these was really a Symbolist... But in one friend and disciple Mallarme had planted seeds of growth and development. Paul Valery had as a young man known and revered him, written poems under his influence[. . .]. (Bowra, 17)

The French Symbolism was not merely confined to France but also sailed to England and influenced many British authors.

English Symbolist Movement

In English Literature, Romantic writers were the first to emphasize the need of symbols in the sphere of literary works. Famous Romantic writers like Wordsworth, Blake, Keats, Shelley were the outstanding players of symbolic images in the field of poetry. They had perhaps more confidence in symbol as a means of effective communication.:

The tendency to rely on symbols in Modern Literature is an offshoot of the Romantic Movement. Not that the romantic poets themselves are used as models, though that they may often be true. What is certainly true is that the romantics shared with later writers an urgent need for symbolic expression, and they used symbols in analogous ways.

(Perkins, 6)

Wordsworth, for example, uses the 'Wanderer' as a symbolic character in his poem "I Wandered lonely as a cloud". Shelley's manner of employing symbols implies that the concrete has little correspondence with the "deep truth". In the poetry

of Shelley or Keats, major poems are often organized around the symbols that are relatively fixed in poet's imagination. William Blake in his poem *The Sick Rose* presents the 'Rose' as a private symbol. The poem does not seem to be about a rose, but about what the rose represents.

These were the noticeable romantic poets who used symbols very smoothly in their poems to portray their ideas and moods. But these were not the ones to implement the principles of the Symbolist Movement that originated from France. The Symbolist Movement had a strong impact in the world at large, including writers like Pater, Symons, Wilde, Yeats, Eliot, Rilke and Stevens.

Arthur Symons (1865-1945) is regarded as a leader of the Symbolists in England. His critical work *The Symbolist Movement in Literature* (1899) proved to be considerable for the development of Symbolism in English Literature and for other writers who were interested in symbolism.

W. B. Yeats (1865-1939) acted as a significant person who managed to make Symbolism flourish triumphantly. Therefore, he has been regarded as the chief representative of the Modern Symbolists in English Literature. Yeats' deeper interest in the techniques of Symbolism grew after he met the French Symbolist Mallarme.

William Golding (1911-93), in his classic novel *The Lord of the Flies* uses many elements of Symbolism to help the readers gain a greater understanding of his message. As one reads this novel, he or she will begin to recognize the way basic civilization is slowly stripped away from the boys as conflict between civilization and savagery arises.

The Modern Period, in the decades after World War I, is a notable era of symbolism in literature. Many of the major writers of the period exploit symbols which are in part drawn from religious and esoteric traditions and in part invented.

Some of the works of the age are symbolist in their settings, their agents, and their actions, as well as in the objects they refer to. Instances of a persistently symbolic procedure occur in lyrics like Yeats' 'Byzantium poems', Dylan Thomas' series of sonnets (*Altarwise by Owl-light*), in longer poems (Hart Crane's *The Bridge*, T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*), and in novels like James Joyce's *Finnegan's Wake*, and in other American Novels.

The author of memorable books like *Animal Farm* (1945) and *1984* (1949), George Orwell (1903-50) also finds himself inescapable from the symbolic elements. His satirical book *Animal Farm* is full of symbolism, which is a satire on the Russian revolution. Similarly, Orwell's another book *1984* is also the one where there are symbols everywhere. Symbols are used by Orwell to reinforce his major themes in the book.

Other significant modern writers like James Joyce (1882-1941), Dylan Thomas (1914-53) also let Symbolism flow freely in their stories. In James Joyce's *The Dead*, he utilizes his main characters and objects to impress upon his readers his view of Dublin's crippled condition.

American Symbolist Movement

The Symbolist Movement that originated in France greatly influenced the American writers. Similar to that of the English Literature, Symbolism in American Literature appeared from the poems and works of Romantic writers. Though the Movement is regarded to be originated in France, Symbolism has its root in the poetic theory of Edgar Allan Poe. Baudelaire's discovery of Poe proved to be the most significant event of the Symbolist Movement.

In the Nineteenth- Century America, a symbolist procedure was prominent in the novels of Nathaniel Hawthorne and Herman Melville, the prose of Emerson and Thoreau, and the poetic theory and practice of Poe.

Nathaniel Hawthorne (1804-64), a skilled literary craftsman and a master of Symbolism, ranks among the greatest American fiction writers. In 1850, he published *The Scarlet Letter*, which made his fame, changed his fortune, and gave to the American Literature its first 'symbolic novel'. Hawthorne's use of Symbolism in *The Scarlet Letter* is one of the most significant contributions to the rise of American Literature. Several symbols are obviously seen in the novel but the most important symbol which is carried throughout the novel is undoubtedly the scarlet letter 'A'. It initially symbolizes the immoral act of adultery but by the end of the novel the 'A' has hidden much more meaning than that.

Herman Melville (1819-91), has used various symbols in his novel *Moby Dick*. In it, Melville examines both the exploitation of whaling and the reality of being born outside of America. A robust and realistic novel of adventure, drawing upon the author's fascination with the whale and whaling, it achieves a compelling symbolism in the character of captain Ahab, whose fury against the whale sends him to his death.

Walt Whitman's (1819-92) poetry is considered to be highly symbolic. He believed that art is suggestive and that it requires great painstaking on the part of the reader, if he wants really to appreciate it. Similarly, William Faulkner (1897-1962) adopts the poetic language of the symbolists. In his short story *A Rose for Emily*, Faulkner has used symbolism as one of the literary tools to develop his theme.

In the similar way, there are many other writers who showed their profound interest towards Symbolism and at the same time became successful to handle it

satisfactorily. Earnest Hemingway, John Steinbeck, Alice Walker, Wallace Stevens, Arthur Miller, and others used symbols in their works.

Naturalists and Realists used the photographic methods to present the world they saw. They presented the things and happenings as they were. But Symbolists practiced the art of using symbols by expressing the invisible by means of visible or sensuous representations.

J. R. R. Tolkien, being a modern English novelist, exercise symbolism in order to portray the functioning of good and evil in the world and also to visualize his religious views in his novel, *The Lord of the Rings*. Tolkien is obviously more interested in conveying some universal truths about good and evil, where good always lead to success whereas evil to failure. Tolkien has projected symbols in his novel to workout for the message he wanted to convey.

III. TEXTUAL ANALYSIS

1. Physical Power of Evil

In the novel, *The Lord of the Rings*, the One Ring has been presented as a symbol for the power of evil. The Ring that was possessed by Bilbo Baggins for many years inherited to Frodo Baggins, Bilbo's beloved nephew. But neither Bilbo nor Frodo were aware of the tempting and destructive power of the Ring. It was through Gandalf, the wizard, Frodo came to know about the origin and nature of the Ring. Sauron, the Dark Lord, had forged it ages before, putting all his power and malice into it in order to gain control over all other powers and people of the Middle-earth. With the help of this ring, Sauron spread destruction and made people the slaves of his evil power. But, the Ring of power lost from him and came to a simple hobbit, Frodo. The task of carrying the Ring to the Mount Doom had been appointed to Frodo where it was forged and the only place it could be destroyed. Though, the task was not so simple, as the Dark Lord had been searching his powerful ring eagerly.

When Frodo eagerly enquired Gandalf about the Ring, Gandalf answered, "It is far more powerful than I ever dared to think at first, so powerful that in the end it would utterly overcome anyone of mortal race who possessed it. It would possess him" (45). Gandalf who orchestrated many of the adventures in the Middle-earth, told Frodo that the Ring had far more important powers than he suspected- that it might, in fact, hold the key to the world's fate. Gandalf told Frodo that the Ring must be destroyed to defeat Sauron's evil as he had learned of the Ring's whereabouts from the creature Gollum and will seek to find it and kill its bearer. The Ring had amazing power to work independently though it was far from its owner. It had a great power of temptation; it was able to tempt anyone who came in its contact so that they desire to have it and finally it would deceive the bearer. Hence, it is evil by its very nature.

Gandalf warned Frodo not to put on the Ring as it left the corrupting influence to its wearer. Regardless of the wearer's initial intentions, good or evil, the Ring's power always turned the wearer to evil. Indeed, even keeping the Ring was dangerous. Gandalf warned Frodo of the consequences of keeping the Ring:

A mortal Frodo, who keeps one of the Great Rings, does not die, but he does not grow or obtain more life, he merely continues, until at last every minute is weariness. And if he often uses the Ring to make himself invisible, he *fades*: he becomes in the end invisible permanently, and walks in the twilight under the eye of the dark power that rules the Rings[. . .] but neither strength nor good purpose will last- sooner or later the dark power will devour him. (46)

It was ages before, when after Sauron became successful in inventing his powerful Ring, declared the disastrous war in the whole Middle-earth. Elves and mortal men together fought against the evil power of Sauron. Lords and warriors from different kingdoms assembled to fight against Sauron. But, they didn't have the power to defeat him. They were devastated. It was hard for them to oppose the powerful force of Sauron. Only after Isildur, with the help of his father's sword cut off the hand of Sauron where he had the powerful Ring, Sauron fell back.

