Universiteit
Leiden
The Netherlands

The spiritual Tolkien milieu : a study of fiction-based religion

Davidsen, M.A.

Citation
Davidsen, M. A. (2014, October 16). *The spiritual Tolkien milieu : a study of fiction-based religion*. Retrieved from https://hdl.handle.net/1887/29078

Version:	Corrected Publisher's Version
License:	Licence agreement concerning inclusion of doctoral thesis in the Institutional Repository of the University of Leiden
Downloaded from:	https://hdl.handle.net/1887/29078

Note: To cite this publication please use the final published version (if applicable).

Cover Page

Universiteit Leiden

Leiden University Repository

The handle http://hdl.handle.net/1887/29078 holds various files of this Leiden University dissertation

Author: Davidsen, Markus Altena
Title: The spiritual Tolkien milieu : a study of fiction-based religion
Issue Date: 2014-10-16

The Spiritual Tolkien Milieu
A Study of Fiction-based Religion

Proefschrift

ter verkrijging van de graad van Doctor aan de Universiteit Leiden,
op gezag van de Rector Magnificus Prof.mr. C.J.J.M. Stolker,
volgens besluit van het College voor Promoties
te verdedigen op donderdag 16 oktober 2014 klokke 13:45

door

Markus Altena Davidsen

Geboren te Aarhus in 1981

Promotiecommissie

Promotor	Prof.dr. A.F. de Jong
Overige leden	Prof.dr. W.J. Hanegraaff
	Dr. W. Hofstee
	Prof.dr. A. Klostergaard Petersen
	Prof.dr. E.G.E. van der Wall

Markus Altena Davidsen © 2014. No part of this work may be reproduced without the author's explicit permission.

Brief Table of Contents

Introduction 16

Part I: A Theoretical Framework for the Study of Fiction-based Religion 47
Chapter 1. Individual Religion and the Post-traditional Religious Field 48
Chapter 2. Fiction-based Religion 69
Chapter 3. The Religious Affordances of Fictional Narratives 96
Chapter 4. Religious Blending in Fiction-based Religion 105
Chapter 5. Dynamics of Belief in Religious Traditions 120

Part II: The Spiritual Milieu Based on J.R.R. Tolkien's Literary Mythology 147
Chapter 6. Method: Data Collection and Analytical Strategy 148
Chapter 7. The Religious Affordances of *The Lord of the Rings* 163
Chapter 8. An Unexpected Success: Hippies, Neo-Pagans, and *The Lord of the Rings* 185
Chapter 9. The Religious Affordances of *The Silmarillion* 205
Chapter 10. The Tribunal of the Sidhe: A Case Study of Religious Blending 216
Chapter 11. The Elven Movement: A Case Study of Construction and Maintenance of Plausibility 238
Chapter 12. Esoteric Historians on the 'Truth' Behind Tolkien's Elves 276
Chapter 13. Summoning the Valar, Divining with Elves: Tolkien and Western Magic 290
Chapter 14. Peter Jackson's Movies and Middle-earth Paganism 315
Chapter 15. The Religious Affordances of *The History of Middle-Earth* and of Tolkien's Letters and Essays 343
Chapter 16. Legendarium Reconstructionism: A Case Study of Tolkien-based Religion 379

Conclusion: Sixteen Theses on Tolkien Religion 432

Bibliography 458
English Summary 499
Nederlandse Samenvatting 511
Curriculum Vitae 524

Comprehensive Table of Contents

The Spiritual Tolkien Milieu 1
A Study of Fiction-based Religion 1
Brief Table of Contents 3
Comprehensive Table of Contents 4
List of Tables and Figures 10
Acknowledgements 12
Abbreviations 14
Introduction 16
0.1. A Spiritual Milieu Based on J.R.R. Tolkien's Literary Mythology 18
0.2. Earlier Approaches to Tolkien and Religion 20
0.2.1. The Spiritual Dimension of *Lord of the Rings* Fandom 21
0.2.2. Tolkien Studies on the Theology of Tolkien's Literary Mythology 21
0.3. Research Questions and General Approach 24
0.3.1. Fiction-based Religion as Religious Blending 27
0.3.2. Religious Affordances of Fictional Texts 29
0.3.3. Religion Defined Substantively 30
0.3.4. Elemental Religion and Rationalised Religion 32
0.3.5. Philosophical Assumptions 36
0.4. The Road Ahead 38
0.4.1. Part I: A Theoretical Framework for the Study of Fiction-based Religion 38
0.4.2. Part II: The Spiritual Milieu Based on J.R.R. Tolkien's Literary Mythology 41

