Editors' Introduction

This is the sixth issue of *Tolkien Studies*, the first refereed journal solely devoted to the scholarly study of the works of J.R.R. Tolkien. As editors, our goal is to publish excellent scholarship on Tolkien as well as to gather useful research information, reviews, notes, documents, and bibliographical material.

In this issue we are especially pleased to publish Tolkien's note on "Fate and Free Will," edited by Carl Hostetter.

With this exception, and that of the lead article (which was solicited from an expert in the field), all articles have been subject to anonymous, external review as well as receiving a positive judgment by the Editors. In the cases of articles by individuals associated with the journal in any way, each article had to receive at least two positive evaluations from two different outside reviewers. Reviewer comments were anonymously conveyed to the authors of the articles. The Editors agreed to be bound by the recommendations of the outside referees.

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Douglas A. Anderson
Michael D. C. Drout
Verlyn Flieger

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Acknowledgments

In Memoriam

This year *Tolkien Studies* remarks on the passing of two distinguished members in our field, artist Pauline Baynes, and scholar and publisher Derek Brewer.

Pauline Diana Baynes (1922-2008), the prolific artist and illustrator, was perhaps best known for her illustrations to the seven volumes of C. S. Lewis's *Chronicles of Narnia* (1950-56). Baynes had previously illustrated Tolkien's *Farmer Giles of Ham* (1949), and over the years continued her association with Tolkien's works, providing wrap-around cover art for the 1961 Puffin edition of *The Hobbit* and a triptych for the slip-case of the 1964 deluxe edition of *The Lord of the Rings*, and illustrating *The Adventures of Tom Bombadil* (1962), *Smith of Wootton Major* (1967), *A Map of Middle-earth* (poster, 1970), *There and Back Again* (poster, based on *The Hobbit*, 1971); *Poems and Stories* (1980), and *Bilbo's Last Song* (poster 1974; book 1990). Her final Tolkien-related illustration appears, fittingly, to have been a return to her earliest such work—her map of "The Little Kingdom" was added to the fiftieth anniversary edition of *Farmer Giles of Ham* (1999).

Derek Brewer (1923-2008), Emeritus Professor of English at Cambridge, was a well-known medievalist and an early champion of Tolkien's writings. Brewer's essay on "*The Lord of the Rings* as Romance" appeared in *J.R.R. Tolkien, Scholar and Story-teller: Essays in Memoriam* (1979), edited by Mary Salu and Robert T. Farrell.

Conventions and Abbreviations

Because there are so many editions of *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*, citations will be by book and chapter as well as by page-number (referenced to the editions listed below). Thus a citation from *The Fellowship of the Ring*, book two, chapter four, page 318 is written (*FR*, II, iv, 318). References to the Appendices of *The Lord of the Rings* are abbreviated by Appendix, Section and subsection. Thus subsection iii of section I of Appendix A is written (*RK*, Appendix A, I, iii, 321). The "Silmarillion" indicates the body of stories and poems developed over many years by Tolkien; *The Silmarillion* indicates the volume first published in 1977.

Abbreviations

B&C
Beowulf and the Critics. Ed. Michael D. C. Drout. Tempe, AZ: Arizona Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies, 2002. Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies 248.

Bombadil
The Adventures of Tom Bombadil, London: George Allen & Unwin, 1962; Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1963.

CH
The Children of Húrin [title as on title page:] *Narn i Chîn Húrin: The Tale of the Children of Húrin*. Ed. Christopher Tolkien. London: HarperCollins, 2007; Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2007.

FG
Farmer Giles of Ham. Ed. Christina Scull and Wayne G. Hammond. London: HarperCollins, 1999. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1999.

FR
The Fellowship of the Ring. London: George Allen & Unwin, 1954; Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1954. Second edition, revised impression, Boston: Houghton Mifflin,1987.

H
The Hobbit. London: George Allen & Unwin, 1937. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1938. *The Annotated Hobbit*. Ed. Douglas A. Anderson. Second edition, revised. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2002.

Jewels
The War of the Jewels. Ed. Christopher Tolkien. London: HarperCollins; Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1994.

Lays
The Lays of Beleriand. Ed. Christopher Tolkien. London: George Allen & Unwin; Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1985.

Letters   *The Letters of J.R.R. Tolkien*. Ed. Humphrey Carpenter, with the assistance of Christopher Tolkien. London: George Allen & Unwin; Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1981.

Lost Road   *The Lost Road and Other Writings*. Ed. Christopher Tolkien. London: Unwin Hyman; Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1987.

Lost Tales I   *The Book of Lost Tales, Part One*. Ed. Christopher Tolkien. London: George Allen & Unwin, 1983; Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1984.

Lost Tales II *The Book of Lost Tales, Part Two*. Ed. Christopher Tolkien. London: George Allen & Unwin; Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1984.

MC   *The Monsters and the Critics and Other Essays*. Ed. Christopher Tolkien. London: George Allen & Unwin, 1983; Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1984.

Morgoth   *Morgoth's Ring*. Ed. Christopher Tolkien. London: HarperCollins; Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1993.

OFS   *Tolkien On Fairy-stories: Extended Edition*. Ed. Verlyn Flieger and Douglas A. Anderson. London: HarperCollins, 2008.

Peoples   *The Peoples of Middle-earth*. Ed. Christopher Tolkien. London: HarperCollins; Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1996.

RK   *The Return of the King*. London: George Allen & Unwin 1955; Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1956. Second edition, revised impression, Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1987.

S   *The Silmarillion*. Ed. Christopher Tolkien. London: George Allen & Unwin, 1977. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1977. Second edition. London:HarperCollins, 1999; Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2001.

Sauron   *Sauron Defeated*. Ed. Christopher Tolkien. London: HarperCollins; Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1992.

Shadow   *The Return of the Shadow*. Ed. Christopher Tolkien. London: Unwin Hyman; Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1988.

Shaping   *The Shaping of Middle-earth*. Ed. Christopher Tolkien. London: George Allen & Unwin; Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1986.

SWM	*Smith of Wootton Major: Extended Edition*. Ed. Verlyn Flieger. London: HarperCollins, 2005.
TL	*Tree and Leaf*. London: Unwin Books, 1964; Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1965. Expanded as *Tree and Leaf, including the Poem Mythpoeia [and] The Homecoming of Beorhtnoth Beorhthelm's Son*. London: HarperCollins, 2001.
TT	*The Two Towers*. London: George Allen & Unwin, 1954; Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1955. Second edition, revised impression, Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1987.
Treason	*The Treason of Isengard*. Ed. Christopher Tolkien. London: Unwin Hyman; Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1989.
UT	*Unfinished Tales of Númenor and Middle-Earth*. Ed. Christopher Tolkien. London: George Allen & Unwin; Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1980.
War	*The War of the Ring*. Ed. Christopher Tolkien. London: Unwin Hyman; Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1990.

"A Kind of Elvish Craft": Tolkien as Literary Craftsman

John D. Rateliff

At the beginning of J.R.R. Tolkien's professional career, he made a revealing comment in a letter to Mary Wright, the wife of Joseph Wright (his old tutor and mentor as a philologist), expressing his feelings whenever he browsed in her husband's massive six-volume *English Dialect Dictionary*:

> Middle English is an exciting field—almost uncharted I begin to think, because as soon as one turns detailed personal attention on to any little corner of it the received notions and ideas seem to crumple up and fall to pieces. (*Letters* 11)

This I think very neatly describes the current state of Tolkien studies. There is a growing consensus on many points, but much of this broad agreement relies upon assumptions which in turn are based upon details that by and large have gone unexamined. And Tolkien was a details man, who distrusted any critical approach that dealt in generalities (like the so-called "monomyth" of Joseph Campbell, which would have been anathema to Tolkien).[1] Tolkien found most of his own inspiration in close consideration of minute particulars. As in his professional work, so too in his storytelling: *The Lord of the Rings* is an easily summarized story, but any summary—*"reluctant hero embarks on grueling quest to destroy evil artifact"*—leaves out the details that bring the tale to life and give it its appeal—indeed, one might say, that make it worth reading. It is from the details that Tolkien crafted his world, and such details will well repay our attention, particularly the details whose significance emerges only through close study of Tolkien's texts and manuscripts, such as the *History of Middle-earth* series and the treasure-troves at Marquette University's Special Collections and Archive and the Bodleian Library's Department of Western Manuscripts. There has been a great deal of attention focused on *why* Tolkien created his legendarium; by focusing more on *how* we can better understand how he made it so compelling.

"Labour and Thought"

The first and most important point to make about Tolkien as a writer is to recognize the sheer amount of time, thought, and effort he was willing to put into his work. The stories did not just emerge whole, channeled by an *artiste* in a rhapsody out of some kind of collective consciousness (or uncollected unconsciousness); they were *made*, by a master craftsman

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whose medium was words, ink, paper. We must, accordingly, take into account a craftman's practical considerations. When he was creating *The Lord of the Rings*, Tolkien was not just "expressing himself": he was writing for publication as well. As he put it in a letter to Stanley Unwin, the success of *The Hobbit* (which he had written to amuse himself and his family and friends, and not submitted to a publisher until years after he had finished it) allowed him to hope "whether duty and desire may not (perhaps) in future go more closely together."[2] Indeed, Tolkien wrote *The Lord of the Rings* at a publisher's request, although the form it took was entirely Tolkien's own and differed considerably from what the publisher had imagined. So although he wanted to try his hand at a really long story (*FR*, Foreword to the Second Edition, 6) he did not want to produce an unpublishable book. If we want to draw an analogy from among his characters (a favorite preoccupation of Tolkien scholars, at least as far back as Clyde Kilby's *Tolkien and The Silmarillion*), Tolkien is not the responsibility-shirking solitary artist Niggle from "Leaf by Niggle," concerned only with capturing a private vision. Instead, he is more like the craftsman Smith from *Smith of Wootton Major*: someone who makes useful and beautiful things, which he shares with his community; who has great gifts which he uses to provide for his family.

Tolkien himself emphasizes the amount of work involved in what he was doing:

> Fantasy has . . . an essential drawback: it is difficult to achieve. . . . Anyone inheriting the fantastic device of human language can say *the green sun*. Many can then imagine or picture it. But that is not enough. . . . To make a Secondary World inside which the green sun will be credible . . . will . . . require labour and thought, and will certainly demand a special skill, a kind of elvish craft. Few attempt such difficult tasks. But when they are attempted and in any degree accomplished then we have a rare achievement . . . indeed narrative art, story-making in its primary and most potent mode. (*MC* 139-40)

Of the three elements traditionally taken to make up a story—setting, characterization, and plot—Tolkien has been universally acknowledged to excel in the first; that is, world-building: Middle-earth is made vividly real to the reader. For the second point, earlier critics sometimes underestimated his powers of characterization—Ursula K. LeGuin once made the astonishing confession that she could not tell Merry and Pippin apart[3]—but one of the good effects of the Jackson films has been that, by raising a debate on whether Jackson got certain characters right, they have focused attention on the unappreciated subtlety of Tolkien's

own characterization. Finally, on the third point, Tolkien has been much praised, by all but the most churlish, as a storyteller, for being adroit at presenting a gripping plot. Indeed, Richard West long ago wrote a seminal essay on Tolkien's gift with polyphonic narrative, his ability to move back and forth between the various strands of the plot without ever losing track of the main thrust of the story. Diana Wynne Jones, herself a successful fantasy author, wrote from the point of view of a fellow author when she praised Tolkien's skill in managing a long, complex plot while keeping his readers enthralled and concluded, "there really was nothing about narrative that Tolkien didn't know."[4]

Where Tolkien has been mercilessly criticized has been on quite different grounds. First, for his subject matter (indeed, that anyone should write fantasy at all in this day and age). Second, for what is taken to be his affirmation of traditional values (which by the way is far more subtle and double-edged than either his admirers or his critics sometimes realize, a point nicely made in Marjorie Burns's *Perilous Realms*). And third, for his style. Since the first topic, his subject matter, has been masterfully addressed by Tolkien himself in his essays "*Beowulf*: The Monsters and The Critics" and "On Fairy-stories," and since the second, attacks on his values system, tend to be politically motivated and self-defeating, reflecting worse on those who make them (e.g., China Miéville, Germaine Greer) than on their intended target, I would like to focus in on the third topic: Tolkien's style.

Tolkien's style is the tool with which he crafts his story. So it seems distinctly odd that, among all the attention that have been focused on that story, there has been very little critique of his style, aside from Tolkien's own spirited defense[5] of his occasional use of archaisms in certain contexts and Brian Rosebury's careful demonstration of the obvious but often-overlooked point that while Tolkien is frequently accused of writing "Biblical" prose, dense and inverted and artificial and archaic, in fact the vast majority of *The Lord of the Rings* is written in ordinary everyday English. It is no surprise that a disgruntled Edmund Wilson flatly asserted that both Tolkien's prose and poetry are bad (328), but what are we to make of Stephen Medcalf's outrageous claim that Tolkien "really *was* ill-at-ease with his own language"?[6] Or Burton Raffel, who although he uses words like "magnificent," "entrancing," "extraordinary," "superb," "wonderful," and "a genuine epic" to describe *The Lord of the Rings* nonetheless asserts that it is not "literature" because it is too readable? That is, so far as I understand him, that its prose is meant to deliver the story rather than be savored like a rare cheese or, in his words, "there is no real attempt to explore sensory realities; only narrative realities matter to Tolkien, and so adept is he that nothing more matters to us" (222). Raffel argues that Tolkien excels in delivering an engrossing story that sweeps

the reader along, but asserts that "the language of literature must do more than this, must transmit information as well as sense impressions of some sort, and to effect this the language must be both more deeply felt and more deeply worked" (221).

I will return to Raffel's strictures in a minute, but first I want to draw attention to Tolkien's own description of how his prose works, of what he was trying to achieve. In one of the endnotes appended to "On Fairy-stories," he includes the following revealing passage setting forth his narrative method, in which he makes clear his goal of writing in such a way as to draw in his readers, making them participate in the creation of the fictional world by encouraging them to draw on their own personal memories when reading one of his evocative passages:

> However good in themselves, illustrations do little good to fairy-stories. The . . . distinction between all art . . . that offers a *visible* presentation and true literature is that [the former] imposes one visible form. Literature [by contrast] works from mind to mind and is thus . . . at once more universal and more poignantly particular. If it speaks of *bread* or *wine* or *stone* or *tree*, it appeals to the whole of these things, to their ideas; yet each hearer will give to them a peculiar personal embodiment in his imagination. Should the story say "he ate bread," the dramatic producer or painter can only show "a piece of bread" . . . but the hearer of the story will think of bread in general and picture it in some form of his own. If a story says "he climbed a hill and saw a river in the valley below," the illustrator may catch, or nearly catch, his own vision of such a scene; but every hearer of the words will have his own picture, and it will be made out of all the hills and rivers and dales he has ever seen, but specially out of The Hill, The River, The Valley which were for him the first embodiment of the word. (*MC* 159)[7]

Tolkien's contrast here of a single image presented to the passive viewer with the internal personalized visualization of a reader, who thus participates in the (sub)creation of the work, is of a piece with his championing, in the Foreword of the second edition to *The Lord of the Rings*, of what he calls applicability: his refusal to impose a single authorial or "allegorical" meaning on a work.[8] I would argue that the style in which he chose to write, which he painstakingly developed over several decades until it reached its peak in *The Hobbit* and *Farmer Giles of Ham* and *The Lord of the Rings* and some of the late Silmarillion material, is deliberately crafted to spark reader participation. That many readers *do* get drawn in is witnessed by the intense investment so many people have in these books, the

strong personal connection they form with the story, the almost visceral rejection of illustrations or dramatizations that do not fit their own inner vision of the characters, the returning to reread the books again and again to renew our acquaintance with the imaginary world.

Keeping that in mind, I would like to return to Raffel's claim about the need for literary fiction to "explore sensory realities." Clearly, some writers excel at just the sort of writing Raffel holds up as his paradigm. And, just as clearly, others excel in quite different ways. Contrast, for example, the following two passages, the first by Tolkien, the second by fellow fantasy author John Bellairs:

> The Company now gathered together as close to the cliff as they could. It faced southwards, and near the bottom it leaned out a little, so that they hoped it would give them some protection from the northerly wind and from the falling stones. But eddying blasts swirled round them from every side, and the snow flowed down in ever denser clouds.
>
> They huddled together with their backs to the wall. . . . A great sleepiness came over Frodo; he felt himself sinking fast into a warm and hazy dream. He thought a fire was heating his toes, and out of the shadows on the other side of the hearth he heard Bilbo's voice speaking. *I don't think much of your diary,* he said. *Snowstorms on January the twelfth: there was no need to come back to report that!*
>
> *But I wanted rest and sleep, Bilbo,* Frodo answered with an effort, when he felt himself shaken, and he came back painfully to wakefulness. Boromir had lifted him off the ground out of a nest of snow.
>
> "This will be the death of the halflings, Gandalf," said Boromir. . . . (*FR*, II, iii, 303)

> It did not look haunted, especially at noon, this crowded, textured, interwoven wood. Prospero saw every shade of green, from light, bleached, papery, yellow-green to a dark, wet, inky green that was almost black. Willows, poplars, maples, oaks, and stubby kinked mulberry trees. . . .
>
> Once he was actually inside the forest . . . Prospero knew what was wrong. There are times when you feel that you hear doors slamming in the distance, voices calling your name; you see blurred things, far away or very close up, that look like people until you focus on them. That was the trouble. The whole place seemed slightly out of focus, very slightly off. It was as if you were half asleep. . . . [H]e had to stare at

a tree for several seconds before it looked like a tree and not a leaning furry shadow. He felt very nervous, drowsily nervous, with prickling dark borders on his sight. A . . . bell was ring-ing somewhere deep, deep in the forest. An icy green glass bell ridged with frost, trembling on a green willow branch.

(Bellairs 74, 76)

Of these, note that in the passage from Tolkien, he does not describe every detail—what color were the rocks? who was on either side of Frodo as he sat huddled against the bitter cold? But Tolkien does tell us every-thing we need to know, in general terms with just enough specific detail to bring the scene home, to guide the reader's imagination, to draw on our own memories of being cold and frozen, exhausted and miserable. We do not need to know what Frodo looked like, because we are looking through his eyes; too much detail would actually limit the applicability.

The excerpt from Bellairs, by contrast, almost baroque in its elabora-tion when contrasted to Tolkien's plainstyle, tells us everything we need to know and more; it paints a vivid word-picture to help us precisely visualize the scene. Bellairs masterfully creates what it is like to be doing something that frightens you but which you have decided you must see through, the first stages of what will within a few pages become pure panic-stricken terror. But it's a scene viewed from outside; we identify with the character's experience, but we do not contribute to it.

Raffel might say that the transparency of Tolkien's prose carries the reader along on the surface of a fast-flowing river, while Bellairs' opaque-ness causes him or her to sink into and savor the moment, surrounded by the specificity of the experience. But I would reverse the metaphor and instead suggest that Tolkien deliberately withholds the kind of detail Bellairs provides so that the reader is nudged into providing it himself or herself, since this participation draws the reader into the work.

In addition, I think another element is at work here, one not planned by Tolkien but nonetheless present throughout *The Lord of the Rings*: he often describes a scene not as you would experience it but as you would remember it afterwards. That is, his prose assumes the tone of things which have already happened, as they are stored in our memory. Thus the "walking bits," which have so annoyed impatient readers who are only reading for the plot, do not in fact detail every day of Frodo's year-long journey but instead are rendered down to a relatively few vivid im-ages, such as would linger in the memory long after the event. After you have read these passages and think back on them, they very strongly resemble your actual memories of similar events (in fact, the very ones that provided the mental images that flashed through your mind when reading them) : a general recollection of where you were and what you

were doing anchored by a few sharp, vivid, specific details that stand out. Thus the memory of reading the story gains the associations of events in the reader's own life, because the one has already drawn upon the other.

"A Rare Achievement"

In order to support my claim that Tolkien was a master craftsman in his chosen medium, words, I would like to look at three specific cases where close examination of detail highlights the "labour and thought" that underlie his "rare achievement" and, I think, casts some light on his working method. It is sometimes said that "the devil is in the details," but in fact this is a modern reversal of the original proverb, which was "God is in the details." In any case, it is in such detailed examinations that the hand of the craftsman who made the piece shows up; looking at almost any point in Tolkien's complex prose reveals the careful construction, and dense web of words and allusions and images and associations, that underlie his tale.

For my first example, I would like to look at the description of the moon rising over Lake Town during the battle with Smaug. As the scene was originally drafted, the moon does not appear, but Tolkien quickly added several significant references: first the thrush's warning

> "Wait, wait" it said "the moon is rising. Look for the hollow of the left breast as he flies and turns above you." Then Bard drew his last arrow from his quiver. The dragon was circling back, and the moon *rose above the eastern shore* and silvered his great wings. (Rateliff, *Return to Bag-End* 549; my emphasis)

Also added at this time is the detail of Smaug's fatal weak spot showing up in the moonlight:

> As he turned and dived down his belly glittered white with sparkling fire in the moon—but not in one spot. (550)

Finally, the beautiful little passage describing the aftermath of the dragon's death and spectacular fall into the dark waters opens by focusing our attention on the moon:

> *The moon rose higher and higher*, and the North wind grew loud and cold. It twisted the white fog upon the lake into bending pillars and hurrying clouds, and drove it off to the West to scatter in tattered wisps over the marshes before Mirkwood. Then the many boats could be seen dotted on the surface of the lake, and down the wind came the sound of the voices of the people of Esgaroth lamenting their lost town and goods and ruined homes. (554; my emphasis)

Now, I think it is clear that Tolkien here has a very strong visual image of the scene which he is concerned to convey to us as clearly and vividly as possible.[9] This is a clear departure from his usual style, where he sets up a framework then leaves most details to the reader's imagining. But a true craftsman has more than one tool, more than one technique, to achieve his ends. A departure from the norm, offering up a sharp contrast to what came before and what follows, can be very effective. This particular technique was a favorite of his friend C. S. Lewis, who frequently began his own stories with a mental picture which he then built a story around.[10] Major Warnie Lewis, CSL's older brother, goes further and recounts in his diary that during one evening's Inklings meeting (which Tolkien attended) the Major:

> made the always cheering discovery that what I had assumed to be an individual mental anfractuosity,[11] is shared by J[ack], i.e. that we can both only imagine what comes into our heads, but cannot direct our imaginations. For instance, said I, when I picture the country house I would have if I were a rich man, I can *say* that my study window opens on a level park full of old timber: but I *see* undulating ground with a fir topped knoll. I can of course fix my mind on the level park, but when I turn to the window again after arranging my books, there is the knoll once more. J says it is the same with him when he is writing a novel: he *must* use the knoll and can't force himself to use the level park. (193)

Tolkien's own literary inspirations tended by his own testimony to come more from euphonious names (like "Earendel") and invented words (like "hobbit"), but a process similar to the one Lewis describes is clearly at work in scenes like this one—sharp, detailed moments that contrast with Tolkien's usual practice but serve to punctuate the story. And sometimes that mental image contained elements that introduced contradictions into the story. What Tolkien is describing here—a dark night slowly lit by the moon rising in the east—is something that could only take place at the time of a full moon or, more probably, one a little past full (since a true full moon rises at the same time as the sun sets, which does not seem to be the case here; at least some period of full darkness intervenes). This is confirmed by two illustrations Tolkien did for the book, both of which, at least as originally drawn, show a full moon in the eastern sky on the night of the dragon's marauding (*Return to Bag-End*, Plate X, bottom; and Plate XII, top). But we know from reading the story that Smaug's attack came only a little over twenty-four hours after the opening of the Secret Door, on the night of the day following Durin's Day, and that Durin's Day ("as all should know") only occurs at the time of the New Moon,

when the moon appears as the thinnest crescent low in the *Western* sky.

We thus have a paradox: we know that the moon must be in a specific phase (a thin crescent in the west, already in the sky when the sun sets, and setting itself a short time later), but the description of it *rising in the eastern sky* well after dark shows it is somehow at the other end of its cycle, as if two weeks had passed in two nights. Now, we could just accept the fantasy explanation—after all, this is a world where stars fall from the sky at the sound of the dragon's death cry (*Return to Bag-End* 549, 554) and the moon is actually a giant flower taken from the White Tree of Valinor and set to sail through the sky under the guidance of Tilion the Maia, whom we are told several times is wayward in his journeys across the night sky ("The Sketch of the Mythology," *Shaping* 20; "The Quenta" of 1930, *Shaping* 97). But Tolkien was too good an amateur astronomer, or *became* too good an astronomer during the writing of *The Lord of the Rings*, to let that pass, and at some point he noticed the discrepancy and tried to fix it.

Thus the sketch "Death of Smaug" (circa 1937) has a crescent super-imposed over the original full moon and the annotation in the margin "The moon should be a *crescent*: it was only a few nights after the *New Moon* on 'Durin's Day'" (*Return to Bag-End* 561). In the 1966 Third Edition *Hobbit*, he altered the passage so that instead of "The moon rose higher" it now reads "The *waxing* moon rose higher" (Anderson, *The Annotated Hobbit* 308, 312). Unfortunately, this does not resolve the problem, since while these two suggested fixes put the moon in its right phase (more or less) they leave it in the wrong part of the sky. So, we see that Tolkien employed a variety of techniques, of which we have looked at only two, but that mixing them sometimes created problems of its own. This was a price he was willing to accept, like a carpenter using the knots in fine-grained wood for their appealing contrast, despite their lack of symmetry with the whole.

For my second example, I would like to focus in on a discovery made by my friend the late Taum Santoski that remained unpublished until the recent release of *Mr. Baggins*, in which we see Tolkien crafting a place name. This is a good example of the kind of information that can *only* be learned from close study of the manuscripts at Marquette; you could never discover it from looking at the final published book, no matter how deeply you delved. Tolkien's gift for nomenclature has been widely ac-knowledged, but not the work he put into it; most who have drawn any attention to it simply take it for granted as a knack Tolkien was lucky enough to have, not as the result of deliberate craft.[12]

The manuscript shows that Tolkien originally intended for Bilbo to rendezvous with the dwarves not at the Green Dragon Inn, as in the pub-lished book, but at the Great Mill. At a very late stage (February 1937),

when he was correcting the first set of page proofs from the publisher after the book had been set up in type, he struck out *the Great Mill across the Water* and instead penciled in the margin *the Green Man inn by the Water*, at the same time making corresponding pencil changes to the next page, so that [1] *down the lane, and over the bridge, across The Water* becomes *down the lane, past the great Mill, across The Water*; [2] *when he got to the Great Mill* becomes *when he got to Bywater*; and [3] instead of *standing at the mill-door* Balin is on lookout *standing at the inn door* (Marquette 1/2/1: 41). But before returning the corrected proofs to Unwin Brothers (Allen & Unwin's printers) he revisited the passage and changed it again, in ink, to *the Green Dragon Inn, Bywater*. Aside from marking the emergence of the name *Bywater*, these changes are interesting because each name in Tolkien's sequence of choices has distinctive resonances in his life and work.

- The first, *the Great Mill*, is directly based upon an actual mill Tolkien lived next to when he was growing up (between the ages of four to eight), Sarehole Mill on the River Cole in what is now the Hall Green area on the south side of Birmingham. Unlike the inn that replaced it in the story, which Tolkien never drew, the Mill is featured clearly in all Tolkien's illustrations of Hobbiton, centered in the foreground (e.g., *Mr. Baggins* Plate IV top, and Hammond and Scull, *Artist and Illustrator* 100–107). And, renamed Sandyman's Mill, it features in *The Lord of the Rings* a generation or two later, where its transformation into a pollution-belching factory is one of the iconic examples of Sharkey's corruption of the Shire.[13]

- Tolkien's second choice, *the Green Man inn*, draws on traditional English folklore about the Green Man—who seems to be a modern conflation of two figures, or perhaps two separate expressions of the same figure: the first a leafy face often found carved in English churches about which little is known and the second a wild man appearing in masques and village pageants and also frequently represented on Inn signs. Tolkien later developed these in two separate ways in *The Lord of the Rings*: the former as the ents, or tree-folk, and the latter as the woodwoses or "wild men of the woods." It is worth noting that many believe that some form of the Green Man lies behind the antagonist in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, one of the three works Tolkien was most associated with as a medieval scholar (the other two being *Beowulf* and the *Ancrene Wisse*).[14] In any case The Green Man was already a traditional name for an English Inn long before Tolkien's time, and remains popular today—for example, there was a Green Man in Leeds (since demolished) during Tolkien's time there. Another Green Man Inn in Derbyshire, which still exists today, is mentioned in

Boswell's *Life of Johnson* (Boswell 751), and even the most cursory research turns up other inns of that name (past and present) in Herefordshire, Sussex, Northamptonshire, Lancashire, Staffordshire, Norfolk, Essex, Yorkshire, Lincolnshire, and Kent. Tolkien's reasons for abandoning the name are unknown, but it was certainly *not* because it included the word "Man" in the name for what was (presumably) an Inn in hobbit-lands, since that word occurred several times in the original edition of *The Hobbit* to refer to Bilbo or the dwarves, not being removed until its appropriateness was challenged by fellow author Arthur Ransome, several months after the book's publication (*Return to Bag-End*, Appendix IV).

- The third choice, *the Green Dragon Inn*, which made it into the published book, is no less intriguing. The first story Tolkien ever wrote, at about the age of six or seven (that is, when he was still living near Sarehole Mill), was a tale about "a green great dragon." Upon being told by his mother that this should be "great green" instead, Tolkien got so fascinated by this unexpected glimpse of the deep structure of his own language, with its unarticulated rules that everyone learns idiomatically without knowing the why behind them, that he abandoned storytelling for more than a decade and shifted his focus to language itself instead; it may mark the moment that sparked the awakening of the philologist within. In any case, it's striking to note that Tolkien did indeed eventually write a story about a green dragon, "The Dragon's Visit," one of the "songs of Bimble Bay" series dating from the late 1920s (probably circa 1928)[15]—that is, just before he began work on *The Hobbit*. And of course like The Green Man, The Green Dragon is a traditional Inn or tavern name in England; there is a famous centuries-old pub on the outskirts of Cambridge by that name, as well as inns and taverns in Gloucestershire, Wensleydale, southeast Wales, Norfolk, and Worcestershire; no less than three inns in London bore that name at one time or another. And, crossing the ocean, Boston's Green Dragon Tavern, which dates back about three and a half centuries, is famous as one of the gathering spots of Paul Revere and his fellow Sons of Liberty during the events leading up to the Revolutionary War.

Both The Green Man and the Green Dragon Inn do have a comic effect the Great Mill would have lacked; through juxtaposition they bring in a reference to something from the Wild World outside into the heart of the comfortable settled hobbit country (as the younger Miller says in *The Lord of the Rings*, "There's only one Dragon in Bywater, and that's Green"—(*FR*, I, ii, 53). Tolkien may ultimately have decided that the

contrast was sharper with a dragon than a wild man and so the quiet joke would accordingly be more noticable.

Finally, for my third example, I would like to offer a cautionary tale and look at a case which highlights the perils of over-thinking the might-have-beens and putting *too* much emphasis on the story's drafts at the expense of the book(s) that Tolkien actually produced. Close textual studies can lead to interesting discoveries, such as the effervescent appearance of The Green Man this once and only once within Tolkien's opus, but the dark side of such work is that it can also be the cause of introducing errors into the book where there were none before.

For example, in Chapter V of *The Lord of the Rings*, "A Conspiracy Unmasked", Frodo asks Merry "How soon could we get off?" as he decides whether or not to leave Crickhollow at once for fear of Black Riders or remain behind hoping Gandalf will show up. Merry replies

> ". . . we could get off in an hour. I have prepared practically everything. There are six ponies in a stable across the fields; stores and tackle are all packed, except for a few extra clothes, and the perishable food." (*FR*, I, v, 117)

Now, this is how the text read from its first publication in 1954 until three years ago, when it was changed in the Hammond-Scull Fiftieth Anniversary Edition so that Merry now says "There are *five* ponies in [the] stable." The reasons for this change go back to Christopher Tolkien's 1986 edition of the manuscripts for this passage in *The Return of the Shadow* (326–327), where he notes that originally all five hobbits present during this discussion were to enter the Old Forest, and concluded that when one hobbit was designated to remain behind "this detail was overlooked, and the six ponies remained at this point" in the text, with the implication that it should have been changed to five ponies instead. This suggestion was taken up by David Bratman in his article "A Corrigenda to *The Lord of the Rings*," which appeared in Christina Scull's *The Tolkien Collector* (March 1994) and attempts to list all known changes that would need to be made to achieve our best possible approximation to textual perfection. Bratman concedes that some of the "errors" he points out "would require the author's intervention" to set right but asserts that 'some of these discrepancies, such as the extra pony at [Volume] I [page] 117 . . . may be corrected with some confidence and precision." ("Corrigenda" 18–19). Accordingly, the text is indeed changed in the 2004 Hammond-Scull edition (Fiftieth Anniversary *Lord of the Rings* 107), which is intended to become the new standard text of the book henceforth.

This reasoning seem solid at first glance, and the credentials of those who have put this theory forward are impeccable, but as soon as you back up and look at it from the point of view of the published book rather

than the manuscript drafts the argument falls apart. Here is the sequence of events in the published work (*FR*, I, vi, 120): When Frodo does decide to go by way of the Old Forest, Merry brings the baggage-pony to the house to load up, then leads it and his fellow hobbits to the stables, where all five (Frodo, Sam, Merry, Pippin, and Fatty Bolger) mount up and ride for an hour to the gate in the Hedge separating Buckland from the Old Forest. Here Fatty says goodbye to them and returns the way he came, while the rest ride onward with their five ponies (who are later given the names Sharp-ears, Wise-nose, Swish-tail, Bumpkin, and White-socks by Tom Bombadil; *FR*, I, viii, 155). Five ponies entering the Forest, plus one pony ridden back to Crickhollow by Fatty Bolger, equals six: Tolkien's original count was precisely right, and the new revised text introduces an error by changing it to *five*.[16] The vision of Fatty Bolger jogging alongside his mounted companions for a solid hour while they rode in comfort is enough, I think, to refute any argument that he did not have a pony of his own when he accompanied them to the border of Buckland—especially since Tolkien himself had Tom Bombadil address this very issue three chapters later, when he provides his own pony (Fatty Lumpkin) in order to accompany them on their way:

> ". . . old Tom's going to ride . . . he's coming with you, just to set you on the road; so *he needs a pony. For you cannot easily talk to hobbits that are riding, when you're on your own legs trying to trot beside them*." (*FR*, I, viii, 156; my emphasis).

And if this is true of the larger, lively, hopping-with-energy Bombadil, how much more must it be true for the lethargic Fatty Bolger? It is much more likely that Tolkien got the math right and that Merry was quite correct in saying that there were six ponies in the stable: the four ridden by the hobbits who enter the Old Forest, the pack-pony taken with them into the Forest, and the sixth pony ridden from Crickhollow to the High Hay and then back again by Fatty Bolger.[17]

Small details? Of course! But then, as we have already seen, Tolkien is a writer with whom details matter; they are the individual stones, no two alike, from which he builds his lighthouses on the Shores of Faerie. Changing a word here, a phrase there, a reference over yonder, can have a cascading effect. And while Tolkien's creation is robust enough to survive such minor changes, I would suggest that it is not the editor's role to *change* a work entrusted to his or her care. Rather, as I see it, it is the editor's task to preserve and present the author's intent as clearly and accurately as possible.

It is far easier, and more accurate, to avoid all these difficulties by letting Tolkien's original text stand. Tolkien was unusually fortunate as an author in that, as the *Lord of the Rings* galleys at Marquette prove, he had

almost[18] total control over his text, even to the degree that he was able to insist on favorite spellings of words—something almost unheard of in publishing, where such matters are determined by house style and in-house editors think nothing of copyediting a text. Certainly some of his contemporaries left behind texts riddled with unintended errors—James Joyce comes to mind[19]—but this is not, or at least *was* not, the case with Tolkien. But that immunity from editorial interference within his own lifetime has, in recent years, given way to a chimerical quest for a perfect text, with I think regrettable consequences. Even if we were to assume the number of ponies *is* in error, despite evidence to the contrary, we know from the example of the moon over Lake Town that Tolkien was aware of "errors" which he chose to preserve in the text. How are we, not being Tolkien, to know which apparent "errors" he was aware of and intended to stand? By all means we should correct typos, especially those which crept in with later printings, but we should always remain wary of substituting our words for Tolkien's, and avoid changing the original text to suit our own ideas about what Tolkien should have said, in the interests of preserving what he actually *did* say.