As the Ring came down to Isildur, he was counseled by the wise Elves to throw away the ring in to Mount Doom, to destroy. But Isildur couldn't detach the Ring from him, the Ring had attracted him. Isildur unknowingly brought about the misfortune upon him as the Ring deceived him and was killed by Orcs:

Isildur took it, as should not have been. It should have been cast then into Orodruin's fire nigh at hand where it was made. But few marked what Isildur did. . . .“This I will have as weregild for my father, and

my brother,” he said; and therefore whether we would or no, he took it to treasure it. But soon he was betrayed by it to his death [. . .]. (237)

The Ring had a tangible presence and it maintained easily observable powers. The Ring caused its wearer to physically disappear, but it weakened the owner’s personal sense of identity with each use. Those who encountered the ring were overcome with longing for power over others, and the ring could give more power to Sauron.

The Ring also suggests slavery and weakness, since whoever gives into the temptation of the Ring becomes a slave to it. Gollum is an example, who was once a young hobbit named Smeagol, killed his friend Deagol for the Ring and then gradually became a wretched, crouching, frog-like creature who thinks only of his desire to retrieve the Ring for himself. When Deagol found the shining ring in the river one sunny day, Smeagol desired for it:

“Give us that, Deagol, my love,” said Smeagol, over his friend’s shoulder.

“Why?” said Deagol.

“Because it’s my Birthday, my love, and I wants it,” said Smeagol.

“I don’t care,” said Deagol. “I have given you a present already, more than I could afford. I found this, and I’m going to keep it.” (52)

At the first sight of the Ring, Smeagol was tempted towards it. Therefore, when Deagol refused to give it to him, he murdered his own friend and invited his tragic situation when he was discarded by his own family and society.

[. . .] and he caught Deagol by the throat and strangled him, because the gold looked so bright and beautiful. Then he put the ring on his finger [. . .]. The ring had given him power according to his stature. It

is not to be wondered at that he became very unpopular and was shunned (when visible) by all his relations[. . .] they called him Gollum, and cursed him, and told him to go far away; and his grandmother, desiring peace, expelled him from the family and turned him out of her hole. (52)

Everyone, to whom the ring went, became a victim of its corruption. The power of the Ring transformed the Black Riders, once human kings, into fearsome, neither dead nor alive, Ringwraiths. Sauron enslaved the nine mortal kings by his evil rings, to use them as his slaves. Gandalf provides the information about the Ringwraiths in Book One's chapter The Shadow of the Past: "Nine he gave to Mortal Men, proud and great, and so ensnared them. Long ago they fell under the dominion of the One, and they became Ringwraiths, shadows under his great Shadow, his more terrible servants" (50).

Denethor, the steward of Gondor and his son Boromir both became the victim of Ring's temptation. The Ring started to show its impact upon Boromir, when he saw it in Rivendell; in the council of Elrond. When the council resolved to destroy the Ring that someone must throw the Ring into the Fires of Mount Doom, where it was first created, in Mordor, Sauron's country, Boromir argued to wield the Ring by themselves: "Why do you speak ever of hiding and destroying? Why should we not think that the Great Ring has come into our hands to serve us in the very hour of need? Wielding it the Free Lords of the Free may surely defeat the Enemy. That is what he most fears, I deem" (260).

Sauron, The Dark Lord was desperately searching his powerful Ring and he had scattered his armed- force throughout the Middle-earth in search of it. He desired to be the Lord of whole Middle-earth, hence, spreading war and destruction, and

Gondor was no exception for the destruction. Thus, when Denethor came to know about the powerful Ring, he became ambitious to wield the Ring but Boromir could not bring him the Ring as he lost his life in the hands of Orcs. When Faramir, another son of Denethor reached his country and revealed that he had met Frodo, the Ringbearer on the way but he didn't even try to touch the Ring, Denethor got angry with Faramir and wished that if Boromir were in his place he would certainly have brought the Ring to him: “ ‘For Boromir was loyal to me and no wizard's pupil. He would have remembered his father's need, and would not have squandered what fortune gave. He would have brought me a mighty gift’ ” (795).

During the travels of the Fellowship, Boromir grew increasingly corrupted by the proximity of the Ring, wanting to use its power to destroy Sauron and save his country rather than destroy the Ring itself:

‘Ah! The Ring!’ said Boromir, his eyes lighting. ‘The Ring! Is it not a strange fate that we should suffer so much fear and doubt for so small a thing? It is a gift, I say; a gift to the foes of Mordor. It is mad not to use it, to use the power of the Enemy against him. The fearless, ruthless, these alone will achieve victory. What could not a warrior do in this hour, a great leader? What could not Aragorn do? The Ring would give me power of Command. (388- 89)

As Elrond and Gandalf had advised, ultimately, the Ring led Boromir to desire it for himself. Such greed for the Ring brought both Boromir as well as Denethor up to their tragic death. Boromir received his tragic end while fighting with Orcs to defend Merry and Pipin. He became the target of Orcs- arrows. Aragorn found the body of Boromir, enormously wounded by the black- arrows: “He was sitting with his back to a great tree, as if he was resting. But Aragorn saw that he was pierced with many

black-feathered arrows; his sword was still in his hand, but it was broken near the hilt; his horn cloven in two was at his side” (404).

For many, the great power offered by the Ring dominated all rational thought. The very desire for the Ring corrupted even the wise hearts. Saruman is an example. Saruman, the wizard, once a wise wizard turned in to a devil for the people and for nature. He became treacherous and evil for he wanted the Ring for himself to become more powerful:

‘Alas, no,’ said Elrond. We cannot use the Ring. That we now know too well. It belongs to Sauron and was made by him alone, and is altogether evil. . . . The very desire for it corrupts the heart. Consider Saruman. If any of the Wise should with this Ring overthrow the Lord of Mordor, using his own arts he would then set himself on Sauron’s throne, and yet another Dark Lord would appear. (261)

Gollum is a miserable character in the novel. Characters variously define him as “wretched”, a “vile creature”, a liar, a thief, and a murderer, and all of which are quite true. Corrupt and vindictive, he cheats, steals, lies, and betrays. The Ring corrupted him. Once a ring-bearer, Gollum became a lonely creature, wandering all alone in the darkness with skinny body. The Ring enslaved him as there was nothing more precious to him than the Ring. When Frodo asked Smeagol or Gollum, for what reason and on what basis should they trust him, “Smeagol”, replied Gollum with his wide staring eyes at Frodo, “Smeagol will swear on the Precious” (603). Gollum swore to be faithful to Frodo by taking the name, Precious. As he couldn’t think more and apart from the Ring i.e. his “Precious”. Though promised to be true to Frodo, Gollum betrayed Frodo when he left Frodo and Sam in the dark tunnel for the Shelob,

a giant spider, to devour everything and Gollum made a pact with her to deliver the hobbits, hoping to find the Ring in their discarded clothing after she had eaten them:

It may well be, O yes, it may well be that when She throws away the bones and the empty garments, we shall find it, we shall get it, the Precious, a reward for poor Smeagol who brings nice food. And we'll save the Precious, as we promised. O yes. And when we've got it safe, then She'll know it, O yes, then we'll pay Her back, my precious. Then we'll pay everyone back. (708)

Gollum's lust for the Ring never ended and therefore he followed Frodo, the ring-bearer to Mordor where he attacked the invisible Frodo and bit his invisible finger, where the ring was put on. Gollum achieved his precious ring. Dancing with a mad celebration, he stumbled and fell into the fire. The Ring was consumed. Everything that the Dark Lord possessed vanished. The Nazgul, Dark Armies; the mountain exploded. Sauron's fortress collapsed. Hence, the evil power was finally destroyed. The Ring which Gollum wanted to possess, possessed him instead:

'Precious, precious, precious!' Gollum cried. 'My Precious! O my Precious!' And with that, even as his eyes were lifted up to gloat on his prize, he stepped too far, toppled, wavered for a moment on the brink, and then with a shriek he fell. Out of the depths came his last wail
Precious, and he was gone. (925)

Though the chosen Ring-bearer Frodo was most resistant to the ring's lure, he had to fight constantly his desire for it. He sometimes wanted to hand it over to his more powerful friends like Gandalf, Aragorn and Faramir and even to Lady Galadriel, while at other times he wanted to keep it for himself.

‘But you’re in the land of Mordor now, sir; and when you get out, you’ll see the Fiery Mountain and all. You’ll find the Ring very dangerous now, and very hard to bear. If it’s too hard a job, I could share it with you, may be?’

‘No, no!’ cried Frodo, snatching the Ring and chain from Sam’s hands.

‘No you won’t you thief!’ He panted, staring at Sam with eyes wide with fear and enmity. (890-91)

For the first time, Frodo was lured by the Ring to be its only owner when Sam offered to share the Ring’s burden after his Master came to consciousness after Shelob’s attack.

The Ring become heavier for the bearer, as it went nearer to its originated land and at the same time its power increased. Being a ring-bearer, Frodo could feel the heaviness of the Ring as he took another step nearer to the Mount Doom. “I can’t manage it, Sam,” says the exhausted Frodo, “It is such a weight to carry, such a weight” (916).