Part I: A Theoretical Framework for the Study of Fiction-based Religion 47
Chapter 1. Individual Religion and the Post-traditional Religious Field 48
1.1. Subjectivisation 48
1.2. Transformations and Constitution of the Religious Field 50
1.2.1. Wouter Hanegraaff on the Autonomisation of Spiritualities 51
1.2.2. Deinstitutionalisation, Detraditionalisation, and Dedogmatisation in the Religious Field 53
1.2.3. The Constitution of the Religious Field 57
1.3. The Post-traditional Religious Field as a Cultic Milieu 59
1.4. Research on Post-traditional Individual Religion 64
1.4.1. The Cataloguing Approach 64
1.4.2. The Normative Approach 65
1.4.3. The Social-Scientific Approach 67
Chapter 2. Fiction-based Religion 70
2.1. 'Hyper-real' or 'Fiction-based' as Qualifiers for Religion Based on Popular Culture 71
2.1.1. Jean Baudrillard on the Hyper-Reality of Religion in General 71
2.1.2. Conceptualising Fiction-based Religion against 'History'-based Religion 75
2.1.3. Conceptualising Fiction-based Religion against Fandom 83
2.2. Varieties of Interaction between Fiction and Religion 86
2.2.1. Degrees of Fiction-basedness: Fiction-inspired, Fiction-integrating, and Fiction-based Religion 87

2.2.2. Religious-didactic Fiction 89
2.3. Theosophy as a Case Study of Fiction-inspired Religion 90
Chapter 3. The Religious Affordances of Fictional Narratives 96
3.1. Textual Affordances and the Semiosic Process of Reading 97
3.2. Four Types of Religious Affordances 99
Chapter 4. Religious Blending in Fiction-based Religion 105
4.1. Types of Religious Blending 106
4.1.1. Two Forms of Bricolage: Integrative and Supplementary 107
4.1.2. Syncretic Processes in Fiction-based Religion: Mixture, Assimilation, Synthesis, and Acculturation 109
4.2. Religious Blending on the Concept Level 111
4.2.1. Transfer, Synonymisation, and Domestication of Religious Concepts 111
4.2.2. Conceptual Blending Theory Applied to Religious Concept Metamorphosis 113
Chapter 5. Dynamics of Belief in Religious Traditions 120
5.1. Structure and Dynamics of Religious Traditions 122
5.1.1. The Structure of Religious Traditions: Four Loci of Belief 122
5.1.2. The Dynamics of Belief in Religious Traditions 125
5.1.3. The Dynamics of Belief in the Spiritual Tolkien Milieu 127
5.1.4. Justification of Beliefs: Legitimisation and Relativisation 128
5.2. Ontology Assessment: Reflective Processes of Affirmation and Transformation 131
5.2.1. Assessing the Ontological Status of Supernatural Entities 133
5.2.2. Assessing the Referentiality of Religious Narratives and Supernatural Fiction 137
5.3. The Metaphorical Turn Thesis 144

Part II: The Spiritual Milieu Based on J.R.R. Tolkien's Literary Mythology 147
Chapter 6. Method: Data Collection and Analytical Strategy 148
6.1. Methods of Data Collection 148
6.1.1. Sampling and Possible Island Effect 148
6.1.2. Overview of the Empirical Material 152
6.2. Analytical Strategy 156
6.2.1. The First Analytical Stream: Tolkien's Literary Mythology 156
6.2.2. The Second Analytical Stream: The Spiritual Tolkien Milieu 157
Chapter 7. The Religious Affordances of *The Lord of the Rings* 163
7.1. Fantastic Elements in *The Lord of the Rings* 164
7.1.1. Beings, Races, and Bloodlines 164
7.1.2. Otherworlds: Rivendell, Lothlórien, and the Blessed Realm in the West 166
7.1.3. Magic 167
7.1.4. Intuitions, Dreams, Visions, and Prophecies as Sources of Knowledge 168
7.2. Narrative Religion in *The Lord of the Rings* 169
7.2.1. Divine Powers in *The Lord of the Rings*: The One and the Valar 169
7.2.2. Morality and Values in *The Lord of the Rings* 171
7.2.3. Cosmology, Eschatology, and Afterlife in *The Lord of the Rings* 172
7.2.4. Rituals in *The Lord of the Rings* 174
7.3. Thematisation of the Veracity of *The Lord of the Rings* 176
7.3.1. The Frame Narrative in *The Lord of the Rings* 176