Conclusion: Tolkien the Wordsmith

In the end, what we carry away from a reading of Tolkien's books is our delight in the world Tolkien created, and the characters he populated it with, and the stories he tells of what happens to them. Seventy years after *The Hobbit* was published, and more than fifty years since *The Lord of the Rings* joined it, and thirty since *The Silmarillion* completed the triptych setting forth his fantasy mythology, the appeal of his work is as great as ever. It has found an ever-widening audience around the world, eager to share in the insights of other readers who have thought deeply about his stories and brought different things with them to their readings, different participations to his sub-creation. With the great medieval authors Tolkien so loved, like the authors of *Beowulf* and *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, we are left with only the final product and can only make ill-informed guesses about how these works were created. We are fortunate beyond words that a pre-eminent author like Tolkien preserved his manuscripts, through which we can trace every step of the creative process from first scribbled lines through the multiple drafts to the final polishing many thousands of pages later.

NOTES

This paper was originally delivered as the 2007 Blackwelder Lecture at Marquette University on October 4th, 2007.

1   Cf. Tolkien's rejection, in "On Fairy-stories," of those who treat myth

or folklore in generalized or synoptic form, rather than focusing on the significance of specific stories.

> [S]tudents of folk-lore . . . are inclined to say that any two stories that are built round the same folk-lore motive . . . are "the same stories." . . . Statements of that kind may express (in undue abbreviation) some element of truth; but they are not true . . . in art or literature. It is precisely the colouring, the atmosphere, the unclassifiable individual details of a story . . . that really count. (*MC* 119)

Among those whose methodology Tolkien rejects here would be Fraser, Frye, Jung, and Campbell.

2   The full passage from Tolkien's letter to his publisher, with whom he was already discussing which of several projects would be the best follow-up to *The Hobbit*, reads "I must confess that your letter has aroused in me a faint hope. I mean, I begin to wonder whether duty and desire may not (perhaps) in future go more closely together. I have spent nearly all the vacation-times of seventeen years examining, and doing things of that sort, driven by immediate financial necessity (mainly medical and educational). Writing stories in prose or verse has been stolen, often guiltily, from time already mortgaged, and has been broken and ineffective. I may perhaps now do what I much desire to do, and not fail of financial duty. Perhaps!"(*Letters* 24).

3   Le Guin's comment comes in her essay "The Staring Eye," written as a tribute at the time of Tolkien's death, where she mentions reading the book aloud to each of her children in turn, and observes that "the nine-year-old likes Merry, but doesn't much like Pippin. I never could tell them apart to that extent" (172). By contrast, Marion Zimmer Bradley, of all people, was more perceptive, giving a detailed contrast between the two hobbits' behavior and attitude in "Men, Halflings, and Hero Worship" (Isaacs and Zimbardo 112).

4   West's essay, "The Interlace Structure of *The Lord of the Rings,*" appears in *A Tolkien Compass*, ed. Jared Lobdell (1975). Jones's "The Shape of the Narrative in *The Lord of the Rings,*" a good essay in a bad collection, appeared in *J.R.R. Tolkien: This Far Land* (1983), ed. Robert Giddings. More recently, Le Guin has drawn attention to the rhythms of Tolkien's plotting, alternating dangers with periods of rest, in "Rhythmic Pattern in *The Lord of the Rings*," her contribution to *Meditations on Middle-earth* (2001), ed. Karen Haber.

5   Tolkien's discussion of his selective use of archaic language to express nonmodern points of view, particularly in the Rohan sections of *The Lord of the Rings*, comes in his draft letter of September 1955 to Hugh Brogan, who had earlier criticized such usage (*Letters* 225–226).

6   Medcalf originally made this claim in his Hobbit Workshop presentation at Church House, London, on Saturday May 16th 1987; I quote him here from my notes taken on that occasion. His presentation has since been published in rewritten form as the essay "The Language Learned of Elves" in the 1999 volume of *VII*, without the offending phrase but still stressing "his alienation from modern English" (Medcalf 34).

7   That Raffel utterly failed to understand what Tolkien is saying here is shown by his quoting this very passage and retorting that " 'He climbed a hill and saw a river in the valley below' does not . . . evoke any kind of scene at all. It is a cog in some narrative machine: there was some reason for this person to climb a hill, there was some reason for him to see a river, and some consequence perhaps flowed therefrom . . . None of this has anything to do with what words as words can communicate; the question of style is simply not at issue" (Raffel 226–227).

8   Specifically, Tolkien wrote "many confuse 'applicability' with 'allegory'; but the one resides in the freedom of the reader, and the other in the purposed domination of the author" (*FR,* Foreword to the Second Edition, 7). Note that for Tolkien the word "allegory" had a very specific meaning somewhat at odds with the looser usage of some of those who have written about him; for him, an "allegory" must contain one-on-one correspondences between the fictional characters and events and the things they represent, like a roman-a-clef. Thus neither "Leaf by Niggle" nor *Smith of Wootton Major* is an allegory as Tolkien would have defined the term.

9   For another example, see a short piece written by Tolkien in 1966 that I call "Notes on a Parley," which will appear in a future edition of *Return to Bag-End*. In it, he devotes several pages to describing the arrangement of the new wall or barricade Thorin and Company threw across the Front Gate during the Siege of the Mountain, the path from there to Ravenhill, and the collapsed bridge over the river near Dale.

10 Lewis's method is most straightforwardly described in his essay "It All Began With A Picture . . ." (1960), collected in *On Stories* (53–54).

11 I.e., a twist or quirk.

12 In his 1965 BBC radio interview with Denys Gueroult, Tolkien reacts with pleasure when Gueroult praises his ability to enhance characterization through nomenclature. Although Tolkien describes it as "a minor technical craft," he goes on to affirm that he took a great deal of time and effort over this aspect of his work to achieve his desired effects.

13 There is a historical irony in this, since it turns out that the original Sarehole Mill had been converted to industrial uses in the mid-18th century but had reverted to grinding grain in Tolkien's time; see John Ezard, "Tolkien's Shire" (1991). Preserved through the foresight of solicitor Arthur Foster (d. 1928), who willed the site to the city on provision that Mill, meadow, pond, and cottages (including the one the Tolkiens had lived in) all be preserved, it is now a museum amid a wilderness preserve (Mosley Bog).

14 Cf. for example Verlyn Flieger's "The Green Man, The Green Knight, and Treebeard: Scholarship and Invention in Tolkien's Fiction" (85–98).

15 I am indebted to Douglas Anderson for establishing, and sharing with me, the probable date of this sequence (*Mr. Baggins* 187 Note 12; and 377 Note 1).

16 Specifically, Tolkien writes that "*the five hobbits*" entered the stable and then says that "*They* mounted, and soon they were riding off. . . . After riding for about an hour . . . they saw the Hedge looming suddenly ahead" (*FR*, I, vi, 120; emphasis mine). There is no indication of any sort that by "they" Tolkien means only four of the five hobbits present. The natural reading of this passage would be that all five rode, accompanied by the sixth baggage pony.

17 Hammond and Scull approach the problem from a slightly different angle in their *The Lord of the Rings Companion*, claiming that:

> Although some readers have tried to explain the reading "six ponies" by suggesting that one was for Fredegar to ride with his friends as far as the hedge, Merry is here answering Frodo's question about preparations, with details of transport and provisions specifically for the four hobbits who are to make the journey—excluding Fredegar. (118)

In essence, Hammond and Scull here are arguing that while there actually *are* six ponies present in the stables, Merry should only *mention*

five of them since the sixth is not part of his "preparations." Even if we grant their argument, this means Merry's unaltered statement was in fact accurate—there *were* six ponies in the stable that night— while their altered reading must be parsed as meaning something like "there are five ponies in the stable, plus a sixth one that does not count and must not be mentioned because it is only going part-way with us."

18 "Almost": the one important change imposed upon Tolkien by his publisher was the work's division into three volumes rather than the large single volume Tolkien would have preferred, a change dictated by the publisher's desire to spread their projected financial loss over three fiscal years. Of course, the book proved to be successful from the very start, so much so that Allen & Unwin accelerated the release schedule of the second and third volumes.

19 Not only was Joyce more or less legally blind during the period when he was trying to proofread *Finnegans Wake*, but most of his later books were typeset by men who could not read the language in which they were written.

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Talk to the Dragon: Tolkien as Translator

Ármann Jakobsson

In chapter 12 of *The Hobbit*, Bilbo Baggins finally meets the dragon Smaug, the object of his and his companions' quest. This encounter with the dragon is in a sense both the climax and the anti-climax of the story. It is also a turning point, both structurally and morally. The story has up to this point been episodic in structure, a travel narrative with each adventure coming on top of the previous one, as Bilbo and the dwarves travel to The Lonely Mountain (Erebor). It has also been morally simple for the most part, with Bilbo and his companions as un-ambiguous protagonists, facing various kinds of evils (goblins, wolves, spiders and hostile elves). After the meeting with the dragon, however, the narrative becomes more unexpected, entangled, ambiguous, and po-litical, culminating in the hostile encounter between Bilbo's companions and the elves and men of Lake Town (Esgaroth), and Bilbo's subsequent betrayal of his dwarf friends.[1]

In this article, I will analyze the encounter between Bilbo and Smaug, trying to come closer to the identity and the origins of the dragon. I will show how Tolkien is acting as a translator of a kind, by which I mean that he is using Old Norse sources not only as an inspiration for this scene, but that he also gathers a subtext from them, making his dragon much more ambiguous and still more frightening a brutish beast. I will argue that Smaug the dragon might be regarded as an uncanny monster and that this uncanny aspect of the dragon is present not only in *The Hobbit* but also in its major source, the Old Norse poem *Fáfnismál*. Thus Tolkien is acting as a translator not only of motifs but also of ideas, and even of eerie feelings.[2]

When Bilbo, and the readers of *The Hobbit*, are confronted with the dragon, they are in for a surprise, as Smaug's behaviour is somewhat un-usual for a dragon. Dragons are an ancient and fairly ubiquitous cultural phenomenon, the origins of which are extremely hard to trace.[3] Tolkien clearly expected his readers to be a little familiar with dragons: various statements made in the book suggest that he is addressing an audience with some previous knowledge of said species, in theory if not practice.[4] This ideal audience would not have been surprised to see Tolkien's drag-on as depicted in the book: a huge, scaly, fire-breathing, flying monstros-ity, resting on its treasure.[5] This is what a dragon should be like, and in four out of the five times that Tolkien's dragon appears it behaves more or less as a 'generic' dragon might be expected to, wrecking things with-out giving much thought to it. If anything, the dragon is pleased about

the destruction it wreaks, which is unsurprising, since dragons are evil monsters and being dangerous and destructive is their role. And Smaug, the dragon in *The Hobbit*, lives up to this expectation. He turns out to be as bestial and as monstrous as the best of dragons.

Evil monster he is indeed, but how? It is the fifth scene, in which my interest lies, the one where Tolkien's dragon might be said to defy expectations. Initially, the dragon is mentioned as the main antagonist of the dwarves visiting Bilbo Baggins, as the object of their quest and as a destroyer and killer whose death they desire. The actual encounter with the dragon keeps being postponed as the quest proceeds, with trolls and goblins and wolves and spiders and elves—but no dragons, until the story is well advanced. Then, finally, Bilbo Baggins has to walk into the dragon's lair (happily invisible, though) and steal something from it, only to bring the dragon's wrath upon himself and the dwarves, who all nevertheless escape from it—the dragon eats their ponies instead.[6] And it is at that point in the narrative that Bilbo is again sent to face the dragon. This time, it is awake and it speaks—and I will now have to stop referring to the dragon as "it," since *he* has started speaking.

When the dragon starts to speak, the reader cannot escape the feeling that this is a climactic event which turns the expected storyline upside down:

> Smaug certainly looked fast asleep, almost dead and dark, with scarcely a snore more than a whiff of unseen steam, when Bilbo peeped once more from the entrance. He was just about to step out on to the floor when he caught a sudden thin and piercing ray of red from under the drooping lid of Smaug's left eye. He was only pretending to sleep! He was watching the tunnel entrance! Hurriedly Bilbo stepped back and blessed the luck of his ring. Then Smaug spoke.
> (*H*, XII, 211–12)

Readers are probably expected to be a bit taken back by the words "Then Smaug spoke", at the end of this paragraph—they are, as it were, much like a punch-line (or surprise) of an Elizabethan sonnet.

It seems likely that many readers of *The Hobbit* would start out regarding dragons as belonging to the animal kingdom, mythical to be sure, but beasts nonetheless. Tolkien's dragon, on the other hand, is not a beast. The moment it speaks, it becomes a character, an intelligent person who is not merely governed by his bestial instincts. The dragon still retains these bestial instincts, though. Indeed he soon refers to his having feasted on dwarves (his exact words are: "I know the smell (and taste) of dwarf—no one better" (*H*, XII, 213)—which is tantamount to cannibalism, since dwarves are also intelligent and speaking creatures.[7] Thus,

Tolkien's dragon is actually a hybrid: part man, part beast, a chimera or a *finngálkn* in Old Norse.[8] Still, in spite of his wildness, the dragon turns out to be quite a conversationalist: curious, polite, clever, and subtle.

When dragons start to talk, they are transposed into the world of humans, of those who possess the ability to speak and to converse. And for a conversation to take place, the two (or more) people involved need some common ground. Most importantly, they need a common language (and, perhaps surprisingly but probably mainly for the sake of the storyline, dragons and hobbits share a language in *The Hobbit*); secondly, they need some common points of reference. And these turn out to be possible for Bilbo and the dragon when they meet for the second time and start talking to each other.

It is not so much the fact that the dragon speaks that makes Bilbo's conversation with dragon surprising but how he speaks: the dragon is clever and subtle and formidable in an eerie way. This opens up a Pandora's Box of new and uncanny possibilities: is the dragon perhaps human in some way? Is he, heaven forbid, one of us?

While Tolkien was writing *The Hobbit*, he also composed his famous essay "*Beowulf:* The Monsters and the Critics" (the Israel Gollancz lecture of 1936), and he was, very rarely for a serious scholar of that age, quite preoccupied with monsters (as his essay bears witness, most would have considered monsters folkloristic and frivolous). Unlike most of the critics of *Beowulf*, Tolkien liked the hero's monster battles, arguing that the inhumanity of the antagonists (and their more elemental nature) is not just a plebeian descent into folktales belonging in the nursery, but a device which made the story larger and more significant.

In this lecture, Tolkien also ponders the relationship between monstrosity and otherness, a very common preoccupation in modern monster studies.[9] To simplify, we can distinguish between two types of monsters, which are exemplified in *Beowulf* by the dragon that Beowulf dies fighting and by Grendel and his mother, the monstrous antagonists in the first part of the poem.

There is, on one hand, the monster which is the complete Other, as one might initially regard the Beowulfian dragon. A giant tarantula would fit into this category, as would Godzilla and perhaps the Alien from Ridley Scott's influential film of the same name. No affinity between man and monster seems possible.[10] The other type is the monster as our double, human monsters, such as Grendel. Robert Louis Stevenson's Mr Hyde is the obvious example but all speaking monsters belong in some way to this category.[11] The same would seem to apply to shapeshifters, a well-known category of medieval monsters, which includes werewolves and, perhaps, berserkers.[12]

A dragon such as Smaug is an interesting case in point. At first sight,

it (and in this context we have to refer to Smaug as "it") seems to belong in the category of the monstrous Other, that set of monsters who are completely and utterly alien to us.[13] Of course, dragons would initially seem to belong to the utterly alien, and it is easy to argue why, since dragons do not resemble humans in the slightest: they are slithery, flying, fire-breathing serpents. From the modern biological point of view, humans and serpents are not even slightly related—the actual relationship between the two is considerably weaker than that which exists, say, between humans and apes, while in the Northern Middle Ages it was usually bears and wolves that were seen as somehow akin to the human race. Still, there are also Old Norse cases of humans and serpents belonging to the same family, including most notoriously the originally human dragon Fáfnir, whom I will discuss below.

When Tolkien's dragon starts to speak, it has moved, perhaps unexpectedly, into the other category, the monster as our double.[14] Smaug then becomes Mr. Hyde, Dracula, Frankenstein's monster—all these well-known figures of the popular culture of the 1930's, to which Tolkien, whether he would have seen it that way or not, also belongs.[15] Tolkien is doing new things with the concept of the dragon. He is, in a way, neutralizing the opposition between the human and the monstrous, or, at least, moving the dragon between categories, using it to reflect something that can also be found in humans.[16]

As scholars have noted, the notion of the talking dragon comes from the poem *Fáfnismál*, as well as from *Völsunga saga* where *Fáfnismál* is used as a source.[17] This is hardly surprising, since Tolkien himself actually says in *The Monsters and the Critics* that "dragons, real dragons, essential both to the machinery and the ideas of a poem or tale, are actually rare. In the northern literature there are only two that are significant. . . . we have but the dragon of the Volsungs, Fafnir, and Beowulf's bane" (*MC* 11).[18]

The clue is almost superfluous: for anyone who knows both *The Hobbit* and *Fáfnismál*, the conversation between the hero and the dragon in the former is obviously modelled on and inspired by the latter.[19] As an extension of this observation, I will argue that the uncanny aspects of the monster Smaug, how it is familiar and unfamiliar at the same time,[20] are also present in *Fáfnismál* and that Tolkien is, as it were, translating them to suit the needs of a modern novel.

Fáfnismál is a part of the story of the dragonslayer Sigurðr in the Poetic Edda. Sigurðr killed the mighty dragon Fáfnir, but, as the Eddic poems are for the most part more interested in conversations than deeds, this is not really the main subject of the poem, which instead focuses on Sigurðr's conversation with the dying dragon. *Fáfnismál*, even in comparison with other Eddic poems, is obscure to the point of being completely baffling. For example, Sigurðr starts off by cleverly concealing his name

(calling himself "ga̸fvgt dyr" [a noble animal]), only to reveal it unnecessarily a little later.[21]

Throughout the poem, readers will be prone to get an eerie feeling that the dragon is somehow outwitting Sigurðr, as Smaug also outwits Bilbo in *The Hobbit*, or at least thinks he does, even though the hobbit certainly has the last laugh. In *Fáfnismál*, the dragon certainly has the upper hand in the beginning. Though in his dying throes, he asks aggressive and clever questions, mostly attempting to wrest out of the young hero the identity of the man who he thinks has put him up to this (the dragon's own brother Reginn), whilst warning him against the curse of the gold. The dragon's last words are that if Sigurðr is not careful, they will both end up being killed by the same man. That would entail a strange sharing of fate for the dragon and his slayer, but, as the myth of *Fáfnismál* has it, they do have a lot in common: not just Reginn, but the gold and the violence by which they live. Fáfnir was, according to the Eddas, originally a human who was transformed into a dragon to keep his gold safe. Thus in *Fáfnismál* we do not have a dragon as a complete Other. In fact, the dragon and the hero might be said to share a curious affinity with each other, even a family relationship, since they both have an intimate connection with Reginn.[22]

Tolkien, when writing his narrative of the encounter with the dragon, is, in a sense, acting as translator. He is not translating *Fáfnismál* directly to English,[23] but he is translating its essence for inclusion in a modern novel (and for all its medieval learning *The Hobbit* is quite modern and was arguably ahead of its time in 1937).[24] His dragon, although its human origins remain unspecified, is strangely and unnervingly human, like Fáfnir. And Bilbo, faced with the daunting experience of having his first talk with a dragon, resorts to the same methods as Sigurðr does, that is speaking in riddles. Clearly humorously alluding to *Fáfnismál*, the narrator applauds Bilbo's decision to speak in riddles: "This of course is the way to talk to a dragon, if you don't want to reveal your proper name (which is wise) and don't want to infuriate them by a flat refusal (which is also very wise). No dragon can resist the fascination of riddling talk and of wasting time trying to understand it" (*H*, XII, 213).

While Bilbo does a slightly better job with the riddles than Sigurðr, he still unintentionally reveals some things to the clever dragon that he did not want to, who realizes from one of the riddle-names Bilbo invents for himself that he has received the hospitality of the people of the lake town Esgaroth.

The conversation actually gets close to comical at one point when Bilbo becomes lofty in his riddle-making, while the dragon keeps interrupting him with down-to-earth remarks, much in the way of a gruff school-teacher, or King Haraldr hard-ruler during the first performance

of *Magnússdrápa hrynhenda*.[25] One example:

> "I come from under the hill, and under the hills and over
> the hills my paths led. And through the air, I am he that
> walks unseen."
>
> "So I can well believe," said Smaug, "but that is hardly
> your usual name."
>
> "I am the clue-finder, the web-cutter, the stinging fly. I
> was chosen for the lucky number."
>
> "Lovely titles!" sneered the dragon. "But lucky numbers
> don't always come off." (*H*, XII, 212)

Bilbo is obviously trying to impress the dragon, as a young man might wish to impress a paternal figure, whereas one cannot really imagine oneself trying to impress Godzilla.[26]

Both Bilbo and Sigurðr run into trouble because their dragons are slippery, their answers unexpected and both gently goad their heroes into revealing more: Smaug by snorting "lovely titles!"—whereas when Sigurðr claims to be both motherless and fatherless, it is Fáfnir's turn to snort: "af hverio vartv vndri alinn" [what wonder begat you?] (stanza 3).[27] Both dragons also warn the hero about the treachery of his comrades. And, as *The Hobbit* has it, Bilbo was in dire risk of falling under the dragon's spell (*H*, XII, 214).

The subtext about parentage in *Fáfnismál* aids in rendering the dragon no simple monster.[28] It is no coincidence that the dragon begins by asking about Sigurðr's parents, since Sigurðr has actually been brought to Gnitaheiði by his foster-father and mentor, Reginn, who is the brother of the dragon Fáfnir. As Reginn's brother, Fáfnir easily becomes a surrogate parent to Sigurðr as well, and their conversation bears witness to it: this dragon is not merely a monster in the wilderness. He is a teacher, a respectable figure, and he also has magical powers.[29] He is a thing of sorcery and that means that he is terrible. The dragon-spell is not only a gimmick that the dragon possesses to make him a more formidable adversary. It also reminds us that there is in the hearts of others (certainly in the hearts of the dwarves, and, as it turns out, also in the heart of Bilbo) a tiny essence of the dragon, that *draconitas* which made it possible for Fáfnir to turn himself into a dragon.[30] As Jonathan Evans has remarked, the main function of the dragon in the Old Germanic world was as a legendary or even mythic symbol of greed,[31] and in *The Hobbit* we have a good example of this in the tragic fate of the master of Esgaroth who dies from "dragon-sickness" in the epilogue of the narrative (*H*, XIX, 285).

There is one major difference between the two protagonists. Bilbo is afraid, as described shortly before he meets the dragon: "It was at this point that Bilbo stopped. Going on from there was the bravest thing he

ever did. The tremendous things that happened afterward were as nothing compared to it. He fought the real battle in the tunnel alone, before he ever saw the vast danger that lay in wait" (*H*, XII, 205). Bilbo's passage through the tunnel is loaded with symbolic meaning, as everyone would recognize in our post-Freudian age.[32] We do not even really need to be inspired by Freud to see the tunnel as an image of birth: in the tunnel, Bilbo is born as a hero. What does he then meet in the bright world beyond? He enters the lair of the dragon, the brightness of which is explained by the treasure, and encounters a big strangely familiar creature that is intimidating and whose motives are unclear.

This Freudian birth imagery is connected to the idea that the dragon may become a somewhat twisted paternal figure to the hero, not only in *Fáfnismál*, where the dragon is actually the brother of Sigurðr's father-figure Reginn, but also in *The Hobbit*. One way for a budding hero to become a man is slaying a dragon, as Sigurðr Fáfnisbani does (and Ragnar, the hero of *Ragnars saga loðbrókar* as well), an idea that Tolkien must mainly have gathered from *Fáfnismál*. It clearly has an added significance that *Fáfnismál* starts with Fáfnir asking his slayer about his birth. He wants to know not who Sigurðr is, but whose son he is. And after that, Sigurðr and Fáfnir spend the first five stanzas of the poem repeating the words "father" and "son". They go on to discuss the curse of the gold and Sigurðr's eventual death. Sigurður seems somewhat at a loss as to how to acquit himself when conversing with dragons throughout the dialogue with Fáfnir, but he still wants to gain wisdom from this wise old creature.[33] The first thing he asks him is about the origins of the norns who "kjósa møþr fra mǫgum" [sunder mother and son] (stanza 12).[34] Birth, fatherhood, motherhood and death seem to be foremost in Sigurðr's mind when faced with the dragon.

Curiously, Bilbo too when he confronts the dragon, starts thinking about his own father, who is otherwise a shadowy figure in *The Hobbit*, and, indeed, in *The Lord of the Rings*: "Perhaps something will turn up. 'Every worm has his weak spot, as my father used to say'" (*H*, XII, p. 211). By remembering things that his father told him, he finds the weak spot on the dragon's belly, making his father a part of his confrontation with the dragon. In *The Hobbit*, the dragon is certainly not such a palpable father figure as Fáfnir is in *Fáfnismál*, but I would contend that the subtext is still there, as is evident in the passage quoted above where Bilbo's riddling talk is tested by the dragon. From *Fáfnismál* Smaug carries with him some of the aura of an evil ancestor, familiar and unfamiliar at the same time, and his uncanny status in the conflict owes something to this "ancestry" of the text *The Hobbit* as a "translation" of *Fáfnismál*. Were it not for the ambiguous and perversely paternal role Smaug has, Bilbo might not have needed to bring his biological father into the lair with him

to confront this antagonist.

The parental role of the dragon is less overt in *The Hobbit* than in *Fáfnismál* and it is important to keep in mind that the dialogue between the two dragons and their antagonists also differs in many other respects. Even so, one might still say that Tolkien has picked up themes and even an uncanny atmosphere from *Fáfnismál* and thus translated the old poem into a narrative fit for his own tale.

The most important thing that Tolkien gained from *Fáfnismál* is that the conversation between the dragon and the hero and the intellectual game they play moves the dragon from one monster category to the other. The dragon is no longer merely terrible and bestial, he now also becomes uncanny, strange and yet familiar, human and yet not human, acting almost as if he is Bilbo's parent and teacher and not merely a monster in the wilderness. An uncanny relationship is thus established between the hero and the dragon. The duel with the monster becomes a duel of wits, an idea not perhaps central to the Sigurðr myth as such but certainly central to *Fáfnismál*.

Tolkien is translating not only the conversation between budding hero and dragon from the Old Norse, but also that dialogue's alarming sub-text. Tolkien's dragon becomes both monstrous and uncanny. His intelligence and his command of language, his strange familiarity, makes his appetite for dwarves, his cannibalism as it were, seem more eerie and more subtly frightening. This monster is not just terrifying, it is a part of us. We can talk to it because there is a revolting but real connection between man and monster.

NOTES

This article was originally written as a paper for the *International Mediaeval Conference* in Leeds and presented in a session organized by Carl Phelpstead (with him and Dimitra Fini as the other speakers) in July 2007.

1   Tolkien wrote *The Hobbit* in two stages and the last part of the novel only after having been approached by publishers (Carpenter 183–84; this has been challenged by Rateliff I, xi–xviii). I have argued previously (*Tolkien og Hringurinn*, 41–42) that this part of the narrative completely transforms the book, as it enhances both its structural complexity and its irony, as the fight at one point suddenly is not between good and evil anymore but rather between various factions of the good races; see also Shippey (*Road* 76).

2   I am treading the path of recent monster theory (Cohen 4) by examining the monster both as a construct and a projection. The

idea of Tolkien as a 'translator' in a sense pervades the work of T.A. Shippey (see esp. *Road*) as well.

3 The most extensive study of Indo-European dragon slaying myths is Watkins, (esp. 297–303).

4 E.g. "If you have ever seen a dragon in a pinch you will realise that this was only poetical exaggeration applied to any hobbit" (*H*, I, 27); "Dragons steal gold and jewels, you know" (*H*, I, 32); "dragons must sleep sometimes, I suppose" (*H*, I, 35).

5 Smaug is described in *H*, xii, 205–6 and again on page 212–16.

6 This probably seems rather wicked to most readers, except Icelanders, who have been eating ponies for centuries.

7 This would depend on how cannibalism is defined. On the one hand, dragons and dwarves do not belong to the same species. On the other, one sapient (talking) animal eating another violates the same norms that cannibalism does, as C. S. Lewis, Tolkien's friend and ally, suggests in *The Silver Chair* (113).

8 On this Icelandic monster type and its metaphorical use, see Einar Sigmarsson.

9 See e.g.: "Triumph over the lesser and more nearly human is cancelled by defeat before the older and more elemental" (*MC* 34).

10 Many monsters of popular culture seem at first to belong to this type, although perhaps wrongly, with King Kong as a good example (one may keep in mind that the famous 1933 film is contemporary to the *The Hobbit*).

11 Tolkien's Orcs are a good example, however deformed they are made to look by the film make-up artists.

12 This category of human monsters would also seem to incorporate the Old Norse giants, who are not only the gods' main antagonists but also their ancestors and relations by marriage, see e.g. Jakobsson ("Contest").

13 And yet, as Samantha Riches has recently reminded us, animals in literature are never wholly similar to and never entirely different from humans (199).

14 Tolkien preferred not to think of dragons as animals ("as a sober zoologist," as he phrases it himself) (*MC* 11).

15 On the monster culture of the 1930s, see Skal (esp. 113–209).

16 On Tolkien's recurrent interest in dragons, see Rateliff (II, 525–34). He later created a second and very different dragon, Chrysophylax Dives, a character in *Farmer Giles of Ham* (published 1949, but actually written in 1937, in the midst of Tolkien's preoccupation with dragons). Chrysophylax is in some ways even more human than Smaug, although he retains some bestial qualities.

17 See e.g. Shippey (*Road*, 82; *Author*, 36).

18 This is a hyperbole, as demonstrated by Evans (221) but Tolkien is not entirely wrong; these are the two most important dragon characters from Old Germanic culture and undoubtedly the ones that he used when creating Smaug. Only Fáfnir in *Fáfnismál* speaks, but the *Beowulf* dragon may also be said to possess a somewhat human personality; when its cup has been stolen, it does not only scour the vicinity, searching for the thief, it also goes to its treasure mound to see if it has not simply mislaid it.

19 I am not suggesting that *Fáfnismál* is the only model for Ch. 12 of *The Hobbit*; other influences have also been noted but are of less interest to this study.

20 In his 1919 essay, Freud defines the uncanny as that which is familiar and yet strange, thus frightening (*CPW* XVII, 220). As Royle has recently shown, Freud's depiction of the uncanny is complex and full of ambiguities, but this simple definition will have to do for our purposes.

21 *Norræn fornkvæði* (219–20).

22 *Fáfnismál* is in itself a very complex narrative and it is also a part of a complex narrative cycle where the most complicated part is the moment between the dragon-slaying and the double marriages that later take place between Sigurðr, Brynhildr, Guðrún and Gunnarr (see e.g. Andersson).

23 In the same way, he is not directly translating *Beowulf* when he borrows from it theft of the golden cup for *The Hobbit* (and Tolkien somewhat disingenuously denied having been thinking of *Beowulf* at all when he wrote that scene, see *Letters* [31]).

24 Its lack of a preaching tone is comparable to the contemporary works of Enid Blyton who became somewhat unfairly notorious for adopting her audience's point of view. For good arguments as to how Tolkien is very much a twentieth century novelist, see Rosebury (147–57) and Shippey (*Author*, 310–18).

25 *Morkinskinna*, (116–18).

26 Shippey has also remarked that the "familiarity" of Smaug's speech suggests an unsettling connection between man and monsters (*Road*, 84).

27 *Norræn fornkvæði* (220).

28 Evans has noted that the motif of the dragon as a transformed man serves to ambiguate the categorial binarism of the opposition between man and monster and thus it is also possible to see the hero and the dragon as "doubles" (250–56; see also Lionarons).

29 As Tom Shippey has noted the dragon's speech has echoes of the "aggressive politeness of the British upper class" (*Road*, 83; *Author*, 37–38).

30 This is suggested already in the first chapter by his reaction to the song of the dwarves (*H*, I, 25).

31 Evans (263). He also discusses monstrous transformations of greed in depth in his excellent study of the Old Germanic dragon (248–61).

32 As Freud explains (*CPW* V, 397), he is not claiming any originality in spotting these symbols; he expects e.g. narrow passages and closed doors to be recognized as well-known or obvious symbols for the vagina. Even though Freud and Tolkien were far removed from each other as scholars, it is not unlikely that Tolkien was at least aware of the possibility of such an interpretation.

33 Cf. Evans (265).

34 *Norræn fornkvæði* (221).

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A "Clerkes Compleinte": Tolkien and the Division of Lit. and Lang.

JILL FITZGERALD

In 1931, Tolkien delivered a lecture to the Philological Society of Oxford titled, "Chaucer as a Philologist: *The Reeve's Tale*," which was subsequently published in 1934 and recently reprinted by *Tolkien Studies* in 2008.[1] This paper hopes to complement that reprint by setting Tolkien's lecture within his professional context at the time of its delivery and, additionally, by examining the role Chaucer played in Tolkien's scholarly and creative works. Tolkien's essay "Chaucer as a Philologist" is perhaps the most comprehensive account of the dialectic variations in *The Reeve's Tale* to date. Beneath its detailed surface argument, it is also a tongue-in-cheek attempt by Tolkien to convince his audience (and certainly his skeptics) that Chaucer was philologically savvy, and would have felt right at home within the Oxford "language school." A year before delivering this lecture Tolkien had weighed in on the long-standing pedagogical dispute between the programs known as "Lit." and "Lang." in an article for *The Oxford Magazine*. He wrote: "In the English School, owing to the accidents of history, the distinction between philology and literature is notoriously marked . . . its branches are customarily but loosely dubbed the 'language' and 'literature' side—titles which never were accurate, fortunately for both. History may explain their arising, but provides no defence for their retention" (778). As Tolkien implies, this debate had its roots in the Oxford English Department's fledgling years during the nineteenth century, and continued to intensify in the years between World War I and World War II.

It is no secret that Tolkien's anxiety over the state of philological studies at the university level was career-long, but aspects of his attitude about Lit. and Lang. are still in need of a fuller explanation. His underlying objective for the "Chaucer as a Philologist" lecture was not simply to pull the rug out from under those on the side of Lit. at Oxford, but also to demonstrate that the most compelling literary criticism rests on a substantive philological understanding.

It is hard to tell if the Lit. and Lang. feud had a distinct origin.[2] In *The Rise of English Studies* (1965), D. J. Palmer documents that as far back as 1887, the split between philology and literature was, in reality, a split between those who studied the literature of the Middle Ages and those who read classical and modern literature. As for the anxiety surrounding language studies, one extreme of this attitude is expressed by John Churton Collins: "An English school will grow up, nourishing our language

not from the humanity of the Greeks and the Romans, but from the savagery of the Goths and Anglo-Saxons. We are about to reverse the Renaissance" (Palmer 101). Attitudes such as this one were not uncommon, and only forced philology into a category that grew increasingly synonymous with the pejorative connotations of the "dark ages" in the following decades. Yet, despite all the apparent drama, professors like D. B. Monro, W. P. Ker, Henry Nettleship, and C. H. Firth were actively concerned about giving equal weight to both language and literature. Nettleship published a pamphlet arguing that "whatever temporary misunderstandings may arise between them [philology] is a necessary adjunct to the study of literature" (Palmer 104). His argument fell on deaf ears, however, and was shortly followed up by Collins' rebuttal titled, "Philology *versus* Literature."

In 1905, W. A. Raleigh and A. S. Napier oversaw a structural reorganization of the English School at Oxford with the intention of keeping Lit. and Lang. from being exclusively identified with medieval and modern periods respectively. Their system aimed to provide English majors with something equivalent to modern "concentrations." The reform proposal, known as "bifurcation," allowed separate schemes for those perusing language study and "those who chose to specialize in literature (the great majority)" (Palmer 128). It was submitted in 1905, and subsequently passed in 1906 (129). But questions over how to balance Lit. and Lang. never went away entirely. By Tolkien's time, lines had been conspicuously drawn.