Sam really cared for his master and he was worried to see Frodo’s weariness. When Sam asked to share his burden for the second time, Frodo became furious at Sam: “‘Then let me carry it a bit for you, Master,’ he said. ‘You know I would, and gladly, as long as I have any strength.’ A wild light came into Frodo’s eyes. ‘Stand away! Don’t touch me!’ he cried. ‘It is mine, I say. Be off!’ His hand strayed to his sword-hilt” (916).

Though, Sam didn’t have any bad intention. Frodo reminded Sam that the task of carrying its burden went only to him. The Ring was steadily luring Frodo to protect the Ring for himself and distrust his faithful Sam. When, finally Frodo and Sam

reached the very Crack of Doom, Frodo could not simply throw away the Ring into the Fire. We can see that Frodo has been lured by it, finally:

Then Frodo stirred and spoke with a clear voice, indeed with a voice clearer and more powerful than Sam had ever heard him use, and it rose above the throb and turmoil of Mount Doom, ringing in the roof and walls. 'I have come,' he said. 'But I do not choose now to do what I came to do. I will not do this deed. The Ring is mine!' And suddenly, as he set it on his finger, he vanished from Sam's sight. (924)

Rather than cast the Ring into the Fire, as he always intended, Frodo claimed it for his own. Now, Frodo could not resist the temptation to take the Ring as his own. Frodo's failure at the Cracks of Doom reveals that the danger of the Ring was not limited to its use. The immense power of the Ring could corrupt even the most wise and well-intentioned. Accidentally, Gollum took the Ring into the Cracks of Doom, which Frodo couldn't have done intentionally.

Sauron, the Dark Lord had invented the One Ring of Power in order to enslave all the creatures of the earth, to bring them all under the shadow: "*One ring to bring them all, and in the darkness bind them*" (248).

Unfortunately, at last, the Ring forged with full of evil characteristics didn't even leave to betray its own master or the creator. The luring power of the Ring functioned strongly both on Frodo and Gollum and in their fight, Gollum succeeded to achieve the Ring. But his happiness turned out to be his tragic end as well as the destruction of Mordor:

Towers fell and mountains slid; walls crumbled and melted, crashing down; vast spires of smoke and spouting steams went billowing up, up, until they toppled like an overwhelming wave, and its wild crest curled

and came foaming down upon the land. And then at last over the miles between there came a rumble, rising to a deafening crash and roar; the earth shook, the plain heaved and cracked., and Orodruin reeled. (926)

The Ring deceived his own master. Sauron's own creation brought about his own doom, a weird destruction. The Realm of Sauron blasted as the volcanic fire blasts the mountain, the thunder of which was felt all over the Middle-earth. Sauron's kingdom was destroyed and hence the quest of Frodo had been completed: "Well, this is the end, Sam Gamgee," said a voice by his side. And there was Frodo, pale and worn, and yet himself again; and in his eyes there was peace now, neither strain of will, nor madness, nor any fear. His burden was taken away. There was the dear master of the sweet days in the Shire" (926).

The Ring took away Frodo's weariness, suspicion and the heavy burden with itself. After Gollum was victimized by the Ring, his peaceful life as a hobbit, ended. He retreated into a cave and became isolated from the world. Similarly, when the Ring came to Frodo, it isolated him, too, even though Sam accompanied him throughout his journey to the Mount Doom. While the entire fellowship was in great danger, only Frodo was haunted by the visions of Mordor and Sauron. He was unable to share this torment with the others, so it became the very basis of his isolation. Even after the ring was destroyed, Frodo remained isolated. When Sam came to the study room of his Master Frodo, one evening, he found his master suffering from some strange feeling. So, he enquired: "What's the matter, Mr. Frodo?" said Sam. 'I am wounded,' he answered, 'wounded; it will never really heal'" (1002).

Frodo was unable to readjust the life in the Shire due to his experience with the Ring and eventually left the other hobbits behind. His experience as ring-bearer had permanently isolated from his friends and society. The alienation and isolation

experienced by Tolkien's characters like Gollum and Frodo symbolizes alienation that came as a result of the Two World Wars.

In such a way, while we've gone through the characters and events in the novel, we can trace out the symbolism of the One Ruling Ring. The Ring symbolizes the destructive evil power which shows its devilry since the time of its creation till its destruction and its aftermath.

Though, Tolkien presents the Ring as the most powerful symbol in his novel *The Lord of the Rings*, we couldn't go indifferent with the other quite interesting symbols which are finely interwoven and quite helpful for developing the theme of the novel.

2. Colour Symbols

Tolkien has used the public symbols of colours White and Black in his novel. To represent good things, the White colour is selected while to represent ill things, the Black. The most popular symbols indeed, whether it is in literature or in common life.

Ringwraiths, the terrible servants of Sauron are called "Black Riders" by the characters in the novel. The Dark Lord Sauron has appointed them the task of searching the Ring-bearer and fetching the Ring from him; they are badly in search of the Ring. When they came to know that the Ring-bearer has left his native place to fulfill the quest, they followed him through the Shire till the border of the kingdom of wise Elrond. Frodo and his friends were aware that they were haunted by the Black Rider and they could confront with him at any time. So, when they heard some strange sound, they quickly hid themselves under the huge oak tree. But Frodo wanted to confirm whether it was the Black Rider or not: "Don't let us go too far!"

said Frodo. ‘ I don’t want to be seen, but I want to see if it is another Black Rider’” (77).

Through the darkness of night, Black Riders were following Frodo and his friends. They could have been fallen under the claws of these fearful Riders. Luckily, Fair elves approached their way singing in their own language and Riders fled away. They could not tolerate the White elves and their power:

‘Yes, it is Elves,’ said Frodo [. . .]. They don’t live in Shire, but they wander into it in Spring and Autumn, out of their own lands away beyond the Tower Hills. I am thankful that they do! You did not see, but that Black Rider stopped just here and was actually crawling towards us when the song began. As soon as he heard the voices he slipped away. (77)

Frodo’s group was attacked by the BlackRiders near the ancient watchtower of Weathertop. The Strider chased away the Riders but Frodo was wounded by the stab of Ringwraith’s evil sword:

Over the lip of the little dell, on the side away from the hill, they felt, rather than saw, a shadow rise, one shadow or more than one. . . Soon there could be no doubt: three or four tall black figures were standing there on the slope, looking down on them. So black were they that they seemed like black holes in the deep shade behind them. (190)

Here, Tolkien describes the Ringwraiths or the Black Riders as the Black figures, which in the darkness of the night couldn’t be distinguished from the Black holes. Such a imagery of blackness, Tolkien creates to make clear about the ill- intention and evil nature of the Ringwraiths. The selection of word shadow seems efficient for the description of the evil instincts, for where there is shadow there is darkness. Even the

smell of their breath was unpleasant. The Strider discovered the Black Breath of the Riders which presented the evidence of their wickedness. Merry came running in haste after he got the sight of the Riders; he explained his companions about the accident he had. At the same time, Strider too found some hint of the Riders' arrival: " 'I do', said Strider. The Black Breath. The Riders must have left their horses outside, and passed back through the South-gate in secret" (170).

On the contrary, Gandalf, the White as well as the fair-elvish Lady Galadriel stand for good. Gandalf is a wise character in the novel who utilizes his power and effort only to fight against evil and save the peaceful earth throughout the novel. He helped Frodo to set out on the quest against Mordor. He risked his own life to save the Ring- companion in the Bridge of Khazad- Dum. He released Theodan, the King of Rohan from the net of Saruman and his servant Wormtongue. His deeds for good reason are numerous. He played a vital role to save Minas Tirith of Gondor against the attack of Sauron's powerful armies. He fought against the enemy of good people until the evil Lord and his kingdom was destroyed. Such a personality is presented before the readers with the White colour always with him or around him. Though, at the beginning, he is mentioned as Gandalf the Grey, after he passed the test, he became Gandalf the White, with additional power on him: "His hair was white as snow in the sunshine; and gleaming white was his robe; the eyes under his deep brows were bright, piercing as the rays of the sun; power was in his hand" (483).

After he had fought with Balrog and defeated him, Gandalf came alive with new powers in him; he turned into Gandalf the White. Hence, the colour White has been presented as a symbol of power, purity and goodness:

Indeed my friends, none of you have any weapon that could hurt me.

Be merry! We meet again. At the turn of the tide. The great storm is

coming, but the tide has gone. He led his hand on Gimli's head, and the Dwarf looked up and laughed suddenly. 'Gandalf!' he said. 'But you are all in white!'

'Yes, I am white now,' said Gandalf. (484)

Lady Galadriel, who is herself a symbol of purity and power, in the similar way wore white clothes. When the Fellowship of the Ring reached the Land of Lady Galadriel and finally got chance to meet with Lady Galadriel and the Lord, all the members of the Fellowship were mesmerized to see them: "Very tall they, were, and the Lady no less tall than the Lord; and they were grave and beautiful. They were clad wholly in white . . ." (345).

Even the horses of the Black Riders were black and Gandalf's horse, the Shadowfax was white in colour. The main Gate, the entrance to Mordor was named as "Black Gate", and the Orcs that were under the command of Sauron are described as "Black shapes" in the novel.

