

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **THE HUMAN IMAGE AND THE INTERRELATIONSHIP OF THE ORCS, ELVES AND MEN**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

The Orcs, being among the more deceptive characters in The Lord of The Rings, has distinct similarities with the race of men and elves from the 'free peoples' (The LOTR 453-454) category. There is a form of interconnectedness between the three races that cannot be denied. The bond between the Orcs, elves, and men go beyond the confines of the physical and well into the orientations of history, conflict, symbolism, character delineation, and blurring of images that ultimately unite them. While unravelling the complexities of such relations, I shall be dwelling deeper on the complicated nature of the Orcs by discussing the infusion of the human image in them while drawing comparisons with the race of elves and men. Through such an analysis, I hope to finally distinguish the character of the Orcs from being merely background characters to characters worthy of our attention and essential to the development of the novel.

#### **2.2 The Major Races of Middle-earth**

To begin with, who are the 'free peoples' of Middle-earth? Treebeard the Ent briefly described the origins of the free men and elves that fall under this grouping. The 'free peoples' of Middle-earth consist of the elves, dwarves, Ents, hobbits, and men. They are 'free' because they are independent of Sauron's power and any other powers that be. The Orcs, however, are constantly subjugated to the will of the Dark Lord and do not

belong under this category. Treebeard recited this grouping of the 'free peoples' to Merry and Pippin in Fangorn Forest. It is in fact a catalogue of 'living creatures' from the first race to a selection of beasts, birds, and reptiles:

Learn the lore of Living Creatures!

First name the four, the free peoples

Eldest of all. The elf-children;

Dwarf the delver, dark his houses;

Ent the earth born, old as mountains;

Man the mortal, master of horses;

Merry and Pippin then insist that the catalogue be 'updated' and the race of the hobbits be mentioned in it. Treebeard ponders awhile and realizes his mistake and decides to make a place for them between Ents and men.

Half-grown hobbits, the hole dwellers.

(The LOTR 453-454)

The list of 'living' and 'free creatures' that Treebeard speaks of is pertinent because it lists the various intelligent races of Tolkien's Middle-earth. It is interesting to note that each member of the Fellowship is chosen from this hierarchical chain of being that catalogues several major races in the order of their appearance.

Another important feature of all the 'living creatures' is that they are capable of speech, and in my first chapter I highlighted W.H. Auden's view, that speech constitutes the ability of making moral choices and would denote a certain degree of intelligence. While the Orcs are hardly seen in making moral choices, it is undeniable that they are capable of speech and have a certain degree of intelligence and thus, here lies one of the earliest links of men and elves to the Orcs. The races of elves, dwarves, Ents, hobbits, and men (including the Orcs) are salient, and one important feature is prevalent among them. The feature that I am referring to is of course the image of Man in all the 'free peoples' of Middle-earth as well as the Orcs. This recurring image that is central to our discussion is constantly seen in the race of the Orcs and Elves. The blurring of the human image is then worthy to be studied in the light of such a profound image that could reveal the dynamics of the relationship between races for a greater perception and understanding of the novel.

### **2.3 The Justification for Middle-earth**

It is in this image that the diverse and multifaceted 'free peoples' of Tolkien's world complement one another. As rich and detailed as they may be, I shall only be conducting a study on the race of the elves and men because they are the only two races that have the closest possible association with the Orcs in terms of origin, conflict and resemblance. Before this is fully dealt with, we must understand the reason for Tolkien's creative impulses that might shed some light on our understanding of the characters in this study. Being a devout Catholic, Tolkien's reason for writing such an elaborate mythology was for a more intense purpose. He believed that:

...in one sense he was writing the truth . He did not suppose that precisely such peoples as he described, “elves”, “dwarves”, and malevolent “orcs”, had walked the earth and done the deeds that he recorded. But he did feel, or hope, that his stories were in some sense an embodiment of a profound truth. (Carpenter 99)

What was this ‘profound truth’ that Tolkien spoke about? Tolkien has said that while writing The Silmarillion, his actions were more than that of a writer creating tales of the mind. This ‘truth’ lay embedded in him and grew accordingly as it progresses. According to Tolkien, the ‘truth’ that he was writing about:

...arose in my mind as “given things”, and as they came, separately, so too the links grew. An absorbing, though continually interrupted labour (especially, even apart from the necessities of life, since the mind would wing to the other pole and spread itself on the linguistics): yet always I had the sense of recording what was already “there”, somewhere: not of “inventing”. (qtd. in Carpenter 100)

For Tolkien, his asserted role of a mythmaker is not complete in merely conjuring a world that he thinks should be real; it is also about universal truths and fundamental Christian values. The core of such a creation should also never exclude the spiritual aspect of it. In this respect, Tolkien’s Middle-earth contains a geography that is not only ‘latent and symbolic’ but:

... where mysteries are forever beyond the reach of objective examination meet us on every hand, as indeed they do the great physicist, in such “contemptible” things as matter and light. It is a world in which God still happens to be alive and man is still responsible, an elusive but not at all illusive world. (Kilby 75)

It is also of primary importance to note that Tolkien’s The LOTR is not an overtly religious piece of work and while the presence of God is felt and the image of Man is infused in many of his characters, Man himself has an important role to play in carrying out God’s designated plan. Middle-earth is thus not a world that is devoid of any relevance to our world, in fact Middle-earth is earth as it is. While conceptualising it, Tolkien also wanted:

...the mythological and legendary stories to express his own view of the universe; as a Christian he could not place this view in a cosmos without the God that he has worshipped. At the same time, to set his stories “realistically” in the known world, where religious beliefs were explicitly Christian, would deprive them of imaginative colour. So while God is present in Tolkien’s universe, He remains unseen. (Carpenter 99)

Thus we sense the importance of Man and the influence of God in Tolkien’s work. With this in mind, my focus is also to show the importance of the elusive image of Man in the race of the Orcs and their relationship with the race of men and elves.

## 2.4 Orcs and Elves

The Orcs and elves in The LOTR have long been feuding races and a part of Middle-earth's history. They are similar and yet dissimilar in so many ways. Both are bitter rivals from the start and share an almost binary existence that dates back to the creation of Middle-earth's universe. In The Silmarillion, the creation of the elves by Ilúvatar and the capture of some of the elves by Melkor (or otherwise known as Morgoth), to be turned into Orcs, could be the only similarity between the two races in terms of their creation. The creation of the elves as a contrast to the Orcs is described as a sort of an awakening from a deep slumber into a new paradise.

By the starlit mere of Cuivienen, Water of Awakening, they rose from the sleep of Iluvatar; and while they dwelt yet silent by Cuivienen their eyes beheld the first light of all things the stars of heaven. Therefore they have ever loved the starlight, and have revered Varda Elentari above all the Valar. (The Silmarillion 56)

While the creation of the elves was intended to fulfil the grand designs of Iluvatar yet to come, Melkor ensnared some of the elves and '...by slow acts of cruelty were corrupted and enslaved; and thus did Melkor breed the hideous race of Orcs in envy and mockery of the elves, of whom they were afterwards the bitterest foes' (The Silmarillion 58). Thus the Orcs and elves share a very calamitous past that was further worsened when Melkor stole the Silmarils (jewels) of Feanor. There raged total war between the elves and Orcs who were primarily Melkor's servants. The Orcs in The Silmarillion were

described as ruthless creatures who were interested in wanton destruction and full of hatred for the elves. It was also Melkor's doing in instilling his evil will upon his servants that the Orcs became ruthless and violent.

Now the Orcs that multiplied in the darkness of the earth grew strong and fell, and their dark lord filled them with a lust of ruin and death; and they issued from Angband's gates under the clouds that Morgoth sent forth, and passed silently into the highlands of the north. (The Silmarillion 113)

The Orcs were also responsible for slaying Denethor, leader of the Nandorin elves in The Silmarillion, and the many more battles between them proved only to be vengeful in nature.