The ideological and pedagogical quarrels of the nineteenth century were only exacerbated in the twentieth as German nationalism and Germanic philology widened the fault lines in the years leading up to World War I. Philology had a strong presence in German institutions, and was commonly regarded as a uniquely German science grounded in the comparative study of languages. Many were uneasy about philology because they felt the study's application did not always lead to an understanding of linguistic evolution, but rather to a comparison of cultures which, by extension, translated into national pride in the language of a particular people. Richard Utz argues in *Chaucer and the Discourse of German Philology* that the German philological impulse was acutely tied to two convictions, the first being that "philological discourse was a home-grown German product superior to any methodologies in other countries." Utz's second point stresses the connection between the institution and the state: "by practising and exporting this kind of superior methodology [Germany was] contributing, in the academic arena, to [its] rise to importance as a powerful modern nation state" (13). It is in this context that Chaucer makes an appearance in philological debates.

Two early advocates of *Chaucerphilologie* were Bernhard ten Brink,

Chair of English Philology at the University of Straßburg, and Julius Zupitza, Professor at the University of Berlin. Both professors were known for notoriously long examinations of linguistic minutiae in their scholarship. Both ten Brink and Zupitza eventually published separate critical editions of Chaucer's *General Prologue* (Utz 45). According to Utz, a number of German philologists felt that "a close link between Chaucer and Germany" (101) should be forged. This impulse mirrors attempts made by philologists several decades earlier to appropriate "ownership" of *Beowulf* through linguistic and cultural analysis.[3]

Utz posits that there was a distinctly "sardonic tone in German responses to much British work in Early English studies" (109), and that scholars such as Ewald Flügel and John Koch were some of those who led the charge to construct German philological practices as exclusively German. Another editor of Chaucer, Arnold Shröer, insisted "on the primacy of German philological scholarship. . . [and] the amateurism of [the] English counterparts." Efforts to monopolize the study of philology in German institutions continued well into the 1920s and 1930s, even as both American and British philological studies were consciously being phased out of universities (Utz 119).

After World War I, the word "philology," especially "comparative philology" (or *vergleichende Philologie*), came to be viewed as problematic in the minds of some because it had been used as a tool for critiquing "superior" and "inferior" languages and nations. Although much of the damage had already been done, it took scholars like Tolkien and R. W. Chambers to call attention to this unhealthy and unnecessary association between philology and nationalism. In 1923, Chambers contended that "*philology* itself, conceived as a purely German invention, is in some quarters treated as it were one of the things that the late war was fought to end" (36). Scholars certainly faced an uphill battle if medieval literature and philology were going to persist at universities. Nonetheless, to use Tolkien's allegory, philology was moreover a reconstructive practice by which the "old stones" could remake the "tower" (*MC* 8). Tolkien's perspective, that philology offered the foundational material on which to build broader literary insights, is advocated in his "Chaucer as a Philologist" presentation to the Philological Society by highlighting how philology does not trump, but instead complements well-rounded literary criticism.

In June 1925, when Tolkien applied for the Rawlinson and Bosworth Chair of Anglo-Saxon, there was an obvious imbalance in the Oxford English program between students who studied literature and those who opted for language study. In his letter to the electors, Tolkien wrote glowingly about his successes with the linguistic program during his five short years at Leeds, noting in particular that the number of students in

linguistics rose from five to twenty.[4] Tolkien wrote: "Philology, indeed, appears to have lost for these students its connotations of terror if not of mystery" (*Letters* 13). He firmly states near the end that "if elected . . . I should endeavor . . . to advance, to the best of my ability, the growing neighbourliness of linguistic and literary studies, which can never be enemies except by misunderstanding or without loss to both" (13).

Tolkien may have publicly advocated cooperation between Lit. and Lang., but privately he harbored frustrations. For instance, in the *Songs for the Philologists* (1936), Tolkien wrote a poem called "Two Little Schemes," with an alternative title "Lit. and Lang." While his tone in this poem is harshly satirical, it should be noted that, in reality, Tolkien did not scorn his Lit. students. In later years he became less adamant and, in 1967, Tolkien wrote a poem commending W. H. Auden, one of his eager pupils who received terrible grades for Lang., but excelled in and felt more comfortable with Lit.[5] Although Tolkien did not shy away from taking a side in the Lit. and Lang. debate, it is also evident that he perceived much of the quarreling as counterproductive, and felt bewilderment over how the two came to be divided in the first place.

Five years after arriving at Oxford, Tolkien was proposing implementation of an A-scheme and a B-scheme curriculum like the one found at Leeds (the "Two Little Schemes" that were the subject of the poem mentioned above). It would have been right around this period that Tolkien read his "Chaucer as Philologist" paper. He was by no means the first to draw Chaucer into the long-standing Lit. and Lang. debate, and he was certainly not the last. In the opening, he suggests that Chaucer is not exactly rolling in his grave over the state of his legacy but rather, according to Tolkien:

> . . . surveying from the *Galaxye* our literary and philological antics upon the *litel erthe that heer is . . . so ful of torment and of harde grace* . . . One can imagine the brief burning words, like those with which he scorched Adam [Scriveyn], that he would address to those who profess to admire him while disdaining 'philology.' (109)

Tolkien quotes lines from Chaucer's earlier dream poem, *The Parliament of Fowls* (56-7; 65), where the narrator reads about Scipio, who dreams that his ancestor, Scipio Africanus, shows him the earth from the heavens. While Tolkien goes on to say that one may suspect that Chaucer "would prefer the Philological Society to the Royal Society of Literature, and an editor[ship] of the English Dictionary, to a poet laureate" (1), he never once asserts that literary study is pointless. Rather, he argues that Chaucer was apparently intrigued by speech patterns and dialectal variety.

Tolkien asserts that the *Reeve's Tale* is an extended dialectal joke.[6] Since his paper was meant for oral delivery, the idea was that all the philologists in the room could have a laugh at the expense of the literature crowd (if indeed any were present). Tolkien insists that dialects are not only funny but, in this instance, vital to analysis. Furthermore, he suggests that while London was the locus of polite language, the really interesting places to hear people speak in the Middle Ages would have been out in the country, particularly in college towns (4). Tolkien also informs his audience that he is about to play professor, and read the *Reeve's Tale* as though he were to "put Chaucer through a linguistic examination" (11).

Tolkien surmises that the distinct features of the clerks' accents can be found in Scandinavian and Northern influences, and that geographical analysis offers further clues about where their dialects originate. The Reeve states that the clerks come from *Strother*, a place name that means simply "marsh," as if to say the clerks come from a town called Swamp.[7] As elements in place names, *-strother* and *-strothe* were once associated with towns in Lancashire, the Lake counties, and Northumberland, some of which are now lost, such as *Caldstrother* and *Langstrothdale* (58). Since no actual place by the name of *Strother* alone seems to have existed for the clerks to hail from, the word could also be a clue indicating their ancestry. The *MED* lists the names *le Strodere* and *Strother*, and Tolkien points out that the surname, *de Strother*, belonged to a considerably important family from Northumberland during the late fourteenth-century (56-8). Although in regards to *Strother*, the Reeve says he "kan nat telle where" (4015), Chaucer, at least, demonstrates a keen sense of terms, places, and familial names particular to the remote North.[8]

In the *Reeve's Tale*, the Cambridge students, John and Aleyn, are sent by their manciple to Trumpington to collect grain from the miller, Symkyn. Believing that the miller is a swindler, John and Aleyn devise a plan to outsmart him and steal extra grain and flour. The miller senses their deviousness and retaliates by untying their horse, which they are forced to chase until the end of the day. During the chase scene, John and Aleyn's habits of speech are further revealed. Tolkien evaluates Chaucer's application of the $\bar{a}/\rho$ "sound-law" to point out the Northernisms. John and Aleyn's vowels show a clear retention of $\bar{a}$:

164 (4084) "Alas," quod Iohn, "Alain for cristës paine,
        Lai doun þi swerd, and I sal min alswa.
        I es ful wight, god wat, *as es* a ra.
        Bi goddës hertẹ, he sal nought scape vs baþe !
        Qui nad þou pit þe capel *i* þe laþe ?
169 (4089) Il hail ! Bi god, Alain, þou es a fonne. (my emphasis)

Because of this sound change, pronunciations like *bǫǫn* ("bone"), and later *bōn*, developed in the South, whereas *bān* remained in the North. Tolkien remarks that "the most striking characteristic of Northern speech in a London ear was the long *ā* (of O.E. or O.N. origin)" (114). He praises Chaucer's representation of northern *ā*, and his equally consistent usage of the sound represented by "hooked *o*" which, he argues, a Southern audience would have regarded as "normal usage" (114).

Tolkien next launches into an exhaustive catalogue of the Northernisms in the clerks' ninety-eight speaking lines of the fabliau. He points out that John says of the manciple "Swa werkës ai þe wangës in his hed (line 4030) [the molars?/temples? in his head ache so [much]], and notes that previous commentators gloss *wanges* as "molars." Still, outside this passage the sense "molar" is always expressed wong-*tothe* (cheek- or jaw-tooth; see *MED wong* n.2 def. b.). By itself, *wong* from OE *wange* usually means "cheek." Tolkien cites the phrase *wete wonges*, a sign of weeping commonly found in alliterative poetry. [9] The ON cognate *vangi*, however, meant not the cheek but "the whole side of the head" (Cleasby and Vigfusson), so that *wong* in John's Scandinavian-influenced Northern dialect might mean not "molar" or "cheek" but rather "temple." Tolkien's assessment of the variant meaning of the word suggests that the manciple's malady may be a migraine, and not a toothache, and implies Chaucer's familiarity with differences in Northern semantics (37-40). Moreover, by emphasizing a word with non-normal or imperceptible usage, Chaucer only adds to the joke.

Tolkien goes on to record certain words in the appendices that have very few southerly attestations: *gif*, *sal*, *boes*, *tan*, *ymel*, and *slik* (for "such"). Overall, Tolkien identifies 127 points of morphology (inflection), phonology, and vocabulary all to be regarded as distinctly variant from Southern linguistic patterns. Finally, taking on the role of philological examiner, Tolkien asserts that he "would award Chaucer a fairly high mark for his effort" (16).

Of course, Tolkien admits, the MSS. of the *Canterbury Tales* exhibit a great degree of dialectal and orthographic variation.[10] He addresses this obvious problem by suggesting that Chaucer's subtle dialectal details may have even been omitted by scribes who were not able to recognize them, or did not fully get the "joke" (12). S.C.P. Horobin has pointed out in his "Reconsideration of the Northernisms in Chaucer's *Reeve's Tale*" (2001) that Tolkien leaned heavily on the Ellesmere MS for his study and that, since his lecture, most critics have come to regard Hengwrt as the MS from which most of the others derive or "mirror" (100). Horobin argues that in Hengwrt the students' Northernisms are inconsistently represented in terms of grammar and morphology (99). Furthermore,

he asserts that only two MSS (Cambridge Dd and BL Harley) show evidence of scribes augmenting the Northernisms, while the rest (not fully understanding the joke) make Southern substitutions.[11] Horobin concurs with N. F. Blake that Chaucer's main intent was to express a "flavour" of Northern dialect "rather than [achieve] absolute philological accuracy or consistency." He goes on to say that "Chaucer's representation of dialect was no doubt further constrained by the nature of his Southern, courtly audience, who would perhaps have had difficulties comprehending the more extreme provincialisms of Northern speech" (104).

Horobin's analysis may indeed cast doubt on Tolkien's argument if one accepts, as many (but by no means all) contemporary critics have, that Hengwrt is a more definitive text. Nevertheless, Tolkien's critical work is valuable on several planes. On one level, his criticism frequently shows a unique scholarly acumen, an ability to look in on the field and dispel persistent misconceptions. While Tolkien's body of scholarship is sometimes thought to be relatively small, much of the criticism he left us shows distinguishing impulses that defend and reinforce both his professional and creative efforts.

One often senses that Tolkien used his scholarship as a defense of his own literary work: "I have the author of *Beowulf*, at any rate, on my side: a greater man than most of us. And I cannot myself perceive a period in the North when one kind alone was esteemed: there was room for myth and heroic legend, and for blends of all these" (*MC* 16). Tolkien's "Chaucer as a Philologist" lecture took place five years before "*Beowulf*: the Monsters and the Critics." The latter was published the same year as *The Hobbit*, in 1937 (Carpenter 269). There is a little self-advocacy in both these essays. In other words, Tolkien justifies his *avocation* as a fantasy writer in "*Beowulf*: The Monsters and the Critics" and defends his *occupation* as philologist in "Chaucer as a Philologist."

Despite Tolkien's role in the Lit. and Lang. dispute he had plenty of friends on both sides of the aisle. By 1931, he continued to work diligently with C. S. Lewis among others to remake the curriculum. Still, there is no denying that his professorship was filled with immense anguish over the state of his beloved subject. Shippey comments on the end result of the post-philological era:

> In this entire process the thing which was perhaps eroded most of all was the philologists' sense of a line between imagination and reality. The whole of their science conditioned them to the acceptance of what one might call '***-**' or 'asterisk-reality,' that which no longer existed but could with 100 per cent certainty be inferred. (*Road* 22)

The concept of an "asterisk reconstruction" is not unique to Tolkien,

but a creative exploit we know he dabbled in a great deal. Asterisk reconstructions involved discerning words and even whole works that must have existed once, and reintroducing them as though they had always been there. Tolkien also wrote pastiches, or "asterisk poems" in ancient languages.[12] Many medieval scholars undertook this practice with great seriousness and, for some, reconstruction was more than just a popular form of imitation. The Danish scholar and poet, Alex Olrik, *re*-composed the Old Norse poem, the *Bjarkamál*, from an Icelandic fragment and Latin paraphrase.[13] For Olrik, the goal was that a fragment could "gradually come to life," and in his Introduction to *Heroic Legends of Denmark* (1919) he encourages his audience to "live [themselves] into the *Bjarkamál*'s world of thought" (86).

In the case of Tolkien, his pastiches (like his scholarship) seem tied to his frustration with university bureaucracy. One Middle English pastiche, called "The Clerkes Compleinte," conveys his early sense of frustration just two years after he began as a Reader at Leeds. This sixty-line poem was anonymously published in *The Gryphon* (1922), a student and faculty periodical at what was then "Yorkshire College." In the poem, the narrator, a young "clerke" is discouraged from registering for the language courses he wishes to take in the fall. During the academic year of 1921-1922, Tolkien's teaching responsibilities included History of the English Language, West Saxon Texts, the Language of Chaucer, and Old and Middle English Dialects (Scull *Companion* 117). One can imagine that these courses provided him with plenty of linguistic materials to include in this poem. The phonetics, lexis, syntax, and scansion of the Middle English are all very accurate. It is no surprise that Tolkien was also putting the final touches on *A Middle English Vocabulary* three or four months before the poem was published (Scull *Companion* 119).

Long before his application and appointment at Oxford, Tolkien shows a morose sense of the dwindling status of language study. *The Gryphon*[14] issue containing "The Clerkes Compleinte" was rediscovered in 1984 by Anders Stenström, and the poem, edited by T. A. Shippey and Stenström, was subsequently published in the Swedish journal *Arda* that same year.[15] Shortly after the poem was published, Christopher Tolkien provided Stenström with a facsimile of a handwritten manuscript of "The Clerkes Compleinte" (fol.1r – fol. 2r) which his father had revised later on in his career, probably when he was at Oxford. According to Christopher Tolkien, this copy was written no earlier than 1924 on paper used in Oxford examinations.[16] Several emendations had been made since the original version. "Leedes," instead of being described as the "fairest" town in Yorkshire, became the "derkest." Instead of Leeds being the university where the group of young clerks journey to for registration, and from whence narrator is banished, Tolkien emends it to

"Oxenforde" in the marginalia (line 16).

To my knowledge "The Clerkes Compleinte" has not come up in Tolkien studies outside of Shippey's and Stenström's commentary in *Arda*, under Shippey's entry for "Poetry in Other Languages" in the *Tolkien Encyclopedia*, and an annotation in Scull and Hammond's *Tolkien Companion and Guide* (2006). This poem is one of two known and complete samples of Tolkien writing in a Middle English dialect. The other such poem is called "Doworst," and is also about struggling university students. "Doworst" is in the alliterative style and meter of William Langland's *Piers Plowman* but, unlike "The Clerkes Compleinte," the narrator's *Visio* describes Oxford students performing miserably during their oral examinations while their professors, "four clerks" who are difficult to please, administer the questions.[17]

Readers familiar with Chaucer find themselves on familiar linguistic ground from the start of "The Clerkes Compleinte," but will quickly realize that the mood which Tolkien establishes is starkly different from that of Chaucer's opening to *The Canterbury Tales*. Stenström's follow-up article in 1986 outlined the multiple variations between the version in *The Gryphon*, a typescript, and the Oxford version, and included several emendations to the *Arda* 1984 edition. Since copies of *Arda* are not widely available, and the revised Oxford version has not been transcribed from the facsimile published in *Arda* in 1986, I submit the Oxford version of the poem in its entirety:

Þe Clerkes Compleinte

Whanne þat Octobre mid his schoures derke
Þe erþe haþ dreint, and wetė windes cherke
& swoghe in naked braunches colde and bare,
& þ'oldė sonne is hennes longe yfare;   5
Whan misti cloudes blake ymeind with smoke
her yen blenden & her þrotes choke,
& frosty Eurus with his kenė teþ
Ech man forwelked biteþ þat him fleþ,
& wrecchė cattes youlen umbewhiles,
þat slepen nat, bot wandren on þe tiles   10
(So prikeþ hem nature in her corages)—
Þan þinken folk to doon her auantages,
& seken hem faire educacioun
In yonge dayes of þe sessioun;
& specially from euery schires ende   15
In al þe north to Leedės clerkes wende,   [marginal note: "londe to
        Oxenforde þei wende"]
& in þe derkest toune of Yorkeschire

49

Seken of lore welles depe and schire!

Bifel þat in þat sesoun dim & mat,
In Leedes atte dores as I sat,   20
At morne was come in to þo halles hye
Wel nygh fyue hondred in my companye
of newė clerkes in an egre presse,
langages olde þat wolden lerne, I gesse,
Of Fraunce or Engelonde or Spayne or Ruce,   25
þo tonges harde of Hygh Almayne & Pruce;
Or historye, or termes queinte of lawe—
yit nas bot litel Latin in her mawe,
& bolde men, alas, þer were yet lece
þat þoghten wrestle with þe tonge of Grece,   30
or doon her hedes aken with etyk
& with philosophye malencolyk.
And yit an heep was þer so huge yþronge,
vnnethe mighte I tellen tho clerkes yonge
þat wolde lerne how men in Fattes depe   35
With queynte odoures hydes seþe and stepe,
or weuen wolle in webbes softe & fayre,
or brennen col & fylen nat þe ayre!
Þer soghte an huge prees matematyk
& fragraunt chymistrie & sleigh physyk,   40
& mani uncouþ sciencė for þe nones
of floures, fissches, or of oldė stones.

Þer mani vois gan maken swich a din
þe heuy ayres schooke, & many a pin
vnherd þer fil vpon þo flores wyde,   45
til þat men criden hy myn ere biside
of fees & of examinacioun,
& axede of matriculacioun,
& wher I hadde of Godes faire grace
by auenture ychaunced hit to pace.   50
Þogh maystres hadde I mo þan þryės ten,
& wysdom of an heep of lerned men,
þat were of lore expert & curious,
yit couthe I nat namore þan can a mous
of swich lettrure, ne wiste I what þey mente.   55

Lo! fro þe halles swiþe men me sente
to dwellen al a yeer withoute yate
& pleynen me of myne unkyndė fate,

withoute yates al a yeer to dwelle
ne durrė drynken of þe clerė welle!   60

      N. N. [18]

The opening lines obviously evoke an array of Chaucerian allusions, but they do so through inversion. The freshness and vitality of spring-time which Chaucer conjures in the *General Prologue* of the *Canterbury Tales* (1-27) is replaced by the chill of fall. Chaucer's April is swapped for October; Zephyrus becomes frosty Eurus who, instead of loosing sweet breath, chokes the throat. The sounds of birds tweeting are replaced by cats caterwauling, and the narrator finds himself not at the Tabard Inn, but at the door to Leeds University at registration time. Several lines in *The Clerkes Compleinte* are the same as ones found in the *General Prologue*: Line 11: "(So priketh hem nature in her corages)"; line 15: "And specially from every schires ende." Line 28 closely resembles the final line of the *Epilogue* to the *Man of Law's Tale*: "Ther is but litel Latyn in my mawe" (1190). Line 575 of the *General Prologue*, which refers to the Manciple, reads, "The wisdom of an heep of lerned men"; it is echoed in line 52 of *The Clerkes Compleinte*. Among the list of languages from distant lands mentioned by the clerk, Pruce and Ruce compare to the list of places where the Knight has fought as mentioned in the *General Prologue* (53-4). Tolkien has inserted several modernisms in Middle English form such as "matriculacioun," and "examinacioun" (lines 47-8).

While Tolkien uses the language of innuendo and polite confrontation in his address to the Philological Society, I believe that "The Clerkes Compleinte" registers his more private tone on the matter of philology: a deeply personal sense of marginalization and a sense of professional lament that is also present in works like "Leaf by Niggle" and *Smith of Wootton Major*. These autobiographical allegories register a sense of personal failure, of efforts gone under-appreciated, similar to the tone in this complaint. The clerk-narrator is timid and hesitant about his interest in languages, until he is finally frightened away from pursuing them in his studies. The din of those registering for vocational studies such as physics, chemistry, and engineering is overwhelming to him and, in the end, the clerk is ushered out of the hall and left to lament his fate for a year.

It is appropriate that Tolkien brought up Chaucer again and again to emphasize his thoughts about Lit. and Lang. since Chaucer's works were commonly regarded as a dividing line, the place where philologists and medievalists were reputed to end their literary pursuits, and where modernists would not venture further into the past. The Lit. and Lang. debate has not really gone away, but been redefined in ways that Tolkien probably never would have predicted. The Oxford curriculum underwent further changes in 2001 when compulsory Old English was

removed. However, a compulsory History of the English Language paper (now known as The English Language) with an emphasis on sociolinguists and linguistic theory remains.[19] It would be interesting to know where Tolkien would stand on current scholarly debates involving theory and literature, or literature and composition. Yet, I think it is safe to say, no matter what the state of literature and language studies, he would have looked for common ground with his students and colleagues.

NOTES

I am grateful to Professor Paul Acker for his editorial guidance with this paper, S. Gary Hunnewell for providing me with a copy of *Arda*, and Professor Thomas A. Shippey for his advice and many helpful comments.

1   The actual date of the paper's delivery was May 16, 1931. With the assistance of David Nichol Smith, Tolkien was putting the final touches on the paper for publication in December 1932. At about the same time, somewhere between the end of 1932 and the start of the New Year, Tolkien gave the first typescript of *The Hobbit* to C. S. Lewis (Scull *Chronology* 166-7). At the time of the lecture's publication in 1934, Tolkien stated that he had intended a "closer investigation of words, and more still a much fuller array of readings from MSS. of the *Reeve's Tale* . . . But for neither have I had opportunity, and dust has merely accumulated on the pages." Tolkien did include textual notes and appendices, nearly thirty pages worth, that were "naturally omitted in reading." Along with the reprint of "Chaucer as a Philologist," *Tolkien Studies* 5 included the reproduction of a pamphlet including Tolkien's prefatory remarks on "The Reeve's Tale" (1939), which he prepared for the Oxford "Summer Diversions" (173-83).

2   J. M. Kemble's attempt to introduce philology and Grimmian scholarship to Oxford and Cambridge during the 1830s was unpopular (partly arising from Kemble's cantankerousness). For information about Kemble's professional career, see Dickins. For correspondence between Kemble and Jakob Grimm, see Shippey & Haarder.

3   For analysis and translations of primary sources on nineteenth-century critical scholarship about *Beowulf*, see Shippey & Haarder.

4   By the time Tolkien left Leeds, literature students still outnumbered language students by a ratio of about 2:1 (*Letters* 12-13).

5   The poem dedicated to Auden was an imitation of the OE poem, *The Gifts of Men*; see Encyclopedia "Poems by Tolkien in Other Languages," 514.
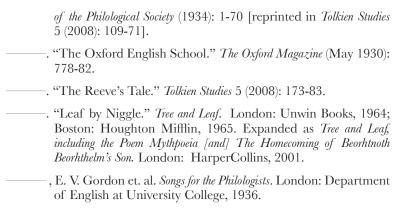
6   Benson cites Tolkien as the first modern critic to examine the dialects in *The Reeve's Tale* (see *Riverside* explanatory note, 4022). For further critical studies on dialects and *The Reeve's Tale*, see Horobin, Smith, and Meier.

7   I owe this suggestion to Professor Paul Acker. For a further explanation of *strothe*, see *MED* and E. V. Gordon's edition of *Pearl* (1953). Gordon notes that the *Gawain*-poet uses the word *strothe* in *Sir Gawain* (line 1710) to describe the fox's hiding place, and *strope-men* in *Pearl* (line 115) to mean "men of this world" also carrying "pictorially, a suggestion of the dark, low earth onto which the high stars look down" (note 115).

8   The clerks also swear by *Seint Cutberd* [St. Cuthbert] (4127), who was commonly associated with the North, especially the county of Durham.

9   The formula *my wonges waxeþ won* (or *wete*) is commonly found in Northern alliterative works, notably in Harley 2253 (from this MS, Tolkien points to the lyric, *Alysoun*); the other texts he points to are *Cursor Mundi*, the York Plays, *Joseph of Arimathie*, *Sir Tristrem*, Layamon's *Brut*, and the *Promptorium Parvulorum*. The line also appears in two other alliterative poems from Harley 2253 that Tolkien does not mention: *The Poet's Repentance*: "Weping haueth myn wonges wet" (line 1), and *An Old Man's Prayer*: "Unwunne haueth myn wonges wet" (line 13). See Kurath *MED wong* n.(2), def. (a) for further examples.

10 Tolkien adds that "for lack of time and opportunity [this study] is based solely on the facsimile of the Ellesmere MS.; and on the Six-Text (Hengwrt (H), Cambridge University Library Gg.4.27 (C), Corpus Christi College, Oxford (O), Petworth (P), Landsdown 851 (L)) and the Harleian MS. 7334 (Hl) printed by the Chaucer Society (11). Furthermore he writes that "the copyists must, of course, usually have perceived that the clerks' lines were abnormal in language" (13).

11 Some of the terms he points to as having Norse roots and being replaced by Southern equivalents are: *heythen*, *ille* (from ON *illr*) (103). For further information on the Hengwrt MS, see Horobin.

12 *Songs for the Philologists* also included four "asterisk" poems: one in Gothic "Bagme Bloma," and three in Old English in ballad style ("Éadig Béo Þu," "Ides Ælfscýne," and "Ofer Wídne Garsecg"). For texts and translations, see Shippey, *Road* 353-61.

13 The *Bjarkamál* was an incitement to battle recited to the troops of

King Óláfr before the Battle of Stiklastaðir (in 1030).

14 *The Gryphon* first appeared in 1897 and, though it was disbanded in the 1960s, still holds the title of longest-running staff and student periodical at Leeds. For information on the centenary celebration of the journal held in 1997, see the online Leeds University Archives Exhibition page under "Centenary of *The Gryphon*."

15 *Arda* is only kept in five libraries worldwide. In the United States, it can be found at Harvard University, Bowling Green State University, and Marquette University.

16 For a facsimile reproduction of this page and analysis of the three versions of the poem (one of which is a typescript emended in both pencil and ink), see Anders Stenström's "The Clerkes Compleinte Revisited" in *Arda* 1986, pp. 1-13. There are four notes made by Tolkien in the margins of the facsimile: line 17: *londe to Oxenforde þei wend[e]*; line 23: *Students are enrolled*; line 41: *large queue for 'applied science'*; line 46: *female students scatter hairpins (now obsolete)*.

17 Tolkien initially gave the manuscript of "Doworst" to R. W. Chambers. Eventually it passed to Arthur Brown. In 1978, the first nineteen lines of the poem were printed in a fanzine by a group from Monash University, Victoria, Australia. According to Anderson "the location of this manuscript . . . since Brown's death in 1979 is unknown" (144 n.6). Scull and Hammond note that a revised copy was given by Tolkien to his colleague Kathleen Lea in 1953, but they do not mention whether or not the location of this copy is known (214).

18 "N.N." is the signature following *The Gryphon* version of the text. Shippey suggests that "N.N." stands for "No Name." Alternatively, the abbreviation might stand for "Nomen Nescio," a Latin abbreviation used to specify persons unknown or anonymous which literally means "I do not know the name."

19 I would to thank Professor Carolyne Larrington of St. John's College, Oxford for her personal correspondence regarding the current state of the Oxford curriculum.

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Echoes of *Pearl* in Arda's Landscape

Stefan Ekman

"It is made of tales often told before and elsewhere, and of elements that derive from remote times" (*MC* 72). This is how J.R.R. Tolkien described the Middle English poem *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* but it is a description which would fit much of Tolkien's fiction equally well. The world of Arda and the many stories set therein carry within them echoes of earlier tales, and even though it would be terribly reductive to discuss Tolkien's work only in terms of its sources, knowledge of where the echoes come from contributes to our understanding and, perhaps more importantly, enjoyment of his world and stories. This is illustrated as much by the numerous university courses that discuss Tolkien and his literary roots as by the scholarship that examines Tolkien's texts in terms of medieval language as well as literature. Indeed, many readers take great pleasure simply in identifying an echo from "remote times," be it a connection between Merlin and Gandalf, the philological roots of the woses in *Sir Gawain*'s *wodwos*, or similarities between the battles of Fingolfin and Morgoth in *The Silmarillion*, and Arthur and the giant in *The Faerie Queene*. Many echoes are still left unexplored, however, and in this article, I will investigate what traces the Middle English poem *Pearl* may have left in Tolkien's creation and suggest how he made the landscape of *Pearl* his own, writing it surely and truly into some of the more memorable parts of Arda.

My point of departure is Tolkien's poem "The Nameless Land" in which he uses the *Pearl* meter and which recalls the strange and beautiful land where the Dreamer in *Pearl* finds himself. Apart from invoking a similar dreamlike landscape, the poem's setting shares several distinct features with the Dreamer's surroundings, but it also shows distinct connections to the world of Arda, connections which become clearer as subsequent revisions of "The Nameless Land" are taken into account. I then examine landscapes both in Aman and Middle-earth where echoes of the *Pearl* landscape can be found, discussing both physical appearance and the associations among visions, dreams, and death which can be found in the medieval poem as well as in the garden of Lórien in the Blessed Realm and the Elvish realm of Lothlórien.

* * *

Ever since he first applied himself to the study of Middle English in his teens, the two poems *Pearl* and *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* exercised enormous influence on Tolkien. Indeed, among his lasting academic

achievements must be included his 1925 edition of *Sir Gawain* co-edited with E. V. Gordon, and he worked, more or less actively, with editions and translations of *Pearl* and *Sir Gawain* from 1922 to his death (*Letters* 11; Tolkien, *Preface to Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* 7). Tom Shippey suggests that it would be "characteristic of Tolkien to have read *Pearl* and started thinking about it literally," wondering, along with the Dreamer, what place this actually was (Shippey, personal communication). Not much is told about the setting of the poem, but if Tolkien followed the same reading strategy for *Pearl* as he recommends for *Sir Gawain* ("close and detailed attention, and after that . . . careful consideration" *MC* 72), he would discover a very vivid landscape.

The main description of the *Pearl* landscape is found in stanzas 6-11. Set at the foot of mountains and beneath crystal cliffs, a wondrous tract of woodland stretches down to a river, across which the Dreamer converses with the Pearl Maiden. In this forest, the trees have indigo-blue trunks and leaves of burnished silver (Gordon ll. 76-77). Among their boughs there are fragrant fruits and birds of splendid colours and beautiful voices (ll. 87-94). The gravel underfoot is precious pearls (ll. 81-82), stream banks glow like golden thread, and he walks through a landscape of "raweȝ and randeȝ and rych reuereȝ" (l. 105), that is, according to Gordon's notes, hedge- or tree rows (raweȝ), strips of land beside a stream or other body of water (randeȝ), and either meadows along streams or the streams themselves (reuereȝ) (Gordon 50). Through the elaborate concatenation used in *Pearl*, the five-stanza sections are united through key words or expressions which come to characterise each section. In stanzas 6-10, the word which thus characterises the landscape is "adubbement", a word which means *adornment* or *splendour* according to Gordon's glossary, and which Tolkien translates as *wonderment*. Wandering through this land of wonder, the dreaming protagonist eventually reaches a river with banks of beryl (l. 110) and a riverbed of precious stones (ll. 117-18). There is, however, an intriguing problem of geography here, as Tom Shippey observes:

> All readers realize that the river which the dreamer cannot cross is the river of death. But in that case, where is he standing? It is not Paradise, for that is on the *other* side of the river; but it is not Middle-earth either . . . . (*Author* 197, his emphasis; cf. *Road* 181)

Tolkien also appears to have given some thought to the strange land in *Pearl*. In May 1924, he wrote a 60-line poem using the complex *Pearl* stanza, to show that its metrical form was possible to render in modern English (*Letters* 317). The poem is called "The Nameless Land," and a version of it was published in 1927 in *Realities: An Anthology of Verse*

(reprinted in *The Lost Road*). Shippey suggests that the poem recalls the strange, nameless land in *Pearl* (*Road* 181), and although Tolkien does not tie his stanzas together in the same way that the *Pearl* poet does, there is no denying the sense of *wonderment* that pervades "The Nameless Land." Tolkien's poems also share more specific features with *Pearl*: not only is it suggested that it is a dream (l. 56), but there are trees with silver leaves (ll. 3-4), wonderful fragrance (l. 16), and shining beaches beneath crystal cliffs (ll. 35-36). There is even water impossible to cross. In *Pearl*, the river of death separates the Dreamer from the Pearl Maiden and Paradise; in "The Nameless Land," a stream flows towards the sea which "no sail doth know" (l. 20), a "water wide" which "no feet may tame" (l. 31). Indeed, the river of death is also a water that "no feet may tame"—at least not in life (ll. 318-24). The water is too deep for the Dreamer to dare wade across, and he is unable to find a ford (ll. 143, 150); and when he attempts to throw himself into the river and swim to Paradise, he is whisked back to the waking world (ll.1l57-71).

It is hardly surprising that there are similarities between the mysterious land in *Pearl* and the Nameless Land described in a poem which was "inspired by reading *Pearl* for examination purposes" (*Lost Road* 98). But are they the same place? There is no explanation of what land Tolkien is writing about, but it mentions a few places which it is *not*. It is obviously not Middle-earth, the land of the living—even time behaves differently in the Nameless Land: the "endless year" neither "fades nor falls," the afternoon is "ageless," and evening never comes (ll. 6-9)—but it is also "more faint and far" than Paradise, and "more fair and free" than the faerie realm of Tir-nan-Og (ll. 49-50). The inhabitants described briefly in stanza 4 are equally elusive. Lovely, certainly, and barefoot, dressed in wind and rain (ll. 37-44) but apart from that, unknown—and unknowable—to the reader.

At this point, it is tempting to assume that "The Nameless Land" describes a dreamland similar to that in *Pearl*, but the final stanza complicates such an assumption. Although the land described in the poem might be nameless, two places connected to it are named. In line 51, there is an invocation of the "shore beyond the Shadowy Sea" and in the same stanza are mentioned the "beacon towers in Gondobar" (l. 57). Christopher Tolkien, in his comment to the poem, observes that Gondobar is also mentioned in a later (c. 1940) version of Tolkien's early poem "The Happy Mariners" but that elsewhere, it is one of the seven names of Gondolin (*Lost Road* 104; cf. *Lost Tales II* 160). In fact, the name Gondobar appears already in "The Fall of Gondolin," one of the earliest texts about Arda, dating back to 1917 (Carpenter 92; *Letters* 345). The Shadowy Sea is similarly connected to Tolkien's early writing. In *Lost Tales I*, it is the name of the sea between the Great Lands (which later

turned into Middle-earth) and the Blessed Realm (*Lost Tales I* 68, 135 *et passim*).