3. Light and Dark symbolizing Good and Evil

The imagery of Light and Dark or Day and Night has been very well used in the novel to stand for good and evil respectively. The Dark is the symbol of power for evil Sauron whereas; Light represents hope and power for kind-hearted and good people. In the novel, evil place Mordor has been described as "The Land of Shadow" or the land without light. Frodo and Sam couldn't find the beautiful day-light after they reached the territory of Mordor: "Day was coming again in the world outside, and far beyond the glooms of Mordor the Sun was climbing over the eastern rim of Middle-earth; but here all was still dark as night" (896).

Mordor was covered with a shadowy blackness. Sauron commanded a thick cloud to cover the Land of Mordor for his own protection, as his power was greatest only

under the cover of darkness. The standard archetype of shadows, black images, thunder and heavy clouds are all employed to illustrate the landscape of Mordor.

The Black Riders are certainly a symbol of evil and are stronger in the darkness of night as compared to the light of the day. At night time, these riders became active and full of life like earthworms but during the day time, they left no any sign of them.

Frodo half expected to see the small distant figure of a horseman on the ridge dark against the sky; but there was no any sign of one. The sun escaping from the breaking clouds, as it sank towards the hills they had left, was now shining brightly again. Their fear left them, though they still felt uneasy. [. . .] Everything seemed quiet and peaceful, just an ordinary corner of the Shire. (89)

Day and Night are opposed to one another and it is no surprise that day journey is safer and protected than the bleaker night journeys in the novel. Frodo and his friends' journey was beyond safe after they left the Shire. At night, they had to fear most, as the Black Riders were more active and steady during the dark hours. Under the Shadow of the night, the Black Riders were successful in hurting Frodo. During the night time only, the Black Riders got into the Bree, where Frodo and his companions were spending their night:

The Night deepened. There came the soft sound of horses led with stealth along the lane. Outside the gate they stopped, and three black figures entered, like shades of night creeping across the ground [. . .] house and the quiet trees seemed to be waiting breathlessly[. . .]. There was a faint stir in the leaves, and a cock crowed far away [. . .]. There was a blow, soft but heavy, and the door shuddered. (172)

Night time is presented as fearful and dangerous while Day is fruitful and hopeful. Tolkien has used this image very effectively, borrowing man's natural fear of night and the unknown. The images of Light and Dark are also very archetypal in the novel as it is in other writings of Tolkien: Light Vs Dark= Good Vs Evil.

Exhausted and weary, Sam and Frodo were filled with hope when they caught a glimpse of light in the west from the gloomy mountain of Mordor:

Far above the Ephel Duath in the West in the night-sky was still dim and pale. There, peeping among the cloud-wrack above a dark tor high up in the mountains, Sam saw a white star twinkle for a while. The beauty of it smote his heart, as he looked up out of the forsaken land, and hope returned to him. (901)

Galadriel presented Frodo a phial that lighted up places that were dark. The phial had the power to spread light in the dark whenever Frodo and Sam needed it. “‘In this phial,’ she said, ‘is caught the light of Earendil’s star, set amid the waters of my fountain. It will shine still brighter when night is about you. May it be a light to you in dark places, when all other lights go out” (367).

The phial gave them strength and courage to fight against the evil Shelob and her dark tunnel. When Gollum misled Frodo and Sam to Shelob’s Liar, they were trapped in the darkness without a single ray of light:

Not since the lightless passages of Moria had Frodo or Sam known such darkness, and if possible here it was deeper and denser.[. . .] They walked as it were in a black vapour wrought of veritable darkness itself, as it was breathed, brought blindness not only to the eyes but to the mind, so that even the memory of colours and of forms and of any light faded out of thought. (701)

Sam and Frodo had never come across such a dark and mysterious place during their journey. It was darker and dangerous than the darkness of the Mines of Moria. They couldn't trace their way out from such a heavy darkness. They lost their hope and fear covered their heart but luckily Frodo remembered the phial given by Lady Galadriel. The light gifted by The Lady proved to be their leader to light up the surrounding: “‘The star-glass?’ muttered Frodo, as one answering out of sleep, hardly comprehending. ‘Why yes! Why had I forgotten it? *A light when all other lights go out!* And now indeed light alone can help us’” (704).

Once again Sam used the star-glass or the phial given by Lady Galadriel in the deadly Tower of Cirith Ungol. Even though they were running out of food and water and weary enough to take next step further, still there remained hope inside them to fulfill the quest, as they had light and a bit of Elves' food in the hand to keep them moving.

In such a way, Light, for the good creatures proved to be their hope, courage and life. Whereas, the same light was not appreciated by ill-creatures. Every time a Nazgul passed overhead, the sun or moon was completely blocked out. The Black-Riders became dangerous and swift with the darkness of night. Sauron preferred to keep his kingdom under the bleakness of thick cloud. Evil creatures live in dark places. Shelob for example, live in a pitch-black cave.

Even Gollum hate the light of the day and craved the anonymity of dark. Gollum was the guide for Frodo and Sam to lead them into the Mordor. They walked on and on during the nights with little rest at times. While passing through the land of marshes, tired Frodo and Sam could see the glimpse of morning arriving. But it hurt Gollum: “At last the sky above grew faint with the first grey of morning. Gollum had shown no signs of tiring, but now he looked up and halted. ‘Day is near,’ he

whispered, as if Day was something that might overhear him and spring on him.

‘Smeagol will stay here: I will stay here, and the Yellow Face won’t see me’ (607).

We can see how the sunlight of the day casts fear in Smeagol’s heart. By Yellow Face, he referred to the sun and he didn’t want to come in contact with its rays. The very sight of the sun made Gollum languish. He feared light whereas, light is a symbol of life and goodness for the common people.

They could hear him snuffling, and now and again there was a harsh hiss of breath that sounded like a curse. . . ‘Ach, sss! Cautious, my precious! More haste less speed. We musstn’t risk our nect, must we, precious? No, precious- *gollum!*’ He lifted his head again, blinked at the moon, and quickly shut his eyes. ‘We hate it,’ he hissed. ‘Nassty, nasty shivery light it is-sss-it spies on us, precious- it hurts our eyes’.

(599)

Gollum was not only afraid of the light of the day but also couldn’t tolerate the light thrown by the moon at night. When for the first time, Frodo and Sam came across Gollum, they found him cursing upon the moon-light. The following paragraph further demonstrates the indifference and enmity of Gollum towards the light:

As the day wore on the light increased a little, and the mists lifted, growing thinner and more transparent. [. . .] But even at this faint reminder of her presence Gollum scowled and flinched. He halted their journey, and they rested, squatting like little hunted animals, in the borders of a great brown reed-thicket. (612)

In the quest of conflict between the good and evil, the Lamps of the Shire as well as the lights of the Lothlorien can be juxtaposed with the darkness or the shadow of Mordor.

4. Water symbolizing life

Water serves as a life-saving force for the good beings of the Middle-earth throughout the novel, *The Lord of the Rings*. In our normal life too, Water is one of the vital elements to keep us alive while the others include Food, Air, Clothes, etc. Water proves to be the source of energy and strength for the characters throughout the novel:

‘Drink this!’ said Glorfindel to them, pouring for each in turn a little liquor from his silver-studded flask of leather. It was clear as spring water and had no taste, and it did not feel either cool or warm in the mouth; but strength and vigour seemed to flow into their limbs as they drank it. . . . They had rested rather less than five hours when they took to the Road again. . . they covered almost twenty miles before nightfall [. . .]. (206)

The Water-like drink provided by the elf, Glorfindel filled the group of Frodo, which consisted of the Strider, Sam, Merry, Pippin and Frodo himself, with a strange sense of strength. With the help of which they walked forward more than twenty miles.

Frodo, badly injured by the stab of the Ringwraith was carried along by the horse of an elf, Glorfindel as the Ringwraiths were recklessly chasing him. Helpless Frodo was saved by the flood that swept away the Nine Black-Riders, his pursuers in the border of Rivendell:

Dimly Frodo saw the river below him rise, and down along its course there came a plumed cavalry of waves. The black horses were filled with madness, and leaping forward in terror they bore their riders into the rushing flood. Their piercing cries were drowned in the roaring of the river as it carried them away. (209)

Similarly, Gandalf came alive with a stock of new power after a long fall when he landed in the body of water. Balrog, the giant evil attacked the Fellowship of the Ring while they were trying to move their way through the Bridge of Khazad-Dum. Fighting with Balrog, Gandalf rescued his friends but he couldn't run away from the whip of Balrog and thus he fell along with his enemy. After he came out from the mouth of death regaining innovative power he shared his story with Aragorn, Legolas and Gimli. “. . . for a moment it seemed that a cloud of pain passed over his face, and he sat silent looking old as death. ‘Long time I fell,’ he said at last [. . .]. ‘Long I fell, and he fell with me. His fire was about me. I was burned. Then we plunged into the deep water and all was dark. Cold it was as the tide of death: almost it froze my heart’” (490).