7.3.2. The Motif of 'True Tales' in the Discourse of Authoritative Characters 179
7.3.3. The Levels of Communication in *The Lord of the Rings* and the Reading Modes they Afford 180
7.4. Summary: The Religious Affordances of *The Lord of the Rings* 183
Chapter 8. An Unexpected Success: Hippies, Neo-Pagans, and *The Lord of the Rings* 185
8.1. The 1965 Paperback of *The Lord of the Rings* 186
8.2. Tolkien in the Counter-Culture 187
8.2.1. Hobbits and Hippies: Shire-Life as Social Model 188
8.2.2. Tolkien and the Commune Movement: The Case of De Hobbitstee 189
8.2.3. Tolkien and Environmentalism 191
8.3. The Neo-Pagan Movement and *The Lord of the Rings* 191
8.3.1. The Neo-Pagan Movement 192
8.3.2. Metaphorical Binoculars: Neo-Pagan Readings of Tolkien 198
8.3.3. *The Lord of the Rings* and Pagan Fantasy 200
8.4. The Mojave Desert Group 202
8.5. Religion Inspired by *The Lord of the Rings*: A Summary 203
Chapter 9. The Religious Affordances of *The Silmarillion* 205
9.1. Narrative Religion in *The Silmarillion* 206
9.1.1. Cosmogony: *The Music of the Ainur* 206
9.1.2. Theology: The Valar and the Maiar 207
9.1.3. Cosmology: The Wars between Good and Evil and the Reshaping of the World 208
9.1.4. On the Nature and Power of Evil 209
9.1.5. Rituals 211
9.1.6. Eschatology and Afterlife 211
9.2. Fantastic Elements in *The Silmarillion* 212
9.2.1. Beings, Races, and Bloodlines 212
9.3. Note on Veracity 214
9.4. The Combined Religious Affordances of *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Silmarillion* 214
Chapter 10. The Tribunal of the Sidhe: A Case Study of Religious Blending 216
10.1. The Tribunal of the Sidhe as Tolkien-integrating Religion 217
10.2. Religious Blending on the Tradition Level: The Tribunal of the Sidhe as Religious Synthesis 220
10.2.1. Robert Graves' Tuatha Dé Dannan and Theosophy's Astral Fairies 221
10.2.2. The Integration of Tolkien's Literary Mythology 226
10.3. Religious Blending on the Concept Level: Domestication and Compression in the Tribunal of the Sidhe 229
10.3.1. *Sídhe*, Satyrs, and Elves as 'Kin Folk': Domestication through Categorisation 230
10.3.2. The Category of Changelings: Constructing an Identity through Compression 231
10.4. The Social Organisation of the Tribunal of the Sidhe and the Group's Place within the Spiritual Tolkien Milieu 234
10.5. Some Other Tolkien-integrating Pagan Paths 236
Chapter 11. The Elven Movement: A Case Study of Construction and Maintenance of Plausibility 238
11.1. Tolkienesque Beginnings: The Elf Queen's Daughters and the Silver Elves 239
11.2. Growth and Consolidation: The Elven Community after 1990 245
11.2.1. The Internet and the Emergence of an Online Elven Community 245