The connection between the Nameless Land and Tolkien's earlier work on the Silmarillion becomes even stronger when revisions of "The Nameless Land" are taken into account. Two of at least six later reworkings are included in *Lost Road*: the "Intermediate" and final versions according to Christopher Tolkien (the former version, he guesses, belongs to the time of *The Lost Road*, early or mid-1930s, and the latter probably stems from the years after *The Lord of the Rings* but possibly as early as 1945) (*Lost Road* 100, 8). While some lines survive unaltered from "The Nameless Land" to the poem's final version, a great number of revisions are made, setting the poem more and more firmly in Arda. While it is beyond the scope of this article to discuss every revision, some of them merit a closer look.

In the intermediate version ("The Song of Ælfwine" *Lost Road* 100-102) references to Tir-nan-Og and Paradise are removed, together with the names Bran and Brendan (l. 45), and in line 50 the word "Edhil" is introduced, which is glossed as a Sindarin word for "elves" in *The Silmarillion* (*S* 358). Another addition is the phrase "west of West," which is used already in the pre-*Lord of the Rings* version of the Silmarillion to describe the side of the Blessed Realm furthest away from the mortal lands; this expression is kept in the published version (*Lost Road* 206; *S* 28). In the final version an invocation of Eressëa, the Lonely Isle off the coast of Elvenhome, is added between the title and the first stanza, and "dreaming niphredil" is substituted for the "immortal dew" in line 15 (*Lost Road* 102). "Niphredil" is the white flower that greets Lúthien's birth in Doriath and which also grows on Cerin Amroth in Lothlórien (*S* 344, 91; *FR*, II, vi, 341f). Also, the "lingering lights" of line 1 are changed to "elven-lights." By removing what to most readers would be familiar references (one of them actually precluding the possibility that the Nameless Land would be Faerie, or Tir-nan-Og) and adding references to Arda, including more elven names, the land (which ceases to be nameless; it has in the intermediate version a long-forgotten name and in the final version, a name unknown only by mortals (l. 27) clearly becomes Aman. This becomes even more obvious through the radical, and quite revealing, change to the title of the later versions. They are called virtually the same thing, "The Song of Ælfwine (on seeing the uprising of Eärendel)," with the difference that the later version lacks the brackets around the subtitle.

Eärendel, an adaptation of what is probably an Old English name for the morning star (*Letters* 385), is an important actor in Arda's history. The "wandering fire" that ties together stanzas 1, 2, and 3 in the poem (lines 12-13 and 24-25 in all three versions) is the mariner Eärendel who sails across the sky with a silmaril on his brow and his ship filled with divine

flame (*Lost Road* 327; *S* 250). *Ælfwine* is a later name for Eriol (*Lost Tales I* 15), a character of central importance in earlier versions of Tolkien's legendarium. His story is described by Christopher Tolkien as "among the knottiest and most obscure matters in the whole history of Middle-earth and Aman" (*Lost Tales I* 13) and the addition of his name to the title of the poem is part of what Verlyn Flieger interprets as a development towards an increasing focus on a specific character (Flieger 72). The name "Eriol" hints at another, if somewhat weaker, echo of *Pearl* as his name means "One who dreams alone" (*Lost Tales I* 2).

The names Ælfwine, Eärendel, Gondobar, Eressëa, and the Shadowy Sea all go back to writings about Arda's First Age that predate "The Nameless Land." Even in these early stories, some of them written as early as 1916-17 (*Lost Tales I* 1) and all of them written before *Pearl* inspired the writing of "The Nameless Land," the Blessed Realm is described in terms similar to the *Pearl* landscape. When he wrote them, Tolkien was already familiar with the Middle English poem. During his first explorations of Middle English in school, he read *Pearl* and it impressed him sufficiently to recite from it (and *Beowulf* and *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*) to a group of school friends in the early 1910s (Carpenter 35, 46). Thus, the echoes of *Pearl* in Aman originate in Tolkien's earlier encounters with the poem, although they might have been amplified by "The Nameless Land."

To begin with, there is a superficial similarity between the landscape in *Pearl* and various places in Aman. In the wondrous *Pearl* forest, the gravel is pearls (ll. 81-82), the river has banks of beryl, and the pebbles therein are, in Tolkien's translation, "emerald, sapphire, or jewel bright" (ll. 110, 118). In *Lost Tales I*, it is described how the Solosimpi bring up pearls from the sea-beds, how the Noldoli create the gems (*Lost Tales I* 137-39), and how the Elvish cities and lands are adorned with these pearls and gems. There is a clear connection between gems and water, where "pebbles of diamond and of crystal [were] cast in prodigality about the margin of the seas" and "the pools amid the dark rocks were filled with jewels, and the Solosimpi whose robes were sewn with pearls danced about them" (*Lost Tales I* 139). In *The Silmarillion*, the coast is clearly recognisable in this description of the dwelling-place of the Teleri (formerly Solosimpi) elves:

> Many jewels the Noldor gave them, opals and diamonds and pale crystals, which they strewed upon the shores and scattered in the pools; marvellous were the beaches of Elendë in those days. And many pearls they won for themselves from the sea, and their halls were of pearl, and of pearl were the mansions of Olwë at Aqualondë . . . . (*S* 61)

Bilbo describes the coast of Aman in similar terms in the "Song of Eärendil" that he sings in Rivendell. Eärendil the Mariner journeys "until he heard on strands of pearl / where ends the world the music long, / where ever-foaming billows roll / the yellow gold and jewels wan" (*FR*, II, i, 228).

The clearest echo, however, is found elsewhere in the Blessed Realm. The dream-land to which the *Pearl* Dreamer comes to receive a vision borders on the river of death across which lies Paradise. In Aman, a similar place can be found in the gardens that in its *Lost Tales* version is called Murmuran. It is the dwelling of the Vala of dreams and visions, Lórien Olofántur. Beyond its boundaries lies the paradisal Valinor, and although this realm is situated at almost the opposite end of Valinor to the dwelling of the Vala of death, Véfantur Mandos, dream and death are close in a different way: Lórien and Mandos are brothers (*Lost Tales I* 66, 75, 77). The names of the Vala of Dream and his realm have been constructed to underline Lórien's function, as can be observed in the appendix to *Lost Tales I*. *Murmuran* has an unclear meaning, but contains the word stem MURU which is connected to sleep/slumber and is probably related to *maur* "dream, vision". Another stem associated to dreams and sleep, LORO, is found in both *Lórien* and *Olofántur* (and, in fact, *Eriol*), and in the latter name, the stem FANA can also be found, carrying meanings of visions, dreams, and sleep.

Murmuran and the *Pearl* landscape have other features in common as well. Both places are located by mountains (*Pearl*, ll. 66, 74; *Lost Tales I* 75) where birds sing beautifully (*Pearl*, l. 94; *Lost Tales I* 75). Although they largely have different trees—Lórien's gardens have mainly coniferous evergreens, while the trees in *Pearl* have leaves—Murmuran "wander[s] nigh to the feet of Silpion [the Tree of Silver later known as Telperion]" and is lit up by its silver light (*Lost Tales I* 75) while in *Pearl*, the trees' silver leaves "shone with a shimmer of dazzling hue" (*Pearl*, l. 80; Tolkien's translation). In *Pearl*'s river, stones glittered "[a]s stremande sterneȝ" (*Pearl*, l. 115) and in Lórien, Varda "had set stars within [the pools'] depths" (*Lost Tales I* 75). Finally, and not least importantly, there are pearls, as gravel underfoot (*Pearl*, l. 82) and as a bed for the vat Silindrin, in which the liquid light from Silpion is kept (*Lost Tales I* 75). Indeed, among the "seeds" used for the Tree of Silver are three huge pearls (*Lost Tales I* 71).

The names and descriptions changed over the years, and in *The Silmarillion*, the brothers are called Námo (formerly Vefántur Mandos) and Irmo (formerly Lórien Olofántur), now known by the names of their dwellings: Mandos and Lórien. Most details about the gardens of Lórien have been removed; it is said to be the "fairest of all places in the world" (*S* 28) where the Noldor king Finwë mourns his wife beneath its silver willows (*S* 64)—obviously the flora has changed somewhat—and the

Tree of Silver still illuminates Lórien (*S* 99). Thus, the gardens retain an echo of silver-leaved trees also in *The Silmarillion*. *Lórien* retains the meaning "dream", although this is never pointed out explicitly in *The Silmarillion*. The stems ÓLOS/LOS "dream/sleep" are listed in the *Etymologies* (*Lost Road* 341-400), a list of primary stems that Christopher Tolkien believes to be contemporary with *Quenta Silmarillion*, the third version of the Silmarillion. (*Quenta Silmarillion* was abandoned for work on *The Lord of the Rings* during early 1938 (*Lost Road* 3, 200, 345; cf. *Letters* 27, 38).) The translation of *lórien* with dream can also be observed in *The Two Towers*, where Treebeard translates *Lothlórien* with *Dreamflower* (*TT* III, iv, 456). (The stem LOT(H) "flower" is likewise found in the *Etymologies*.) Thus, even the garden's final name reveals it as a dream land.

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The *Pearl* landscape is not only echoed in Lórien in Aman but also in the forest realm of the same name (referred to below by its alternative name, Lothlórien, to avoid confusion). The land in *Pearl* not only contains "rych reuereʒ" whose banks glow like golden thread (Gordon, *Pearl*, ll. 105-06), its border is defined by a river, the river of death. Lothlórien's borders are similarly defined by water; the river Anduin and the stream Silverlode protect the heartland of the sylvan realm, although it is enough to cross the smaller stream Nimrodel to enter the land. In connection to these watercourses, Shippey draws two parallels between Lothlórien and the strange land in *Pearl*. First, he observes that the crossing of Nimrodel brings consolation to the Company, just as the "adubbemente" of the landscape makes the Dreamer "al greffe forʒete," makes him happy, and puts an end to his sorrow (Gordon, *Pearl*, ll. 85-86, cf. 121-23) and in both cases, this consolation is only temporary. The river water removes "the stain of travel," thus cleaning and restoring lustre to the Company (*Author* 198; *Road* 218; cf. *FR*, II, vi, 330). Second, Shippey compares the second river that the Company crosses, the Silverlode, to the river that is death in *Pearl*. The difference, obviously, is that whereas the Company can enter Lothlórien, the Dreamer never crosses the river to the Paradise beyond *Author* 198-99; *Road* 218). Equating the Silverlode with *Pearl*'s river implies that Lothlórien's heartland would in fact correspond to the *Pearl* Paradise. Such correspondence is not necessarily corroborated by other *Pearl* echoes that are found on the other side of the Silverlode, however.

Once they have crossed the Silverlode, the Company are all blindfolded until they reach Cerin Amroth. Once Frodo is relieved of his blindfold, he experiences a world of otherworldly lustre:

> It seemed to him that he had stepped through a high window that looked on a vanished world. A light was upon it

<div align="center">65</div>

for which his language had no name. All that he saw was shapely, but the shapes seemed at once clear cut, as if they had been first conceived and drawn at the uncovering of his eyes, and ancient as if they had endured for ever. He saw no colour but those he knew, gold and white and blue and green, but they were fresh and poignant, as if he had at that moment first perceived them and made for them names new and wonderful. (*FR*, II, vi, 341)

The poignancy of Frodo's impressions parallels those of the Dreamer in *Pearl*, who is in what Robert J. Blanch calls a "jewel-garden" which is "bathed in supernatural radiance" and where "everything is effulgent and shimmering" (Blanch 87; cf. *Pearl*, ll. 73-80). Again, silver trees are part of the landscape: the tall *mallorn* have leaves and flowers of gold but their bark is silver (*RK*, VI, ix, 303) and the Company are taken through "rolling woodlands of silver shadows" (*FR*, II, viii, 362). From the top of Cerin Amroth, Frodo first spies Caras Galadhon, the capital of the Galadhrim. It seems to him that out of it comes the power and light that holds the land in sway (*FR*, II, vi, 342). His impression echoes that of the Dreamer's as he first catches a glimpse of New Jerusalem, which shines with rays brighter than the sun's (*Pearl*, l. 982). When the Company arrives at Caras Galadhon, countless green, gold, and silver lights gleam among the leaves and branches, and singing is heard from on high (*FR*, II, vii, 344; cf. also *FR*, II, viii, 361). Again, their experience is similar to the Dreamer's, as he walks through a forest where the silver leaves "shone with a shimmer of dazzling hue" (*Pearl*, l. 80; Tolkien's translation) and birds sing in sweet harmony (*Pearl*, l. 94). The habit of sitting in trees and singing is apparently something the Galadhrim share with their Rivendell kin: when Bilbo first encounters the elves of Elrond's house, they also sit in the trees and sing (*H,* III, 91-92).

As with Irmo's Lórien, the realm of Celeborn and Galadriel shares more than some superficial similarities with the *Pearl* forest. It is juxtaposed with mortality and death and connected to dreams and visions. Most noticeable is the darkness which is pointed out to Frodo as the fastness of Southern Mirkwood with Dol Goldur at its center. The power of the elves strives with the dark power in the place where Sauron once dwelt under the name of the Necromancer (*FR*, II, ii, 244; *FR* II, vi, 342-43), a name with etymological ties to blackness as well as death. Death in *Pearl* is not as dark, with its offer of Paradise on the other side, but it is just as present (cf. e.g. *Pearl*, ll. 323-24). Similarly present is the association with dreams and visions. Lothlórien's name is only its most obvious connection. As she discusses Lothlórien's status as dream in *A Question of Time*, Flieger calls attention to the etymology of the name as well as

its relation to the Vala of Dreams, but also points out that none of the Company dreams while they are there. Lothlórien is, she suggests, "a dream sent or dreamed by the God of Dreams and . . . the Company in Lórien is, in one sense at least, inside that dream" (Flieger 192). Part of Lothlórien's dreamlike quality is its temporal vagueness. Although called attention to only when the Company has left the elves and Sam is puzzled by the new moon (*FR*, II, ix, 379), this vagueness pervades the entire Lothlórien episode. Flieger discusses in detail how time flows in Lothlórien as compared to the outside world and after having examined Tolkien's musings on time in Lothlórien from *The Treason of Isengard* (367-69), she explains that after an "interior argument," Tolkien appears to decide that it is "better to have *no* time difference" between Lothlórien and the outside world. Nevertheless, time in Lothlórien remains vague and imprecise because "Tolkien's theme, if not his plot, needed two kinds of time" (Flieger 107; cf. *Treason* 369).

The clearest example of how time runs differently in the elven forest is provided during the Company's final day there. They rise and walk with Haldir to the boats, a distance of about ten miles. When "noon [is] at hand," they reach the tongue of land where the Silverlode passes into Anduin. They pack the boats and go for a test-drive up the Silverlode, where they run into the Lord and Lady of the Land, who announce a parting feast, after which Celeborn informs them of the lay of the land along the river and Galadriel imparts her gifts. Then the Company leaves, as a "yellow noon [lies] on the green land" (*FR*, II, viii, 360-67). Unless the Company and the elves are remarkable efficient with their packing, partying, and presents, something has happened to time here. It seems as if it has almost ceased inside Lothlórien, allowing for a greater number of actions than usual to be performed in a briefer (outside) time. The simplest explanation would be to ascribe this temporal curiosity to textual mistakes, but there is an alternative interpretation. According to "The Tale of Years," Frodo and Sam are taken to Galadriel's Mirror on February 14 and the Company departs on February 16 (*RK*, Appendix B, 373). Since the hobbits look into the Mirror on what is obviously the Company's last evening in Caras Galadhon (*FR*, II, viii, 358-60), Wayne G. Hammond and Christina Scull suggest that a mistake has been made and that the correct date for the Mirror of Galadriel in "The Tale of Years" should be February 15 (Hammond and Scull 718). But would "a writer known for scrupulous attention to the calendar" (Flieger 100) make not one but two mistakes for two consecutive dates? February 16, the day of departure, is the day with two noons. Does one noon, in fact, belong to the 15th and one to the 16th? Does the parting feast take them through the night and out on the other side without anyone noticing? Do Lothlórien days and nights, up to the very last, pass faster than on the

outside? This would explain not only what seems like inconsistencies but would also fit with Sam's bewildered attempt to recall more than a handful of days of an entire month.

The two noons thus imply both a moment stretched into hours, and hours folded into a brief moment, ultimately suggesting that time in Lothlórien is not simply faster or slower than in the mortal world but following completely different rules. This calls to mind Annika Sylén Lagerholm's comment that the *Pearl* Dreamer "go[es] back in time to an *experience* of an intrinsically atemporal sphere" (Lagerholm 43, my emphasis). Like the Dreamer, Frodo *experiences* a shift to a timeless (atemporal) land. Time in Lothlórien is often expressed in terms of experience, as when it *seems* to Frodo that he has stepped over a bridge of time into the Elder Days (*FR*, II, vi, 340) or when he *feels* himself to be in a timeless land which never fades, changes, or falls into forgetfulness (*FR*, II, vi, 342). In *Pearl*, the otherwordly, atemporal sphere of the dream is linked to the divine (Lagerholm 44); in *The Lord of the Rings*, otherwordly, timeless Lothlórien is, at least in some ways, linked to a divine being, the Vala of Dream.

Once they have been left, the *Pearl* and Lothlórien dream-times differ, each representing not only dream-time but the temporal difference between Faerie and the mortal world (cf. Langford 948). Whereas the Dreamer wakes up to find himself back where and, since he refers to his spiritual journey simply as a dream or vision (e.g *Pearl,* ll. 1170, 1180), presumably reasonably close to when he fell asleep, the Company leaves Lothlórien to find that much more time has passed in the world outside than they had experienced during their stay with the Galadhrim (*FR*, II, ix, 379). Furthermore, where the *Pearl* dream-land is an eternal realm with "kytheʒ þat lasteʒ aye" (Gordon, *Pearl*, l. 1198), Lothlórien is doomed to wither and die once the power of the elves wanes. The sense of timelessness, of atemporality, is present throughout the Company's stay in the Elvish domain, however, even though the difference in time is never quite defined. Flieger links this difference to the theme of Death and Immortality (investigated further in *A Question of Time*). This theme, she explains, requires a difference in time which is "important enough to be noticed but too important to be made explicit" (Flieger 107).

While most of Lothlórien's dreamlike qualities are implicit, its association to visions is all the more explicit. From her first meeting with the Company, Galadriel makes clear her farseeing abilities, telling them that she knows that Gandalf left with them and that he did not enter the land. She adds that there are limits to her powers; she is unable to see Gandalf unless he is within the borders of her land (*FR*, II, vii, 346). The most obvious visions, of course, are those that Sam and Frodo receive through her Mirror. Although the *Silmarillion* version of Lórien only mentions the concept of visions in passing, *The Book of Lost Tales* explains how,

gazing into Silindrin, Lórien Olofántur sees "many visions of mystery pass across its [Silindrin's] face" (*Lost Tales I* 75), visions similar to what the hobbits see in the Mirror of Galadriel. While the *Pearl* vision includes silver-leafed trees, however, the most ubiquitous image is the pearls; not only as part of the setting but as the poem's most powerful symbol. In Murmuran, Silindrin rests on a bed of pearls but contains the liquid light from the Tree of Silver, directly associating visions with pearls as well as silver. The association with silver is even more pronounced in Lothlórien: with a silver ewer, Galadriel fills a silver basin with water from a silver stream, which springs from a fountain lit by silver lamps (*FR*, II, vii, 345, 352). Eärendil, the evening star, that shines down on the Mirror, contains the light of the last silmaril (*S* 250; *FR*, II, i, 229), a light which, in turn, stems from the Trees of Silver and Gold, Telperion and Laurelin (*S* 67 *et passim*).

Lothlórien, while sometimes referred to as the Golden Wood (*FR*, II, vi, 328, 329 *et passim*) is in fact just as much a place of silver. The leaves of the *mallorn* trees might be golden but their bark is silver and they grow beside the Silverlode, and the name of the silver-haired Lord of Lothlórien, Celeborn, means Tree of Silver (*S* Index 321). In other words, silver trees dominate Lothlórien just as they do the two other gardens of dreams and visions.

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Thus, echoes from the *Pearl* vision's dreamland reverberates in Tolkien's works. The Middle English poem provided an impetus for Tolkien to write "The Nameless Land," but *Pearl*'s wonderful, mysterious setting also worked itself into the much larger world of Arda. There it mixed with other echoes of other places, but some central ideas remained, ideas of dreams, visions, death and Paradise, and the pervasive but faint image of silver trees. Ultimately, that is what the *Pearl* landscape is about: dreams, visions, death and Paradise—and leaves glittering like burnished silver in the sunlight.

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Councils and Kings: Aragorn's Journey Towards Kingship in J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* and Peter Jackson's *The Lord of the Rings*

Judy Ann Ford and Robin Anne Reid

Within *The Lord of the Rings* the return of the king to Gondor is secondary, yet independently important, to the main plot of the destruction of the Ring. Destroying the Ring will save Middle-earth from falling under the shadow of Sauron, but it will take the true king—Aragorn—to restore the world of men to its former glory. Aragorn must not merely help defeat Sauron or rule a great kingdom; he must serve as the agent of Gondor's renewal on both the material and spiritual levels. His destiny is inherent in his name: having entered Minas Tirith, Aragorn says: "'. . . for in the high tongue of old I am Elessar, the Elfstone, and Envinyatar, the Renewer'. . ." (*RK*, V, viii, 141). It is made clear throughout J.R.R. Tolkien's novel that Aragorn is a character conscious of his destiny and determined to fulfill it. In contrast, the Aragorn of Peter Jackson's film version of *The Lord of the Rings* is far less certain about his destiny; he is a more modern, self-doubting hero.[1] These two versions of Aragorn both arrive at the same narrative resolution, namely, becoming the king who restores the world of men to the glory of earlier ages, but their narrative arcs describe two quite different paths. This paper compares the treatment of Aragorn's relationship to the office of king in Tolkien's novel and Jackson's film by exploring the different cultural concepts of kingship and heroism that inform the two versions of the character. In both versions, the events of the Council of Elrond prove to be crucial to Aragorn's narrative journey and thus are a central focus of discussion.

In the novel, Tolkien incorporates many elements from the literature and culture of the Middle Ages, particularly the early Middle Ages, roughly the sixth through the tenth centuries. *The Lord of the Rings* is, among other things, his attempt to create the sort of story that could have been told by Anglo Saxons, filled with their beliefs, values, and ideologies, adapted to the modern form of a novel. Many medieval elements of *The Lord of the Rings* have been analyzed by scholars, especially Tolkien's use of literary, linguistic, and mythological sources, but little attention has been paid to his incorporation of early medieval concepts of kingship.[2] Tolkien's conception of Aragorn as king was influenced by Anglo-Saxon, and more broadly, early Germanic ideas.

Anglo-Saxons, like the other Germanic peoples who settled into

territories once held by the Roman Empire, assimilated elements from Rome but continued to hold on to much of their earlier culture. During the centuries of migration, settlement, and the establishment of political states, Germanic kingship, not surprisingly, evolved a good deal, both through contact with Rome and the force of circumstances. It is not the purpose of this paper to trace out the complexity of these developments, but rather to focus on the characteristics that broadly typified Germanic kingship in contrast to later European ideas of kingship which are more available to modern readers. Scholars in Tolkien's time, the mid-twentieth century, argued that in pagan Germanic culture, kingship was sacral, that is, it was grounded in a religious purpose.[3]

The king's principal role, according to this theory, was to preserve the people through his relationship with the gods. He was the head priest, performing rituals and making sacrifices for victory in war and prosperity in peace, but the king was much more than an impersonal enactor of ritual. Germanic kings traced their ancestry back to a god; Anglo-Saxon kings commonly claimed descent from Woden. This divine ancestry was believed to endow royal blood with a portion of divine wisdom and supernatural power. The king's relationship with the gods was believed to be crucial to the survival of the nation. The people expected to receive guidance from the gods through their king and to be connected to the gods through their oaths to the king. The king had to bless the fields to bring fruitful harvests. If the crops failed, the king was blamed, and could himself be sacrificed to the gods to restore the prosperity of the people. This sacrifice may have happened in the case of King Olaf Tretelgia of Sweden, who was burned in his house as an offering to Odin (Chaney 15). In short, according to pagan Germanic cultural ideas, the king was the embodiment of the well-being of his people. He served as a living link to the gods, and brought to the people luck and supernatural power (12-24).

This belief in the sacral character of kingship was to persist to a degree throughout the Middle Ages even though the concepts of royal power underwent slow modification under the influence of Christianity and Roman imperial models. In the eighth century, to Christianize the traditional religious character of Germanic kingship, the church began to anoint kings in liturgical ceremonies similar to those used to consecrate bishops and priests (Zacour 97). The king's pagan sacral status was transmuted to a Christian sacramental position: chosen for royal office by God; the king was called upon to uphold divine law, defend Christianity, protect the weak, and rule justly. Prior to standardization in the twelfth century, royal coronations were often listed among the sacraments. Later medieval kings, deprived of both the pagan claim to divine ancestry and the Christian status of sacramental coronation, eagerly sought the

canonization of their ancestors in order to claim descent from saints. Other signs of close connections between royal families and the divine were sought in the later Middle Ages through claims such as that of the kings of France that God sent from heaven the oil used in royal corona- tions. Sacral and sacramental kingship became less important in England after the Norman Conquest of 1066 when the more secular and contrac- tual concept of feudal kingship took precedence. Nevertheless, remnants of sacral kingship stayed alive in feudal and post-feudal England, as well as elsewhere in Europe, through such beliefs as the Royal Touch: the belief that some semi-divine quality of royal blood allowed kings to cure scrofula, a skin disease, through touch alone (Myers 167).

The sacral model of kingship influenced the method by which kings were selected. In early modern and modern Europe, primogeniture dic- tated orderly inheritance of royal titles from father to eldest son, not- withstanding the heir's competence to rule. In pagan Germanic Europe, primogeniture did not dictate the inheritance of a royal title. A family line claimed divine favor through descent from a god, but not all in the line would be believed to possess the same charismatic power on which the tribe would depend. The people, however constituted, would elect or choose from among the members of a royal house, or houses, the candidate who seemed most obviously to possess divine favor. The favor of the gods, or later, God, was believed to be manifested through luck, or later, grace or blessing, which was not interpreted as random chance but rather the intervention of the divine into the world of men. A candidate for king would be believed to be close to the divine if he demonstrated luck, especially in military matters. A candidate could also demonstrate his close relationship to the divine by manifesting supernatural abilities, such as prophecy or the ability to heal (Meyers 2-4; Zacour 97).

This concept of a sacral king who is both a descendant of the gods and a mediator between them and the people seems to have guided Tolkien's construction of Aragorn's journey towards kingship. In order for Aragorn to restore the world of men, he must show the people of Gondor that he is a living link to the gods, a man whose luck in battle and supernatural powers prove his divine favor and justify his assumption of kingship.

Germanic ideas of kingship serve to explain much about how Arago- rn's narrative is constructed in the novel. They provide a reason for Tolk- ien's creation of a family line for Aragorn extending back to a god. The chapter "The Council of Elrond" is where the reader first learns that Strider is Aragorn: "'He is Aragorn son of Arathorn,' said Elrond; 'and he is descended through many fathers from Isildur Elendil's son of Minas Ithil" (*FR*, II, ii, 260). Elendil and his sons, Isildur and Anarion, were leaders of the Faithful, the small group of Númenorians who refused to

be persuaded by Sauron to defy the Valar and who escaped the destruction of the kingdom of Númenor, fled to Middle-earth, and established two realms: Arnor, in the North, and Gondor, in the South. Elendil, as High King, died fighting Sauron, and his son Isildur cut the one Ring from Sauron's hand, winning the War of the Last Alliance and giving Middle-earth centuries of peace (*RK*, VI, A, 325-27). Aragorn's ancestry establishes that he is not only descended from a royal line, but from a line that traces its origin back to a god. Aragorn, Isildur, and Elendil are all descendants of Melian, a Maia. The Maiar were spirits of the same nature as the Valar, but a lesser order; they were the servants and helpers of the Valar. The Valar and the Maiar were types of planetary deities in Tolkien's complex mythology, creatures of Ilúvatar, the One God, but operationally gods in Middle-earth. Melian married an elf, Thingol, soon after the appearance of the elves in Middle-earth.[4] Their daughter, Lúthien, married a human, Beren.[5] Lúthien and Beren's great-grandsons, Elrond and Elros, chose different paths; the latter choosing to be mortal. The kings of Númenor descended from Elros, and Aragorn descended from them.

Germanic ideas of kingship also clarify the reason why Aragorn is not accepted as king of Gondor even though no one at the Council of Elrond expresses any doubts that Elrond correctly identified Aragorn's lineage. At the Council, except for Bilbo, whose poem promises that "The crownless again shall be king," no one expresses the idea that Aragorn should be crowned. If the peoples of Middle-earth were operating on an idea of kingship as a human office descending through primogeniture, the Council presumably would have recognized Aragorn as king once Elrond explained his ancestry. Clearly they were not using primogeniture as their model for choosing kings. The reaction of the Council to the information that Aragorn is Isildur's heir reflects instead a notion of kingship in which a candidate's bloodline makes him eligible to be king, but is not in itself sufficient to make him king. Boromir, the next in line for the office of the Steward of Gondor, reacts in conformity with idea that a true king will possess luck inherited from his ancestors when he expresses the hope that Aragorn can win victory against Sauron and save Gondor, if he is really a king. Boromir says: "'Mayhap the Sword-that-was-Broken may still stem the tide—if the hand that wields it has inherited not an heirloom only, but the sinews of the Kings of Men.' 'Who can tell?' said Aragorn. 'But we will put it to the test one day. 'May that day not be too long delayed," said Boromir. 'For though I do not ask for aid, we need it'" (*FR*, II, ii, 281).

Aragorn does not seem to expect the others to accept him as king simply because of his lineage. He promises to return with Boromir to Gondor to help fight Sauron but makes no demand to rule there. Before

being crowned, Aragorn must demonstrate that he is worthy of being king by showing not only that he has the favor of the gods through his possession of luck, especially through victory in battle, but also that his divine inheritance is active, a quality shown through supernatural abilities, such as the ability to heal. In the novel *The Lord of the Rings*, Aragorn's coronation as king is not delayed for personal or tactical reasons, for example, because he is unsure that he wants the office, or because the steward's son resists him. Aragorn's narrative arc in the novel traces his attempts to prove his luck and his supernatural qualities in order to be recognized as king.

Between the Council of Elrond and his coronation, Aragorn's storyline demonstrates that he possesses the sacral qualities that would mark him as a true king. He has victory in battle, showing his luck in combat in situations too numerous to recount. He also is shown to possess supernatural powers. Aragorn is able to command the Army of the Dead (remnants of a people who had sworn to aid Isildur in his fight against Sauron and who could not die until they fulfilled their oath to Isildur's heir) and to use a palantír: both abilities are presented as a consequence of his bloodline, things which could be achieved only by Isildur's heir. Both are tests: episodes in which Aragorn is able to demonstrate that he inherited the full measure of the qualities of his ancestors.

Even more telling is that Tolkien endows Aragorn with the supernatural quality a modern reader would be most likely to identify as a mark of sacral kingship, because it is the characteristic that survived longest into modern times: the ability to heal. Aragorn is able to use a plant, *athelas* or kingsfoil, to cure injuries caused by the Black Riders, both to the spirit and the body, doing so at Weathertop and the Houses of Healing. Tolkien makes clear that Aragorn's use of *athelas* is supernatural, rooted in his inherited royal characteristics rather than in any mundane knowledge of herbs. Aragorn inherited the ability to use *athelas* medicinally from his family line: it is a quality possessed in an even greater degree by his elder relative, Elrond (*RK*, V, vi, 141). Others know about *athelas* but those who know healing plants, such as Ioreth and the herb-master in the Houses of Healing, dismiss it as lacking medicinal qualities. But the herb master remembers a rhyme recited only by old wives, such as Ioreth, that explained its relationship to the king: "come athelas! come athelas! Life to the dying/In the king's hand lying!" (*RK*, V, viii, 140), and, as Gandalf quotes Ioreth, "The hands of the king are the hands of a healer, and so shall the rightful king be know." (*RK*, V, viii, 140). Faramir, once he is healed by Aragorn with *athelas*, immediately recognizes him as the true king:

> Suddenly Faramir stirred, and he opened his eyes, and he
> looked on Aragorn who bent over him; and a light of knowl-
> edge and love was kindled in his eyes, and he spoke softly.
>
> 'My lord, you called me. I come. What does the king
> command?'
>
> 'Walk no more in the shadows, but awake!' said Aragorn.
> 'You are weary. Rest a while, and take food, and be ready
> when I return.'
>
> 'I will, lord,' said Faramir. 'For who would lie idle when
> the king has returned?' (*RK*, V, viii, 144)

The people of Gondor quickly follow Faramir's lead; the text reads: "And soon the word had gone out from the House that the king was indeed come among them, and after the war he brought healing; and the news ran through the City." (*RK*, V, viii, 145). Aragorn's use of *athelas* to heal those affected by the Black Breath of the Nazgûl, which harms the spirit more than the body, allows the people of Gondor to recognize Aragorn as a true king.

Aragorn's story is one in which he proves that he has "the sinews of the Kings of Men," and that he has as much right to rule as did his il- lustrious ancestors. After he has proven himself, Aragorn is crowned. It is significant that Aragorn is crowned by Gandalf, a Maia, underscoring the sacral nature of the coronation and perhaps echoing the imperial coronation by Pope Leo III of Charlemagne, a early-medieval king fa- mous for his efforts to renew a fallen empire. Immediately after Aragorn is crowned, "all that beheld him gazed in silence, for it seemed to them that he was revealed to them now for the first time. Tall as the sea-kings of old, he stood above all that were near; ancient of days he seemed and yet in the flower of manhood . . ." (*RK*, VI, v, 246). Aragorn, in his resem- blance to "the sea-kings of old," that is, the Númenorians, embodies the link between his people and their Edenic past, uniting the past with the present and the people with the gods. During his reign as king, Gondor is restored to its earlier grandeur and renews its alliances with the other Peoples of Middle-earth:

> In his time the City was made more fair than it had ever been,
> even in the days of its first glory; and it was filled with trees
> and with fountains, and its gates were wrought of mithril
> and steel, and its streets were paved with white marble; and
> the Folk of the Mountain laboured in it, and the Folk of
> the Wood rejoiced to come there; and all was healed and
> made good, and the houses were filled with men and women
> and the laughter of children, and no window was blind nor
> any courtyard empty; and after the ending of the Third Age

of the world into the new age it preserved the memory and
glory of the years that were gone (*RK*, VI, v, 246).

It seems clear that just as Tolkien wove into his work the language and
literature of the early Middle Ages, he used their notions of kingship to
ground his creation of Aragorn.

But what of Peter Jackson's Aragorn? One study has already been
published on Jackson's adaptation of the Council of Elrond, although it
does not address the issue of kingship. In "'Elisions and Ellipses:' Coun-
sel and Council in Tolkien's and Jackson's *The Lord of the Rings*," Judith
Kollmann notes the importance of councils and counsel in Tolkien's nov-
el and offers a close reading of the Council scenes in both book and film.
Her overall evaluation is that the sequence as constructed by Jackson
shifts the focus from Frodo to Aragorn.[6] Kollmann argues that, "except
for the fact that Frodo is healed at Rivendell and reunited with Gandalf
and Bilbo, that Boromir, Legolas and Gimli arrive, that the Council of
Elrond does take place and that the nine members of the Fellowship are
chosen, virtually everything is changed" (155). She does not enumerate
the changes in her analysis, but offers a narrative summary of action
and speech. Her conclusion is that Jackson's framing of the Council with
scenes between Aragorn and Boromir and Aragorn and Arwen before,
and with Aragorn at his mother's grave after, shifts the focus of the se-
quence to Aragorn and away from the hobbits. Her conclusion appears
to be valid but limited; the work of analyzing the impact that shift and
other changes have on characterizations and plot development remains
to be done. In this essay, we argue that one consequence of these changes
is the re-fashioning of Aragorn as a modern, self-doubting hero, a shift
that is supported by original scenes written for the film that precede the
"Council of Elrond" (Scene 27): "The Sword That Was Broken" (Scene
25), and "The Evenstar" (Scene 26).[7]

In the novel, Aragorn expresses no doubts about whether his royal
lineage endows him with the capacity to rule; his narrative arc is shaped
by his need to demonstrate to others that he possesses the requisite luck
and supernatural power to serve as a living link to the divine. Tolkien's
Aragorn, echoing the heroic characters of medieval epics, is constructed
primarily through external actions, frequently directed towards prepar-
ing himself to wear the crown. Certainly there are moments when the
reader is given access, through narration and dialogue, to Aragorn's
thoughts, and there are even times when the reader is shown that Arago-
rn doubts the correctness of his decisions.[8] But these internal and short-
lived doubts never concern Aragorn's capacity to rule or his desire to be
king: they only concern specific actions that might be taken to achieve
the goals of destroying the Ring and becoming king.