After Merry and Pippin became successful in escaping from the hostage of the Orcs, they felt really exhausted and were unable to move their legs easily:

‘Let's have a drink at any rate’, said Pippin. ‘I'm parched.’ He clambered on to a great tree-root that wound down into the stream, and stooping drew up some water in his cupped hands. It was clear and cold and he took many draughts. Merry followed him. The Water refreshed them and seemed to cheer their hearts. (450)

Merry and Pippin had fled away into the near forest when the Orcs from Sauron's land and Saruman's broke in conflict and at the same time the Rohirrim attacked the Orcs. They had been carried by the Orcs as hostages since many days; since Boromir was killed; without any food and drink. So, their limbs were lifeless, their hearts were filled with gloom by the detachment of their companions. In such a situation, Water they drank, not only quenched their thirst but lifted their heart to cheer as they were separated from their friends.

Similarly, While Frodo and Sam reached the Land of Shadow, i.e. Mordor, they suffered a great need of water to keep them going towards their destination. Their lips went dry without the touch of water, when they fortunately heard the sound of dropping water. Life came alive within them:

Unbelievable, but unmistakable. Water trickling. Out of a gully on the left, so sharp and narrow that it looks as if the black cliff had been cloven by some huge axe, water came dripping down: the last remains, maybe, of some sweet rain gathered from sunlit seas, but ill-fated to fall at last upon the walls of the Black Land and wander fruitless down into the dust. (899)

They felt lucky and themselves blessed to confront with water in such a gloomy and hopeless land. Though the taste of water was strange and unpleasant, they drank with all praise and went on: “They drank their fill, and Sam replenished his water-bottle. After that Frodo felt easier, and they went on for several miles, until the broadening of the road and the beginnings of a rough wall along its edge warned them that they were drawing near to another orc-hold” (900).

Hence, Water, in the novel stands for the energy and vigor for anybody. On top of that, when somebody is setting out for the quest of good deed like Frodo and his companions, Water is a compulsion as it helps to revitalize their parchedness.

Water also suggests the afterlife in the novel. When Boromir died fighting with the Orcs in the forest near the river Anduin, his dead body was placed on a pyre made of a boat and sent down the river. Had Aragorn and his friends decided to leave Boromir’s dead body somewhere in the deep forest, his dead body would have become the prey of the foul creatures or the wild animals. But Aragorn decided to send Boromir’s dead body in the River so that the water will protect him:

'First we must tend the fallen,' said Legolas. 'We cannot leave him lying like carrion among these foul Orcs' [. . .]. 'Then let us lay him in a boat with his weapons, and the weapons of his vanquished foes,' said Aragorn. 'We will send him to the Falls of Rauros and give him to Anduin. The River of Gondor will take care at least that no evil creature dishonours his bones.' (405)

The dead body of Boromir was sent down to River Anduin by Aragorn and his friends because this journey in river was safe for his dead body. It suggests that he will live on in the memory of his friends and his people even after his death.

Similarly, the elves depart Middle-earth on a ship and sail-out to a great body of water i.e. the Sea. They are supposed to have their more peaceful world after their journey through water.

In this way, Water symbolizes the life for good beings whereas destructive and fearful element for the evil beings, like Black Riders.

5. Nature and Ambition of Evil Powers

The Two Towers in the novel represented the two strong and ambitious villains. The Tower of Barad-dur in Mordor was the stronghold of Sauron and The Tower of Orthanc was Saruman's citadel in Isengard. These heighted towers symbolize the elevated ambition of Sauron and Saruman, both of whom desired for the undefeatable power.

The Two Towers in which the two evil characters reside reflects the respective natures of their owners. Sauron has been presented as evil from when, the novel doesn't clarify. Barad-dur has always been evil; Sauron built it himself and used it for no other purpose than as a refuge from which to use his Great Eye to watch and spoil

Middle Earth. Once, the Gondorians had overthrown Sauron from his power and his place. But then again Sauron returned with stronger determination:

But the strength of Gondor failed, and men slept, and for long years the towers stood empty. Then Sauron returned. Now the watchtowers, which had fallen into decay, were repaired, and filled with arms, and garrisoned with ceaseless vigilance. Stony-faced they were with dark window-holes staring north and east and west, and each window was full of sleepless eyes. (622)

As Sauron repaired and made his Tower stronger and more alert, in the same way, his ambition too became stronger and repaired. On the other hand, Saruman, now wicked was once a good figure, the leader of the Wizard's Council. Saruman was not born evil; rather he has become corrupt out of his own arrogance and ambition. The nature of Saruman is symbolized by the Tower Orthanc. Orthanc existed long before Saruman came to Middle-Earth.

We learn that Orthanc was constructed by the ancient Lords of Gondor and it used to be beautiful and peaceful place but when Saruman started to dwell there he changed it according to his ill-nature:

A strong place and wonderful was Isengard, and long it had been beautiful; and there great lords had dwelt, the wardens of Gondor upon the West, and wise men that watched the stars. But Saruman had slowly shaped it to his shifting purposes, and made it better, as he thought, being deceived- for all those arts and subtle devices, for which he forsook his former wisdom, and which fondly he imagined were his own, came but from Mordor [. . .]. (542)

Ironically, though Saruman believed that he improved the tower by using it as the fortress of his ambition, we learn that Saruman was just copying Mordor and he got his inspiration from the Dark Lord of Mordor. Saruman's desire to wield the powerful Ring by himself, rather than to lead it away to Sauron distorted the once wise mind of Saruman. He transformed the once peaceful and green Isengard to smoky and filthy place where he worked in mustering his tough force of army; furthermore he went against the natural law and created the unusual Orcs-breed by combining the dead body of Men and Orcs.

Apart from that, Sauron the Dark Lord symbolizes the evil which is an external elemental force that exists independent of and outside the human mind. On the other hand, Saruman, the Wizard symbolizes the evil, which is an internal force that humans create by themselves. These two forces are represented by the evil-born Tower of Barad-dur and the later-perverted tower, Orthanc.

6. The Lord of the Powers

The very title of the novel "The Lord of the Rings" is significantly symbolic. The title has been elected for the Dark Lord whose intention and nature, both are evil. Here, the Rings refer to the Rings of Powers, which were made by the Elven-smiths in the history. Dark Lord Sauron secretly forged a great Ring of Power, the One Ring laying all his power and malice into it so that it could enslave all the wearers of the other Rings of Power. With this Ring, he hoped to rule all the other Powerful Rings and the Ring-owners and become The Lord of the Rings:

The Three, fairest of all, the Elf-lords hid from him, and his hand never touched them or sullied them. Seven the Dwarf-kings possessed, but three he has recovered, and the others the dragons have consumed.

Nine he gave to Mortal Men, proud and great, and so ensnared them.

Long ago they fell under the dominion of the One, and they became Ringwraiths, shadows under his great Shadow, his most terrible servants. (50)

After the invention of the One Ring, Sauron possessed all the other powerful rings except the three that the elves concealed from him and the four that were devoured by the dragons. He distributed the nine rings to the nine kings of mortal men. These men who possessed the Nine were corrupted over time and became the undead Ringwraiths, or Nazgul, Sauron's most dreadful servants.

Sauron's determination to establish himself as the only Lord with the store of power that can rule over the world and bring all the people of Middle-earth under his shadow led him to launch war, time and again. Isildur, the son of Elendil cut the One Ring from Sauron's hand in the war and Sauron's spirit fled into the wilderness; and since then the powerful ring has been departed from Sauron.

But, after many years, again the Dark Lord became active and revived his power and armies and desperately in search of the One Ring. This is the only Ring which will give him the power to capture the other Rings of Power including the Three Rings preserved by the mighty Elves:

The Three are hidden still. But that no longer troubles him. He only needs the One; for he made that Ring himself, it is his, and he let a great part of his own former power pass into it, so that he could rule all the others. If he recovers it, then he will command them all again, wherever they be, even the Three, and all that has been wrought with them will be laid bare, and he will be stronger than ever. (50)

Through Gandalf's narration of the story of the One Ring and its importance to the Dark Lord, we come to know about the power of the ring and the ambition of

Sauron. Hence, by possessing the One Ring he could be able to possess all the powers of the world. In another way, he will become the Lord of all the powers in the world. That is the reason why, throughout the novel, his quest is to find out the Ring of Power and become “The Lord of the Rings” or “The Lord of the Powers”.

7. Christian Symbolism

Christ's Resurrection

Though the story of *The Lord of the Rings* is set in a pre-Christian world, Christianity plays its prominent role in the novel. Tolkien was himself a devout Catholic Christian and thus it is not a queer thing to find the influence of his religion on his literary work.

There is Christian Symbolism attached to the Wizard Gandalf. In a distinctly Christ-like resurrection, the Wizard died and returned from the grave. We actually believe him to be dead for several chapters when he fell in Moria. When the company was attacked by the fire-spreading giant, Balrog, Gandalf dealt with him and tried to stop him from passing towards his company.

At that moment Gandalf lifted his staff, and crying aloud he smote the bridge before them [. . .]. The bridge cracked. Right at the Balrog's feet it broke [. . .]. With a terrible cry the Balrog fell forward, and its shadow plunged down and vanished. But even as it fell it swung its whip, and the thongs lashed and curled about the wizard's knees, dragging him to the brink. He staggered and fell, grasped vainly at the stone, and slid into the abyss. 'Fly, you fools!' he cried, and was gone.