But the victory of the Elves was dear-bought. For those of Ossiriand were light-armed, and no match for the Orcs, who were shod with iron and iron-shielded and bore great spears with broad blades; and Denethor was cut off and surrounded upon the hill of Amon Ereb. There he fell and all his nearest kin about him... (The Silmarillion 113-114)

Another example of their ancient battles was fought when the Noldor elves drove the Orcs away in the Battle-under Stars.

The Noldor, outnumbered and taken at unawares, were yet swiftly victorious; for the light of Aman was not yet dimmed in their eyes, and they were strong and swift, and deadly in anger, and their swords were long and terrible. The Orcs fled before them, and were driven forth from Mithrim with great slaughter...(The Silmarillion 126)

The connection between the Orcs and the elves can be seen from the aspect of their creation and the deep animosity between them from the times of The Silmarillion to the present Third Age struggle in The LOTR. The struggle between the Orcs and elves is then renewed in a consistent manner that draws parallel to The Silmarillion. Like inseparable entities, both races continue the rhythm and flow of the tale that sees the tension between them growing in a similar pattern. The close involvement of the Orcs and the elves is thus deeply intertwined with the struggle of a higher cause that involves powerful forces of good and evil.

In The LOTR the lines are drawn between the Orcs and elves and the battle for the One Ring sees the Orcs once again under another dark lord, this time Melkor's lieutenant who holds the reins of evil power. The elves now come under a Fellowship with the other free races, to unite for the common cause of freedom and goodwill for all of Middle-earth. The Orcs not only serve as a precursor of darker events and uncertainty but they provide the necessary tension with the elves and other free peoples of Middle-earth.



That name the hobbits only knew in legends of the dark past, like a shadow in the background of their memories; but it was ominous and disquieting. It seemed that the real evil in Mirkwood had been driven out by the white Council only to reappear in greater strength in the old strongholds of Mordor. The Dark Tower had been rebuilt, it was said. From there the power was spreading far and wide, and away far east and south there were wars and growing fear. Orcs were multiplying again in the mountains. (The LOTR 45)

The correlation between these two races goes beyond the boundaries of opposition and in Tolkien's portrayal of the Orcs and elves, he made it clear from the beginning that they share a common source of existence, the will of Ilúvatar. In Tolkien's The Silmarillion, the confrontation between Orcs and elves has its continuity in The LOTR and Tolkien has made this enmity consistent to the very end. The Orcs and elves still reprise their roles as mortal enemies. Elrond says in the council that the threat of the enemy is growing and must be contained at all cost.

Not all his servants and chattels are wraiths! There are orcs and trolls, there are wargs and werewolves; and there have been and still are many Men, warriors and kings, that walk alive under the Sun, and yet are under his sway. And their number is growing daily. (The LOTR 216)

The growing threat of the Orcs is evident when Legolas was attacked by a horde of Orcs and as a result, Gollum was lost. ‘It was that very night of summer, yet moonless and starless, that Orcs came on us at unawares. We drove them off after some time; they were many and fierce, but they came from over the mountains, and were unused to the woods’ (The LOTR 249). Haldir, an elf also expressed his loathing for the Orcs as a company of them invaded the sanctity of Lothlorien. ‘A strong company of orcs has passed. They crossed the Nimrodel—curse their foul feet in its clean water! – and went on down the old road beside the river’ (The LOTR 336).

These examples only serve to show that the Orcs and elves still share a very turbulent and enmity-filled past. They remain two opposing sides that Tolkien maintains as a pattern of conflict in the saga. Their involvement in two major battles with the elves, namely, the Battle of Gladden Fields in which Isildur took the One Ring of Sauron and the Battle of Pelennor Fields were decisive battles that turned the tide of events in the tale. The battles only serve to mark these two races as ancient enemies that remain feuding till the end. By such a depiction, Tolkien has managed to chart the story in a parallel direction just as The Silmarillion and The LOTR are similar to one another. David Colbert comments that:

The parallels between The Silmarillion and The LOTR are fascinating and revealing, starting with the objects at the centre of each story. The Silmarillion gets its name from the Silmarils, three beautiful jewels made by Elves. Like the Rings of Power in LOTR, the Silmarils are made by the