11.2.2. The Otherkin Movement 250
11.2.3. *Changeling: The Dreaming* and Other Role-Playing Games 252
11.2.4. After the Movies: A New Wave of Tolkienesque Elves 254
11.2.5. The Elven Movement as Tolkien-integrating Religion: Summary 256
11.3. Construction and Maintenance of Plausibility in the Elven Movement 258
11.3.1. Semiotic Strategies for Plausibility Construction I: Cultural, Genetic, and Spiritual Rationalisations 258
11.3.2. Semiotic Strategies for Plausibility Construction II: Legitimisation and Relativisation 263
11.3.3. Interpretive and Epistemic Drift: 'Conversion' to Elvishness 267
11.3.4. Plausibility Structures and Plausibility Threats for the Elven Movement 272
Chapter 12. Esoteric Historians on the 'Truth' Behind Tolkien's Elves 276
12.1. The Elven Bloodline: Tolkien and Conspiracy Genealogy 277
12.1.1. The *Sang Réal*: Esoteric Speculations about a Secret Royal Bloodline 277
12.1.2. Laurence Gardner's *Realm of the Ring Lords* as Tolkien-affixing Conspiracy Genealogy 279
12.1.3. Nicholas de Vere's *The Dragon Legacy* as Tolkien-affixing Conspiracy Genealogy 283
12.2. Why Refer to Tolkien? Tolkien's Literary Mythology as a Source of Legitimisation in Conspiracy Genealogy 286
Chapter 13. Summoning the Valar, Divining with Elves: Tolkien and Western Magic 290
13.1. The Valar Working of the Fifth Way Mystery School 291
13.1.1. Steeped in Tolkieniana: The Valar Working as Tolkien-integrating Magic 291
13.1.2. Summoing the Valar: The High Elvish Working as Religious Blending 292
13.1.3. The Truth beyond Tolkien's Created Arda: Rationalisation in the Fifth Way Mystery School 297
13.1.4. The Place of the Valar Working in the Spiritual Tolkien Milieu 298
13.2. Terry Donaldson's *Lord of the Rings* Tarot 299
13.2.1. Divining with Elves: The *Lord of the Rings* Tarot as Tolkien-integrating Magic 299
13.2.2. Integrating Middle-earth into the Golden Dawn Tarot system: The *Lord of the Rings* Tarot as Religious Blending 301
13.2.3. Tolkien as Mythopoeic Channeler: Rationalisation and Legitimisation in Donaldson's *LR* Tarot 304
13.2.4. The Place of the *Lord of the Rings* Tarot in the Spiritual Tolkien Milieu 309
13.3. Tolkien Religion Based on *The Silmarillion*: A Summary 310
Chapter 14. Peter Jackson's Movies and Middle-earth Paganism 315
14.1. The Religious Affordances of Peter Jackson's Movie Adaptation of *The Lord of the Rings* 321
14.1.1. From Book to Script: Main Changes in Story and Narrative Mode 321
14.1.2. Fantastic Elements in Peter Jackson's Movie Adaptation 323
14.1.3. Narrative Religion in Peter Jackson's Movie Adaptation 326
14.2. Middle-earth Paganism 329
14.2.1. A Convergence of Movie Fandom and Eclectic Wicca: The Case of Middle-Earth Pagans 330
14.2.2. The Social Organisation of Middle-Earth Paganism: Reflections on the Fast Collapse of Middle-Earth Pagans 333
14.3. Tolkienesque Elven Groups 335
14.3.1. Children of the Varda 336
14.3.2. Elende 337
14.3.3. Indigo Elves 338

14.4. Movie-Based Tolkien Religion: A Summary 340
Chapter 15. The Religious Affordances of *The History of Middle-Earth* and of Tolkien's Letters and Essays 343
15.1. Thematisation of Veracity in *The History of Middle-earth* 346
15.1.1. The Initial Frame Narrative: *The Cottage of Lost Play* 347
15.1.2. The Unfinished Frame Narratives: *The Lost Road* and *The Notion Club Papers* 348
15.1.3. Thematisation of Veracity in Tolkien's Frame Narratives: Analysis and Summary 352
15.2. Narrative Religion in *The History of Middle-earth* 353
15.2.1. Cosmogony in *The History of Middle-earth* 354
15.2.2. Theology in *The History of Middle-earth* 356
15.2.3. Cosmology in *The History of Middle-earth* 360
15.2.4. Afterlife and Eschatology in *The History of Middle-earth* 361
15.2.5. Narrative Religion in *The History of Middle-earth*: A Summary 364
15.3. The Religious Affordances of Tolkien's Letters and Essays 365
15.3.1. Thematisation of Veracity: Religious Affordances Attributed to Tolkien's Literary Mythology by Tolkien's Personal Beliefs 366
15.3.2. Divine Inspiration: Religious Affordances Attributed to Tolkien's Literary Mythology by Tolkien's Experience of Revelation 372
15.3.3. The Veracity Spill-Over Effect as Conceptual Blending 374
15.4. The Religious Affordances of *The History of Middle-earth* and Tolkien's Letters and Essays: A Summary 377
Chapter 16. Legendarium Reconstructionism: A Case Study of Tolkien-based Religion 379
16.1. History and Social Organisation of Legendarium Reconstructionism 384
16.1.1. The Prehistory of Legendarium Reconstructionism Online 384
16.1.2. The History of Legendarium Reconstructionism Online I: Tië Eldaliéva 389
16.1.3. The History of Legendarium Reconstructionism Online II: Ilsaluntë Valion 392
16.1.4. Membership 395
16.2. Rituals and Ritual Blending in Legendarium Reconstructionism 397
16.2.1. Rituals in Tië Eldaliéva: Inward Acculturation and Belief Elaboration 397
16.2.2. Rituals in Ilsaluntë Valion: Continued Acculturation and Belief Elaboration 404
16.2.3. Ritual Approaches and Blending Patterns in Legendarium Reconstructionism 408
16.3. Rationalisation and Justification in Legendarium Reconstructionism 410
16.3.1. The Reality of Tolkien's Narrative World: Mytho-historical and Mytho-cosmological Approaches 410
16.3.2. The Ontology of Tolkien's Supernatural Beings: Affirmative and Transformative Approaches 415
16.3.3. The Concept of Gnosis: Disagreements on Justification 420
16.3.4. Semiotic Plausibility Construction in Legendarium Reconstructionism: A Summary 425
16.3.5. Revisiting the Four Hypotheses on Religion based on *A History of Middle-earth* 427
16.4. Explaining the Relative Success of the Legendarium Reconstructionist Online Communities 429