(322)

Gandalf the Grey fell into deep shadow fighting with the evil Balrog and saved his company to move forward. He continued to fight the Balrog and eventually

overcame him. The Ordeal changed him and he returned in White to signify that he was now the head of the Wizard's council. Gandalf's reappearance as the 'White Rider' symbolizes the Christian accounts of Christ's resurrection and besides this, Gandalf's struggle against Balrog refers to the struggle between good and evil. Gandalf revealed that he was sent back to the earth so that he could complete his mission: "Naked I was sent back- for a brief time, until my task is done. And naked I lay upon the mountain-top [. . .]. Healing I found, and I was clothed in white" (491).

Thus, Gandalf the White had returned to fulfill his task. His task was to fight against evil, to save the lives of good people. That is to say, he had returned to lead the fight against Mordor. Like Christ, who returned to life again after his death to fight or live for the people of this world, in the same way, Gandalf returned from death to fight against the enemy of the Middle-Earth.

In *Defending Middle Earth*, Curry states: There is Gandalf's transformation from the Grey into the White, which although Tolkien was not trying to portray, Gandalf as Christ, nonetheless has unmistakable connotations of Christ's resurrection. (Curry, 108)

Sacrifice

Lady Galadriel of Lothlorien is presented as a symbol of sacrifice in the novel. She was the owner of one of the three powerful Rings belonged to the Elves. Like the other characters in the novel, she too was not far from the temptation of the One Ring. When Frodo offered the Ring to Galadriel, she admitted that she greatly desired for it: "I do not deny that my heart has greatly desired to ask what you offer. For many long years I had pondered what I might do, should the Great Ring come into my hands, and behold! it was brought within my grasp" (356).

Sorely tempted by the thought of possessing the Ring, Galadriel for one moment imagined herself as a Queen with the immense power who shall be “. . . beautiful and terrible as the Morning and the Night! Fair as the Sea and the Sun and Snow upon the Mountain! Dreadful as the Storm and the Lightning! Stronger than the foundations of the earth” (356).

But at the other moment, she resisted the temptation and realized that the defeat of Sauron and his evil deeds could not be achieved by taking the Dark Lord's place. She was also aware of the fact that when the Ring of Power will be thrown into the Cracks of Doom and the evil power has been destroyed, the power and the realm of Elves will also diminish, but she understood that there must be a balance between the era and the next. It was like a trial for her between the temptation of power and her will. Finally she declared that she became successful: “‘I pass the test,’ she said. ‘I will diminish, and go into the West, and remain Galadriel’” (357).

The courage of the elf-queen is seen in her willingness to sacrifice her power to defeat the evil of Sauron. She had the opportunity to claim limitless power and immortality for herself by accepting the One Ring offered by Frodo but she denied and sacrificed the limitless power for the peaceful life of the people of the Middle-Earth.

Similarly, Arwen, the daughter of Elrond and grand-daughter of Lady Galadriel is a lady with beauty, intelligence and immortality who embraced mortality and pain of separation with her people for Aragorn's love. Linda Greenwood argues that this story “involves an element of sacrifice, a sacrifice that does not belong solely to the lives of Aragorn and Arwen, but also to those who give their lives as a gift for the salvation of others” her phrasing certainly connecting this story implicitly to the sacrificial death of Jesus. (Enright, 98)

Superficially, Arwen's sacrifice seems to be the devotion for her love but while going through deeper understanding it is the sacrifice for the well-being of whole human beings. "As Elves were willing to sacrifice their powers and immortality in order to destroy Sauron, Frodo sacrificed his health to achieve the same end" (Boswell, 197). Stabbed by the Nazgul at Weathertop, stung by Shelob at Cirith Ungol, and bitten by Gollum at Mount Doom Frodo was deeply wounded though he became successful to save his land, his Shire.

Another important characteristic of Christian Symbolism in the novel is the sense of pity. In the chapter, The Taming of Smeagol, Frodo and Sam realized that Gollum was following them. Gollum attacked Sam so he wanted to punish Gollum by tying him up and leave it to suffer. But Frodo pitied over Gollum and denied to harm him, "'No', said Frodo. 'If we kill him, we must kill him outright. But we can't do that, not as things are. Poor wretch! He has done us no harm'" (600). According to Tolkien, pity is an important element of the Christian faith that can be found across the trilogy. Frodo's journey from the Shire to Mordor represent the spiritual journey of a man and Frodo's victory over Sauron symbolize the power of moral and spiritual strength and courage overcoming physical power. (Enright, 102)

Apart from the before-discussed Symbolism resided in the novel *The Lord of the Rings*, there are many other minor but significantly noticeable symbols. Places and objects are presented as symbols.

8. Places as Symbols

Shire as Pre-war England

Shire has been presented as a happy and blissful place untouched by the smoke and air of Industrialism. Tolkien has created his fictional place, Shire to represent a pre-industrial rural England where people and environment are in balance. Green

trees, Gardens and fresh water were the identical elements of the Shire. The Hobbits of the Shire lived simply unworried, merry-making, and free from war and greed. But when Frodo and his friends returned to their homeland Shire after their quest was over, they found the face of their land was drastically changed:

Many of the houses that they had known were missing. Some seemed to have been burned down. The pleasant row of old hobbit-holes in the bank on the north side of the Pool were deserted, and their gardens that used to run down bright to the water's edge were rank with weeds[. . .] And looking with dismay up the road towards Bag End they saw a tall chimney of brick in the distance. It was pouring out black smoke into the evening air. (981)

When Frodo returned with Sam, Merry and Pippin from the journey to Mordor, they were dumb-founded by the vision of their Shire in front of them. The old and familiar houses were broken-down, trees were cut-down and in its place tall new buildings were built. They found their land devastated by some devilry, "This is worse than Mordor!" exclaims Sam in astonishment, "Much Worse in a way. It comes home to you, as they say; because it is home, and you remember it before it was ruined" (994). Tolkien had similar kind of experience with his country during the pre-war and post-war time. Establishment of 'great brick building' with black smoke out instead of tall green trees and the old mill is symbolical to the development of industrialism in England.

Hobbits were the ones who loved quiet and peaceful life with "good- tilled earth". They loved "well- farmed" countryside and did not like and understood machines more complicated than a 'forge- bellows', "a water-mill", or a "hand-loom"; though they were skilful in handling the tools. They loved eating and enjoyed

smoking. They laughed often and they were fond of simple jests and had six meals a day. They loved parties and gifts as they were eager and delighted to get and give away the gifts. But when the Hobbits returned from their adventurous journey, they found nothing familiar; they couldn't freely step their feet inside their own territory "between sundown and sunrise". Similarly, they were restricted to have extra food, drink and smoke.

'I am sorry, Mr. Merry,' said Hob, 'but it isn't allowed.'

'What isn't allowed?'

'Talking in folk off-hand like, and eating extra food, and all that,' said Hob. (976)

[. . .]. 'All right, all right!' said Sam. That's quite enough. I don't want to hear no more. No welcome, no beer, no smoke, and a lot of rules and orc-talk instead. I hoped to have a rest, but I can see there's work and trouble ahead. (977)

Other Hobbits of the Shire were grasped inside the new rules and regulations. When few of them came out from their house to see the travelers, Frodo and his friends could notice the faces that "did not seem quite sure whether laughing was allowed" (980). Even 'laughing' was treated to be illegal in this newly transformed Shire.

Tolkien's life- experiences has shaped the novel in more than one way.

Tolkien had a group called "Inklings", an informal circle of friends, which included the author C. S. Lewis too. Inklings were the typical English men of their time. They often spent their holiday together, walking through the English countryside and staying at country pubs. They all enjoyed walking, talking, drinking and smoking. The same way of life is crucial to his characters "Hobbits" in the novel. Furthermore, "Inklings" disliked the modern world. They would praise medieval poetry, but

dismiss the latest work by T.S. Eliot. Such coldness towards the Modern World and its effects are portrayed by the description and the actions of the Hobbit, in *The Lord of the Rings*.

Frodo, Sam, Merry and Pippin, together fought to regain the beautiful Shire free from pollution, strict rules and regulations. Hobbits' dislike towards new tall brick buildings and the smoky environment refers to Tolkien and his group Inklings' coldness towards the suburbanization of their place:

The Inklings experienced the gradual loss of this particular version of England. Even as Tolkien assembled the mythology, much of the landscape they loved was being suburbanized. It did not quite become Mordor; but in their eyes Oxford began to look like the industrialized Isengard- and they did not like it. (Blake, 28)

Sam planted the seed given by Lady Galadriel in places where the beautiful trees were destroyed. After some times, Shire regained its greenery and freshness that it had lost:

Spring surpassed his wildest hopes. His trees began to sprout and grow, as if time was in a hurry and wished to make one year do for twenty. . . . In after few years, at it grew in grace and beauty. . . . [. . . .] Not only was there wonderful sunshine and delicious rain, in due times and perfect measure, but there seemed something more: an air of richness and growth, and a gleam of a beauty beyond that of mortal summers that flicker and pass upon this Middle-earth. (1000)

Eventually, the Hobbits succeeded to regain natural peaceful environment instead of noisy, steamy industrial one, which became the example for the whole

Middle-earth. This symbolizes Tolkien's favorable support and likeness for the natural world compared to the industrial world:

Tolkien himself, of course, was deeply hostile to modernity, root and branch- capitalism (especially industrialism), unrestrained science, and state power alike. For him, they were idols whose worship had resulted, in our century, in the most efficient ever devastation of both nature and humanity alike. (Curry, 25)

Mordor as a land of Autocracy

Mordor is a gloomy place ruined by the single hand of Sauron and a typical symbol for the Autocratic state. Every single creature that crept around this land was under the command of Sauron. They were not permitted to walk or talk freely. Even, he commanded the thick cloud to cover his land so that his land remained under the shadow; under the bleakness. The Orcs, Sauron's servants were there to guard on the borders of Mordor. When Frodo and Sam reached the border of the dark land, they could notice the impatient watchers on the gate, who were there to guard during the day and the night: "At the length they came to the door upon the outer court, and they halted. Even from where they stood they felt the malice of the Watchers beating on them, black silent shapes on either side of the gate through which the glare of Mordor dimly showed" (893).