Elves, for the same reason: they want to preserve something beautiful. In LOTR, they wish to preserve certain aspects of Middle-earth; in *The Silmarillion*, they want to capture the light of Two Trees of Valinor, magnificent creations that shine and dim, in turn, on a twelve-hour cycle. In another parallel, both the Rings of Power and the Silmarils have special qualities because they contain powerful forces. The One Ring that Tolkien created for the LOTR is the mirror image of the Silmarils: it contains the essence of the Dark Lord—a neat storytelling twist on the jewels, which hold light. Tolkien's use of his own legends in LOTR includes characters copied from originals in *The Silmarillion*, and again the First Age reveals much about the Third Age. (Colbert 136)

## **2.5 Orcs and Men**

From the interrelationship between Orcs and elves, I shall move on to show the affinity of the Orcs with the race of men in *The LOTR*. Like the elves, the race of men had their fair share of troubles with the Orcs. Melkor, the first dark lord of ancient Middle-earth, vowed to disunite elves and men and anything else that was created by the will of Ilúvatar. The more he couldn't thwart Ilúvatar's plans, the more determined he was in creating chaos in the land.

But Morgoth, seeing that by lies and deceits he could not yet wholly estrange Elves and Men, was filled with wrath, and endeavoured to do Men what hurt he could. Therefore he sent out an Orc-raid, and passing

east it escaped the leaguer, and came in stealth back over Ered Lindon...and fell upon the Haladin the southern woods of the land of Caranthir. (The Silmarillion 175)

And in The LOTR, we have an example of conflict between Orcs and men. Eomer, the Third Marshall of Riddermark tells Gimli the reason for his people's hatred for the Orcs.

Some years ago the Lord of the Black Land wished to purchase horses of us at a great price, but we refused him, for he puts beasts to evil use. Then he sent plundering orcs, and they carry off what they can, choosing always the black horses: few of these are now left. For that reason our feud with the orcs is bitter. (The LOTR 426)

The race of men consists of several different communities, the earliest of which were the First House of Beor, the Second House of Haladin, and the Third House Of Hadar. In the First Age, there were the Easterlings and Swarthy Men who were evil and '...proved unfaithful and though feigning friendship with the Elves, they betrayed them to Morgoth, the Dark Enemy' (Day 154). In the Vales of Anduin, the Northmen of Rhovanian (now the people of Rohan) dwelled there while those who followed the elves to the South were the famed Dunedain, the Men of Westernesse Island or otherwise known as the Numenoreans. The Numenoreans later became a great seafaring nation before the Valars destroyed the island. Isildur and Aragorn were from the bloodline of the

Dunedain. The other groups of men include barbaric Men of the South, the Haradim, Dunlendings, Easterlings and Variags The Balchoth, Wainriders, Beornings, Lake Men of Esgaroth, the Bardings of Dale are from the east and North.

What shall be discussed specifically is the blurring of the physical attributes between the Orcs and men and the role of the human image in the Orcs. Here it is pertinent to discuss the Uruk-hais for they are one of the newer breeds of greater Orcs who were made by Saruman and Sauron for diabolical purposes. Tyler describes the Uruks to be:

...a new strain of orcs bred in secrecy by him (Sauron) in Mordor towards the end of the Third Age, and said (by his enemies) to have created the Uruk-hais by the blending of the races of Orcs and Men. It is certain, however, that (so far as Orcs went) the Uruk-hai were a far superior breed, being taller and stronger, with great endurance, and an altogether higher level of intelligence. For these reasons alone they were greatly to be feared. (Tyler 498)

The Uruk-hais, being the new breed of foot soldiers with 'improvements' in them emerges as a new threat to all of Middle-earth. The most notorious of them are the Isengarders, or the Uruk-hais of Saruman; they are also called Uruks and under the banner of The White Hand of the wizard, wage battle with the people of Rohan at Helm's Deep. So much devastation had they caused in cutting down ancient trees of Fangorn

Forest to feed the furnaces of Isengard that Treebeard is deeply angered at Saruman for creating such a horror as the Uruk-hais.