Conclusion: Sixteen Theses on Tolkien Religion 432
17.1. The Religious Affordances of Tolkien's Literary Mythology 432
17.2. Patterns of Religious Blending in the Spiritual Tolkien Milieu 442

17.3. The Dynamics of Belief in Tolkien Religion 449
17.4. The Plausibility Structures of Tolkien Religion 454

Bibliography 458
Written Sources 458
Motion Pictures 496
Audio Files 498

English Summary: The Spiritual Tolkien Milieu: A Study of Fiction-based Religion 499
Nederlandse Samenvatting: Het Spirituele Tolkien Milieu: Een Studie van *Fiction-based Religion* 511
Curriculum Vitae 524

List of Tables and Figures

Table 0.1. Overview of the Dissertation 46
Figure 1.1. The Religious Field According to Wouter Hanegraaff 52
Figure 1.2. The Religious Field 57
Table 2.1. The Modes of Mimetic Discourse (Adapted from Ryan) 77
Table 2.2. Three Ideal Types of Fiction-based Religion *Sensu Lato* 88
Figure 2.1. Fiction-based Religious Types in the Post-traditional Religious Field 89
Figure 4.1. Domesticating Synonymisation as Concept Construction through Compression 115
Figure 4.2. Domesticating Transfer as Resemantisation through Selective Projection 116
Figure 4.3. Quendi-modified Fairy/Elf 118
Figure 4.4. Fairy-modified Quendi 118
Figure 5.1. The Dynamics of Belief in an Established Religious Tradition 124
Figure 5.2. The Dynamics of Belief in the Spiritual Tolkien Milieu 128
Figure 5.3. The Epistemic Modalities According to Greimas 130
Figure 5.4. Ontology Assessment of Supernatural Entities (Adapted from Wulff) 133
Table 5.1. Reading Modes for Religious Narratives and Supernatural Fiction 139
Figure 5.5. Reading Modes for Religious Narratives and Supernatural Fiction (Graphically) 143
Figure 6.1. The Main Groups of the Spiritual Tolkien Milieu 151
Table 6.1. Overview of Data Collected from the Spiritual Tolkien Milieu 153
Table 7.1. Levels of Communication and Narration in *LR* 182
Figure 9.1. The Line of Lúthien 213
Figure 10.1. The Changeling Identity Blend 234
Table 11.1. Activity in Elven Realities 249
Figure 11.1. Epistemic Drift to Elvishness 272
Table 13.1. Translations of Arwen's Elbereth Hymn 295
Table 13.2. The Major Arcana of the *LR* Tarot Deck 301
Table 13.3. Overview of Tolkien Religion Based on both *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Silmarillion* 314
Figure 14.1. The Tolkien-Religious Online Network, March 2010 320
Table 14.1. Overview of Tolkien Religion after the Movies 342
Table 15.1. Tolkien's *History of Middle-earth* (after Whittingham 2008, 10) 345
Table 15.2. Valarin Names and Terms (*WJ* 399-401) 358
Figure 15.1. Example of Veracity Spill-Over from Reflective to Narrative Texts 375
Figure 15.2. Mytho-historical Reading Afforded by Frame Story and Letters 376
Table 16.1. Legendarium Reconstructionism Core Members 395
Table 16.2. Legendarium Reconstructionism Member Profiles 396
Table 16.3. A Synoptic Overview of the Structure of Legendarium Reconstructionist Rituals 398
Table 16.4. Tië Eldaliéva Directions and Key Words 400
Table 16.5. Ritual Calendar of Tië Eldaliéva and Ilsaluntë Valion 403
Figure 16.1. An Ilsaluntë Valion Lunar Observation 406
Table 16.6. Three Modes of Legendarium Reconstructionism 409
Table 16.7. Rationalisations of Tolkien's Narrative Cosmology 413
Figure 16.2. The Quendi-*Álfar* Relation as Source-Product Reversal 416
Table 17.1. Overview of the Religious Affordances of Tolkien's Literary Mythology 434

