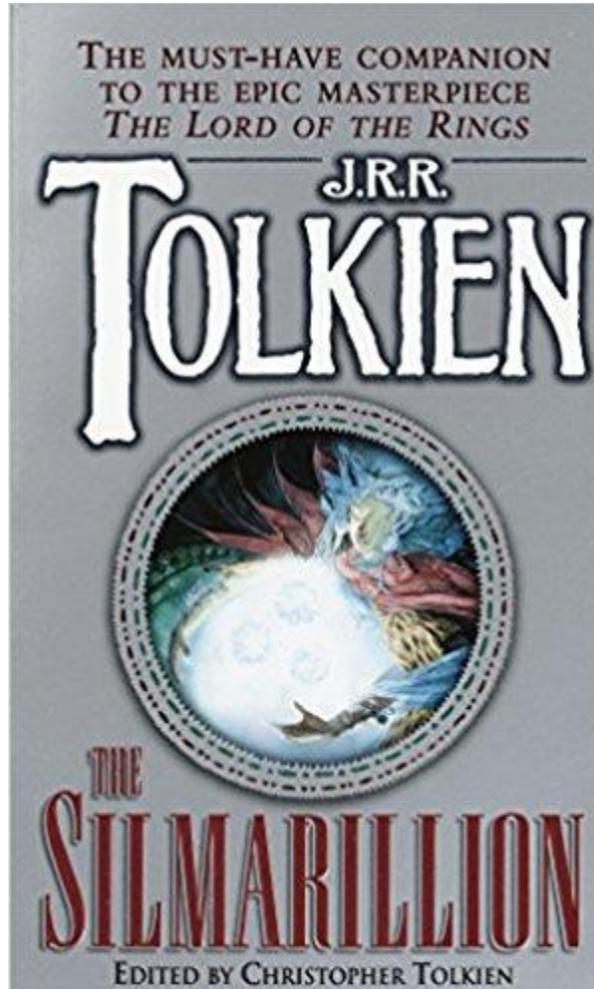


**The Study of Panpsychism in the Works of
J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Silmarillion* and *The Hobbit***

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Courtesy: <https://www.amazon.com/Silmarillion-J-R-R-Tolkien/dp/0345325818>

Abstract

The term *Panpsychism* originates from the Greek term *pan* which unifies center of the mental life of human beings and other living creatures, and *psyche* comes from the Greek word which means life, soul, mind, spirit or heart. It is controversial due to its other views like mind, mental perceptive, mental aspect, and experience. If we want to define the term panpsychism, it is the view of consciousness, mind or soul and it is a universal and primitive feature of all things.

The panpsychists view on panpsychism is a philosophy of mind and possible solution to the consciousness. It has also been applied in the field of environmental philosophy through the work of Australian philosopher Fraya Mathew and David Chalmers have proved in their remarkable master piece *The Conscious Mind*. In addition to, neuroscientist Christ of Koch has proposed, *The Conscious Mind* is a scientifically superior version of panpsychism. In the same path Tolkien, the British theologian projects his views in his epic fantasy works, *The Silmarillion* and *The Hobbit*. It is using multiple consciousness theories from prominent consciousness authors. The term panpsychism projects in his works in the form of plotlines, character compositions, and physical and mental interactions between individual and entities. These are examined through multi-faceted panpsychic consciousness views. Those are projects in integrality, evolutionary emergence of consciousness, brilliance, mythical trickster, precognitive and lucid dreaming, removal of self-identity through separation and burial, inner work, plurality and conflict, and enlightenment and synergism. Panpsychism can be related to the metaphysical positions like idealism, dualism, monism, physicalism, materialism and holism.

Keywords: J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Silmarillion*, *The Hobbit*, Panpsychism, Consciousness, Mind, Soul, Physical, Mental, Evolutionary, Fantasy, Precognitive, Conflict and Metaphysical.

Panpsychism

Panpsychism is one of the most exciting questions regarding consciousness, either it is isolated to an individual or relegated to a collective presence. The perception of panpsychism has just recently become a prominent sub-field of consciousness studies. It is not only relatively new, but it is also largely repudiated in consciousness studies. It has not definitive boundary between ‘what can?’ and ‘what cannot?’ in consciousness. In this dilemma, how does Tolkien explore the relationship between panpsychism and fantasy literature to apply in his classic works. He is describing panpsychism, through character compositions, interactions and behaviors. He includes with naturalistic, magical, and supernatural perspectives into his storylines, which leads to panpsychism. The study describes the panpsychic perspective in his selected classic epic fantasy works *The Silmarillion* and *The Hobbit*.