And now it is clear that he is a black traitor. He has taken up with foul folk, with the Orcs. Brm, hoom! Worse than that: he has been doing something to them; something dangerous. For these Isengarders are more like *wicked Men* (my emphasis). It is a mark of evil things to come in the Great Darkness that they cannot abide the Sun; but Saruman's Orcs can endure it, even if they hate it. I wonder what he has done? Are they Men he has ruined, or has he blended the races of Orcs and Men? That would be black evil! (The LOTR 462)

Thus it would seem that the blending of races between Orcs and men is something that is forbidden. It is against the laws of nature for the race of men and Orcs to crossbreed and since evil sorcery was used to produce this unnatural race, the laws of the universe and the will of the creator had been violated. Ugly, devious, cruel, and even cannibalistic, the Orcs and the Uruk-hais seem to be portraying Man in his most primitive existence. It is an image of violence, savagery, and primitiveness that one finds in the race of the Uruks. Compared to the race of lesser Orcs, this new breed of Orcs seems to exemplify a closer resemblance to Man. One example was when Aragorn, Gimli, and Legolas were inspecting some of the Orcs they had slain; a curious physical resemblance was noted.

And Aragorn looked on the slain, and he said: 'Here lie many that are not folk of Mordor. Some are from the North, from the Misty Mountains, if I know anything of Orcs and their kinds. And here are others strange to me. Their gear is not after the manner of Orcs at all!

They were four goblin-soldiers of greater stature, swart, slant-eyed with thick legs and large hands. They were armed with short broad-bladed swords, not with curved scimitars usual with Orcs; and they had bows of yew, in length and shape like bows of Men. (The LOTR 405)

The mélange between Orcs and men even appear in the race of half-orcs of whom Foster describes to be '...the product of a cross between Men and Orcs. Although tall as Men, they were sallow-faced and squint-eyed' (Foster 185). From the above examples, it seems that the Uruk-hais have a certain likeness to men but in the race of half-orcs, Tolkien shows us examples of men who in turn resemble Orcs. The blurring of the image of men and Orcs appears in the chapter entitled 'The Scouring of The Shire'. In this chapter, the Chief's Men (half-orcs of Saruman) have taken control of the Shire. Merry and Sam chance upon some of the men and note that their likeness is in fact disturbing.

When they reached *The Green Dragon*, the last house on the Hobbiton side, now lifeless and with broken windows, they were disturbed to see half a dozen large ill-favoured Men lounging against the inn-wall; they were squint-eyed and sallow-faced.

'Like that friend of Bill Ferny's friend at Bree,' said Sam.

‘Like many that I saw at Isengard,’ muttered Merry.

(The LOTR 981)

In another instance, when the hobbits were engaged in a battle with the Chief’s Men, Merry in the heat of the moment ‘...slew the leader, a great squint-eyed brute like a huge Orc. Then he drew his forces off, encircling the last remnant of the Men in a wide ring of archers’ (The LOTR 992). The recurring blurring of Orcs and men in various parts of the novel seems to suggest a play of images that mirror Tolkien’s view of humanity. The lesser Orcs, Uruk-hais and half-orcs (who are called ‘ruffians’ in the Shire) seem to project images of Man in different shades of diabolical behaviour.

## **2.6 The Image of Man and the interrelationship of the Orcs with Elves and Men**

Tormented, confused and angry, the Orcs are men at a very fragmented state of existence. In general, the Orcs represent men who are evil and cruel, but that does not mean that they are not entirely irredeemable. The introduction of two separate Orc breeds by Tolkien could signify and reaffirm how complex Tolkien sees the image of Man in both versions but it is undeniable that a stronger image of Man lies in the Uruk-hais and half-orcs because of the similarities of their physical traits. In the Uruk-hais, Tolkien wanted a new breed of evil, deeply feared and with a stronger resemblance to Man to reinforce our involvement at a deeper level. The Uruk-hais represent Man at a deeply fragmented stage and in an era of new complexities besieging humanity. Therefore man’s image must be made stronger to signify humanity’s deeper involvement in the struggles of the Third Age and subsequently before the coming of the Age of Man, the



Fourth Age. This could be the reason why we do not see any other images of evil embodying the likeness of Man. This seems to justify then the importance of the Orcs to highlight the diverse nature of men, from their tormented side to other multiple facets of their character.