In contrast, in the film, Aragorn is shown as fearing what he inherited from his lineage as a weakness that might render him unfit to rule. As a result of the changes in characterization, Aragorn's narrative arc in the film is primarily internal: he needs to overcome his own doubts about his self-worth. In the novel, Aragorn needs to convince others of who he is; in the film, Aragorn needs to change himself, to overcome his own doubts. In a scene that is completely original to the film, before Aragorn's lineage is described, before he is revealed to be anyone but Strider, the Ranger, the audience is told that Aragorn has rejected the very idea of being king (Scene 24 "The Fate of the Ring"). In the discussion of how best to face the dual threat of Sauron and Saruman, Elrond states that neither Elves nor Dwarves can lead the fight; when Gandalf expresses his belief that men are the ones to lead, Elrond doubts not only the abilities of men, based on his experience of Isildur's weakness in refusing to destroy the Ring, but also points out that Aragorn rejected the position of king. Aragorn's name is not actually mentioned in this scene; but an immediate cut to a close-up of Aragorn's face follows the dialogue, and the film audience soon learns that Elrond was referring to Aragorn.

Within the film, as within the novel, crucial elements shaping Aragorn's character are shown at the Council of Elrond, and, in the case of film, the framing scenes set in Elrond's house in Imladris before the Council. It is there, in the chamber where Frodo recovers from the Nazgûl knife wound, that Elrond tells Gandalf that Aragorn turned away from the path of kingship. In the extended edition of the film, a key scene reiterates Aragorn's rejection of kingship: Aragorn, at his mother's grave in Imladris, tells Elrond directly that he never wanted the power to wield the sword Narsil, a central symbol of Aragorn's relationship to the crown of Gondor in both the novel and the film (*Fellowship*, scene 28: "Gilraen's Memorial").[9] Not wanting to wield Narsil means not wanting to be king.

In a critical scene preceding the Council of Elrond, Narsil is again used to illustrate a presentation of Aragorn's potential kingship that differs markedly from the novel. Aragorn and Boromir meet in the library of Elrond's house prior to the Council and talk in front of the shards of Narsil. This scene does not appear in Tolkien's novel, although some of the dialogue draws upon dialogue between these two characters elsewhere in the book. In the novel, Aragorn carries the shards of this sword with him as a talisman of his royal lineage: the broken sword embodies the image of a line of kingship broken when the Stewards of Gondor and their advisors refused to consider the claims of Aragorn's ancestors to the throne to be legitimate.[10] In the film, the sword also symbolizes Aragorn's royal lineage, but it is one that he has put aside, left in Rivendell on display as if in a museum. In the film, Boromir meets Aragorn, who sits, reading a book, in the room where shards of Narsil are displayed. They

do not know one another and Aragorn declines to provide his name, so Boromir's statements about the sword are made without his knowing that he is in the presence of a descendant of its most famous owner. Boromir's feeling of awe when he first sees the sword soon changes. He refers to the sword not as an "heirloom," as he does in the novel, but a "broken heirloom" as he lifts it up and, after some hesitancy, lets it drop to the floor (Scene 25, "The Sword That Was Broken"). This scene underscores the distance that Aragorn in the film has placed between himself and kingship, and it also indicates that Boromir, as a representative of Gondor, has respect for the memory of Isildur but does not revere Aragorn's line as the true line of kings for the southern kingdom.

In another critical framing scene, one which immediately follows the scene with Boromir, Arwen talks to Aragorn about his fears regarding kingship and then pledges to become mortal, to marry him. In the book *Fellowship*, Arwen appears in one scene only in which Frodo sees her at a feast at Elrond's house, and the discussion between her and Aragorn is related only in Appendix A. The story of Aragorn and Arwen that appears in Appendix A was drawn upon to a great extent by the writers and director of the film in creating Arwen's character. In the scene which precedes the Council meeting and follows Aragorn's meeting with Boromir, while Aragorn picks up the piece of Narsil dropped by Boromir, Arwen asks him what he finds to fear in the past. Aragorn answers that Isildur's blood runs through him, and with it, "the same weakness," that is, the flaw in Isildur that led him to succumb to the Ring, keeping it when he had the chance to destroy it, a decision that led him to his death. Arwen reassures Aragorn that he is "Isildur's heir, not Isildur himself," that she believes he will succeed where his ancestor did not—resisting the temptation of the Ring and conquering Sauron. In other words, she believes that he may have power even though his illustrious ancestor was weak (Scene 26, "The Evenstar"). Her words stating Aragorn is "Isildur's heir not Isildur himself" actually mirror a line of dialogue given to Aragorn in the book, in a very different context. Speaking to Boromir, Aragorn acknowledges that he bears little resemblance to the statues of the famous kings of old, stating, "I am but the heir of Isildur, not Isildur himself" (*FR*, II, ii, 261). In the book, Aragorn makes it clear, as do other narrative elements, that men, and the other races of Middle-earth, have degenerated since earlier Ages. His words imply his acknowledgment that he could not hope to match Isildur's greatness. The same words, spoken by Arwen, reverse Aragorn's relationship with his lineage: instead of his ancestry providing, as it does in the novel, the grounding of his right to rule, in the film it serves as the source of Aragorn's self-doubt, as the reason why he chooses not to be king. He must overcome that obstacle, that perception of inherited weakness.

The pivotal scene showing the difference in constructions of kingship and of Aragorn is Scene 27, "The Council of Elrond," which differs from the book chapter in many respects. The book chapter has at least twenty different characters who speak: twelve of them in the room speaking in the present of the narrative and another eight whose dialogue is reported in lengthy passages by several of the main speakers.[11] Some characters talk for pages, such as Elrond and Gandalf, and are major characters in the action of the book; others have only a line or two, for example, Galdor, Glorfindel, Erestor, Frodo, Sam; at least two of these are never seen again in the novel. In the film, the speaking parts are cut from twelve to ten, with many sections of dialogue cut, and specific stories and topics removed entirely or shifted to other places in the film.[12] The shift in number of characters speaking is more significant than the numbers initially suggest because all minor characters are eliminated in terms of speaking parts: Gloin, Galdor, Erestor, Glorfindel specifically, as well as all the characters whose speech is reported by other characters, primarily to fill in background information.[13] The speaking parts in the film are given to the nine members of the Fellowship, several of whom are speaking for the first time in the film (Legolas, Gimli, and Boromir), and to Elrond, with the exception of some of the background characters in the Council who are shown arguing at one point but whose words are not easily audible to the film audience.

The difference in content is even more striking. The chapter contains much more exposition: on the history of Middle-earth, the long conflict with Sauron, and current events. In the film scene, much of the exposition is missing, having been moved to other parts of the film or cut. The chapter in the book contains much more debate, reasoned debate over the history and the nature of the Ring, whether Bilbo's Ring is in fact Sauron's Ring, and what is the best of several possible solutions to deal with the problem, while in the film, debate quickly devolves into a shouting match with no question whatsoever that this Ring is the One Ring. In the film, Elrond is much more directive in stating the purpose from the start: he has called them together; they must deal with the Ring. The action of the scene moves more quickly to the formation of the Fellowship, a resolution not given in the book chapter. As Kollmann notes, the changes shift the focus to Aragorn. However, the change affects other elements of the narrative as well.

The Council of Elrond in the film continues the presentation of Aragorn's kingship established in the framing scenes, both in regard to his own reluctance and to the resistance of Gondor to his rule, at least as represented by Boromir. In the book chapter, when Aragorn produces the shards of Narsil, Elrond explains Aragorn's lineage to the group, including the history of the Northern line in the war against evil, as part of

the larger exposition of the past. In the film, Legolas, not Elrond, identi-
fies Aragorn as the heir of Isildur, and he does so not as part of an expo-
sition of history but as a direct statement to Boromir that Boromir owes
Aragorn allegiance because he is Isildur's heir. This concept of kingship,
in which Aragorn is owed the crown solely through primogeniture, is
quite different from the concept expressed in the novel. Aragorn, instead
of producing family heirlooms or making any other gesture connecting
himself with his lineage, merely asks Legolas to sit down. He does not
reject the idea of kingship descending through primogeniture; he merely
does not want his inheritance discussed. In the book chapter, Boromir ac-
knowledges that the return of Elendil's sword would be a "boon," if such
a thing is possible, and if Aragorn is able to wield it. In the film, Boromir
sneers at the idea that he owes allegiance to Aragorn. His derision is not
directed at the concept of kingship implicit in Legolas's statement; the
Boromir of the film seems also to accept the notion of rule based on pri-
mogeniture. Instead, Jackson's Boromir rejects the necessity of kingship
altogether, saying "Gondor has no king. Gondor needs no king." At no
point in the book does Boromir, or any character, reject or even question
monarchy as a form of government; the only doubt concerns Aragorn's
fitness to rule. Even Denethor, who, in the novel, rejects Aragorn's claim
to rule over Gondor, accepts monarchy as Gondor's proper form of gov-
ernment. He says to Gandalf that "'. . . the rule of Gondor, my lord, is
mine and no other man's unless the king should come again.'" (*RK*, V,
i, 30). Moreover, Denethor's rejection of Aragorn as an "upstart," the
"last of a ragged house long bereft of lordship and dignity," is spoken in
the context of his suicidal despair, and his opinion of Aragorn is made
a symptom of the culmination of Denethor's fatal character flaw: his
unwilling to accept change (*RK*, V, vii, 130).

From the Council of Elrond to the end of the novel *The Lord of the
Rings* and the end of the film *The Fellowship of the Ring*, Aragorn is en-
gaged in a very different secondary project. In both, his primary goal is
the destruction of the Ring. In the novel, Aragorn must also demonstrate
that he possesses the divine spark inherited through his bloodline which
makes him worthy of being king. In the film, Aragorn must overcome the
distrust of the anti-monarchical heir to the stewardship of Gondor. His
narrative arc in the film thus becomes more relational and less epic, more
political and less mythic.[14] It culminates in a scene not narrated in the
novel: Boromir's death. In the novel, Aragorn finds Boromir, injured, and
learns that the Orcs have taken "the Halflings" captive; Boromir has only
a few more lines of dialogue before his death: first, he expresses regret
for having tried to take the Ring from Frodo; second, he says "Farewell,
Aragorn! Go to Minas Tirith and save my People! I have failed" (*TT*, III,
i, 16). Aragorn reassures Boromir, but the scene is quite short. There is

no narrative depiction of the fight scene or of the hobbits being taken captive. In striking contrast, at the end of the first film, Boromir's death scene and his redemption is made the climax: after his attempt to take the Ring from Frodo, he is next seen coming to fight the Orcs on behalf of Merry and Pippin (Scene 45 "The Departure of Boromir). The scene contains an extensive combat sequence in which Boromir fights on despite multiple wounds, beyond all human strength. He has a lengthy death scene in Aragorn's arms in which his final words end the personal conflict the film established between them at the Council of Elrond: Boromir has lost hope, and believes his people will be extinguished. Aragorn reassures him that he will go to Minas Tirith, that he will not let the White Tower fall, or their people fail. In response, Boromir says that he would have followed Aragorn, calling him "my brother, my captain, my King." His narrative and character arc has led him to change his beliefs concerning Aragorn as king: he accepts the idea of monarchy, and with it, Aragorn as heir to the throne.[15]

Aragorn's internal struggle, his reluctance to becoming king, established in the film in the Council of Elrond and its framing scenes, is not resolved until much later, in the film *The Return of the King*. In two scenes not present in the novel, Scene 10, "The Reforging of Narsil," and Scene 30, " Andúril Flame of the West," Arwen demands that Elrond reforge Narsil and carry it to Aragorn. Elrond does so, riding to where Aragorn is encamped with the Rohirrim, and offers the final argument to encourage the still reluctant Aragorn to take the sword and become king. The only way to win the war, Elrond argues, is to have more forces; the only forces not committed to one side or the other are the Army of the Dead who will only follow the King of Gondor. Elrond persuades Aragorn that he must take upon himself the responsibility of being king, both because he was born to it and because he is needed. This scene parallels Gandalf's earlier encouragement of Aragorn to help Théoden and the Rohirrim hold their ground at Isengard. In a dramatic gesture, Elrond presents the sword to Aragorn who pauses, then draws it, saying "Sauron will not have forgotten the Sword of Elendil. The Blade that was broken shall return to Minas Tirith" (Scene 30, "Andúril Flame of the West"). It is only at this point, near the end of the film trilogy, that Jackson's Aragorn resolves his internal struggle with self-doubt.

Critical reception of Jackson's film has been mixed. A number of the essays produced by literary scholars evaluating how well the film "adapted" the book have been fairly negative.[16] Much of the scholarship on the film as adaptation has come from medievalists who draw on literary methodologies, not a surprising development given the extent to which medievalists have dominated the scholarly analysis and teaching of Tolkien's novel since the 1970s, despite strong objections from some of

their colleagues who subscribe to the aesthetics of the Modernist canon which condemns Tolkien's fiction as popular and thus without merit. As film scholars, including Karen Kline, have noted: when literary scholars approach film adaptations, their tendency is to compare the "literary" elements of the film, such as plot, characterization, themes, to those of the novel, and to ignore or downplay cinematic elements, such as cinematography, costuming, sets, light, and sound, including the soundtrack. Such an approach almost always leads to some variant of the argument that the film is inferior to the novel. Within film studies, the issue of adaptation is approached rather differently and with greater precision. Film scholarship can, among other things, shift the analysis away from the assumption that the novel is the primary text.

Karen Kline's adaptation theory identifies four paradigms for analysis of films based on other texts, each involving different assumptions and methodologies: translation, pluralist, transformation, and materialist. She argues that one reason why the same film may receive a wide range of different critical evaluations is that different writers are working from different paradigms, often without considering the underlying assumptions and values placed on the two texts, or without realizing the existence of other paradigms. The four paradigms, briefly, are as follows: the translation paradigm is concerned with how faithful the film is to the novel, especially with regard to literary elements such as character, plot, and theme; the pluralist paradigm independently evaluates the film's fictional world, which may connect to the novel only on an emotional or intellectual level; the transformation paradigm assumes the novel is only raw material which will be changed significantly in the film which is an original work in its own right (in this paradigm, knowledge of the novel is not considered necessary for writing about the film); and finally, the materialist paradigm considers the novel as only one source element in the film, other source elements include cultural and historical processes.[17]

This essay draws upon Kline's pluralist and materialist paradigms. Rather than argue whether Jackson's Aragorn is a good or bad adaptation of Tolkien's Aragorn, we consider these two texts in relation to each other, analyzing how the novel and the film each construct a story. Just as Tolkien adapted elements of early medieval Germanic culture to the modern genre of the novel, Jackson adapted elements of Tolkien's work for the even more modern medium of film. We argue that changes in Aragorn's character made as a result of the adaptation to film shift the portrayal from an epic hero who, while knowing he must prove himself to others, has no doubt about his ability to do so, to a more contemporary hero who doubts himself and must deal with those doubts over the course of the film. Some of these changes are needed to appeal to a contemporary audience who does not know *Beowulf,* epic conventions, or

pagan Germanic notions of kingship.

This characterization may be more appealing than the original to some in the contemporary audience although it would probably irritate Tolkien and does irk some scholars. In her essay, "The Art of the Story-Teller and the Person of the Hero," Kayla McKinney Wiggins' final judgment is that Jackson's Aragorn is a "modern protagonist, *smaller in scope and lesser in nature*" than the epic Aragorn of Tolkien's novel, claiming that the result is viewers cannot know the characters as well because "[w]e can't know them with the fundamental recognition that is a part of our primal consciousness, the part of ourselves that reaches out to myth, and folklore, and legend, as essential truth, as absolute identity" (121, our emphasis). Wiggins assumes the reality of a primal consciousness, a literary belief that most historians and that some literary scholars, especially those trained in most postmodern critical theories, would not acknowledge. Contemporary critical theorists in history and literary studies are equally uneasy with any claim of a "universal" archetype, or with essential truths and identity, noting how such standards worked to exclude works of literature from different cultures and perspectives over the decades. And finally, as Louis Menand notes in a fine review of the film which he saw in the company of a fourteen year old, what is universal for one generation is not for the next. Menand compares his youthful reading of the novel in 1963 with his friend's, noting that he read it as a kind of historical novel, as opposed to the fantasy adventure understood by a fourteen year old who had recently read the book and noted that a good deal of the film was from the book. Menand realized a reader who had grown up with cultural references including *Xena: Warrior Princess* and computerized games is an entirely different reader than the one that he had been in 1963. Our experiences teaching Tolkien in undergraduate and graduate courses, to students ranging from nineteen years old to sixty years old, as well as our experiences reading Tolkien over the course of several decades and viewing Peter Jackson's films multiple times, is that, as Louis Menand realized, and as Tom Shippey says, there is now "another road" to Middle-earth, a road that acknowledges the existence of multiple ideas of kingship, heroism, and truths, embodying them for different readers. [18]

Notes

1 Gwendolyn A. Morgan also identifies the modern nature of Aragorn's self-doubt in contrast to what she calls the "pseudo-medievalist Northern courage" of the epic hero. Morgan's chapter offers a less focused, more general discussion of Jackson's translation, re-creation, and interpretation of Tolkien's work than does this article; moreover, Morgan's chapter concentrates the influence of *The Wizard of Oz* on

Jackson's film (Morgan 21-34).

2   For example, see Burns, Flieger, and Nelson; and Chance and Siewers.

3   The historiography of the nature of pagan Germanic and early medieval medieval kingship has changed over time, and scholars today are much less optimistic than their predecessors of the mid-twentieth century about recovering Germanic culture as it existed prior to Roman contact because it was communicated through intermediaries, such as Tacitus, who were hardly disinterested observers. Norman Cantor's *Inventing the Middle Ages* describes the ideas of the most influential medievalists of the twentieth century, including the concepts of medieval kingship put forth by Percy Schramm and Ernst Kantorowicz as a combination of Christian and Roman influence with a heroic tradition of Germanic kings exemplified in the poem *Beowulf*, as well as Marc Bloch's work on the royal touch (79-117, 140). The "sacral kingship" thesis would have been widely acknowledged during Tolkien's time. For descriptions of this understanding of kingship, see Chaney, Myers & Wolfram, Leyser and Zacour.

4   The wording in Appendix A of *The Lord of the Rings* leaves no doubt of Melian's divinity: "Lúthien Tinúviel was the daughter of King Thingol Grey-cloak of Doriath in the First Age, but her mother was Melian of the people of the Valar" (*RK*, VI, A, 314). The marriage of Thingol and Melian occupies a chapter in Tolkien's *The Silmarillion.*

5   Beren and Lúthien also have their own chapter in *The Silmarillion*.

6   Kollmann's extensive essay focuses on a primarily descriptive comparison of all major council scenes in book and film, and on how the pacing of the film downplays and changes the importance of counsel as well as councils. We do not disagree with her readings of book and film for the most part. Her work focuses primarily on analyzing differences between the two works without evaluating the film directly although some of her language at times indicates an assumption that the changes in the film lessen the impact of the councils and theme of counsel and communal wisdom. Her concluding argument concerning the changes in Aragorn focuses on the shift from Tolkien's more masculine Aragorn, needing to be complemented by the feminine Arwen, to the nature of Peter Jackson's Aragorn who is balanced within himself, having both masculine and feminine characteristics.

7   Scene numbers and titles are from the Extended Editions.

8   Aragorn expresses some uncertainty about their route when speaking

to Gandalf in "The Ring Goes South," discussing whether to attempt the Redhorn Gate or go by way of Moria (*FR*, II, iii, 300-1). He is also uncertain about what is best to do after the Company leaves Lothlórien: his original plan to accompany Boromir to Minas Tirith has been changed by the death of Gandalf, and he is unable to direct Frodo or the others to make a clear decision (*FR*, II, viii, 383). Most strongly, in "The Departure of Boromir," at the start of *The Two Towers*, he believes "an ill fate is on [him] this day," (*TT*, III, i, 3) leading him to make ill decisions, and Boromir's death leads him to feel that he has failed, and he does not know what to do (*TT*, III, i, 15). These doubts have more to do with Tolkien's exploration of the interplay of free will and fate than with the theme of kingship. After Boromir's burial and the elegy, Aragorn is able to make the decision to take the remaining members of the company to rescue Merry and Pippin, instead of following Frodo and Sam (*TT*, III, i, 21).

9   Within film studies, the canonical text is the theatrical version. Arguably, the scene at the grave was cut because Aragorn's refusal to accept the sword, and the power of the kingship, was established in the scenes between Gandalf and Elrond, and between Aragorn and Arwen. Our work on the film draws from both releases, and on occasion makes use of the Special Features as well, just as our work on Tolkien's novel draws from other publications relating to the novel, including his letters and the *History of Middle-earth* volumes edited by Christopher Tolkien.

10 Aragorn was from the line of kings of the northern kingdom, Arnor, who were the only descendents left from the Númenorian kings after the death of King Eärnur of Gondor (RK, Appendix A, 348). The debate over the legitimacy of the line of Northern kinds to rule in Gondor is detailed in Appendix A. Arguably, the decline of Gondor under the later Stewards, especially Denethor, and the increasing threat of Sauron, and Aragorn's deeds lead the people of Gondor to reconsider that earlier rejection.

11 Tom Shippey, in the second chapter of *J.R.R. Tolkien: Author of the Century*, rightly argues that the Council of Elrond chapter is a "large unappreciated linguistic *tour de force*, whose success may be gauged by the fact that few pause to recognize its complexity" (68).

12 The most notable of these shifts is the movement of much of the history and background of the Ring being shifted from Gandalf in the Council scene to Galadriel in the voice-over at the start of the first film. Since Tolkien wished to include parts of what later became *The Silmarillion* with *The Lord of the Rings* so that this extremely long

expository scene need not be included in the novel, the writers' and director's decision to move the key information, along with Bilbo's finding of the Ring in Gollum's cave, into a "prelude" makes perfect sense. In Letter 131 to Milton Waldman, written to argue that some of the mythic and historical material such as "The Silmarilllion" and *The Downfall of Númenor*, should be published with the novel which would allow the cutting of "much explanation of background, and especially that found in the *Council of Elrond* (Bk II)" (*Letters* 161).

13 The long description of Gandalf's imprisonment by Saruman and his escape is shown directly, in the main film narrative and in a flash-back when Gandalf is speaking to Frodo when he wakes

14 We agree with Morgan's argument that the changes in Jackson's film add up to a more secularized text than Tolkien's novel.

15 Some critics see Boromir as being given the function reserved for Faramir in the novel, of being the first to recognize Aragorn as king. The changes in Faramir's character and the effects on the structure and themes need to be the subject of a separate essay.

16 See, for example Chance, "Is there a Text in this Hobbit?" and "Tolkien's Women (And Men): The Films and the Book."; Bratman, Croft "Mithril Coats,"; Wiggins, and Timmons. More positive evaluations include Mallinson, Paxson, Akers-Jordan, Gaydosik, and Thum. All but two of the scholars of the essays in the Mythopoeic Society anthology edited by Janet Brennan Croft are literature or composition scholars or librarians. One scholar is trained in film studies; a second is working from a religious studies method. Tom Shippey, a philologist who served as an advisor for the film, presents a nuanced argument concerning important thematic shifts in the film while arguing that his reading is that of someone who prefers the book, in "Another Road to Middle-earth."

17 Film scholars do not necessarily consider knowledge of the book that is the source of a film to be important, as J. E. Smyth's essay, "The Three Ages of Imperial Cinema from the Death of Gordon to *The Return of the King*" demonstrates. Smyth is interested in how Jackson's film fits within the ideology of imperialism in film and does not mention the book. Sue Kim's "Beyond Black and White: Race and Postmodernism in *The Lord of the Rings* Films" analyzes racial coding in the film, considering the racial constructions in Tolkien's novel, but then moves to an analysis of the impact of the films on the economy and social structures of New Zealand.

18 "Another Road to Middle-earth."

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The Unique Representation of Trees in
The Lord of the Rings

Cynthia M. Cohen

When *The Lord of the Rings* was originally published (in 1954 and 1955), it became the first literary work to portray tree-like beings as ontologically distinct from regular trees. Before *The Lord of the Rings* and during Tolkien's lifetime, other authors who had imagined trees that did not behave or appear like trees of the Primary World had conceived of these creatures simply as trees—strange, extraordinary, malicious, or friendly trees—and they perceived no need to further distinguish them. For the purposes of this article, literary trees are divided into four categories: (1) trees that do nothing unusual, appearing essentially as Primary World trees; (2) trees that remain rooted in the ground but are able to talk, think, and/or feel; (3) trees that remain rooted but can move their branches or trunks as trees of the Primary World cannot; and (4) trees that can uproot themselves, physically moving from one place to another. These categories are augmentations: trees in all categories but the first can talk, think, and/or feel; and trees in the fourth category can move their branches or trunks as well as relocate themselves. When these categories are applied to *The Lord of the Rings*, Ents and Huorns fall into the fourth category, Old Man Willow belongs in the third, trees of the Old Forest and Fangorn Forest fall into the second or first categories (although most readers assume they belong in the third or fourth), and the remainder of trees in the text belong in the first. As this article will demonstrate, Tolkien distinguishes trees of the fourth category from all others; he implies but does not confirm that trees of the third category are something other than trees; and he seems to accept that trees of the second category can convincingly be called "trees." The following survey of texts written before or contemporaneously with *The Lord of the Rings*—texts that contain trees of the third and fourth categories—reveals the originality of Tolkien's consideration of such trees as ontologically distinct.

I. The Uniqueness of Tolkien's Method

Trees of the third and fourth categories often appear in literature as trees upon which human characteristics have been projected. This can be partly attributed to morphological similarities: for instance, humans and trees both have trunks, limbs, and crowns, in roughly comparable locations, and both typically stand upright. Another explanation, Tolkien suggests, is that people wish to associate or communicate with other

living things (*MC* 152), expressed by G. K. Chesterton in a legend of the Barbary Coast (1922):

> St Securis . . . grew to love [trees] like companions. . . . And he prayed that they might be loosened from time to time to walk like other things. And the trees were moved upon the prayers of Securis. . . . The men of the desert . . . [saw] the saint walking with a walking grove. (58)

Chesterton portrays these trees as trees—trees that physically move as Primary World trees cannot, but trees all the same—illustrating the key difference between Tolkien and every other author surveyed here. Where other authors saw no need to ascribe words other than "tree" (or familiar species names of the Primary World) to tree-like creatures that did not act like actual trees, Tolkien opted for linguistic distinctions that would complement his literary descriptions. In *The Lord of the Rings,* the words "Ent" and "Huorn" signal ontological differences from trees; other authors made no such distinction.

David Lindsay and Ludvig Holberg, for example, both wrote about trees of the fourth category. An unusual creature—at first glance simply "a great tree floating in the water . . . upright, and alive"—appears in Lindsay's *A Voyage to Arcturus* (1920), a book that Tolkien read "with avidity" (Lindsay 187; *Letters* 34). Maskull discovers that the crown "actually was a sort of head, for there were membranes like rudimentary eyes"; he realizes that he can ride this tree, directing it through watercourses by covering up some of the "eyes" (Lindsay 188). Though once referred to as "the huge plant-animal," the creature is otherwise called a "tree." Similarly, the ambulatory trees that populate Holberg's *The Journey of Niels Klim to the World Underground* (1742) are called "trees" and identified as familiar species (49, 85). Curiously, these trees have strikingly unarboreal features: "on the top of the trunks or bodies of the trees their heads were placed, not at all unlike human heads; and instead of roots, [they had] two feet" (Holberg 19). The cypresses, in particular, display varying eye shapes (oval or square), numbers (from one to four), and locations (forehead or back of the head) (Holberg 85). Neither these eyes nor the other unarboreal features seem to justify a new class of being—Holberg (like Lindsay) merely describes a very strange sort of tree.

Extraordinary trees also appear in two works by George MacDonald. *The Golden Key* (1867)[1] contains a scene reminiscent of Tolkien's hobbits encountering Old Man Willow in the Old Forest. A child in this story encounters a tree that, though it moves of its own accord, is still conceived of simply as a tree: "It dropped its branches to the ground all about her, and caught her as in a trap" (MacDonald, *Key* 14). *Phantastes* (1858), on the other hand, offers a more complex association of sentient,

ambulatory trees identified by species (7). Anodos describes the Ash as a creature of terrible and changing light, with an especially disturbing face (MacDonald, *Phantastes* 21–22). Anodos relates that the Ash "bent his Gorgon-head, and entered the cave . . . He drew near me . . . He came stooping, like a beast of prey"; the Ash then retreats and disappears (MacDonald, *Phantastes* 39–40). Although they clearly fall into the fourth category of literary trees, MacDonald's ambulatory trees are not distinguished by name from trees that remain rooted.

A similar portrayal of ambulatory trees can be found in The Chronicles of Narnia series by C. S. Lewis, who considered *Phantastes* a "great literary experience" and "a major influence upon his thought and work" (Lewis, W. H., and Hooper 47, 322). In *The Magician's Nephew* (1955, Book 1 according to internal chronology), Aslan first awakens the trees, together with other natural elements. Aslan commands them to "be walking trees" and tells the Oak, "Come hither to me" (Lewis, C. S., *Magician's* 126, 130). Trees are not seen walking again in Narnia until *Prince Caspian* (1951, Book 4 according to internal chronology), when they are needed to fight the Telmarines. While Lewis may have been influenced here by Tolkien, their execution differs: Tolkien not only distinguishes between trees and Ents (where Lewis only describes trees—"Awakened Trees"), Tolkien further distinguishes Huorns (who travel to Helm's Deep but remain rooted during the battle, while Ents are consistently ambulatory). Lewis's relocated forest is entirely ambulatory: "Instead of being fixed to one place, [imagine it] was rushing *at* you; and was no longer trees but huge people; yet still like trees because their long arms waved like branches and their heads tossed" (Lewis, C. S., *Prince* 196). Implying that these trees are like people, Lewis takes a tentative step toward a new ontological class, but he retracts this perspective by the novel's end, where these beings are once called "the tree people" but otherwise are called "trees" (Lewis, C. S., *Prince* 210–12). Conversely, Tolkien's cultural descriptions in *The Lord of the Rings* emphasize the human side of Ents, building narrative depth that makes his own representation credible.

Lewis also once refers to animated trees as dryads and hamadryads, using the terms somewhat interchangeably, while Greek mythology distinguishes the two: each type of being maintains an identity unequivocally distinct from the trees with which they associate, but while a dryad may move freely among the trees and groves where she lives, a hamadryad is physically and emotionally bound to a particular tree (Lewis, C. S., *Prince* 117–18; Porteous 115). The Classical tradition also includes a notable example of trees moving in ways that Primary World trees cannot. Ovid describes Orpheus, who sits atop a hill and attracts a host of trees by playing irresistible music (Simpson 167). Ovid's long, annotated species list describes some species (poplar, laurel, umbrella pine, and cypress)

drawn from other Classical myths where people are transformed into trees, yet most of the featured species have no such derivations. This is an example of the tree-lists (or tree catalogues) in Classical and medieval poetry. Although tree-lists appear in the works of Seneca, Lucan, Statius, Claudian, Boccaccio, Chaucer, Virgil, and others, only Ovid describes the trees of his list as ambulatory (Root 19; Boitani 28). Even so, Ovid does not distinguish his myriad ambulatory species from the stationary trees of the real world.

Trees with human characteristics can also be found in the Old Welsh poem "Cad Goddeu," attributed to Taliesin, where trees are transformed into warriors (Jones 65). Taliesin names various familiar tree species and enumerates their military deeds; for example, "Fine hawthorn delivered pain," and "Pear worked oppression on the battlefield" (Ford 185). Marged Haycock recognizes clichés of heroic poetry in Taliesin's descriptions, citing the traditional Welsh practice of metaphorically describing kings and warriors in terms of trees and architecture, using words such as "tree, column, post, prop, beam, [and] roofbeam" (302–04). While "Cad Goddeu" may have inspired Tolkien in much the same way as Shakespeare's Birnam wood—sparking his desire for trees to defend themselves in battle—the poem provides no verisimilitude, revealing no attempt to present a Secondary World that is convincing to the reader (*Letters* 212 n). Neither Shakespeare nor Taliesin considers that, if trees could march at all, they would no longer be recognizable as familiar trees of our world.

The graphical representation of literary trees must also be considered, as illustrations can affect how a reader apprehends the text. Arthur Rackham, a prime example in the context of this discussion, was perhaps best known for producing images of trees with human attributes (Hamilton 13).[2] Rackham's credits include *Fairy Tales of the Brothers Grimm* (1900 and 1909), Shakespeare's *Macbeth* (1908) and *The Tempest* (1926), Charles S. Evans's *The Sleeping Beauty* (1920), Milton's *Comus* (1921), Hans Christian Andersen's *Fairy Tales* (1932), and Kenneth Grahame's *The Wind in the Willows* (1940), all of which offered Rackham the opportunity—with threatening or enchanted woods, trees that speak or are otherwise conscious, or spirits trapped in trees—to draw anthropomorphic trees (Hamilton 185–86). Although Rackham's illustrations appear in no text featuring trees of the third or fourth categories (i.e., trees that physically move as Primary World trees cannot), his suggestions of arm-like branches, leg-like roots, and facial features on tree trunks influence how the trees in these stories have been received. While these trees speak, think, or exude an ominous aura without moving in ways that Primary World trees cannot, the vivid corporeal texture of Rackham's drawings make the oral, mental, and psychic faculties of these trees explicitly physical. Trees that belonged—by their authors' intentions—to the first and second

categories, function—through Rackham's interpretation—as trees of the third or fourth categories. The result, however, is consistent with all other texts here reviewed, as even the most anthropomorphically drawn trees are still considered trees.

Another popular text to consider is *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* (1900) by L. Frank Baum. The trees in this story belong to the third category: "Just as [the Scarecrow] came under the first branches they bent down and twined around him, and the next minute he was raised from the ground and flung headlong among his fellow travellers." The Woodman fares better with a practical, Primary World approach, demonstrating that these "Fighting Trees" have the same weaknesses as real-world trees: "When a big branch bent down to seize him the Woodman chopped at it so fiercely that he cut it in two. At once the tree began shaking all its branches as if in pain." Baum suggests that the trees can move because they have been "given [a] wonderful power," demonstrating that Baum conceived of these beings as ordinary trees endowed with extraordinary qualities (311–12).

The final example surveyed here is T. H. White's *The Sword in the Stone*, which Tolkien read soon after it was published in 1938 (Scull and Hammond, *Reader's Guide* 818). In the "Dream of the Trees," various tree species engage in a long discussion; afterward, they dance: "they moved their bodies but not their feet," and they "rippled their twigs like serpents, or made slow ritual gestures about their heads and bodies with the larger boughs" (White 248). Like Holberg, MacDonald, and others explored in this article, White's trees of the third category are conscious manifestations of familiar tree species, differing only in that they occur within the framework of a dream—a construct that Tolkien deemed inappropriate to a fairy-story (*MC* 116).

Lindsey, MacDonald, and Lewis aspired, as Tolkien did, to place their stories in a believable Secondary World; the authors of "Cad Goddeu" and the Classical story of Orpheus, conversely, had no interest in preserving "the inner consistency of reality" (*MC* 138–40). While the trees discussed here serve different narrative and symbolic functions in context, the reader initially apprehends each through literal description, making some judgment—whether relevant to the story or not, whether conscious or not—as to how realistic the scenario seems. Considering *The Lord of the Rings* against the backdrop of these literary trees will emphasize how differently Tolkien portrays trees in his own work.