The Silmarillion

J.R.R. Tolkien’s one of the best master pieces is *The Silmarillion*. It is Tolkien’s own creation story. In this novel, the beginnings of Ea originate with Eru known as Iluvatar, or the One All-father, who is similar to God. He gives birth to Ainur. He considered as angelic beings, and existed with Iluvatar in a purely spiritual dimension before the actual creation of Ea. The Ainur directs Iluvatar’s conscious thoughts in the perfection of panpsychism, which relates to James’ stream of consciousness affecting cosmic experience, Combs’ assertion of luminosity and synchronicity and Johnson’s description of inner work and gaining awareness of consciousness within oneself. Iluvatar’s consciousness is like a free flowing divine and enlightening with all aspects of creation the material world. Iluvatar allows the Ainur to take part in the actual creation of Ea. “Iluvatar’ sun harmed creation has been marred by an evil that corrupts not only the moral life of free creatures; it also lays waste to the natural order” (Woods, Gospel p 21). The panpsychic aspects of pervading consciousness, as witnessed with Melkor intentionally changing the entire universe and to his own personal consciousness, again relates back to how

panpsychism can be viewed through the lens of luminosity and synchronicity, discrimination, control, and sense of reality and the relationship between enlightenment and consciousness.

Melkor's consciousness is discordant cosmic energy. He has ability to control the humanity and affect the creation of Arda exhibit a primal awareness of pervading existence in Universal upheaval. After the Ainur had completed the Music of Creation, including the discord inserted with Melkor and Iluvatar. From this vision, Iluvatar speaks the cosmos and Arda into being. Because of this sequence of events, Iluvatar's consciousness pervades throughout the entire cosmos in complex. According to Wood's view "forming a great chain of being that stretches from Iluvatar all the way down to the inert minerals" (Woods, Gospel p 11). This is matching with the panpsychic concept when viewed through the views of integrality and multifacetism. It is higher order processing layers of evolutionary consciousness and soul. Iluvatar, with his multifaceted composition, is integrated into the Universe, and creates the cosmos through layered processes and personas containing his divine essence.

Iluvatar creates heavens and Arda and he sent the Ainur and Arda to prepare it for the Children of Iluvatar (Elves and Men) and the coming of The First Age. Arda divided into several regions and the Ainur known as Aman (the blessed realm). From this Realm, the Ainur set to govern over all of Arda. The Ainur has divided into two classes, the greater Valar and the lesser Maiar. The Maiar influence the way of Arda's history through cosmic consciousness and divine essence. Elves and Men are divinely connected and blessed. This sequence of events parallels According to James', characteristics of consciousness, specifically personal consciousness and change, as well as interacting with that which is independent of itself. The process of the Ainur coming to Arda, dividing into two ruling entities, and governing the course of existence reflects the panpsychic ideal of a collective and inclusive consciousness. The implications of pervasive, connecting and consciousness are very perceptible in Tolkien's creation story. The panpsychic ideal is witnessed in not only Iluvatar himself, but in the formation of Arda. Its inhabitants, as well as the interactions between and amongst all entities with justify *The Silmarillion* as the ultimate fantasy work on panpsychism.

The Hobbit

Tolkien's *The Hobbit* was prominent text that led to literary acclaim and prestige in the genre of fantasy literature. *The Hobbit* occurs in The War of the Ring, but events in the Second Age set the stage for *The Hobbit's* narrative. In the Second Age, Sauron's supporters and crony convinced the greatest Elven craftsmen and smiths to fashion rings of power for the most prominent races in Middle-earth. It is more power than the Elves, the Men, and the Dwarves ring. In the Third Age, the Battle of Gladden Fields, Deagol find the One Ring, and his friend Smeagol subsequently murders him. Smeagol, living an unnaturally long life because of the ring's mystical and magical essence but suffering from the evil contained within the ring, isolates himself in the Misty Mountains. Later he transforms into Gollum, as a dual personality because of manipulative, wicked, and consumed with the ring. During his transformation from Smeagol to Gollum, and his subsequent living with a split persona as Smeagol identifies as "good" and Gollum identifies as 'bad'. The creature refers not only to the one ring as his precious but also to himself.

Bilbo Baggins is self-absorbed, bad tempered, and reserved. He grapples with his fear of the unknown surrounding the adventure with Gandalf in the Lonely Mountain. The beneficial threads and their relation to the adventure, dangers, and excitement within, and description of consciousness as viewed through the lens of self when Bilbo contemplates his decision to join the company or not. Bilbo's panpsychic idea existed from consciousness through divine inspiration, self-discovery, and self-reflection. The panpsychic elements are evident within this meeting between Bilbo and Gollum: Bilbo's sword, the One Ring, and Gollum as a trickster. Bilbo's sword begins to glow blue during his confrontation with Gollum, indicating that Goblins are nearby. Sting "burned with a rage... bright as blue flame for delight in the killing" (Tolkien, *The Silmarillion* p 61). The sword possesses an unexplainable consciousness, indicative of James' consciousness characteristics, (interpretations and experiences of consciousness), particularly that of changing personal consciousness and interacting with objects independent of itself. Combs' views on that everything has the potential for consciousness, ideology of cosmic energy and synchronicity influencing reality, as the universal energy surrounding the sword abruptly ends the game of riddles and allows Bilbo to escape.