In regard to the interrelationship of the Orcs to men, the elves too, share a close resemblance to the race of men in many ways.

Immortal were the Elves, and their wisdom waxed from age to age, and no sickness nor pestilence brought death to them. Their bodies indeed were the stuff of Earth, and could be destroyed; and in those days they were more like the bodies of Men, since they had not so long been inhabited by the fire of their spirit, which consumes them from within in the courses of time. (The Silmarillion 124)

The elves may have similar physical attributes to Man including their avidity and outlook on life, but what sets them apart is the immortality of the elves and the fact that when they die, their spirits would venture to the Halls of Mandos ('Houses of the Dead', The Silmarillion 408) and paradise for the elves would be a journey to the Undying Lands/Deathless Lands in a time unknown to them. For the elves, the 'Undying Lands' is a parallel to the desires of Man; though they will never grow old, their continued existence on Middle-earth will be a sorrowful experience for them as dictated in the will

of Ilúvatar. Hence, the need for a 'return' is a must for the elves as they make way for the dominion of men in the fourth age.

The physical bodies of the elves are equivalent to those of men but it is their physical fairness that denotes their great wisdom and ethereal origin. Theirs is a manner of existence that is perhaps akin to the perfect or almost perfect race of men envisioned by Tolkien. The elves represent the human race at its highest levels of achievement; they constantly crave for perfection in all matters pertaining to all branches of knowledge and the arts. It is described, 'in those days Elves and Men were of like stature and strength of body, but the Elves had greater wisdom, and skill and beauty...' (The Silmarillion 123).

The elves have the most perfect and ideal human passions that are contrasted to the most basic human desires of the Orcs. Humphrey Carpenter says the elves epitomize Man before the Fall.

They are all intents and purposes *men*; or rather Man before the Fall which deprived him of his powers of achievement. Tolkien believed devoutly that there had once been an Eden on Earth, and that man's original sin and subsequent dethronement were responsible for the ills of the world; but his elves, though capable of sin and error, have not 'fallen' in the theological sense, and so are able to achieve much beyond the powers of men. They are craftsmen, poets, scribes, creators of works of beauty far surpassing human artefacts. Most important of all they are, unless slain in battle,

immortal. Old age, disease, and death do not bring their work to an end while it is still unfinished or imperfect. They are therefore the ideal of every artist. (100-101)

These, then, are the elves of The Silmarillion, and of The Lord of the Rings. Tolkien himself summed up their nature when he wrote of them: 'They are made by man in his own image and likeness; but freed from those limitations which he feels most to press upon him. They are immortal, and their will is directly effective for the achievement of imagination and desire' (qtd. in Carpenter 101).

Thus, just as the race of the Orcs are related to elves in terms of their origin and conflict, and to the race of men in the blurring of physical likeness, the interrelationship of Orcs to both elves and men is very much consistent with the deep involvement of the major races in the story. It is by highlighting the relationship of the Orcs to the other two major races that I hope such interconnectedness gives depth to the importance of the Orcs in their role as purveyors of tension and conflict in the story. The Orcs also share a bond with elves and men in the unifying human image that exists in all three races. For the Orcs, man's likeness has empowered their character to a point of realism. Tolkien achieves this in the characterization of the many different races and creatures in the novel.

Most of the other creatures are more or less 'human,' with human-like motives and responses. The use of superficially nonhuman beings is

Tolkien's method of characterization: "Much that in a realistic work would be done by 'character delineation' is here done simply by making the character an elf, a dwarf, or a hobbit. The imagined beings have their insides on the outside; they are visible souls. (qtd. in Gasque 156)

The infusion of the image of Man creates coherence and unity while making it easier for readers to relate to the characters presented in the novel. With similar physical attributes, human emotions and experiences, a reader would be able to identify with the characters while affirming and acknowledging their roles and values. It must be understood that Tolkien constantly utilizes the image of Man that is embedded in various races of the epic, to make his tale believable.