II. Narrative Significance of Botanical Characteristics

Tolkien differs from the authors surveyed above not only by distinguishing between trees and tree-like beings but also by making first-category trees significant in the narrative. The prominent place of trees

in *The Lord of the Rings* is often identified solely with Ents, Huorns, and Old Man Willow—characters readers tend to describe as trees that can physically defend themselves. Sharing the textual landscape with such captivating creative inventions, Tolkien's subtle weaving of the botanical characteristics of familiar and fictional tree species into the narrative can easily be missed. All trees in *The Lord of the Rings* mirror the essential qualities of trees in the Primary World. Even the few that belong to Tolkien's fictional species are built from the same "primary material" as familiar species: their trunks, leaves, branches, and roots invariably display colors, textures, shapes, and seasonal variations that can be found in the Primary World (*MC* 140).

Familiar Tree Species of the Primary World

The first example of Tolkien's literary use of botanical characteristics occurs soon after the newly assembled Fellowship leaves Rivendell: they arrive at Hollin, a place whose history is recorded in its ancient holly trees (*FR*, II, iii, 295). The people of Hollin planted holly trees to denote the boundaries of their land, as expressed in the place-names "Hollin" (extant in modern-day England) and "Eregion" (Tolkien's word, glossed as "holly-region") (*FR*, II, iv, 316; Miles 159; Tolkien, "Nomenclature" 772). Unique in Middle-earth's history, Hollin is one of a very few places where Elves and Dwarves interacted peacefully and productively (*RK*, Appendix B, 363). Tolkien captures this history using botanical qualities characteristic of real-world holly trees when he describes the "grey-green trunks [that] seemed to have been built out of the very stone of the hills," grafting the Dwarves' association with craftsmanship and stone upon the Elvish affinity for trees and forests (*FR*, II, iii, 295; *RK*, Appendix F, I, 410). Few tree species could have been employed for this purpose, but the bark of holly—pale, grey, and "strangely smooth"; indeed, "quite different from that of most other trees"—is well suited to the task (Morse 22–24). By choosing a tree with bark resembling stone, Tolkien aptly illustrates the cultural history of Hollin with unmodified "primary material."

Likening holly to stone lends permanence to something transient, reinforcing a key function of the "Three Rings of Power" created in Hollin, which enable the bearer to "ward off the decays of time and postpone the weariness of the world." The history of the One Ring also begins in Hollin (*S* 287–88). The power and significance of this place is captured in two individual holly trees at the western entrance to the Mines of Moria:

> Close under the cliff there stood, still strong and living, two
> tall trees, larger than any trees of holly that Frodo had ever

> seen or imagined. . . . They towered overhead, stiff, dark, and
> silent, standing like sentinel pillars at the end of the road.
> (*FR,* II, iv, 316)

The vast size of these trees reinforces the prominence of Hollin's history, and their placement at the boundary of Elvish and Dwarvish lands recounts that unprecedented friendship. The trees' size, although unusual, is not unheard of in the Primary World. Though the common holly (*Ilex aquifolium*), a native evergreen tree common in Britain, is often found as an understory plant, ornamental shrub, or hedgerow tree—all forms of generally small stature—it can grow up to fifty (and, rarely, seventy) feet tall, if protected well and left undisturbed long enough (Miles 156).[3] The size of the hollies outside Moria, therefore, can be attributed to potential Primary World circumstances; their extraordinary associations come from connections with Middle-earth's fictional history.

Later in the story, Tolkien once again weaves the botanical characteristics of Primary World trees into the narrative as Frodo, Sam, and Gollum reach the Cross-roads of Ithilien en route to the Pass of Cirith Ungol:

> They became aware that these [trees] were of vast size,
> very ancient it seemed, and still towering high, though their
> tops were gaunt and broken, as if tempest and lightning-blast
> had swept across them, but had failed to kill them or to shake
> their fathomless roots. . . .
>
> At length they reached the trees, and found that they
> stood in a great roofless ring, open in the middle to the som-
> bre sky; and the spaces between their immense boles were
> like the great dark arches of some ruined hall. (*TT,* IV, vii,
> 310–11)

Many chapters prior, Elrond recounts Gondor's history, describing Osgiliath straddling the Great River, Minas Ithil to the east, and Minas Anor to the west (*FR,* II, ii, 257). These landmarks of Gondor were linked by an east–west road, while a perpendicular road ran along the foothills of the Mountains of Shadow, joining northern Gondor to the port cities of South Gondor. Over time, Gondor's waning vigilance yielded the landscape to less-desirable inhabitants; Minas Ithil and Minas Anor became Minas Morgul and Minas Tirith, engaged in constant warfare, and Osgiliath was deserted (*FR,* II, ii, 258). When Gondor was strong, the Crossroads linked places associated with prosperity and military victory; by the time Frodo, Sam, and Gollum arrive there, the Cross-roads have come to connect Minas Tirith, Gondor's last stronghold, to threats, enemies, and reminders of failure: to the east, Minas Morgul, occupied by the enemies of Men; to the north, the scene of the last great battle between the free

peoples of Middle-earth and Sauron's forces; to the south, the disputed region of South Gondor and the land of Harad, "a refuge for all the enemies of the king" (*RK,* Appendix A, I, iv, 327). To Gondor, lacking military strength and under constant threat from Mordor, the Cross-roads are part of a failed infrastructure that once kept evil at bay.

This degraded state is evoked by the dominant elements that Frodo, Sam, and Gollum encounter at the Cross-roads. An old stone statue of a king, its head broken off and mockingly replaced with a crudely painted stone, sits among the trees; the visual parallel Tolkien draws between the trees and this statue affords the trees a symbolic link to Gondor's history. The statue demonstrates the current phase of Gondor's leadership: a once great nation led by strong rulers, descendants in a line of kings, has fallen into decay and lost its predestined leaders. The image of the statue, headless but still upright and bodily strong, is reinforced by the surrounding vast, lofty trees with broken tops. Tolkien reasserts the connection between the trees and Gondor's failing leadership by describing the trees' collective structure in terms of a ruined hall (*TT,* IV, vii, 311). While the solidity of the tree trunks and the stone statue conveys Gondor's former strength, the shattered tree-tops and dislodged statue's head plead discontinuity; though Gondor still exists—respectable, determined, steadfast, and rooted in this place—the suffering nation displays the wounds of war. Even broken, these icons are formidable, reflecting a crippled nation upheld by a strong and determined few: Boromir, Faramir, and, ultimately, Aragorn. These enduring trees, battered but still alive, infuse the inert stone statue with their life force by virtue of proximity and similarity; the trees become identified with the statue, as they do with the symbolism of the Cross-roads, gaining narrative significance with no alteration of botanical characteristics.

From a botanical perspective, Tolkien's representation of the trees at the Cross-roads is thoroughly credible in the Primary World, though they are not identified by species: the trees are characterized by great height and girth, seemingly great age, crown dieback (an arboricultural phenomenon suggested by the broken tree-tops), and possible exposure to extreme weather. These characteristics, while insufficient for specific identification, could apply to many tree species in the Primary World. Trees endure a lifetime of exposure to weather; not able to regenerate injured tissue as animals and people can, trees incorporate wounds and breaks into their physical structure. While crown dieback often indicates a serious, potentially fatal problem, such as infectious disease or inadequate water transport in the tree (e.g., due to root damage or soil problems), it may also be a natural response mechanism (Costello et al. 25–26; Rane and Pataky 77–78). An ancient tree, for example, is likely to demonstrate crown dieback during the "Veteran stage" of growth, when

the general branch structure has already been achieved but the tree continues to gradually increase in girth. Because a tree obtains its food from its leaves, the loss of a large branch (and its leaves) hampers a tree's ability to feed itself. If a major branch is lost, the tree may respond by allowing other branches to die in order to sustain the rest of the tree:

> This does not mean that the tree is about to die, it is a condition that can persist for many decades or even centuries. . . . The response of the tree results in a new balance between the area of woody material and that of the leaves. (Read 28–29)

Thus the "gaunt and broken" tops of the Cross-roads trees are consistent with ancient trees in the Primary World. This arboricultural understanding forges another connection with the headless statue: the head, separated from its body, is ringed with delicate plants resembling a small silver and gold crown. Frodo draws hope from this sight and exclaims, "They cannot conquer for ever!" (*TT,* IV, vii, 311). Just as an ancient tree's dead upper branches do not necessarily indicate impending death, the present signs of Gondor's decline will not dictate the future of the nation.

Fictional Tree Species in The Lord of the Rings

The White Tree of Gondor represents the deeper history of Men in Tolkien's Secondary World, reaching back to the Two Trees of Valinor: Telperion had dark green leaves that "beneath were as shining silver," and Laurelin had gold-edged leaves "of a young green like the new-opened beech" and clusters of yellow, horn-shaped flowers (*S* 38). Telperion becomes known as the "White Tree" or the "Silver Tree"; Laurelin is generally called "the Golden."[4] Yavanna's gift, to the Elves in Tirion upon Túna, of Telperion's first descendant marks the first link in the White Tree's chain of relation; named Galathilion, this tree was "a lesser image of Telperion" that did not bear light (*S* 59). Celeborn, propagated from Galathilion, flourishes in Tol Eressëa.

Telperion's descendants develop greater significance once the original White Tree in Valinor is destroyed (*S* 76). In Númenor, the White Tree starts to function as an indicator of the health of the kingship. Númenor's White Tree, a seedling of Celeborn received from the Elves, is named Nimloth, planted in the King's court, and respectfully tended (*S* 259–63). Under Ar-Gimilzôr, the White Tree goes untended and declines, but his successor, Tar-Palantir, honors the White Tree and prophesies that the line of Kings will end when the White Tree dies. The throne passes to Ar-Pharazôn who worships Melkor, defies the Ban of the Valar, and consents to cut down the White Tree (*S* 266–72). Before Númenor

is destroyed, Isildur smuggles Nimloth's seedling to Middle-earth (*S* 276–80; *RK,* Appendix A, I, i, 317). For the first time, the White Tree is planted in Gondor when Isildur settles at Minas Ithil (*S* 291–92).

The White Tree of Gondor's health, though symbolically tied to the kingship throughout the history of Men, is not systematically affected by the strength of Gondor's leadership. Sauron kills Nimloth's first scion in Middle-earth after one hundred years. Twelve years later, Isildur claims the One Ring. Two years later, Isildur plants a seedling of the White Tree at Minas Anor (Minas Tirith) and is slain within the year. That White Tree lives 1,634 years, dying during The Great Plague that also kills the king and his children. An heir to the throne is found, and a White Tree seedling is planted four years after the Plague. The death of the last White Tree, however—that which stands dead during *The Lord of the Rings*—threatens to fulfill Tar-Palantir's prophecy (*RK,* Appendix B, 365–69). At the time of *The Lord of the Rings,* the tree has stood dead in the citadel of Minas Tirith for one hundred sixty-six years, and the White Tree of Gondor comes to represent Gondor's waning power and lack of a king.

Yet in the minds of Tolkien's characters, the image of the White Tree of Gondor repeatedly emerges as a symbol of Gondor's strength. Pippin hears Gandalf sing about "Seven stars and seven stones / And one white tree," and Gollum recalls "tales out of the South . . . about the silver crown of [the] King and his White Tree" (*TT*, III, xi, 202; *TT,* IV, iii, 249). Faramir holds the White Tree as a symbol of hope, wishing to "see the White Tree in flower again in the courts of the kings, and the Silver Crown return, and Minas Tirith in peace" (*TT,* IV, v, 280). During most of his lifetime, Faramir knows the actual White Tree only in death: a stark, skeletal reminder of the progressive failure of his people. Yet the image of the living White Tree is constantly reinforced in Gondor as a symbol of national identity, prompting the persistent memory of Gondor's former strength and the potential promise of the nation's future. In Minas Tirith, Pippin sees the White Tree embroidered upon a uniform that he soon will be wearing, and he first meets Denethor under a virtual shadow of the White Tree: Denethor's chair sits beneath an empty throne, behind which a jeweled image of a flowering tree is carved upon the wall, reinforcing the connection between the ongoing crisis of leadership in Gondor and the lack of a living White Tree (*RK,* V, i, 25–26).

To represent the hope of renewed strength in Gondor, the White Tree need not function outside the normal parameters of familiar Primary World trees. While replacement by a sapling of the same species designates the White Tree incapable of resurrection, the tree's mortality is notable in light of an analogous Christian legend that Tolkien would have known. The White Tree of Gondor distinctly parallels the Dry Tree

described in *The Travels of Sir John Mandeville* (*Mandeville's Travels*), which presumably died when Christ died; it was said that the tree would live again once "a great lord from the western part of the world [conquered] the Holy Land with the help of Christian folk" (Moseley 74). The image of a dead tree replaced by a live one, as the White Tree of Gondor is, upholds the metaphor of resurrection and enables Tolkien to draw an implicit connection between Aragorn and Christ without suggesting anything botanically extraordinary about the tree.

The White Tree of Gondor's botanical details are finally revealed as Aragorn prepares to assume the kingship, confirming that this tree is built from botanical details of Primary World trees. Aragorn finds a sapling with "leaves long and shapely, dark above and silver beneath," bearing one small cluster of white flowers (*RK*, VI, v, 250). The shape and color of the leaves recall the white willow (*Salix alba*), abundant in England, which has silky, white hairs on the underside of the leaf (Morse 67). The same colors are also found in England on white poplar (*Populus alba*), with shiny leaves that are dark grey-green on one side and silvery-white on the other, and on common whitebeam (*Sorbus aria*), which retains "startlingly white-woolly" hairs on the underside of the leaf (Morse 66; Johnson and More 150, 292). Common whitebeam has clustered, white flowers characteristic of several species in the rose family (Rosaceae)[5] (such as wild cherry [*Prunus avium*], common and midland hawthorn [*Crataegus monogyna, C. laevigata*], and common rowan [*Sorbus aucuparia*], all native to England), any of which Tolkien might have used as a model for the White Tree's flowers (Edlin 58; Johnson and More 284, 300, 322–23; Rackham, *Ancient Woodland* 351–56). The most extraordinary feature of the White Tree of Gondor—that it must have germinated from a seed planted at least one hundred sixty-six years before Aragorn discovers the sapling—also has analogues in the Primary World: lotus seeds have germinated after over one thousand years, and Arctic tundra lupine seeds have germinated after an estimated ten thousand years (Stern 138).[6] These seeds germinated after a period of dormancy, a process that prevents a seed from sprouting in an environment where conditions are likely to inhibit survival (Stern 198). Low temperatures, like those likely to occur on Mount Mindolluin, may cause dormancy (Schopmeyer 26–28). The White Tree of Gondor, whose seed remains dormant under harsh conditions in a remote location and germinates after a long period of time, is drawn from real characteristics of Primary World trees.

Without exceeding botanical accuracy, the symbolic associations of the White Tree of Gondor connect the kingdom's history with its present and future. Upon seeing Gondor's White Mountains, Aragorn recites: "West Wind blew there; the light upon the Silver Tree / Fell like bright rain in gardens in the Kings of old," reinforcing the thematic link

between Telperion, the White Tree (or Silver Tree) of Valinor, and the White Tree of Gondor (*TT*, III, ii, 25). The interchangeability of "Silver Tree" and "White Tree" destabilizes the time and place Aragorn refers to. Overlaying Gondorian imagery with allusions to the Blessed Realm—"West Wind" and "Silver Tree" associated with light falling "like bright rain"—this poem demonstrates the continuum of time described by the White Tree's lineage, which itself echoes the lineage of the kings who tend and replace it. Perpetuating Telperion's line is a royal responsibility, as the tree's survival relies utterly upon the diligence of the surviving kings: "though the fruit of the Tree comes seldom to ripeness, yet the life within may lie sleeping through many long years . . . if ever a fruit ripens, it should be planted, lest the line die out of the world" (*RK*, VI, v, 250).

While the White Tree of Gondor describes the linear history of Men, Lothlórien's mallorn trees seem not to experience the passage of time at all. Also not native to Middle-earth, this fictional species descends from trees known first on Tol Eressëa and subsequently on Númenor. When mallorn fruits given to Gil-galad by Tar-Aldarion did not take root in Lindon, Gil-galad gave seeds to Galadriel "and under her power they grew and flourished in the guarded land of Lothlórien" (*UT* 168). Legolas provides the first description of these trees in *The Lord of the Rings*:

> In the autumn their leaves fall not, but turn to gold. Not till the spring comes and the new green opens do they fall, and then the boughs are laden with yellow flowers; and the floor of the wood is golden, and golden is the roof, and its pillars are of silver, for the bark of the trees is smooth and grey. (*FR*, II, vi, 349)

Tolkien provides more detail in *Unfinished Tales* and confirms that mallorn trees are modeled upon familiar Primary World species:

> Its boughs [were] somewhat upswept after the manner of the beech; but it never grew save with a single trunk. Its leaves, like those of the beech but greater, were pale green above and beneath were silver . . . it bore golden blossom in clusters like a cherry. (*UT* 167–68)

The mallorn seed is described as "a small nut with a silver shale" (*RK*, VI, ix, 302). Beth Russell remarks upon the mallorn's flower–fruit combination, atypical of Primary World trees: "most nut-bearing trees have tiny wind-pollinated flowers, whereas trees that produce large, colorful flowers are animal-pollinated and have their seeds contained in various kinds of [fleshy] fruits but not in nuts" (22). Although the mallorn as a composite resembles no known Primary World tree, each individual botanical detail of the mallorn can be found in some familiar species.

Mallorn most resembles the Primary World beech, whose spring foliage emerges as "emerald leaves clothed in silver down"; like the mallorn, the leaves that change color in autumn may remain on the tree until spring (Edlin 15). Leaves of common beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) turn copper and then brown; Oriental beech (*F. orientalis*) leaves turn a rich yellow (Campbell-Culver 83–84). Beech trees are known for having giant trunks covered by smooth, grey bark, and beeches growing near one another in a group are likely to grow tall and have straight trunks (Sutton 68; Miles 80). Mallorn flowers mimic the clustering habit of cherry blossoms but not the color, as cherry flowers are rarely yellow; even so, yellow flowers occur on several Primary World trees found in England such as common lime (*Tilia × vulgaris*), common laburnum (*Laburnum anagyroides*), and the golden-rain tree (*Koelreuteria paniculata*) (Johnson and More 328; Sutton 156, 130).

The Primary World features contributing to the mallorn's form draw symbolism from creative associations of "primary material" with other narrative elements. The smooth, grey bark and gold-colored leaves allow Legolas to describe Lothlórien in terms of a magnificent hall adorned with precious metals, conveying a landscape of immense value (*FR,* II, vi, 349). Trees resembling precious metals recall the dream landscape of *Pearl*, where leaves "did as burnished silver slide / That thick upon twigs there trembling grew," tangentially connecting Lothlórien to the literary tradition of the Earthly Paradise (Tolkien 91; Patch 149–50). Silver and gold reflect Lothlórien's community leaders by mirroring the colors of Celeborn and Galadriel's hair, and also recall the Two Trees of Valinor (*FR,* II, vii, 369).

Like the mallorn's botanical details, the overall shape of each mallorn tree contributes to the narrative. By supporting Lothlórien's dominant architectural form, mallorn structure provides the literal, physical foundation for Lothlórien's cultural landscape: the branches first growing outward, then upward, and the "the main stem [near the top] divided into a crown of many boughs" allow for the building of flets (*FR,* II, vi, 357). The direction of branch growth recalls (but does not mirror) the cedar of Lebanon (*Cedrus libani*), and the divided main stem displays a typical Primary World growth response to a dead, removed, or damaged terminal bud (Howard 39–40; Harris, Clark, and Matheny 15). Just as the mallorn's botanical morphology combines details of different Primary World trees, the mallorn's branch structure incorporates potential growth forms of various trees under various conditions, not specifically corresponding to any individual species but generally observable in the Primary World.

Some typical patterns of tree development, however, are disrupted in this place. At his first sight of Lothlórien, Frodo observes that "no blemish

or sickness or deformity could be seen in anything that grew upon the earth" (*FR,* II, vi, 365). Yet no tree in the Primary World, exposed to weather, other organisms, and time, maintains any degree of perfection. Trees can isolate areas of wounding and injury through a process called compartmentalization, which allows trees to survive and thrive even as parts of them continue to decay (Harris, Clark, and Matheny 34–35). The absence of decay in Lothlórien is due to the Ring of Power that Galadriel wears, not to any extraordinary immunity of the mallorn trees: this ring "[preserves] what is desired or loved, or its semblance" (*Letters* 152). In this unnatural state of perfection, the mallorn trees reflect the residents of Lothlórien, who are immune to disease and decay.

As symbols of community identity, alive and present in daily life, mallorn trees are more real and immediate for the Elves of Lothlórien than is the similarly functioning White Tree in Gondor. Tolkien wrote that "Lothlórien is beautiful because there the trees [are] loved," implying that the relationship between Elves and mallorn trees is more than close—it is symbiotic (*Letters* 419). For residents of Lothlórien, the trees are a metonym for their notion of home. Haldir is distressed by the thought of leaving for Valinor; he says that "it would be a poor life in a land where no mallorn grew" (*FR,* II, vi, 363). Galadriel poignantly refers to the Undying Lands:

> I sang of leaves, of leaves of gold, and leaves of gold there grew:
> Of wind I sang, a wind there came and in the branches blew.
> Beyond the Sun, beyond the Moon, the foam was on the Sea,
> And by the strand of Ilmarin there grew a golden Tree.
>
> (*FR,* II, viii, 388–89)

Conflating the mallorn with Laurelin the Golden and herself with Yavanna, Galadriel yearns for the Blessed Realm. The identification of these Elves with mallorn trees persists in verse remembered even beyond Lothlórien's borders: Legolas first describes the trees based on songs known in Mirkwood (*FR,* II, vi, 349).

Postscript: A Mallorn in the Shire

The planting of a single mallorn tree in Hobbiton somewhat mitigates the mutilation of the Party Tree, and this mallorn keeps the memory of Lothlórien alive once the Elves have left for Valinor. Just as the seed hidden in the soil is only revealed a few paragraphs before Sam plants it, the species is not identified until the seed germinates in spring. The young mallorn, like the many children born that year in the Shire and the plentiful harvest, is a sign of regeneration, happiness, and hope. For the hobbits of the Fellowship, this mallorn provides a vivid memory

of their adventure and makes them appreciate their home all the more. For the other hobbit residents, the mallorn is a wondrous sight connecting their formerly isolated home to other lands and cultures; furthermore, the mallorn ensures continued interaction with the outside world because people travel to see it (*RK*, VI, ix, 302–03). Establishing a chain of cultural associations similar to the White Tree of Gondor, the mallorn in the Shire metaphorically connects hobbits to Elves and the Valar because, by this point in the narrative, most of Lothlórien's Elves have relocated to the Undying Lands. The web of cultural and historical interrelationships forged among the Elvish, human, and hobbit members of the Fellowship is representationally maintained by the mallorn in the Shire and the White Tree of Gondor: specimens of two fictional tree species that remain highly accessible to their respective hobbit and human neighbors.

In a text known for its highly original portrayal of tree-like beings, significant first-category trees such as these can also be found. This combination is rare, for, in the hands of other authors, regular trees typically pale in comparison to trees that can do extraordinary things. In *The Lord of the Rings,* trees like those in the Primary World are not overshadowed by other, more extraordinary trees; they play important roles while trees that might otherwise steal the spotlight are simply not considered trees at all.

III. Arrangements Too Unlike the Primary World

Before Tolkien had conceived of Ents as tree-herds, the narrative already contained several significant trees of the first, second, and third categories. The holly trees at Hollin and the mallorn trees of Lothlórien, literary trees of the first category (essentially like Primary World trees), had already been committed to paper. The hobbits' experience in the Old Forest, containing an ambiguous coexistence of trees of the second category (stationary trees that can talk, think, and feel) and the third (trees that remain rooted but can independently move branches or trunk), also had been written. Although Tolkien would not consciously distinguish between regular and extraordinary trees until after Ents emerged in their final form, "The Old Forest" chapter indicates he was already considering the possibility that trees of the third category—like Old Man Willow—could not convincingly be called "trees," while trees of the second degree—like the other trees of the Old Forest—could.

The Old Forest and Old Man Willow

"The Old Forest" is seldom recognized for the deliberately detailed, botanically credible, and carefully crafted chapter that it is. Verlyn Flieger

considers the Old Forest "consciously menacing, consciously ill-intentioned toward those humans who invade it":

> In the course of the hobbits' journey through its tangled pathways the Old Forest trips them, traps them, throws branches at them, blocks their progress, forces them to go where it wants rather than where they want, and does everything in its not inconsiderable power to make them feel unwanted, unwelcomed, and unliked. ("Eco-Conflict" 148)

Flieger represents the scholarly consensus, indiscriminately ascribing sentience and a capacity for movement to all trees of the Old Forest. Claudia Riiff Finseth similarly asserts that these trees "do untreeish things that go against the laws of nature" (40). Anne C. Petty claims that "the Old Forest…contains trees that are actively hostile toward creatures of the outside and deliberately react to obstruct their progress," asserting that the trees act "with very deliberate intent" (150–51, 236). Dinah Hazell writes that the Old Forest's "danger comes from the trees themselves" (73). These assertions overlook two important points: that the trees take no physical action of which trees in the Primary World are incapable, and that the single tree that does so is not necessarily a tree at all.

"The Old Forest" chapter can be separated into three distinct segments that trace the evolution of Tolkien's storytelling from the adoption of a traditional motif to the generation of a highly original fictional forest. The first segment contains a very credible description of the Old Forest trees that could easily apply to a Primary World forest. The second segment consists of quick movement through successive areas of changing forest density, serving as a transition to the third segment: the encounter with Old Man Willow. The trees are represented as more "unlike . . . the actual arrangements of the Primary World" as the chapter proceeds through each segment, and it appears that Tolkien took pains to maintain "the inner consistency of reality" as this chapter developed (*MC* 138–40).

In the first segment of the chapter, perhaps originally intending to portray the Old Forest as "the standard fairy-tale dark wood on the order of those in 'Snow White' and 'Hansel and Gretel,'" Tolkien ultimately constructs a more realistic interpretation (Flieger, "Eco-Conflict" 149). Yet because the Old Forest superficially presents as a familiar motif, readers expect enchantment there; likewise, the hobbits, having heard rumors, expect to meet trees of the second, third, or fourth categories at every turn. Early in the narrative, Sam's neighbor calls the Old Forest "a dark bad place, if half the tales be true" (*FR,* I, i, 30). Fatty Bolger is "more afraid of the Old Forest than of anything [he knows] about: the stories about it are a nightmare" (*FR,* I, v, 118). Merry stirs up any latent

fears just before the hobbits enter the Old Forest:

> [The trees] watch you. . . . Occasionally [in daylight] the
> most unfriendly ones may drop a branch, or stick a root out,
> or grasp at you with a long trailer. But at night things can
> be most alarming, or so I am told. I have only once or twice
> been in here after dark. . . . I thought all the trees were whis-
> pering to each other . . . and the branches swayed and groped
> without any wind. They do say the trees actually move, and
> can surround strangers and hem them in. (*FR*, I, vi, 121)

Even Merry's alleged eyewitness account smacks of rumor, peppered
with phrases like "so I am told" and "they do say." The hobbits' subse-
quent experience of the forest is similarly unsubstantiated: the hobbits'
feelings of being watched, attacked, and sabotaged by the trees are en-
tirely imagined:

> [The hobbits] picked a way among the trees, . . . carefully
> avoiding the many writhing and interlacing roots. . . . As they
> went forward it seemed that the trees became taller, darker,
> and thicker. . . . For the moment there was no whispering
> or movement among the branches; but they all got an un-
> comfortable feeling that they were being watched with disap-
> proval, deepening to dislike and even enmity. . . . They found
> themselves looking up quickly, or glancing back over their
> shoulders, as if they expected a sudden blow. (*FR*, I, vi, 122)

Tolkien's language is very consistent: phrases such as "*it seemed* that the
trees became taller, darker, and thicker," "there was no whispering or
movement . . . but *they all got an uncomfortable feeling*," and "*as if* they ex-
pected a sudden blow" present the scene in terms of the hobbits' feelings
and perceptions rather than any physical action performed by the trees
(emphasis added). Despite the constant suggestion that the trees can pur-
posely inflict harm, the hobbits' first glimpse of the Old Forest consists
only of elements plausible in the Primary World: tree trunks "straight or
bent, twisted, leaning, squat or slender, smooth or gnarled and branched;
. . . stems were green or grey with moss and slimy, shaggy growths" (*FR*, I,
vi, 122). Neither is there anything extraordinary about "writhing and in-
terlacing roots"—these adjectives, conveying a sense of movement, also
describe forms sometimes seen in tree roots: with plentiful rainfall and
limited sunlight, trees may develop "snaky" roots that extend laterally
over the surface of the soil (Menninger 21, 34). Roots established just be-
low the soil surface also could be revealed as a result of soil erosion. Trees
in compacted, poorly aerated, or excessively wet soils typically produce

very shallow root systems that can emerge above ground (Harris, Clark, and Matheny 228).

The first segment of the chapter continues as the hobbits, ready to be frightened in the Old Forest, blame the trees for their inability to find a path through the woods. As before, Merry sets the tone: he says that the Old Forest contains "open tracks [that] *seem* to shift and change." As he nearly gets lost trying to lead the party to a vaguely remembered route, "the trees *seemed* constantly to bar their way" and "the wood *seemed* to become more crowded and more watchful than before." Finding his way, Merry reflects: "These trees *do* shift. There is the Bonfire Glade in front of us (or I hope so), but the path to it *seems* to have moved away!" (*FR,* I, vi, 121–22; emphasis added for "seem" and "seemed"). Despite Merry's assertion, the trees do not move—a point demonstrated by Tolkien's consistent use of language. A forest is an ever-changing system: various parts of the trees constantly grow while other parts fall to the ground. Without weekly gardener visits, a constant wind, or periodic flooding, debris will collect under any living tree, creating a thick layer of organic matter that could easily obscure a path on the ground. Furthermore, where trees are the only landmarks, most people would become disoriented or lost. Indeed, the hobbits fare much better when they enter the Chetwood, following a more competent leader: "Strider guided them confidently among the many crossing paths, although left to themselves they would soon have been at a loss" (*FR,* I, xi, 194).

While trees in the second segment of the chapter are ascribed some degree of emotion, they still do not physically move unlike Primary World trees—not even when "just behind [the hobbits] a large branch fell from an old overhanging tree" (*FR,* I, vi, 123). While effectively justifying the hobbits' paranoia, this event corresponds to "summer branch drop," a Primary World condition where large limbs break—"for no obvious reason"—from trees that seem to be healthy and stable; this is typically seen in overmature, senescent trees, with branches that reach or extend past the edge of the canopy (Rushforth 1). Arborists report that "summer branch drop is serious enough for the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew to post a large sign at each entrance warning visitors that 'the older trees, particularly beech and elm, are liable to shed large branches without warning'" (Harris, Clark, and Matheny 428). Tree species reported to experience summer branch drop in England include ash, oak, and willow—a short list comprising every named species of broadleaf tree in the Old Forest (Harris, Clark, and Matheny 429; *FR,* I, vi, 125–26). Tolkien's succinct phrase "an old overhanging tree" aptly describes a tree that would be prone to this condition. Thus, the only event in this chapter that could be conceived of as a physical assault (besides the actions of Old Man Willow) is botanically credible in the Primary World.

The second segment of this chapter is marked by two shifts, the first of which is a distinct change in tone. *The Lord of the Rings* contains four specific indications that the Old Forest trees can think or feel, and the first two occur in this chapter: the hobbits sense "the ill will of the wood" before the large branch falls; afterward, Frodo regrets having challenged "the menace of the trees."[7] The vague discomfort of being watched is replaced by a direct suggestion that the wood has a vindictive will of its own (*FR,* I, vi, 122–24). Trees that, earlier in the chapter, were portrayed as belonging to the first category now take on descriptions more appropriate to the second category; in either case, the Old Forest trees have not moved in ways that Primary World trees cannot. Besides foreshadowing Old Man Willow's attack, this departure from the first category shows Tolkien's assessment that trees with emotion and intent do not threaten "the inner consistency of reality," because he still calls them "trees." These trees, which look like trees but may have powers beyond what mortals can perceive, seem simultaneously real and enchanted, thereby conveying the power and magic that Tolkien attributed to things belonging to or coming from Faërie (Tolkien, *Smith* 74)—a quality that augments these trees, initially portrayed as belonging to the first category, but does not necessitate a new ontological class.

The second shift characterizing this transitional segment of the chapter is a series of rapid changes in forest density. The hobbits repeatedly move from dense wood to sunny clearing, progressively failing to achieve their desired direction and ultimately feeling extremely disoriented. This confusion both provides a narrative transition to the third segment and justifies the hobbits' carelessness upon reaching Old Man Willow. The hobbits are elated to exit the gloomy wood and enter the sun-drenched valley, even though it "is said to be the queerest part of the whole wood" (*FR,* I, vi, 122–26). Their relief, combined with the natural tendency to associate enchantment only with the dense woodland interior, makes the hobbits vulnerable to Old Man Willow.

The hobbits' entrance into the Withywindle valley signals the third and final segment of this chapter, where the encounter with Old Man Willow forces Tolkien to consider a possible distinction between trees capable of thought, emotion, or speech and those that can move in extraordinary ways (but are not ambulatory). The pattern of this segment mirrors that of the chapter as a whole, as the initial landscape description is entirely credible from a Primary World point of view:

> A golden afternoon of late sunshine lay warm and drowsy upon the hidden land. . . . There wound lazily a dark river of brown water, bordered with ancient willows, arched over with willows, blocked with fallen willows, and flecked with

> thousands of faded willow-leaves. The air was thick with
> them, fluttering yellow from the branches; for there was a
> warm and gentle breeze blowing softly in the valley, and the
> reeds were rustling, and the willow-boughs were creaking.
> (*FR,* I, vi, 126)

Even without Old Man Willow's enchantments, this landscape could lure
any weary traveler to sleep: the breeze, the rustling reeds, and the sound
of moving water beneath an airy shade describe a lovely spot for a nap.
Like his surroundings, Old Man Willow is originally presented in a bo-
tanically believable (though anthropomorphic) way:

> [Frodo] saw leaning over him a huge willow-tree . . . . its
> sprawling branches going up like reaching arms with many
> long-fingered hands, its knotted and twisted trunk gaping in
> wide fissures that creaked faintly as the boughs moved. (*FR,*
> I, vi, 127)

Once more, Tolkien's language is consistent, describing a tree that *re-
sembles* a monster: "sprawling branches going up *like* reaching arms" (em-
phasis added).

As in "The Old Forest" chapter overall, however, the "primary ma-
terial" that initially resembles "the actual arrangements of the Primary
World" becomes more unlike those actual arrangements as the narrative
proceeds (*MC* 140). As sleep overtakes everyone but Sam, large cracks
in Old Man Willow's trunk "[gape] wide to receive" Merry and Pippin.
This phrase, potentially describing either preexisting cavities or a trunk
moving in a way not possible in the Primary World, nudges Old Man
Willow into the third category of literary trees. Immediately, Sam senses
this change: "There's more behind this than sun and warm air. . . . I don't
like this great big tree. I don't trust it." The hobbits soon realize that this
willow does not quite fit their definition of "tree," since it is capable of
moving in unexpected ways, striking Frodo and trapping Merry and Pip-
pin (*FR,* I, vi, 127–29). Despite Old Man Willow's extraordinary behav-
ior, the hobbits continue to refer to him as a tree; Tolkien's consideration
of this character as something other than a tree, however, is shown by an
analysis of Old Man Willow's origins.