The One Ring displays panpsychic tendencies. It has considered the absolute definition of panpsychism. It is the ability to think and act for itself as well as influencing not only the personalities of those who possess it but also the course of Middle-earth history. Gollum quite intimately understands the panpsychic essence of the One Ring. It has given him long life and supernatural powers like invisibility and telepathy. He has sacrificed his morality and integrity, and lives in a state of complete turmoil and chaos because of the One Ring trying to find its way back to Sauron's spirit. Bilbo begins to understand the force behind the One Ring when he inadvertently slips it on his finger while fumbling in his pocket after the game of riddles ends, realizing "that the ring he had was a magic ring: it made you invisible!" (Tolkien, *The Hobbit* p 79).

In the middle of the novel Gollum has no intention of letting Bilbo leave unhurt if Bilbo wins the game of riddles. Gollum's riddles are intricate and devious, and with each turn he becomes more agitated at Bilbo's tenacity at guessing correctly, growing disappointed with the outcome of the riddle exchange, "getting angry, and also tired of the game (as) it had made him very hungry indeed" (Tolkien, *The Hobbit* p 72). When Bilbo, absentmindedly but unfairly, asks Gollum what he (Bilbo) has in his pocket (i.e., The One Ring), Gollum loses the riddle game. Gollum is furious at guessing incorrectly but obliges in showing Bilbo out of the cave saying "we can't go up the tunnels so hasty we must go and get some things first, yes, things to help us" (Tolkien, *The Hobbit* p 74). Gollum goes back to his chambers to retrieve his 'precious' intending on using the One Ring to become invisible and then attack and eat Bilbo. Upon not finding his ring where he left it, Gollum pieces the riddles together and frantically searches for Bilbo in the caves, now knowing that Bilbo has the One Ring.

When he could not find Bilbo and the One Ring, Gollum "sat down and began to weep, a whistling and gurgling sound horrible to listen to" (Tolkien, *The Hobbit* p 78). Bilbo scared and on the verge of killing the creature from the shadows, "a sudden understanding, a pity mixed with horror... of a glimpse of endless unmarked days without light or hope of betterment, hard stone, cold fish, sneaking and whispering" (Tolkien, *The Hobbit* p 80), and decides instead to let

Gollum live as he (Bilbo) leaves the caves in safety. Gollum's trickster nature parallels the panpsychic assertions of Combs' mythical trickster and synchronicity, as the outcome of the game of riddles allows Bilbo to escape with the One Ring thereby changing the course of Middle-earth history. Tolkien creates the story *The Hobbit* based on the allusions of a cosmic and consciousness. The panpsychic witnessed in multiple forms from Bilbo's decision for adventure and a magical ring. The ability for consciousness to inhabit and alter beings and objects on multiple levels in multiple forms creates the ideal panpsychic fantasy narrative as *The Silmarillion* and *The Hobbit*.

Tolkien's Panpsychism

Tolkien has done a phenomenal job in describing and exploring the concept of panpsychism in his characters, storylines, and narrative interactions. He is using various consciousness, theoretical perspectives. The relationship between panpsychism and Tolkien's stories is unmistakable ranging from omnipotent and omnipresent essences in the creation of Tolkien's cosmos and mythical tricksters and synchronicity affecting the trajectory of Middle-earth history. The inanimate objects are displaying absolute consciousness which is affecting the mind and behavior of the individual possessing the objects. Tolkien's panpsychic culminates in character self-discovery, self-reflection, and self-integration on individual and cosmic dimensions that display a universal psyche between and within characters and Middle-earth.

Panpsychism can be related to the metaphysical positions like idealism, dualism, monism, physicalism, materialism and holism. Panpsychism agrees the idealism with in a sense everything is mental, but whereas idealism treats most things as mental content or ideas which treats them as their own reality. The dualism is an aspect of *panpsychism*. The dual aspect theorists agree the panpsychists concept which is everything has some mental properties. They hold everything has some physical properties, whereas panpsychists hold that physical properties are in mental properties. Monism is coupled with dual aspect theories. It maintains the mental and physical which leads in two perspectives on a reality that is neither mental nor physical. Panpsychism holds that, the physical is satisfied with mental. It is a form of monism in assumed to be incompatible with *panpsychism*. Materialism is come under the *panpsychism*. Its properties are attributed to physical matter, which is the only basic substance. It is related to more holistic view on an organism that possesses a mind in comic consciousness or universal consciousness which is claimed to be distinct from animism or hylozoism which hold that all things with soul.

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Language in India www.languageinindia.com ISSN 1930-2940 18:8 August 2018

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