Nobody could pass through the gate of Mordor without the permission of Dark Lord and if any one got inside the border he or she would fall under the shadow of Sauron; and never to be free again. No sign of light and greenery could be found there. Shadow and dryness was the identity of Mordor. No free activities and no free lives. Everything reside under the rules and regulations inscribed by the Dark Lord. Thus, the power remained only in one hand. Therefore, Mordor is a symbolical

Autocratic land where nothing is more important than the rules and obligations passed down by the head.

Frodo and Sam could see the Dark Lord's soldiers spread in different directions performing their appointed tasks. The armies were ordered to prepare for the war planned by the Dark Lord and Frodo and Sam could see the mustering of the armies. They couldn't imagine of how they were alive and working in such a fruitless land and weather:

Frodo and Sam gazed out in mingled loathing and wonder on this hateful land. Between them and the smoking mountain, and about it north and south, all seemed ruinous and dead, a desert burned and chocked. They wondered how the Lord of this realm maintained and fed his slaves and his armies. Yet armies he had [. . .]. (902)

The Autocratic Mordor can be contrasted with the Democratic Shire, where people live happily, freely, with their enduring love and feeling for the members and the place. The Shire stands as an ideal country distinguished by green hills, pleasant woodlands and shining rivers. Most of the inhabitants, here, lead their life by farming and trading. In contrast, Mordor is a place where all these things are far from the reach.

Dead Marshes

Most of the authors' works are occupied by their intentions and experiences of life. Well, that comes true in Tolkien's case too. Among many of the examples, "Dead Marshes" in the novel is one. When Frodo and Sam made their way to Mordor, Gollum led them through an unpleasant region known as the Dead Marshes. There they saw the corpses of slain warriors- Orcs, Men and Elves who died in a battle on the site long before.

‘Yes, yes,’ said Gollum. All dead, all rotten. Elves and Men and Orcs. The Dead Marshes. There was a great battle long ago, yes, so they told him when Smeagol was young, when I was young before the Precious came. It was a great battle. Tall Men with long swords, and terrible Elves, and Orcses shrieking. They fought on the plain for days and months at the Black Gates. (614)

Dead Marshes is a representative landscape ruined by the war between Men, Elves, Dwarves and Orcs. It is presented as a terrible place with nothing more than the dead bodies of all these creatures, ‘Tolkien had actually experienced landscapes like this during the First World War’ (Blake, 27).

The Dead Marshes, further symbolizes the union of the creatures of the earth after their death. Orcs, and Men fought with each other during their life, but joined each other in death as they lay side by side after their death. This unity of each other in death suggests the unity of creation that often goes forgotten or ignored in the world of life. They fought with each other for power, greed and lust during their life but these divisions that lead to war are all frail and meaningless compared to the everlasting togetherness of death. This too represents the ecological force that unites the creatures of the earth. It strongly suggests the current situation of human lives in the world that people are fighting for wealth, power and territory throughout their life but when they die they couldn’t take anything they fought for, except few stride of mud their dead bodies occupy.

Minas Tirith as a symbol of strength and pride

Minas Tirith, the city of great fortress and the capital of Gondor symbolizes the strength and pride of the people of Western lands as the fortress was tall, strong and beautifully carved. A strong fortress indeed, which was evoked by its strong walls and

the gates. The gates of Minas Tirith were set in different directions rather than one direction, so that they could watch and guard the enemy in different directions:

For the fashion of Minas Tirith was such that it was built on seven levels, each delved into the hill, and about each was set a wall, and in each wall was gate. But the gates were not set in a line: the Great Gate in the city Wall was at the east point of the circuit, but the next faced half south, and the third half north, and so to and fro upwards. . . men reached at last the High Court, and the Place of the fountain before the feet of the White Tower: tall and shapely, fifty fathoms its base to the pinnacle, where the banner of the Stewards floated a thousand feet above the plain. (735)

Tall White Tower where the banners of stewards were hanged represented the survival of humankind and hope of future amidst the tension of war and insecurity. The White Tree, which was broken after Sauron's influence and attack on the city is the symbol of the destruction arriving to the city and the replantation of White Tree of Gondor is a sign of the re-establishment of Aragorn's rule. Minas Tirith also symbolizes uncertain condition of the west in the conflict against Mordor. When Denethor, the Steward of Gondor became aware that Sauron was planning to attack Gondor, Denethor as well as his sons, Boromir and Faramir remained astounded. They tried their best to save their land. When Boromir was counting his last breath in the forest near River Anduin, he pleaded with Aragorn to save Minas Tirith: "Farewell, Aragorn! Go to Minas Tirith and save my people! I have failed" (404).

When Sauron was defeated and Aragorn raised to the throne the Tree was replanted which represents the new hope and renewal of Gondor. Thus, the fall of

Minas Tirith symbolizes the destruction or death of human kind while the strength of Minas Tirith represents the survival of human history and human kind.

Isengard as a Symbol of Cruelty

Isengard is another symbolical place for the cruelty of Industrialism. The conflict between the Ents of Fangorn Forest and Saruman's Isengard represents the conflict between the Natural world and the Industrial world. Fangorn Forest used to be full of huge tall trees; green and thick forest. But with the advent of Saruman in Isengard and his emergence of creating weapons for his monstrous armies, he started destroying wood of the Fangorn forest; cutting down big and healthy trees, which led to a slow but destructive attack of Ents towards Isengard.

He and his foul folk are making havoc now. Down on the borders they are felling trees- good trees. Some of the trees they just cut down and leave to rot- orc- mischief that; but most are hewn up and carried off to feed the fires of Orthanc. There is always a smoke rising from Isengard these days. 'Curse him, root and branch! Many of those trees were my friends, creatures I had known from nut and acorn; many had voices of their own that are lost for ever now. (462)

Treebeard's explanation of Isengard and his master to Merry and Pippin clearly exhibits the cruelty of Isengard towards the forest. Continuous rise of smoke in the sky above Isengard hints to the Industrial activities of Isengard. It was enough! The trees of Fangorn Forest finally aimed to destroy the enemy's fort.

'Though Isengard be strong and hard, as cold as stone and bare as bone,

We go, we go, we go to war, to hew the stone and break the door!' (551).

The Ents mustered together and forwarded to fight against their foe, so that they could save their fellow- trees' lives and take fresh air without the black smoke. They

resolved to break down the strong force of Saruman so that they could survive. Finally, the Ents made attack over the Orcs of Isengard and got control over the Orthanc and Saruman. This event suggests that no man holds the power to control the nature and natural activity no matter how powerful he is:

Tolkien plainly had a profound feeling for nature, and perhaps especially its flora; his love of trees shines through everywhere. The sense in *The Lord of the Rings* of a tragically endangered natural world, savaged by human greed and stupidity in every corner of the globe, is confirmed for us in every daily newspaper. (Curry, 27)

The conflict between the nature and human activities presented in the novel finely portrays the modern- day conflict and devastation of natural instincts by the modernized people. Similar to the victory of good creatures over the evil Sauron, Tolkien presents here the victory of Natural world over the Industrial or the Man-made one. In such a way, Tolkien's preference of natural, ecological world can be traced out throughout the events in the novel.

9. Objects as Symbols

Pippin's Pipe: Pippin's smoking pipe symbolizes the bond of friendship that gives strength to the members of the fellowship. For the quest of the Ring, Nine fellowship were chosen in the council of Elrond. At first some of these fellows were completely unknown and suspicious for each other. But with the passage of time together and the advance of their journey, they grew friendly and close with each other.

When Gimli expressed a yearning for a good smoke after their battle with Orcs, Pippin remembered that he had a spare pipe that he had been carrying with him throughout his travels. It was of great personal value to him as he called it a treasure.

‘Half a moment!’ said Pippin. Putting his hand inside the breast of his jacket he pulled out a little soft wallet on a string. ‘I keep a treasure or two near my skin, as precious as Rings to me. Here’s one: my old wooden pipe. And here’s another: an unused one. I have carried it a long way, though I don’t know why. I never really expected to find any pipe- weed on the journey, when my own ran out. But now it comes in useful after all.’ (548)

However, Pippin offered his pipe to Gimli, who said that he was deep in the hobbit’s debt for such a gift. This little pipe offered by Pippin to Gimli was much more than just a trinket given by one friend to another; rather, it is a symbol of the mutual caring and love that binds the Fellowship together. It also suggests the sharing of gifts or tokens with friends in common life, to prove their intimacy and love for each other.