In "The Adventures of Tom Bombadil," Old Man Willow traps Tom
Bombadil just like he traps Merry and Pippin in *The Lord of the Rings*
(*PS* 14). This poem reveals no attempt to create a believable Secondary
World, but once Tom and Old Man Willow are transplanted into *The
Lord of the Rings,* this point becomes crucial. The inclusion of a tree of the
third category, not only thinking and feeling but also moving in uncon-
ventional ways, forced Tolkien to consider the relative credibility of Old
Man Willow alongside the other trees of the Old Forest, which he had

already implied belong to the second category of literary trees (stationary trees that can talk, think, or feel). Yet no new ontological class was created for Old Man Willow, for "The Adventures of Tom Bombadil" provided Tolkien with an easy solution: the poem suggests that Old Man Willow is an entity separate from the tree. Old Man Willow asks,

> "Ha, Tom Bombadil! What be you a-thinking,
> peeping inside my tree, watching me a-drinking
> deep in my wooden house, tickling me with feather,
> dripping wet down my face like a rainy weather?"
>
> (*Bombadil* 12)

Old Man Willow seems to be an entity living within or associated with a tree—some sort of a spirit, or perhaps a Fairy. In the earliest known draft of the Old Forest episode, Tom describes him as a "thirsty earth-bound spirit [that] had become imprisoned in the greatest Willow of the Forest." This draft explains that "The [willow] tree did not die, though its heart went rotten, while the malice of the Old Man drew power out of earth and water, and spread…on both sides of the valley" (*Shadow* 120–21). These descriptions of Old Man Willow align with Tolkien's characterization of Fairies as spirits coexisting with humans, "capable of good and evil, and possibly (in this fallen world) actually sometimes evil," appearing to us in human form but appearing otherwise to other beings (*Tolkien On Fairy-Stories* 255). In the final text of *The Lord of the Rings*, Tolkien declines to specify what exactly Old Man Willow is, suggesting that he did not find the spirit/Fairy explanation sufficient to justify Old Man Willow's capacity for movement. The obfuscated rewrite of Tom's description omits "the Old Man" as subject, ascribing heart, strength, thought, and spirit to "the Great Willow" and identifying most of the Old Forest trees as being "under its dominion." Tolkien not only blurs the distinction between Old Man Willow and the other Old Forest trees; he also maintains an ambiguity within Old Man Willow's character that refuses to commit him to the ranks of any one life form. By using the terms "old Willow-man"[8] and "Old Man Willow" interchangeably, Tolkien suggests that the character could be a tree-like man, a man-like tree, or something in between. Frodo intuits that, while Old Man Willow looks like a tree, his actions mark him as something else altogether: "'Tell us, Master,' he said. 'about the Willow-man. What is he?'" (*FR,* I, vii, 137–41).

Ents and Fangorn Forest

While it is tempting to claim that Tolkien invented Ents to resolve his own ambiguity about how to handle the relative credibility of the Old Forest trees and Old Man Willow, the distinct ontological separation between Ents and trees was an accident of creative history, for Ents—as

Tolkien conceived of them—initially had nothing to do with trees. Tolkien wrote that Ents "grew rather out of their name, than the other way about. I always felt that something ought to be done about the peculiar A[nglo] Saxon word *ent* for a 'giant' or mighty person of long ago" (*Letters* 208). Tolkien's exposure to Old Norse literature and texts mentioning giants led to a coincidence of nomenclature that would determine the role Ents assumed in *The Lord of the Rings*.

The term "tree-man" and the proper name "Tree-Beard" seem to have aided Tolkien's association of the Old English word "*ent*" with trees. Edward Pettit identifies the word "*trémaðr*," translated literally as "tree-man," in the Old Norse *Hávamál* and in *Flateyjarbók* (Pettit 16). The variant forms "*trémann*" *and* "*trémaðrinn*" occur in *Ragnars Saga Loðbrókar*, a text linked to the *Völsunga Saga* (Grimstad 218). The *Orkneyinga Saga* uses the name "*Þórir tréskegg*," translated as "Thorir Treebeard" or "Thorir Tree-Beard" (Pettit 17; Pálsson and Edwards 16, 31–32). Early drafts demonstrate that, as Tolkien composed *The Lord of the Rings,* he used the words "Tree-men" and "Treebeard" alongside descriptions of giants, which he associated with the Anglo-Saxon word "*ent.*" Figure 1 depicts how the association of the words "Tree-men" and "Treebeard" with giants seems to have set Tolkien's notion of Ents as giants on course toward his conception of the Ents' close involvement with trees. Tolkien's only usage of "Tree-men" outside of *The Lord of the Rings* appears in *The Book of Lost Tales,* as a cryptic element in two lists (*Lost Tales II* 254, 261). This term, lurking in Tolkien's unconscious, may account for his later association of giants with trees, and his transformation of what Anders Stenström calls the "tree trope"—where an author expresses a giant's great size by comparison to a tree—into the notion that a giant could resemble a tree in more ways than height (Stenstrom 60–61). Indeed, Tolkien wrote that he "did not consciously invent [Ents] at all," speculating that "something had been going on in the 'unconscious' for some time" (*Letters* 211–12 n). Tolkien had used the "tree trope" in a version of "The Tale of Tinúviel," revised in the early to mid-1920s, to describe the "neck of Gilim the giant" as "taller than many elm trees" (*Lost Tales II* 46). Stenström proposes that when, in an early draft of *The Lord of the Rings*, Tolkien used this "tree trope" and the term "Tree-Men" in the same paragraph, their juxtaposition produced a creative spark that would propel Ents toward their later association with trees (Stenstrom 61). Sam asks "about these Tree-men, these giants, as you might call them? They do say that one bigger than a tree was seen" (*FR*, I, ii, 53). The editing process that led to that final text, however, proves revealing, as Christopher Tolkien reports:

> As my father first wrote Sam's words, he said: 'But what about these what do you call 'em—giants? They do say as
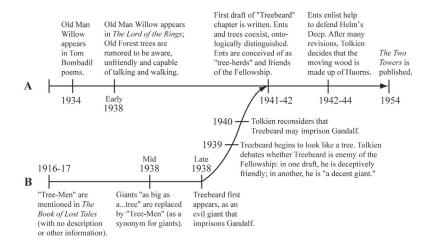
Figure 1. Converging trajectories for Old Man Willow and the Ents [9]

> one nigh as big as a tower or leastways a tree was seen. . . . '
> This was changed at the time of writing to: 'But what about
> these Tree-Men, these here—giants? They do say one nigh
> as big as a tower was seen,' etc. (*Shadow* 254)

During that revision, the "tree-trope" was replaced with the term "Tree-Men" (Stenström 61). Furthermore, Tolkien may have partly envisioned what "Tree-men" would look like by associating the name "Treebeard" with the lichen genus *Usnea*, which can be seen hanging on ancient trees like tinsel on a Christmas tree (Purvis 56).[10] *Usnea* species are commonly called "beard lichens" and could be imagined as the beards of "Tree-men" (Brodo, Sharnoff, and Sharnoff 95). Tolkien's descriptions of Treebeard's "sweeping grey beard" as "thin and mossy at the ends" and of other Ents with "beards grey-green as moss" support this speculation (*TT*, III, iv, 66; *TT*, III, viii, 154).

Treebeard's first mention (in a late 1938 draft) confirms only that he is a giant who is hostile to Gandalf, and the notion of Treebeard as an enemy of the Fellowship persisted (on and off) until the "Treebeard" chapter was composed (*Shadow* 363, 410). In the interim (around July 1939), Tolkien decided that Treebeard—whatever his allegiance—would resemble a tree: "what [Frodo] had thought was the stem of a monstrous oaktree [sic] was really a thick gnarled leg with a rootlike foot and many

branching toes" (*Shadow* 384). Even at this early stage when Treebeard was first considered tree-like, Tolkien explicitly states that Frodo was mistaken in thinking that he was a tree. In an August 1939 outline, Tolkien detailed Treebeard's appearance, distinguishing him from trees in the process: Treebeard is "about 50 feet high with barky skin. Hair and beard rather like *twigs*. Clothed in dark green like a mail of short shining leaves. [His] . . . many thanes and followers . . . look like young trees [?when] they stand" (*Shadow* 410). This outline also mentions that "the tree-giants assail the besiegers," providing the first recorded instance of Ents participating in battle.

While Tolkien is—from the beginning of the final draft of the "Treebeard" chapter—consistently noncommittal about what specifically distinguishes Ents from trees, he makes it very clear that Ents and trees constitute two distinct ontological classes. Treebeard informs Merry and Pippin: "We are tree-herds, we old Ents" (*TT,* III, iv, 71). The visual presentation of this explicitly stated distinction, however, is blurry at times; for instance, the description of morphological diversity at Entmoot employs much tree imagery and several references to familiar Primary World trees:

> A few [Ents] . . . reminded [Merry and Pippin] of beech-trees or oaks. . . . Some recalled the chestnut: brown-skinned Ents with large splayfingered hands, and short thick legs. Some recalled the ash: tall straight grey Ents with many-fingered hands and long legs; some the fir (the tallest Ents), and others the birch, the rowan, and the linden. (*TT,* III, iv, 83–84)

As in Tolkien's early descriptions of the Old Forest, his language makes the Ents seem *like* trees without ever conceding that they *are* trees: "A few . . . *reminded* them of beech-trees or oaks," "Some *recalled* the chestnut," "Some *recalled* the ash" (emphasis added). Now, however, he refers directly to legs, arms, and other body parts rather than employing anthropomorphic metaphors like those applied to Old Man Willow (*FR,* I, vi, 144). While Tolkien never describes his ambulatory trees as conscious manifestations of familiar tree species (as Holberg and MacDonald do), he does seem to intentionally blur the visual boundaries between Ents and trees. Although Treebeard always distinguishes between trees and Ents, even he cannot pinpoint their differences: he says that some of the Ents are "going tree-ish," and a few of the trees are "getting *Entish*." (*TT,* III, iv, 71). The "-ish" suffixes that Treebeard uses may be viewed as consistent with other vague language comparing trees and Ents without equating them to one another, and with the ambiguous language employed in "The Old Forest" chapter. This interpretation shows that, while Tolkien had envisioned these ambulatory, tree-like beings as different from

all other trees, he had some trouble explaining the relationship between Ents and trees as two separate ontological classes. After all, the organic evolution of Ents, by the time they emerged as tree-herds, afforded them the odd distinction of looking like trees, being associated with trees, living among trees, and being charged with the responsibility to protect trees, but not actually *being* trees—a situation not imagined in literature before Tolkien's time.

Although Ents look enough like trees that characters unaware of their existence mistake them for trees, the differences are clearer when Ents and trees are physically separated. Merry and Pippin first see Treebeard in the open; they see "one old stump of a tree with only two bent branches left: it looked almost like the figure of some gnarled old man, standing there, blinking." The text's first proper description of Treebeard cannot be mistaken for a tree: "Man-like, almost Troll-like," he has a distinct head with a face, a beard, and remarkable eyes as well as arms, feet, and toes (*TT,* III, iv, 65–66). Once the roused Ents strike out for Isengard, they are markedly distinguished from the trees in the area, which, in response to the Ents' "great ringing shout: *ra-hoom-rah!*...quivered and bent as if a gust had struck them." The ensuing scene is defined by action of which trees—in both the Primary and Secondary Worlds—are incapable:

> The Ents were swinging along with great strides down the slope. . . . Treebeard was at their head, and some fifty followers were behind him, two abreast, keeping step with their feet and beating time with their hands upon their flanks. (*TT,* III, iv, 88)

Riding through the nameless wood at Helm's Deep, Legolas senses something odd about the trees but sees nothing unusual until the company exits the wood. Looking back, he sees three strange, tall shapes emerge from the trees; soon joined by others of their kind, they all walk back into the wood and disappear (*TT,* III, viii, 154–55). Besides being physically obstructed from view, the Ents also seem to vanish once they stand amid the wood, relatively indiscernible in the context of trees.

While Ents have much in common with trees, they are equally—if not more—like people. Besides the physical traits that trees lack (eyes, human-like appendages, and digits) and the ability to walk upright, Ents demonstrate cultural development, evident in their linguistic prowess and in the system of government followed at Entmoot (*TT,* III, iv, 66; *RK,* Appendix F, I, 408–09; *TT,* III, iv, 82–86). The memory of the presence of Entwives and Entings demonstrates not only that Ents have family structure, but also that they experience love, disagreement, and longing. Expressed in songs, chants, and poems, these emotions are captured in

a body of literature that further asserts the human side of Ents, exemplified by the song of the Ent and the Entwife (*TT,* III, iv, 80). Despite their differing perspectives toward nature recorded in this song, the lives of both genders, together constituting their own ontological class, are inextricably tied to trees.

Unraveling the Mystery of Huorns

The nearly extemporaneous composition of the "Treebeard" chapter marks the merging of the two separate trajectories (Figure 1) that distinguished the development of trees of the first, second, and third categories (trees that do nothing unusual; trees that can talk, think, or feel; and trees that remain rooted but can independently move branches or trunk) from trees of the fourth type (ambulatory trees) (*Letters* 231; *Treason* 411). This event seems to have resulted in Tolkien's conscious recognition that ambulatory trees are too "unlike…the actual arrangements of the Primary World," as the Huorns that arise shortly thereafter in drafts of *The Lord of the Rings* are imagined with particular care not to rupture "the inner consistency of reality" (*MC* 140). While Tolkien had wanted to portray trees in battle, his ultimate portrayal of Ents was insufficient for this purpose: they were tree-herds, not trees, and there were too few of them to present a threat (*Letters* 212 n; *TT,* III, iv, 78). Still wishing to include an arboreal army in the narrative, Tolkien now consciously asks: At what point can a tree no longer be called a "tree"? Sharing with Ents the ability to walk but lacking their capacity for culture, the ambiguous Huorns suggest that Tolkien never resolved whether physical mobility alone was enough to justify a separate ontological class. Yet the Huorns' narrative evolution and their representation in the final text demonstrate that Tolkien had been forced to consider whether or not they could realistically be called "trees."

Tolkien's early ideas about whom or what the Ents would lead into battle span the second and fourth categories of literary trees, characterized by an ability to speak but also able to move from place to place. In the earliest published version of the Ents' attack on Isengard, Tolkien had already determined that the trees the Ents would lead into battle should be no ordinary trees: they enter the narrative with a name—"Galbedirs (Talking Trees)." A series of revisions follows, not possible to place in precise chronological order. On one draft, Tolkien writes: "The Ents sent a force of walking trees (with split trunks)." Another draft shows evolving nomenclature, from Galbedirs to Lamorni and then Ornómar, the name glossed as "an old-fashioned Elvish" word for "Talking Trees…that [Ents] have trained and made half-entish." Despite the later omission of the phrase "Talking Trees," the idea that Ents taught trees to talk persists in a later draft as "*trees with voices* . . . that the Ents have trained . . . though

far wilder . . . and crueller." Wording much like the final text replaced the "*trees with voices*" passage (which "was rejected, probably at once," according to Christopher Tolkien), and the name then changed from Ornómi to Huorns. No longer suggesting that Ents have trained Huorns to be less tree-like, Tolkien intentionally obfuscates the nature of the relationship in this revision: Merry reports that he "cannot make out whether they are trees that have become Entish, or Ents that have become tree-like, or both" (*War* 47–56). In the final text, Merry speculates that Huorns "are Ents that have become almost like trees" (*TT,* III, ix, 170). The textual history of these passages confirms that Tolkien struggled with the issues of what sort of beings the Ents would lead into battle, what they would be capable of, and how they would have become that way. In the finished work, the reader is led to believe that Huorns may be trees, Ents, or something else, revealing Tolkien's uncertainty about how much trees could differ from "the actual arrangements of the Primary World" before threatening "the inner consistency of reality" (*MC* 140).

The purpose, nature, and narrative origin of Huorns are further complicated by the characterization of Huorns as cruel, wild, dark, and dangerous. Most interpretations outside of *The Lord of the Rings*—including Tolkien's description of Fangorn Forest as "tense with hostility because it was threatened by a machine-loving enemy"—cite a desire for revenge akin to the second- and third-category Old Forest trees (*Letters* 420). While such revenge is justified by Saruman's reckless felling of trees, Treebeard suggests another explanation: that "the Great Darkness," which Wayne G. Hammond and Christina Scull define as "the time of [Melkor's] domination of Middle-earth," still lingers in Fangorn Forest (384; *TT,* III, iv, 71 and 77). Treebeard's suggestion, more malevolent and less concrete than any possible physical threat to trees, is supported by a scene late in the narrative, when the defeat of Sauron causes the Great Darkness to lift from the depths of Fangorn Forest. As the Fellowship disbands, Legolas plans to "visit the deep places of the Entwood," and Treebeard's open invitation to travelers indicates there is nothing there to fear (*RK,* VI, vi, 259). The ambiguous attribution of the Huorns' emotion further obscures their mode of being: Huorns driven by vengeance would be intrinsically capable of emotion, but Huorns made cruel by the Great Darkness would be non-sentient trees given the capacity to feel by an outside source.

Precisely how Huorns move is also largely unexplained. Although Huorns are unquestionably ambulatory, descriptions of Huorns in motion are invariably mysterious, characterized by diffuse, untraceable sounds: rustling and creaking, "a noise like a rushing wind," and "whisperings and groanings and an endless rustling sigh" (*TT,* III, ix, 170–71; *TT,* III, viii, 158). Moving Huorns are also communicated through sights

obscured or obstructed, such as an absent moon, a "darkness blacker than the night," a gathering mist, and "moving towers of shadow" (*TT,* III, viii, 158). Yet Huorns, standing still, are inevitably mistaken for trees. Legolas, one of the most arboriculturally savvy characters in *The Lord of the Rings,* is baffled in the presence of standing Huorns; he calls them "the strangest trees that ever [he] saw" (*TT,* III, viii, 152). The text's only detailed physical description of Huorns, while grotesque and ominous, still depicts trees that could exist in the Primary World (*TT,* III, viii, 151): "Long sweeping boughs [that hang] down like searching fingers" could occur on any number of tree species with a pendulous branching habit, such as the weeping willow hybrid that thrives in Britain (*Salix* × *sepulcralis* nv. *chrysoloma*) or the pendulous beech (*Fagus sylvatica* 'Pendula'), an impressive specimen of which stands in Oxford's University Parks (Miles 192; Günther 239). "Roots [that stand] up from the ground like the limbs of strange monsters" are generally termed aerial or adventitious roots when found on Primary World trees, occurring partially above ground and functioning like snorkels to facilitate root respiration in submerged conditions; the roots become visible if the standing water subsides (Thomas 103–07). The aerial stilt roots of the mangrove (*Rhizophora* species), for example, originate on the trunk several feet above ground and often branch as they approach the soil surface, sometimes resembling a creature with many legs and long toes (Menninger 27–34). Therefore, Huorns look essentially like trees, except when they are in motion; yet the absence of visual descriptions of motion maintains the overall notion of a tree-like appearance. Since these beings that look like trees are never actually *seen* moving—not by the reader, nor by any character (besides perhaps the Ents)—the "inner consistency of reality" is preserved.

The name that Tolkien finally chose for these beings reflects the Huorns' ambiguous portrait: while the second syllable, "-orn," unequivocally refers to some kind of tree,[11] "Hu-" defies precise definition. Although scholarly discussion of the etymology of "Hu-" has yielded only speculative conclusions, there is a general consensus that the meaning of "Hu-" relates to the Huorns' ability to speak; unpublished notes by Tolkien similarly suggest a possible derivation from the base KHUG- "bark, bay" (Wynne; Hammond and Scull 425). The combination of the mysterious "Hu-" and the unambiguous tree-element "-orn" conveys exactly what Tolkien endeavored to express about these tree-like beings: Huorns have some relationship with trees, and might even be trees, but the reader of *The Lord of the Rings* will never know their specific nature. By obfuscating the degree to which Huorns differ from "the actual arrangements of [trees in] the Primary World," Tolkien manages to maintain "the inner consistency of reality" (*MC* 140).

IV. The Functions of Fantasy

By representing trees in this way, Tolkien provides recovery, escape, and consolation; these functions, in turn, coalesce into a purposeful message (*MC* 145). As readers tend not to perceive the differentiation of trees, Ents, and Huorns that is explored in this article, the general impression readers have of trees in *The Lord of the Rings* is that they can defend themselves. Pointing back to the underlying truth that trees in the Primary World are relatively helpless, this impression provides consolation, allowing escape to a Secondary World where trees do have their own means of defense (*MC* 155). Furthermore, Tolkien's usage of tree-like beings with human-like characteristics and culture reminds us that, in the Primary World, people are the only real defense that trees have against most of the modern threats that they face. The very thing that most readers do not notice in *The Lord of the Rings*—the distinction between trees and tree-like beings, and the convincing portrayal of both life forms—creates a space where regular trees can function significantly within the narrative without exceeding the physical limits of their Primary World counterparts. By making trees of the first category significant in the narrative, Tolkien enables a sense of recovery, allowing his readers to see trees—which, for many of us, have become all too familiar—in a vivid, new light (*MC* 146). Portraying trees as something worth fighting for and asserting the connections that exist between humans and trees, Tolkien compels his readers to become responsible for preserving and protecting the trees in their own lives.

NOTES

1   Although Tolkien considered this story a "nearly perfect tale" in the 1930s, a critical re-reading in 1964 "filled [him] with distaste" (*Tolkien On Fairy-Stories* 250; Tolkien, *Smith* 69). MacDonald's *Phantastes* "afflicted [Tolkien] with profound dislike" (*Smith* 69).

2   Arthur Rackham partly inspired Tolkien's conception of Old Man Willow (Carpenter, *Biography* 165).

3   While Tolkien probably never saw "the grandest stand of holly in Britain" (in Staverton Park), he may have seen large hollies in Sutton Coldfield Park or the Stiperstones in Shropshire, both near Birmingham (Rackham, *Ancient Woodland* 347; Rackham, *Trees and Woodland* 134, 161; Miles 159). Other potentially accessible large hollies were documented during Tolkien's lifetime in Warwickshire, Yorkshire, Cornwall, and the Chiltern Hills (Loudon 515; Dallimore 40; Elwes and Henry 1717).

4   Within *The Lord of the Rings*, these trees are called "the White Tree
     and the Golden" and "the Trees of Silver and Gold," and separate
     mentions of "the Silver Tree" and "Laurelin the Golden" imply the
     corollary names "the Golden Tree" and "Telperion the Silver" (or
     "the White") (*TT*, III, xi, 204; *TT*, IV, iii, 252; *TT*, III, ii, 25; *RK*, Ap-
     pendix A, I, i, 314).

5   Tolkien's awareness of botanical relationships at the family level (e.g.,
     Rosaceae) is confirmed by Quickbeam's unrelated reference to rowan
     as part of "the people of the Rose" (*TT*, III, iv, 87).

6   Tolkien may have known of the "mummy seeds" collected from an-
     cient Egyptian graves, which people thought might still be capable of
     germination. During Tolkien's lifetime, many respectable scientists
     supported this theory; while the notion is refuted today, the popular-
     ity of this tale persists (Kesseler and Stuppy 163).

7   In successive chapters, Tom Bombadil "[lays] bare the hearts of trees
     and their thoughts," describing them as "filled . . . with pride and
     rooted wisdom, and with malice," and Treebeard speculates that
     "bad memories are handed down" (*FR,* I, vii, 141; *TT,* III, iv, 71).

8   Tolkien may have derived this name from "The Willow-Man" by
     Juliana Horatia Ewing, published first in *Aunt Judy's Magazine* (1872)
     and later as one of two poems in *Tongues in Trees* (1884), a book of
     verses intended for children (Laski 100). The subject of this poem
     belongs in the second category of literary trees.

9   A: 1934 (Scull and Hammond, *Chronology* 173; early 1938 (Scull and
     Hammond, *Chronology* 210, 221; *Shadow* 110–113, 302, 327–29);
     1941–42 (*Treason* 411); 1942–44 (*War* 16–17, 27–30, 42–56, 77–78);
     1954 (Scull and Hammond, *Chronology* 444). B: 1916–17 (*Lost Tales I*
     1; *Lost Tales II* 254, 261); mid-1938 (Scull and Hammond, *Chronology*
     220; *Shadow* 254); late 1938 (Scull and Hammond, *Chronology* 222;
     Shadow 363); 1939 (*Treason* 210; *Shadow* 410); 1940 (*Treason* 71).

10   One sense of the *OED* definition of "tree-beard" is "the lichen *Usnea
     barbata*," which Tolkien may have seen in the Swiss Alps (470; Scull
     and Hammond, *Chronology* 27; Black 39). Although rare in England
     today, large specimens of *Usnea* were common there in the mid- to
     late nineteenth century (Balfour 545).

11   The names mallorn, Fangorn, Celeborn (the White Tree), and Híri-
     lorn are consistent with Tolkien's translations of "orne" and "-orn"
     (*Letters* 308; *Lost Road* 379; *S* 172). The nomenclature of two trees
     still found in England corroborate this meaning: manna ash (*Fraxinus*

ornus, formerly called *Ornus europaea*) and rowan, for which Ornus was once a recorded common name (Campbell-Culver 6, 88, 107).

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Clinamen, Tessera, and the Anxiety of Influence: Swerving from and Completing George MacDonald

Josh Long

In 1973, the year J.R.R. Tolkien passed away, Harold Bloom released his seminal work *The Anxiety of Influence: A Theory of Poetry*. Although Bloom's book has had a profound effect on the topic of literary influence, his theory has received minimal attention within the field of Tolkien studies. Faye Ringel takes a Bloomian approach in her article "Women Fantasists: In the Shadow of the Ring," though, ultimately, her article focuses primarily on those whom Tolkien influenced. Diana Glyer also considers *The Anxiety of Influence* in the final chapter of her book-length study *The Company They Keep: C. S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien as Writers in Community*; however, she is more interested in expanding the notion of literary influence rather than evaluating how Tolkien's fiction fits into Bloom's paradigm. This article serves to demonstrate that Bloom's theory is relevant to both Tolkien's creative journey in general and *Smith of Wootton Major* in particular.

In *The Anxiety of Influence*, Bloom develops six revisionary ratios—ways in which one poet influences another. I am only interested in the first two—*clinamen* and *tessera*. The former might be best described as a corrective swerve, a turning away from a precursor poet in attempt to correct what he did wrong; the latter is antithetical completion, which occurs when a poet retains a precursor's terms but means them in a different way (Bloom 14).

These revisionary ratios are performed by a poet as a means "to clear imaginative space for" himself (Bloom 5). As the modern writer (post-Enlightenment) seeks to achieve literary greatness, he inevitably becomes anxious over influence and, consequently, reacts to his literary precursor. Through a revisionary movement in his own text, the writer is able to create something original and thus pacify his fear of indebtedness. At the heart of Bloom's theory is this idea: "*The history of fruitful poetic influence, which is to say the main tradition of Western poetry since the Renaissance, is a history of anxiety and self-saving caricature, of distortion, of perverse, wilful revisionism without which modern poetry as such could not exist*" (30, emphasis in original). In *Smith*, Tolkien sought to correctively swerve from and antithetically complete MacDonald's *The Golden Key*.

The Unfinished Preface to *The Golden Key*

When Tolkien began Smith in late 1964, he was not intending to

write a story about Faërie. In fact, he was not even initially trying to tell a tale; the story arose almost accidentally.[1] It began with a simple request from a publisher. Pantheon Books of New York inquired on 2 September 1964 whether Tolkien would write a preface to a new edition of George MacDonald's *The Golden Key*. Tolkien responded to their query on 7 September: "I should like to write a short preface to a separate edition of *The Golden Key*. I am not as warm an admirer of George MacDonald as C. S. Lewis was; but I do think well of this story of his" (Letters 351). Though Tolkien had supervised a B.Litt. thesis on MacDonald in 1934 and may have reread him in 1938 or 1939 while working on "On Fairy-stories," he had almost certainly not read MacDonald for nearly three decades..[2] Therefore, when he accepted the request from Pantheon books to write a preface to *The Golden Key*, he was basing his decision largely on the fact that he had praised the story in "On Fairy-stories." In actuality, he only had vague memories of what it was really like.

After rereading *The Golden Key*, Tolkien discovered that he did not like it at all. According to Carpenter, Tolkien claimed that it was "ill-written, incoherent, and bad, in spite of a few memorable passages" (quoted in *Biography* 244). Elsewhere, he stated that "re-reading G[eorge] M[acDonald] critically filled me with distaste" (Smith 69).[3] In spite of these misgivings, he persisted in trying to write a preface:

> A fairy tale is a tale about that world, a glimpse of it; if you read it, you enter Fairy with the author as your guide. He may be a bad guide or a good one: bad if he does not take the adventure seriously, and is just 'spinning a yarn' which he thinks is good enough 'for children'; good, if he knows something about Fairy, and has himself caught some glimpses of it which he is trying to put into words. But Fairy is very powerful. Even the bad guide cannot escape it. He probably makes up his tale out of bits of older tales, or things he half remembers, and they may be too strong for him to spoil or disenchant. (*Smith* 74-5)

Tolkien's tone is slightly cynical, if not critical. He was struggling to write a preface for a book and an author he now disliked; his contempt seeps into his prose. Surely, Tolkien considered MacDonald a "bad guide"; however, this view would not be made plain until the actual story of *Smith*.

The Negative Influence of MacDonald[4]

Understandably, Tolkien never completed his preface to *The Golden Key*. He abandoned it because he had lost interest in MacDonald and found a story of his own beginning to unfold. Tolkien notes, "If I had

gone on [writing the preface] I should only have written a severely critical or 'anti' essay on G[eorge] M[acDonald]—unnecessary, and a pity since G[eorge] M[acDonald] has performed great services for other minds—such as Jack's" ((*Smith* 69).[5] Although the 'anti' essay was never written, *Smith* undoubtedly became charged with Tolkien's feelings of deep resentment and discontent over MacDonald's stories—particularly *The Golden Key*.

On at least two separate occasions, Tolkien acknowledged MacDonald's negative influence on *Smith*. On 26 October 1966, Tolkien read *Smith* aloud at Blackfriars, the Dominican house of studies in St. Giles, Oxford. In his prefatory comments, he remarked, "The story was (as often happens) the result of an *irritant*. And since the irritant will in some degree affect the presentation of the movement in the mind that it sets going I will just say what the *irritant* was in this case. George MacDonald. A writer for whom I have a sincere and humble—dislike" (quoted in Scull and Hammond, *Reader's Guide* 945). Additionally, in writing to Clyde S. Kilby, Tolkien called *Smith* "an anti-G[eorge] M[acDonald] tract" (*Smith* 70). Inevitably, Tolkien was so dissatisfied with MacDonald that he felt compelled to write a reactionary story to *The Golden Key*.

What was it that bothered him so much about MacDonald's writing? First, Tolkien was dissatisfied with the *The Golden Key*'s tone; he felt that fairy tales shouldn't be written with children in mind. MacDonald had inevitably succumbed to this "error of false sentiment" (*MC* 130) In a note he sent to Kilby, he observes, "I had of course, never thought of *The G[olden] K[ey]* as a story for children," but then adds this parenthetical jab, "(though apparently G[eorge] McD[onald] did)" (*Smith* 69).[6] Tolkien's attitude is further emphasized by the fact that on 2 March 1966, he told Henry Resnik: "I didn't write [*The Lord of the Rings*] for children. That's why I don't like George MacDonald very much; he's a horrible old grandmother" (Resnik 41).[7] Second, he felt MacDonald had a tendency to ruin his fairy tales by being overly didactic—they came off more as sermons than stories. Kilby recalls, "He called him an 'old grandmother' who preached instead of writing" (*Tolkien* 31). Tolkien mentioned this less hostilely in his unfinished preface to *The Golden Key*, "All the same I must warn you that [MacDonald] is a preacher, not only on the platform or in the pulpit; in all his many books he preaches" (*Smith* 71). Finally, Tolkien was also displeased that MacDonald wrote allegories—a form he inherently disliked. Tolkien explains, "But [C. S. Lewis] was evidently born loving (moral) allegory, and I was born with an instinctive distaste for it. 'Phantastes' [by MacDonald] wakened him, and afflicted me with profound dislike" (*Smith* 69).[8]

Clinamen: The Corrective Swerve

Despite Tolkien's praise of *The Golden Key*, he now saw MacDonald's story as a flawed and ineffective work, and as it was, he was determined to rewrite it the way he felt it should have been written. In part, this is what he tried to accomplish through *Smith*. Bloom notes,

> A poet swerves away from his precursor, by so reading his precursor's poem as to execute a *clinamen* in relation to it. This appears as a corrective movement in his own poem, which implies that the precursor poem went accurately up to a certain point, but then should have swerved, precisely in the direction that the new poem moves. (14)

This is an accurate description of writing *Smith*. Tolkien believed MacDonald's story "went accurately up to a certain point," but when MacDonald should have been concerned with the integrity of Faërie, he fell to "juvenilizing," moralizing, and allegorizing it.

What MacDonald did right, however, was that he attempted stories about the fantastical. Regardless of how distasteful Tolkien now found his approach to Faërie, he valued the basic structure of *The Golden Key*. After all, *Smith* and *The Golden Key* contain very similar plots—a character or characters journey throughout an enchanted Otherworld. Consequently, MacDonald was the immediate influence that prompted Tolkien to write a fairy tale in which a human comes into contact with Faërie.

Correcting the Juvenility

Tolkien was not necessarily opposed to what MacDonald was doing but *how* he was doing it. He was bothered by the superfluous asides found in *The Golden Key* that were intended to help children follow the storyline, keep them engaged, or teach them. We know that *Smith* was not written with children in mind. Tolkien made this plain: "But the little tale was (of course) *not* intended for children!" (*Letters* 388-9). This conviction about fairy tales—that they "should not be *specially* associated with children"— was an idea he first proposed in "On Fairy-Stories" (*MC* 135), and it greatly affected his approach in *The Lord of the Rings*.[9] It was, however, in *Smith* that Tolkien made his most adamant pronouncement that the fairy tale is really an adult genre.

The first indication of Tolkien's *clinamen* can be found in the opening sentence of the story. Like *The Golden Key*, *Smith* begins quite traditionally, yet it establishes a very different tone than MacDonald's story.

> *Smith*: "There was a village once, not very long ago for those with long memories, nor very far away for those with long legs." (5)

> *The Golden Key*: "There was a boy who used to sit in the twilight and listen to his great-aunt's stories." (1)

At first glance, the two sentences appear alike; however, each author has a different audience in mind. In *The Golden Key*, Mossy listens to his aunt's story-telling just as many children first hear *The Golden Key* read aloud. In this way, MacDonald is able to establish sympathy between his juvenile audience and the protagonist of the story. In addition, MacDonald assumes that his audience has little patience for an opening setting because he advances directly into the story.

Tolkien's approach is wholly different and intended for a more mature reader. His narrative begins with wordplay; the word *long* is used to refer to a duration of time, extended mental capacities, and height. Though an inexperienced reader might grow confused, to an adult, the sentence is intriguing and engaging. Moreover, the parallelism makes the sentence syntactically lucid, and the alliteration and consonance makes it dictionally graceful. "There **w**as a village **o**nce, not very lon**g a**go for tho**s**e with long memorie**s**, no**r** very f**a**r away **f**or tho**s**e with **l**on**g l**e**gs**" (5). What is more, unlike MacDonald, Tolkien develops an opening setting; in typical Tolkienian fashion, he spends three paragraphs discussing the workings of Wootton Major before he even mentions the first character (5-7). *Smith* and *The Golden Key* are initially distinct. As we move through both narratives, the differences between the two texts become even more pronounced.

Whether *The Golden Key* was originally written for children is less important than the fact that it appears to be. MacDonald assists the child by indicating that he is shifting scenes. "And now I will go back to the borders of the forest" (10). Such an interpolation is unnecessary. An adult could figure this out for himself, but such a shift would be more difficult for a young reader to make. *The Golden Key* also contains childish questions. After Mossy finds the golden key, the narrator asks, "Where was the lock to which the key belonged? It must be somewhere, for how could anybody be so silly as make a key for which there was no lock? Where should he go to look for it?" (9). MacDonald is obviously trying to draw in the young reader, but to an adult, such questions are patronizing.

The intrusive narrator also takes on more of a didactic approach. He is decidedly concerned with Mossy and Tangle's hygienic practices. The morning after Tangle is first cleansed by Grandmother, he observes, "For having once been in her grandmother's pond, [Tangle] must be clean and tidy ever after; and, having put on her green dress, felt like a lady" (28). As if the narrator's emphasis on routine bathing is not enough, he takes it one step further by teaching his readers a lesson on altruism. "But the wearer of Grandmother's clothes never thinks about how he or she

looks, but thinks always how handsome other people are" (33). We begin to see why Tolkien referred to MacDonald as a grandmother.

Tolkien, unlike MacDonald, is not interested in the child as reader, and this can be seen most clearly in his visions of Faery. They are baffling for an adult, let alone a child. Verlyn Flieger provides an accurate assessment of the enigmatic nature of these visions: "Wandering in myth he does not understand, Smith of Wootton Major witnesses a whole world to which he does not have the key; nor, in consequence, does the reader. . . . The questions are not just unanswered, they are unasked" (196). Indeed, Tolkien's portrayal of Faery remains so mysterious that when Tolkien swerved from MacDonald, he turned around rather than to the side. While MacDonald is condescending, Tolkien falls on the opposite end—he neither explains nor instructs; and although his descriptions of the Faerian world remain discernible, the intentions or motives of its inhabitants remain unclear.