Tolkien keeps probing into various facets of the differences between elf and mortal as the epic runs its course. But he knows he must keep showing resemblances, too, if we are to believe in the elves. (Kocher 91)

With regard to the Orcs, Tolkien's 'probing' of the human image has not only made them believable but he has shown such affiliations as recognisable human relationships. It is the '...mythical and heroic quality' (Lewis 15) of men that Tolkien finds inspiration from to fuse subtle humanistic nuances in his story. This he does with great effect in The LOTR, portraying Middle-earth as a world with a diverse society of other races other than Man, who rules and reigns in their own sovereign states. Indirectly, there is something that can be learned even from the hobbits themselves. As a result,

Tolkien has created a host of beings with their own language, culture and history to give us Middle-earth. From his imagination, Tolkien has wrought a believable tale with believable races and creatures that resemble and divulge human passions because it is an obviously human audience he is writing for, and Christian too.

But Tolkien is one of us: a member of the race of men, in the twentieth century after Christ. And we only know one intelligent race: our own. The three divisions of human beings (*Hobbits, Elves and Men*) which we call 'races' are merely subdivisions of one basic kind of being.

Since we only know one kind of intelligent being, our imagination is limited. We have only one kind of experience to draw on in trying to portray persons of other races. What we do, therefore-what any author trying to show other beings does-is to use aspects of the one rational race we do know. And of course our one race does have as many different aspects as one could wish. Partly, then, Tolkien's seven different races are aspects of man. (Rogers 70-71)

With the distorted human image 'planted' firmly in the race of the Orcs, we are given another view of humankind in its pristine state from the race of the elves. The human image then serves as a subtle reminder to us so that we do not emulate the Orcs and their darker passions but to follow the example of the elves and to strive for perfection and goodwill. This process of identification of the human image then serves as a method for us to recognise fundamental values of goodness. While Tolkien does not

dismiss the Orcs completely, he is saying that it is *better* to follow the examples of the elves and perhaps even the hobbits.

## 2.7 Conclusion

While it is undeniable that the Orcs are often associated with wickedness and violence, they are creatures with the human image embedded in them and perhaps it is in this light that Tolkien wants us to look at every race on Middle-earth (including the Orcs) as being affiliated with humanity at large. It is through this that we recognise the diverse human experiences to be universally linked. Even in the parallel world of Middle-earth, the multiplicities of races are all extensions of Man. And in the case of the Orcs, the blurring of the human image reconciles us to the condition of the Orcs, who are slaves of Melkor and Sauron, corrupted and forced to serve him for all eternity. Feelings of compassion might be felt for this malignant race and it is here that the human image has successfully elevated the Orcs as a race to be pitied and feared at the same time.

By justifying the relationship and involvement of the Orcs to elves and men, I hope I have established the complexity, diversity and affinity of the Orcs. The existence of the Orcs then would not be seen as merely an insignificant race but one that is vital to the overall meaning of the tale as well. C.S. Lewis has said that Tolkien's characters all play a vital role in the story.

...no individual, and no species, seems to exist only for the sake of the plot. All exist in their own right and would have been worth creating for the mere flavour even if they had been irrelevant. (Lewis 14)

With this in mind, the importance of the image of Man in the Orcs, elves, and men is undeniable to say the least. This image also gives some depth to the Orcs as a shadowy and complex image of terror that is elusive in the saga. The existence of the Orcs then is consistent with the characters of men and elves, and the intricate mythology of Middle-earth. The strong image of Man in the Orcs serves as an important symbol that reflects the universal conditions of Man. Their embodiment of the fragmented image of humanity speaks of the plight of the human self that begs the understanding of a global audience towards the misguided race of the Orcs. This image also unites the three races and portrays the multiplicity of human conditions within the entire network of humanity of Middle-earth. By drawing on the image of Man, Tolkien has built the foundations of Middle-earth on common experiences and images that compel the reader towards an understanding of humanity and self.