The Sword Anduril: The sword Anduril has been presented as a symbol of unity and rebirth in the novel. The sword once belonged to Elendil was broken when he died, and its shattered remains had been passed down for generations and Aragorn, Elendil’s distant heir, carried the fragments with him. Similar to the fragments of the sword, the lands and people of the Middle-Earth were shattered by the threat of War and unfriendliness that Sauron had spread with his evil power. But when the sword was reforged in Rivendell, renaming it Anduril, Aragorn gained a weapon of great beauty and power which he used to fight against Sauron’s army and regained the peace and unity throughout Middle-Earth. Aragorn regained his Kingdom Gondor and kept friendly relation with other lands and people.

On the other hand, The sword Anduril becomes a symbol for Aragorn himself. Colbert says, “In many cases, the sword is both the signal and the means by which a

rightful dynasty is restored to the throne. Although they are made to end life, they are often symbols of rebirth.” (Colbert,156)

At the initial, we come across the shattered pieces of the sword of Elendil, which was useless and without any charm. Similarly, when Aragorn was at first introduced to the Hobbits as well as the readers in the Prancing Pony, he was simply a Strider, a wanderer. But when the sword was reforged in Rivendell, Aragorn also revealed his lineage. The sword became Aragorn’s identity and his greatness.

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 the king. (167)

The letter that Gandalf wrote for Frodo contained the description of Aragorn. When we first met Aragorn, he appeared to be merely a fatigued, weatherworn Ranger, but later he was revealed to be the heir of an ancient and glorious lineage of Gondor. Just as the sword, initially merely a collection of fragmented metal was transformed into a weapon of great power and vigor, Aragorn was transformed into the King of Gondor, who was able to bind the people of different lands under his friendship and courteousness.

In such a way, in *The Lord of the Rings*, Tolkien has been successful to reflect his life experience and religious view through the use of Christian symbols, his private symbols and some common symbols.

IV. CONCLUSION

The Lord of the Rings can be approached as an exciting adventure story in which good eventually conquers evil. The novel is set in fictional Middle-Earth, which resembles our own world with its own languages, peoples and histories. Outwardly, the novel seems to be based on the pre-Christian world. But while reading it thoroughly and analyzing the symbolism in the text, one can imagine himself in the modern world. Numerous and variety of symbols used in the text makes it more telling as well as complex. The conflict between Good and Evil is the main theme of the novel. Tolkien's symbolism has been shaped-up by his religion and his life-experiences, which are vividly seen in *The Lord of the Rings*. He has derived his theme of good and evil from his religion, apart from that some events in the novel too trace the Christian origin. Eg., Gandalf, the wizard is a kind-hearted character who always fights for good against evil. His return from the mouth of death to stand and fight against evil is symbolical to the Christ's resurrection.

Tolkien has finely reinforced various symbols. The Ring for example, stands for the power which is evil and causes destruction to whoever bears it. Power is an abstract entity which cannot be seen yet its effect exists. This abstract entity has been given a physical structure in the novel by Tolkien. The One Ring is a physical structure of the evil power, which can rule over every creature and every life in the whole Middle-Earth. It was created by the Dark Lord, Sauron with ill-intentions. The Single Ring has created havoc throughout the Middle-Earth and only after its destruction, by casting it down to the Cracks of Doom where it was forged, people finds peace and happy life.

As we have discussed earlier that a symbol may be a person, an object, an event, etc. that stands for something else. Furthermore, a symbol can be a concrete

entity that stands for an abstract idea. In the novel, it is clear that the Ring symbolizes both evil and the power that it possesses. Its mere existence has a potential to corrupt anyone. The person who uses the Ring immediately gets into the act of destructiveness and counter-creativity. The circle of the Ring surrounding the finger symbolizes the encompassing of the world by the evil power.

The account of the Great Ring and the quest of good-people to destroy it is the main story of *The Lord of the Rings*, where Frodo Baggins is a simple hobbit who is destined to carry the Ring and cast it in the Cracks of Doom. Though, Frodo is chosen as a Ring-bearer, Sam the Gardener gives company till the end of the quest. The Sword Anduril stands for unity of Middle-Earth's people. Aragorn, with the reforged sword fights against Sauron and his evil army to bring back peace and unity within the people of different lands of Middle-Earth and is successful in performing the task. Similarly, Pippin's offer of the smoking pipe to Gimli develops friendliness between the two races, Hobbits and the Dwarves. Moreover, the pipe represents the strong bond of friendship that keeps the fellowship of the Ring united. Water and light are the inevitable elements that are necessary for human beings to survive. These two elements stand as the supportive forces for well-beings in the novel and disastrous and harmful for the ill-characters. Water rejuvenates the lives of Frodo, Sam, Merry and Pippin. Even Gandalf comes back alive after his body touched Water. On the other hand, the evil Ringwraiths are swept away by water to their destruction. No wonder Light plays the side of goodness in the novel. Light fills the helpless with hope and energy; Sam and Frodo are encouraged to move ahead for the fulfillment of their quest when they are accompanied by the Light. On the other side, Darkness brings fear and danger with it. Darkness is the representation of evil for the evil land Mordor

is always Dark, the mines of Moria and Shelob's Lair are the places with impenetrable darkness.

Furthermore, Tolkien uses the colours White and Black to represent Good and Evil, respectively. White stands for purity and peace whereas, Black for danger and destruction. In the novel, Black Riders are destructive and fearsome who works under the command of the Dark Lord and are eager to hurt Frodo and his friends. On the contrary, Gandalf, the White and Lady Galadriel; all clad in white, are ready to risk their life and their world for the protection of the helpless people of the Middle-Earth. The contrast in the very nature and intention of two types of characters can be well-represented by the colours, Black and White. Another symbolic object i.e., The Two Towers in the novel, The Barad-Dur of Mordor and The Orthanc of Isengard are the symbolic representation of high ambition and the evil nature of two villains, Sauron and Saruman.

Another aspect of evil developed in Tolkien is the insatiable hunger to possess, to rule, to dominate. The title of the novel, *The Lord of the Rings* itself exhibits the symbolic depiction of the ambition of the villain Sauron. The title is referred to Sauron himself who is the synonym for evil in the novel. The term "Lord" provides us with the idea of the autocratic nature and behavior of Sauron. He loves power and aspires to be the only powerful one who can rule each and every creature that creeps around the Middle-Earth. He wants to capture all the Rings of Power with the help of his powerful One Ring, which he had forged in the heart of Mount Doom, putting all his power and malice into it. In such a way, the title of the novel symbolizes the desire and dream of the evil power which is always hungry to devour. It also advocates the idea that power makes the mind corrupt. The more powerful you are the more power you desire.

The story's another phase is the conflict between Natural and the Industrial world, where Nature always wins. In that sense, Tolkien presents Natural world to be pure and good while Industrialization to be the evil entity which ruins the beauty and purity. Tolkien had seen and experienced the destruction of beautiful lands and pollution of the environment during the two great world wars. Therefore, may be, his work could not escape from same sort of events and places inscribed into it. In the novel, Good is associated with the purity of creation and the preservation of the beauty that has been created. The preservation of beauty and freshness in the land of Elves' Lothlorien and Hobbits' Shire symbolizes this. The Marshes, the borders of Mordor, indeed all of Mordor, itself, is the Wasteland, deprived of beauty, freshness, purity and cleanliness. Little grows, certainly nothing of beauty, and that which grows by effort, like the thorn-bushes in Mordor, struggles to survive but is hurtful. This lack of freshness symbolizes the destructive influences of Evil.

Saruman, the ruler of Isengard ruins the forest of Fangorn by cutting down the trees ruthlessly. He only thinks for his own benefit, makes huge fire and smoke to make weapons and at the same time pollutes the environment. At last, the Ents scattered the stronghold of Saruman by bringing flood over Isengard. This event is symbolical to the natural disaster, which men invite intentionally or unintentionally. Nature itself is presented as a symbol for Good force, as it creates the beautiful world. Tolkien develops the example of creative forces of the natural realm set against the destructive forces of Evil, epitomized by Saruman's Isengard. Saruman has ravaged the forests of Fangorn for wood for his fires. He builds his weapons or engines by destroying the natural world and its beauty. What is replaced by him is ugly. Hence, Tolkien has deplored industrialism and the smoke of factories and machines as the synonym for the evil influence.

In the whole novel, Tolkien's Symbolism has been divided to represent two opposite abstract ideas. They are Good and Evil. For instance, Symbols like The Sword Anduril, Pippin's smoking pipe, Water, Light, and the colour White represents good as they are used for good reasons. Whereas, The One Ring, The Two Towers, Darkness and the Black colour are used to represent the evil in the novel. Isengard's smokes and fumes, Mordor's dark land with shadowy clouds and the brutal hewing down of the Shire's trees are all symbolical to evil instincts. Frodo's spiritual journey, his pity over poor creature Gollum, Galadriel's and Arwen's sacrifice are the prominent examples of Christian symbols in the novel. To conclude, Tolkien's novel, *The Lord of the Rings* holds the powerful and enduring symbols hidden away behind the characters, events and the artefacts of his world.

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