Table 17.2. Comparison of Spirituality Based on Different Tolkien Narratives 436
Table 17.3. Integrative Religious Blending in the Spiritual Tolkien Milieu 443
Table 17.4. Blending Outcomes on the Tradition Level 446
Table 17.5. The Plausibility Structures of a Few Tolkien-based Religious Groups 455

Acknowledgements

I want to express my gratitude to the The Danish Council for Independent Research (Humanities) for awarding me a grant as international PhD student. Thanks are also due to the Coimbra Group of Universities and to H.S.H. Leopold Engelbert Evrard, 13th Duke of Arenberg for awarding me the Arenberg-Coimbra Group Prize for Erasmus Students. The prize of 5000 €, which I spent as a book grant, was of immense value in the early stages of the project.

While working on the dissertation, I had the good fortune to discuss my project with inspiring colleagues from Leiden (where I worked), Aarhus (where I was employed), and abroad. Thanks are due to my supervisor, Ab de Jong, and to Carole Cusack, Gregor Ahn, Dick Houtman, Stef Aupers, Anders Klostergaard Petersen, Wim Hofstee, and Elpine de Boer who all helped me at significant moments and have been great guides into the world of academia. I am particularly grateful to Meerten B. ter Borg, my supervisor throughout most of the project, for his support and faith in me. For inspiring discussions, I also thank Egil Asprem and William Arfman, the members of the Noster network group on New Spirituality, and my fellow PhD students in Leiden, especially Merel Kahmann, Tineke Rooijakkers, and Annemarie van Stee. During the final writing stage, I visited the department for the History of Religion in Bergen, Norway where I benefitted from stimulating conversations with Michael Stausberg, Ingvild Gilhus, and others. Portions of the dissertation have been presented at conferences and seminars in Aarhus, Copenhagen, Leiden, Sigtuna, Maynooth, Toronto, Budapest, and Bergen. I am grateful for the stimulating discussions at all these occasions.

This book could not have been written without the kind cooperation of many individuals involved in Tolkien-inspired spirituality. Thanks are due to all the creative and intelligent individuals who have generously shared their experiences and ideas with me. I cannot name everyone here, but want to thank in particular Lady Danu of the Tribunal of the Sidhe, Laurasia of Middle-Earth Pagans, the Silver Elves (Michael J. and Martha C. Love), Calantirniel, Llefyn, and Alyras of Tië eldaliéva, and Eruannlass, Nathan Elwin, and Gwineth of Ilsaluntë Valion. I am grateful to Gwineth for suggesting to me to study Tolkien-inspired spirituality in the first place, and to Calantirniel for sharing her contacts with me and for bringing me in touch with several groups and individuals, both online and offline-based. I thank the Silver Elves, Gwineth, Elwin, and Alyras for reading along and commenting on drafts of chapters 11 and 16.

For their never-failing trust in me and for bearing with me moving to the Netherlands, I thank my parents, Ole and Hanne Davidsen, and my sister Mirka. Most of all, I am grateful and indebted to my wonderful wife, Judit Altena-Davidsen, for her moral support throughout the project, for her critical comments on a draft of the thesis, and for translating the summary into Dutch.

Some preliminary conclusions of the project have been published in 2012 as "The Spiritual Milieu Based on J.R.R. Tolkien's Literary Mythology" in Adam Possamai (ed.), *Handbook of Hyper-real Religions*, Leiden and Boston: Brill, 185-204. Portions of chapters 2 and 5 have been published in 2013 as "Fiction-based Religion: Conceptualising a New Category against History-based Religion and Fandom", *Religion and Culture: An Inter-disciplinary Journal* 14(4), 378-395.

Abbreviations

A. Works by Tolkien

H	*The Hobbit or There and Back Again*, 5th edition 1995, London: HarperCollins. First published in 1937 by George Allen & Unwin.
HoMe[1]	*The History of Middle-earth*.
Letters	*The Letters of J.R.R. Tolkien*, 1981, edited by Humphrey Carpenter with the assistance of Christopher Tolkien, London: George Allen & Unwin.
LROW	*The Lost Road and Other Writings: Language and Legend before 'The Lord of the Rings'*, *The History of Middle-earth* 5, 1987, Christopher Tolkien (ed.), London: Unwin Hyman.
LR	*The Lord of the Rings*, 2007, London: HarperCollins. This edition is based on the 50th Anniversary Edition, first published in 2004. Comprised of *The Fellowship of the Ring*, first published 1954, 2nd ed. 1965 by Ballantine Books; *The Two Towers*, first published 1954, 2nd ed. 1965 by Ballantine Books; *The Return of the King*, first published 1955, 2nd ed. 1965 by Ballantine Books.
LT I	*The Book of Lost Tales, Part One*, *The History of Middle-earth* 1, 1983, Christopher Tolkien (ed.), London: George Allen & Unwin.
LT II	*The Book of Lost Tales, Part Two*, *The History of Middle-earth* 2, 1984, Christopher Tolkien (ed.), London: George Allen & Unwin.
MR	*Morgoth's Ring*, *The History of Middle-earth* 10, 1993, Christopher Tolkien (ed.), London: HarperCollins.
PM	*Peoples of Middle-earth*, *The History of Middle-earth* 12, 1996, Christopher Tolkien (ed.), London: HarperCollins.
RS	*The Return of the Shadow*, *The History of Middle-earth* 6, 1988, Christopher Tolkien (ed.), London: Unwin Hyman.
S	*The Silmarillion*, 2nd ed., 1999, Christopher Tolkien (ed.), London: HarperCollins. First edition published in 1977 by George Allen & Unwin.
SD	*Sauron Defeated*, *The History of Middle-earth* 9, 1992, Christopher Tolkien (ed.), London: HarperCollins.
TL	*Tree and Leaf: Including the Poem Mythopoeia*, 1964, London: George Allen & Unwin.
UT	*Unfinished Tales of Númenor and Middle-earth*, 1980, Christopher Tolkien (ed.), London: George Allen & Unwin.
WJ	*The War of the Jewels*, *The History of Middle-earth* 11, 1994, Christopher Tolkien (ed.), London: HarperCollins.

[1] "*HoM*-e" would be more correct, but looks too ugly. The journal Tolkien Studies has no official abbreviation for *HoMe* which I can use as guideline.

B. Tolkien's invented languages

No	Noldorin. The language of the Noldor. An early from of Sindarin.
Qe	Qenya. Quenya in an early stage of its development. Used in some of the volumes of *HoMe*.
Qu	Quenya. The language of the High Elves (Quendi) of Eldamar. Used in Middle-earth only as archaic ritual language ('Elven Latin').
Si	Sindarin. The language of the Grey-elves (Sindar) of Middle-earth.
Va	Valarin (or Valinorean). The language of the Valar (demigods).

C. Main Tolkien spiritual groups[2]

EQD	Elf Queen's Daughters
ER	Elven Realities
IE	Indigo Elves
IV	Ilsaluntë Valion (Qe: The Silver Ship of the Valar)
MEP	Middle-Earth Pagans[3]
SE	Silver Elves (formerly Silvan Elves)
TS	The Tribunal of the Sidhe
T-e	Tië eldaliéva (Qu: The Elven Path)

[2] I am not sure whether I will abbreviate the names of these Tolkien groups. So far I do not. Perhaps I will use the full names in the main text, but sometimes these abbreviations in tables, figures and references.

[3] This group spells its name "Middle-Earth Pagans" with a capital E even though the correct spelling of Middle-earth is with the letter e in the lower case.