Tolkien's Faery is most interesting for what it does not say. We meet the elven mariners *in medias res*. They appear to be returning from battle and have evidently won (*Smith* 26), but whom they defeated or where they are headed cannot be determined. Next, we behold the King's Tree in all its glory, but know nothing about its purpose (28). It exists and its beauty requires no explanation. Finally, Smith is responsible for awakening the Wind, but what offence he has committed cannot be discerned—if he has, in fact, done anything wrong (29-30). We are just as perplexed as Smith as we experience a world we do not fully understand—a world we are not meant to fully understand. After all, the text makes it plain that there are things in Faery "which men know nothing" about (26). And by saying nothing, not explaining these matters, Tolkien is at once saying something—he is defending the world of Faery. In reaction to MacDonald, who inundated *The Golden Key* with too much meaning and elucidation, Tolkien creates an Otherworld full of uncertainty. If there is one thing he is trying to get across, it is that Faery exists as a thing in its own right and needs no other purpose than to delight and excite, which it does for the reader and Smith alike.[10]

The imagery altogether overshadows the action of these scenes, giving the text more of a poetic feel. Tolkien's paratactic style, use of alliteration, and rhythmic repetition of the word "and" further heightens the poetic element. Such stylistic preferences align these passages with *Beowulf*, which relies heavily on both alliterative meter and parataxis. My point is not that Tolkien had *Beowulf* in mind or that he was even consciously imitating the poem, but that Tolkien's style contains both a heroic seriousness and poetic eloquence that harkens back to Old English verse. Syntactic parallelisms add to the overall rhythm and flow of these scenes (indentified below with brackets). And finally, Tolkien even

employs internal rhyme, such as "down to the ground" and "sun at noon" (consonantal rhyme).

> *Elven Mariners Episode*
> **S**uddenly **th**ey lifted up **th**eir voices in a **s**ong of triumph, [*and* **h**is **h**eart **w**as shaken **w**ith **f**ear], [*and* **h**e **f**ell upon his **f**ace], [*and* they passed over **h**im] [*and* **w**ent a**w**ay into the echoing **h**ills.] (*Smith* 26)

> *King's Tree Episode*
> He **s**aw the King's Tree **s**pringing up, **t**ower upon **t**ower, in**t**o the **s**ky, *and* its **l**ight was **l**ike the **s**un at noon; *and* it bore at once leaves *and* **fl**owers *and* **fr**uits uncounted, *and* not **o**ne **w**as the same **a**s **a**ny other that grew on the Tree. (*Smith* 28)

> *Wind and Birch Episode*
> At **o**nce the breeze **r**ose to a **w**ild **W**ind, [**r**oaring like a great beast], [*and* it swept him up] [*and* flung him on] the shore, [*and* it drove him up] the slopes whirling *and* [falling **l**ike a dead **l**eaf]. (*Smith* 29)

Even when it seems that Tolkien has succumbed to triteness with such similes as "like the sun at noon" and "like a dead leaf," there is artistic intention in his selection. If understood within the context, the similes are not just appropriate but powerful. Leading up to the sun simile is a description of the tree towering up into the sky; thus, it only makes sense that the tree should be compared to the sun. The sun simile does not detract from our visual image but adds to it. The tree is so overwhelming in both size and radiance that it appears, if only for a moment, that it is not merely like the sun but it is the sun. I think this is the image the passage is trying to evoke.

The leaf simile functions similarly. The wind is so strong that Smith is not like a leaf as much as he is a leaf. This picture invokes reverse personification, where the human takes on characteristics of an inanimate object. Therefore, it is fitting that we find Smith clinging to the stem of a birch; he metaphorically becomes a leaf. What is more, the parallel simile used to describe the wind as "a great beast" is not just syntactically analogous; it is important to the scene; the wind is personified in the same instance that Smith undergoes reverse personification.

In addition to these visions of Faery that give the story more of an adult feel, Tolkien incorporated thematic elements that were geared towards adults. Just as MacDonald sought to establish a connection between children and his characters, Tolkien did likewise with adults by

imbuing his text with a profound sense of bereavement—that inexplicable and inescapable feeling of loss that comes with old age.

Tolkien frequently made reference to this element of *Smith*. In writing to Roger Lancelyn Green, he referred to the story as "an old man's book, already weighted with the presage of 'bereavement'" (*Letters* 389).[11] The story begins and ends with bereavement. After twenty-four years of service as Master Cook, Rider retires unexpectedly (*Smith* 9). Nevertheless, Rider is not the one left bereaved; he is almost too willing to give up his position in order to return to Faery.[12] The townspeople are the ones most affected by his sudden disappearance, which is, in a sense, a death because he is never heard from or seen of again. The main difference, however, is that the townspeople carp rather than mourn their loss (*Smith* 9).

In addition, we soon discover that this is not the whole story and that the history of Wootton Major goes all the way back to the birth of Rider. In Tolkien's essay on *Smith*, he devotes a large portion of it to recounting the events of Rider's life, and from it, we learn that Rider was one well acquainted with loss. Tolkien writes, "[Rider's] sadness and 'air of having his mind elsewhere' [while he was Master Cook] was due no doubt not only to his bereavement but also to this deprivation" (*Smith* 96). Rider's bereavement is a result of the untimely death of his wife Rose, who died while giving birth to their daughter Ella, Smith's mother. To make matters worse, Rider's position as Master Cook prevents him from visiting Faery, which is what Tolkien means by "this deprivation." Though none of these events take place in the published text, they assist in giving us a fuller understanding of the bereavement that surrounds the narrative.

Though the loss that begins the story (and back-story) is rich and complex, the bereavement that Smith endures at the end of the tale is most profound. After meeting the Faery Queen and experiencing some type of transcendence, Smith comes to the realization "that his way now led back to bereavement" (*Smith* 39). The next paragraph begins, "That meeting-place was now far behind him, and here he was, walking among the fallen leaves, pondering all that he had seen and learned" (39). This moment of solitude, before he meets up with the Faery King and relinquishes his star, is remarkable for its subtlety—it says much without saying a lot. The outward setting becomes indicative of Smith's inward struggle; the barrenness of his surroundings parallels his own internal landscape. Though he has not given up his star yet, he reflects on his past experiences and realizes that he does not have much time remaining. His encounter with the Faery Queen might very well be his final venture into Faery.

Smith reluctantly gives up the star. After he returns home, the full extent of his bereavement sets in: "His son lit candles, and for a while they

sat by the fire without speaking; for a great weariness and bereavement was on the smith" (*Smith* 49). In "Suggestions for the ending of the story," Tolkien explains Smith's loss, which is to some extent his own, when he writes, "A time comes for writers and artists, when invention and 'vision' cease and they can only reflect on what they have seen and learned" (*Smith* 81). This quality of bereavement reemphasizes the adult nature of *Smith*. As a corrective swerve to MacDonald, Tolkien made his story adult-like not only tonally and stylistically, but also thematically.

Correcting the Allegory

The question of allegory has been an important issue in *Smith* criticism. In fact, two of the top Tolkien scholars take almost opposite positions on this matter—Tom Shippey finds the text to be rich with allegorical meaning, while Verlyn Flieger argues that the work is better read as a fairy tale and valued as a thing in its own right (Shippey and Flieger 186–200). Part of the problem lies in Tolkien's own comments on the story. In his *Smith* essay, he notes that it "is not an 'allegory', though it is capable of allegorical interpretations at certain points" (*Smith* 84). He explains this in greater detail in a letter sent to Kilby: "[*Smith* is] *not* an allegory (however applicable to this or that) in intention: certainly not in the 'Fay' parts, and only fleetingly in the Human, where evidently The Cook and the Great Hall etc. represent The Parson and Church and their decay" (quoted in Scull and Hammond, *Reader's Guide* 40).[13] At face value, Tolkien's explanations seem incongruous, but his understanding of the "allegory" in *Smith* is reconcilable.

It is important to begin by defining Tolkien's terms. In his *Smith* essay, he makes a distinction between allegory and allegorical interpretations. What do these terms mean and how do they differ? Tolkien's clearest definition of allegory can be found in his comments on *Pearl* in the Introduction to his translation of the poem. He writes, "To be an 'allegory' a poem must, and with fair consistency, describe in other terms some event or process; its entire narrative and all its significant details should cohere and work together to this end" (18). Ultimately, *Smith* is not an allegory because the entire narrative does not work together to produce a fair and complete secondary meaning. For instance, the Faery King and Queen are not symbols of anything else, just as the elven mariners are elves and the King's Tree is a tree. The sustained one-to-one correspondences are simply not there.

On the other hand, *Smith* "is capable of allegorical interpretations at certain points." But what does Tolkien mean by this? He explains the term in a letter to Milton Waldman by distinguishing it from allegory: "[T]he more 'life' a story has the more readily will it be susceptible of allegorical interpretations: while the better a deliberate allegory is made

the more nearly will it be acceptable just as a story" (*Letters* 145).

Although allegory and allegorical interpretations appear similar, Tolkien makes it clear that they start out from opposite ends. Allegory is a deliberate attempt on the part of the author to dominate the story and reader's mind; the secondary meaning is infused within the narrative framework. Allegorical interpretations, in contrast, arise as a reader comes into contact with a text. A story is imbued with so much life that it begins to exhibit allegorical qualities, and the reader soon discovers a number of symbolic elements.

Tolkien makes a distinction between not only allegory and allegorical interpretations, but also the Faery and Human parts of *Smith*. He was concerned that the Faery would be interpreted allegorically and the literary belief would be lost or stifled. In his essay on *Sir Gawain*, he speaks of "los[ing] Faerie only to gain a formalized allegory" (*MC* 79). I think this is what he feared with *Smith*—that readers would merely hunt for secondary meaning rather than endeavor to appreciate the story as a story. It seems to me that if you are going to trust what Tolkien says about his work, you cannot feasibly interpret the Faery allegorically.

Taken as a whole, *Smith* functions as a corrective swerve because *The Golden Key* is an allegory and *Smith* is not. Furthermore, while Tolkien insisted that his story's Faery remain free of allegorical interpretations, *The Golden Key's* Fairyland exists primarily to sustain its secondary meaning.

The allegory in *The Golden Key* is plain; it is the story of Mossy and Tangle's journey to heaven. Mossy is an everyman just as John Bunyan's Christian is one; the same is true of Tangle. Even the names of the two children hint at the depravity of humanity—that we are grimy and mixed-up. The golden key may be taken to be salvation; after all, it is what allows Mossy and Tangle to enter heaven. MacDonald's fairies appear to represent angels, especially the aëranthes, who act as guardian angels for the two children—protecting, directing and guiding them along their journey (13-14, 27, 45).

Grandmother is a Christ-figure; she welcomes both children openly and without reserve (14, 31). She emanates warmth and humility, and is responsible for washing both Mossy and Tangle clean. She teaches and instructs the children on various matters. In fact, at one point, her speech strongly recalls Christ's own words in the gospel of Matthew.

> Grandmother: "You must look for the keyhole. That is your work. I cannot help you. I can only tell you that if you look for it you will find it" (31).

> Matthew 7:7: "Seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you."

Both passages not only emphasize seeking and finding but also contain door imagery.

Despite these allegorical parallels, the clearest indication that *The Golden Key* is an allegory comes in the Platonic vision the children encounter when they enter the Valley of Shadows. MacDonald transforms Plato's *Allegory of the Cave* into a profoundly Christian model. Heaven becomes the ultimate reality, while this world and its shadows are a mere glimpse of eternity. It is only after seeing the world for what it truly is that the children experience a moment of epiphany. "After sitting for a while, each, looking up, saw the other in tears: they were each longing after the country whence the shadows fell" (41). For the rest of the story, the two children seek to find this place.

Shortly after this, Mossy and Tangle are separated—which suggests that death has cut them off from one another (42). We follow Tangle for most of the remaining portion of the story as she journeys through a purgatorial realm, encountering the Old Man of the Sea, the Old Man of the Earth, and the Old Man of the Fire (45-65). Each Old Man represents a process of cleansing, purging, and refining that Tangle must undergo to attain eternal life. Mossy only has to face the Old Man of the Earth before he is directed to heaven. The story ends with Mossy and Tangle reuniting, opening a door with the golden key, ascending a staircase, and then entering into a rainbow, which is obviously heaven (73-78).

Unlike *The Golden Key*, *Smith*'s allegorical content is positioned in the Human part of the story. Though Tolkien's own allegorical interpretation of the Master Cook and the Great Hall can be found in the text, this reading is ineffective because it is too subtle—besides the author, no one else was able to detect its presence. The most obvious allegorical interpretation of *Smith* relates to the cake, fairy queen, and Nokes, which seems to me to be a commentary on MacDonald and his art.

Before I develop this allegorical interpretation, I would like to make several prefatory comments. Firstly, as Tom Shippey has pointed out in regarded to his own allegorical reading of *Smith*: "[A]t the more advanced stages of reading an allegory, it is not essential to come up with the one single correct solution. . . . A suggestive or a provocative one will do" (*Author* 298).

Secondly, it cannot be overstated just how much Tolkien came to dislike MacDonald towards the end of his life. His own statements confirm this, but even more compelling is the first-hand account we get from Kilby: "[Tolkien] said he had found MacDonald terrible and his broadside criticism of him implied that nothing he had written was worthwhile" (*Tolkien* 36-7).

Finally, it should be noted that I am not the first commentator to view

Nokes as a MacDonald-figure. Kilby suggests that Nokes "may represent MacDonald" because he could make a cake that was appealing on the outside, but had no idea of what went into making a Great one (*Tolkien* 37). Margaret Sammons also finds Nokes to be a MacDonald-figure. She observes, "Tolkien is perhaps saying that MacDonald believes Faerie is merely something sweet and funny and has little notion of what to put inside a great Tale" (4).

It is no mere accident that Nokes is the antagonist of the story, nor is it by chance that his name means fool. Also, he is the only character who uses the modern form *fairy*—the very spelling MacDonald uses in *The Golden Key*. Though this spelling is not unique to MacDonald, there are other passages in *Smith* that clearly tie Nokes to him. Nokes' description of the fairy queen as "a tricky little creature" (*Smith* 15) strongly recalls MacDonald's portrayal of the "little creatures" who "play [the maids] all manner of uncomfortable tricks" (*Golden* 10-11). In addition, after the children finish eating their cake, Nokes exclaims, "Bless me! Then [the star] can't have been made of silver after all; it must have melted. Or perhaps Mr. Prentice was right and it was really magical, and it's just vanished and gone back to Fairyland. Not a nice trick to play, I don't think" (*Smith* 18). Nokes is the only character to use the term "Fairyland," which is the term MacDonald uses throughout *The Golden Key*. Moreover, in this passage, Nokes reemphasizes the tricky nature of fairies. Even the fact that Nokes insists that fairy is funny is an idea put forth in *The Golden Key*—MacDonald's fairies accidentally make Tangle laugh (*Golden* 12). Clearly, Nokes is a somewhat satirical portrait of MacDonald.

Just as Nokes is analogous to MacDonald, his fairy queen is modeled after MacDonald's fairies—the aëranth. MacDonald's aëranth is described as "a lovely little creature in human shape, with large white wings" (*Golden* 26), and "a beautiful little creature with wings" (45). Nokes' fairy queen is depicted quite similarly as "a little doll . . . dressed all in white, with a little wand in her hand" (*Smith* 11) and "a tiny white figure on one foot like a snow-maiden dancing" (14). Both are diminutive, white, and pretty. Moreover, each contains a traditional characteristic of the little fairy—wings and a wand respectively. Nokes' fairy is plainly an exaggerated caricature of MacDonald's aëranth.

Tolkien was so opposed to the idea of fairy littleness that he satirized it by having Nokes fill his cake with an excessive number of small artifacts. It is not just the queen and her wand that are small, but little trinkets and coins are mixed into the batter, and little trees and a small mountain are placed on the outside. Nokes includes all of these because he assumes that "it amuses the children" (*Smith* 13). Tolkien is commenting on MacDonald's art; he felt MacDonald had geared his "Great Cake" to what he perceived was the reach of children's tastes, and by doing so, he

had produced a work that was overly sweet, petty, and inadequate. It is no wonder that only two of the twenty-four children at the feast are vocally excited about the cake, and after it is passed out, there is "nothing left over: no coming again" (18). Moreover, Nokes' cake does not go down in history. "Indeed it is said that [Nokes] just made his century: the *only* memorable thing he ever achieved" (*Smith* 59, emphasis added).

Although most commentators have indentified Smith as a Tolkien-figure, few have discussed Smith as a child. This portion of the story fits, if with more work, into my reading. Tolkien "grew up on" MacDonald, as Lewis puts it (*Collected Letters* 2: 96). In other words, MacDonald was one of Tolkien's first encounters with Fairy. My allegorical interpretation suddenly takes on autobiographical implications. Although Nokes' cake had mostly failed, it did contain a "glimpse" of Faery (i.e. the star) as the Queen alludes to later. It was this inspiration that eventually led Tolkien to true Faery. When Tolkien writes in his abandoned Introduction to *The Golden Key*, "Some one may meet them [the marvels of Fairy] for the first time in his silly tale, and catch a glimpse of Fairy and go on to better things" (*Smith* 74), he is likely recounting his own history with MacDonald.

Tessera: Redeeming the Word through Antithetical Completion

Tolkien's *clinamen* affected the larger elements of *Smith*—the story's tone and themes, and the positioning and use of allegory, but Tolkien's *tessera* shaped the smaller elements of the story—the words. Bloom describes this revisionary ratio thus: "A poet antithetically 'completes' his precursor, by so reading the parent-poem as to retain its terms but to mean them in another sense, as though the precursor had failed to go far enough" (14). This ratio, even more so than *clinamen*, works well with Tolkien because of the nature of his profession. As a philologist and wordsmith, he was naturally concerned with words and their meanings. If there is one word that Tolkien was trying to redeem from MacDonald, it was certainly the word fairy.[14]

In *Smith*, the first indication that Tolkien was attempting a *tessera* is seen in the fact that he includes a different spelling of the word. Flieger observes,

> He felt that the word *fairy* as conventionally used in modern English had been debased, and divorced from its original complex and powerful meaning. He chose the older spellings [Faërie, Fayery, and Faery] to dissociate the word from its modern connotations of prettiness, delicacy, and diminutive stature, and return it to the older, considerably darker meanings it once had had. (*Smith* 143)

In *Smith*, Tolkien settled on *Faery*; all of the characters use this form except Nokes (*Smith* 143). This was by no means the first time that Tolkien employed this spelling. As early as 1915, he used it in his poem "The Shores of Faëry" (*Lost Tales II* 271-2). Nevertheless, this does not negate or lessen his *tessera*. He included this spelling in *Smith* primarily to juxtapose it to MacDonald's *fairy*.

Although Tolkien retained MacDonald's word, his understanding of the term was antithetically different. This is seen most clearly in both authors' depictions of fairies. In *The Golden Key*, MacDonald's fairies do not play a major role. Nonetheless, they are described and do serve a purpose in inadvertently prompting Tangle towards Fairyland. In addition, they also serve as guides once the children are there. MacDonald introduces them in this fashion: "Now it is well known that *the little creatures commonly called fairies*, though there are many different kinds of fairies in Fairyland, have an exceeding dislike to untidiness. Indeed, they are quite spiteful to slovenly people" (10-11, emphasis added). In contrast, Tolkien describes the Faery Queen: "She wore no crown and had no throne. She stood there in her majesty and her glory, and all about her was a great host shimmering and glittering like the stars above; but *she was taller than the points of their great spears*, and upon her head there burned a white flame" (*Smith* 36-7, emphasis added). The most apparent difference between the two is physical size; however, I think Tolkien's understanding of Faeries is distinct in other ways as well. The Faery Queen's splendor causes humanity (Smith) to tremble in her presence—one might say she is just short of divinity. MacDonald's fairies pale in comparison—they are mischievous at best. Leaving the maids with bruises, they are just short of hilarity. In fact, his fairies are so incompetent that the first time they try to make Tangle run away from home they actually cause her to laugh (12).

In addition, it is also worth noting how both authors approach their fairies. Typical of MacDonald, he utilizes them as an instrument for instruction. Clearly appealing to his Victorian sensibilities, he stresses the need for cleanliness and tidiness. In a way, his juvenile audience is being frightened into keeping their rooms and/or appearances clean because the assumption is if they do not, bad fairies will come and harass them. In keeping with the tone of the rest of the story, this passage reemphasizes MacDonald's didactic proclivity, which often carries to the point of condescension. In this way, his fairies are not just inferior to Tolkien's; they are insignificant in and of themselves; they exist as mere children's props and contain none of the terror or beauty that Tolkien believed was a necessary part of their tradition.

Tolkien, on the other hand, uses the Faery Queen to exemplify and re-establish the concept of terrifying beauty—something he believed had been lost in modern times. In "On Fairy-stories," he writes, "The fear of

the beautiful fay that ran through the elder ages almost eludes our grasp" (*MC* 151). Furthermore, the seriousness of the situation is apparent; unlike MacDonald, Tolkien values his Faeries and suggests that they should be feared, not laughed at. In fact, the same awe-inspiring trepidation that the Faery Queen instills in Smith can also be seen in the elven mariners, when Smith first encounters them (*Smith* 26-27), and Alf, when he reveals himself as the King of Faery (58). Moreover, both the elven mariners and Alf are described as tall (26, 39, 58). Tolkien was determined to antithetically complete MacDonald's word by making his Faeries tall and terrifying.

The final difference between the two fairies is that Tolkien's Faeries radically affect the primary world—they improve it. MacDonald's fairies may be concerned with keeping the primary world tidy, but they are not very good at it, and ultimately, their contribution is of no real significance. In contrast, Alf transforms the town of Wootton Major. Towards the end of the story, we learn that "the Hall had been re-glazed and re-painted" (*Smith* 46). This renovation—the decoration of the Great Hall—is surely something Alf is responsible for. Just as Smith's life was enriched by the fay-star, the town of Wootton Major is forever changed by Alf's presence. Though his Faerian adornment appears to some as new, it is actually a return to a forgotten but important tradition—which allows more than just the smith to come into contact with Faery.

In juxtaposition to Nokes's cake at the beginning of the tale, which leaves only a couple of children outwardly excited, the story closes with Alf's Great Cake. It is important and appropriate that this cake enthuses all the children. "The children all laughed and clapped" (*Smith* 61). Tolkien is again commenting on the superiority of his own art and the inferiority of MacDonald's, but the real point is that the children have now caught a glimpse of *Faery*. After Alf departs, the narrator notes that the town "kept the Hall gilded and painted in memory of Alf" (62). Alf has left a lasting impression on the children and adults alike—this is something Nokes could never do.

In the end, Tolkien's *tessera* was not so much a turning away as a returning to; like Alf's renovation of the Hall, Tolkien was looking to the past to restore the present. He expressed this most poignantly in an interview he gave to William Cater on the 2 August 1966. "By writing about elves as tall as men I am restoring tradition, trying to rescue the word from the nursery" (10).[15] For him, the world of Faery and the word *Faery* were so intricately and inextricably connected that in order to do justice to the former, one first had to have a proper understanding of the latter. For Tolkien, MacDonald had failed in his depiction of fairies because he did not have an accurate conception of them—he was misusing them for children and misrepresenting them as small—in size as well as significance.

The Anxiety of MacDonald

Tolkien's relationship with MacDonald is complex because although he read him as a child and praised his stories as an adult, he grew to despise him later in life. Even so, he recognized that MacDonald did affect his imagination. In a rejected beginning to "On Fairy-stories," he asserts, "For me at any rate fairy-stories are especially associated with Scotland . . . by reason of the names of Andrew Lang and George MacDonald. To them in different ways I owe the books which most affected the background of my imagination since childhood" (quoted in Scull and Hammond, *Reader's Guide* 567, ellipsis in original).[16]

Undoubtedly, MacDonald exerted some influence on him as a writer. In a 1954 letter to Naomi Mitchison, he explained, "[Orcs] are not based on direct experience of mine; but owe, I suppose, a good deal to the goblin tradition . . . especially as it appears in George MacDonald" (*Letters* 178).[17] In 1958, he acknowledged in a letter to Mrs. L.M. Cutts that his Ents contained "perhaps some remote influence from George MacDonald's [sic] *Phantastes* (a work I do not actually much like)" (*Tolkien On Fairy-stories* 207). Although he recognized that he owed some minor influence to MacDonald, there is a hesitancy about his admission, as if he was not quite willing to acknowledge his debt. Carpenter tells another story that confirms much the same,

> I did once suggest to [Tolkien], one of the few conversations I remember having with him myself, that *The Princess and the Goblin* [by MacDonald] has certain resemblances to *The Hobbit*. Beneath the mountain in both books there are goblins mining, and he was, I think, momentarily disconcerted by this suggestion and did admit that there might have been some very slight influence there, a memory from childhood, but no conscious influences. (Carpenter, Sayer and Kilby 17)

What this reveals is that although Tolkien was willing to admit to trivial influences, deep down inside he was anxious about MacDonald. Bloom writes,

> The poet *in every reader* does not experience the same disjunction from what he reads that the critic in every reader necessarily feels. What gives pleasure to the critic in a reader may give anxiety to the poet in him, an anxiety we have learned, as readers, to neglect, to our own loss and peril. This anxiety, this mode of melancholy, is the anxiety of influence. (25)

That Tolkien was plagued by this type of anxiety is quite evident. George

Sayer recalls, "On the whole, Tolkien was, even then, not inclined to admit to the influence on him of any other writers at all" (Carpenter, Sayer and Kilby 15). Carpenter more specifically observes, "Tolkien, like Lewis, knew MacDonald's children's stories during his own childhood. He later repudiated any influence of MacDonald's along with repudiating the influence of practically everybody else" (Carpenter, Sayer and Kilby 17). Kilby asserts, "It looked to me as if he had used MacDonald and very much didn't want to confess it—it was a strange thing. It wouldn't have made any difference if he did" (Carpenter, Sayer and Kilby 17).

Yet it would have made *all* the difference according to Bloom. He suggests, "Poets as poets cannot accept substitutions, and fight to the end to have their initial chance alone" (8).[18] Tolkien's insistent denial of influence was a defense mechanism, a way of maintaining his own poetic vision; his very existence as a writer depended on it. In fact, for him to admit to the influence of MacDonald essentially meant he was a lesser writer. "Where generosity is involved," proposes Bloom, "the poets influenced are minor or weaker; the more generosity, and the more mutual it is, the poorer the poets involved" (30). This is a relatively modern view of literature, which has not always been prevalent. Kilby provides a good account of our contemporary understanding: "Today we feature the 'star' and tend to become more enamored of a name than of an accomplishment. We also worship utter originality to the point of eccentricity and regard literary indebtedness as shameful. These things were not always so" ("Tolkien as Scholar" 9). In fact, the meaning of "original" as new or without imitation did not emerge until midway through the neoclassical period. The *OED* records that Joseph Warton was the first to use this word in this sense. In his 1757 work *Essay on the Genius and Writings of Pope*, he writes of the "new and original images" of Thomson (42), praises Dante's "sublime and original poem" (190), and acknowledges that while Pope was "a most excellent improver," he was "no great original inventor" (298).

For the medieval writer, the word carried an entirely different meaning—it was much more connected with its root word "origin." When Gower alludes to "the lawe original" (*Confessio Amantis*), he is talking about the first and most perfect law. In *The Legend of Good Women*, when Chaucer writes, "Ye gete no more of me, but ye wil rede / Thoriginal [the original], that telleth al the cas," he is referring back to an earlier work, most likely Ovid's *Heroides* (Skeat 171). "Original" had nothing to do with novelty, and in terms of literature, it actually consisted of *using* a precursor's material. In her book *Absent Narratives, Manuscript Textuality, and Literary Structure in Late Medieval England*, Elizabeth Scala observes, "A medieval definition of 'originality,' then, would call attention to the origins from which a story comes. Originality in the Middle Ages points

toward tradition rather than innovation, even as its literary productions begin approaching such novelty" (3).[19]

Although Tolkien was a medievalist, he did not subscribe to the medieval understanding of "original." Like most of his contemporaries, he fought to preserve his own creative enterprise—a vision that was uniquely and wholly his own. According to Bloom, in a poet's attempt to pursue his own artistic ends, he inevitably becomes engrossed in his own creation. Bloom posits, "Poets, by the time they have grown strong, do not read the poetry of X, for really strong poets can read only themselves. For them, to be judicious is to be weak, and to compare, exactly and fairly, is to be not elect" (19). Such a self-focused approach is indicative of the strong poet. In his pursuit after greatness, he becomes solely devoted to and completely consumed by his own work.

Tolkien faced such a poetic dilemma. In writing to C. S. Lewis in January 1948, he admitted, "I have something that I deeply desire to *make*, and which it is the (largely frustrated) bent of my nature to make. Without any vanity or exaggerated notion of the universal importance of this, it remains a fact that other things are to *me* less important" (*Letters* 126-7). Tolkien is, of course, referring to *The Lord of the Rings*, or more generally, his mythology as whole. He began *The Lord of the Rings* in December 1937, The Silmarillion about two decades earlier; at this point in his life, both remained unpublished and unfinished. Surely, Tolkien had grown preoccupied with his own poetic aim. Other things were to him far less important than his own making. About two decades later, he would reaffirm himself as a strong poet in an interview.

> I think I was born with what you might call an inventive mind, and the books that have remained in my mind remain as those things which I acquired and don't really seem much like the book itself. For instance, I now find that I can't stand George McDonald's books at any price at all. I find that now I can't take him. *The same with most books that I've read*. (quoted in Resnik 40, emphasis added)

Tolkien reiterated this in yet another interview: "In any case, I don't read much now, not even fairy-stories. And then I'm always looking for something I can't find. Something like what I wrote myself" (quoted in Plimmer 35). In his mind, all other books paled in comparison to his own. He did "not read the poetry of X" because he could "read only" himself (Bloom 19).

Much of Tolkien's denial of influence stems from his anxiety over it. Like many writers before him, he believed that originality was a natural byproduct of literary greatness. He offers up this very notion in *Smith*: "It was expected that the Great Cake should have something novel and

surprising about it and not be a mere repetition of the one before" (11). This is as much a comment about his own art as it is MacDonald's. Tolkien had indubitably been influenced by MacDonald, but he could not accept this. He had poured himself into his fiction—it was rightfully his, and he did not want to have his own poetic vision confused with that of MacDonald's. Bloom rhetorically asks, "For what strong maker desires the realization that he has failed to create himself?" (5). Tolkien definitely felt this tension. His hostility toward MacDonald was as much a result of anxiety as disgust; he feared that others would associate him with a writer he now considered inferior.

In fact, some of the very criticisms Tolkien made about MacDonald can be found in Tolkien's own early work. *The Hobbit*, for example, contains the same kind of patronizing tone that Tolkien accused MacDonald of using. He told Philip Norman on 9 August 1966,

> 'The Hobbit' was written in what I should now regard as bad style, as if one were talking to children. There's nothing my children loathed more. They taught me a lesson. Anything that in any way marked out 'The Hobbit' as for children instead of just for people, they disliked—instinctively. I did too, now that I think about it. All this 'I won't tell you any more, you think about it' stuff. Oh no, they loathe it; it's awful. (100)

In addition, "Goblin Feet," one of Tolkien's earliest published poems, is swarming with little fairy-creatures.[20] In 1971, he denounced the piece altogether when he insisted, "I wish the unhappy little thing, representing all that I came (so soon after) to fervently dislike, could be buried for ever" (quoted in *Lost Tales I* 32). Clearly, Tolkien had derived his initial ideas about fairies and fairy tales from MacDonald and his contemporaries. As he told W. H. Auden in a 1955 letter: "[*The Hobbit*] has some of the sillinesses of manner caught unthinkingly from the kind of stuff I had had served to me" (*Letters* 215). Another reason Tolkien was so disparaging towards MacDonald was because he had exhibited an influence on Tolkien that had tarnished his own early writing.

It was through *The Lord of the Rings* that Tolkien first broke away from his "Poetic Father" (Bloom 42), but Tolkien's corrective movement and turning were not fully actualized until *Smith*. As a reactionary piece, *Smith* allowed Tolkien "to clear imaginative space" for himself (Bloom 5); it provided him with a chance at "something novel" (*Smith* 11). MacDonald had failed to live up to Tolkien's staunch standards and pedantic expectations. There is an obvious air of superiority in Tolkien's swerve and completion—it is that MacDonald was wrong and would have done better had he been more like Tolkien. Bloom suggests, "The stronger the man,

the larger his resentments, and the more brazen his *clinamen*" (43). Evidently, Tolkien must have contained a considerable amount of strength.

Epilogue: A Brief Defense of MacDonald

It must be remembered that Tolkien was "a man of limited sympathies" and that his "taste [was] not normal" (*Letters* 349, 34). We should be slow to adopt his dislikes, especially those he acquired late in life when his opinions on various matters changed substantially. Despite Tolkien's many severe criticisms of *The Golden Key*, it remains an extremely moving story. Like Lewis's Narnian Chronicles, *The Golden Key's* greatest strength lies in its ability to speak to children while at the same time, comment on deeper spiritual truths. All the same, the story's Fairy is fantastical enough that it can be read and reread without ever taking any notice of its allegorical content. It captures the imagination and raptures the reader into an Otherworld full of beauty and mystery.

The most profound scene occurs when Mossy and Tangle enter the Valley of Shadows. This passage is attractive in a number of ways. First, the description of the barren landscape teeming with shadows is captivating; as a reader, you are drawn in, yet you hesitantly fear the strangeness. Such vivid description recalls some of Smith's own poignant adventures. MacDonald is at his best when he simply describes rather than explains. Second, the children's sorrowful realization that they are longing for a far off country speaks powerfully to the human condition because we all have at one time or another longed for something beyond ourselves or situation. Third, MacDonald places himself in a larger intellectual context by combining Plato's metaphysics with Christian theology. In short, the allegory satisfies the literary critics; the Platonism satisfies the philosophers; and the Christian theology satisfies the theologians.

NOTES

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1   Sammons notes, "As Tolkien explained in an unpublished letter to Professor Clyde Kilby, the story evolved quite by accident" (4).

2   The thesis is entitled *The Fairy Tales and Fantasies of George MacDonald* by Mary M. McEldowney (Scull and Hammond, *Chronology* 174).

3 See also Scull and Hammond (*Chronology* 625).

4 Glyer defines negative influence as "a situation where one work is created in deliberate opposition to another" (37).

5 C. S. Lewis was known to his close friends and family as "Jack."

6 It is true that in Tolkien's original assessment of *The Golden Key* he did not perceive that it was a children's story. In a note to "On Fairy-stories," he writes that it "is not for children though children do read it with pleasure" (*Tolkien On Fairy-stories* 250).

7 See also Scull and Hammond (*Reader's Guide* 570).

8 Although in this quote Tolkien mentions *Phantastes* rather than *The Golden Key*, he plainly understood the latter to be an allegory as well. In his notes to "On Fairy-stories," he specifies that it was "*constructed* with consc[ious] alleg[ory]" (quoted in Scull and Hammond *Reader's Guide* 570).

9 Tolkien once wrote, "*The Lord of the Rings* was a deliberate attempt to write a large-scale adult fairy-story" (quoted in Manlove 158). This quotation is taken from a letter dated 8 February 1967 to C. N. Manlove.

10 Many of the ideas presented in this section owe a great deal to Flieger's discussion of *Smith* in her article "The Footsteps of Ælfwine" (196).

11 See also Carpenter (244).

12 Though it can be inferred from the narrative that Rider returns to Faery after he leaves Wootton Major, Tolkien makes it plain in his essay that Rider "went back to Walton, where by the 'entrance' long familiar to him, he could enter Faery, but live and end his days among his wife's kin" (*Smith* 99).

13 See also *Smith* (70, 99-100) and Scull and Hammond (*Reader's Guide* 945).

14 Bloom asserts, "The *tessera* represents any later poet's attempt to persuade himself (and us) that the precursor's Word would be worn out if not redeemed as a newly fulfilled and enlarged Word of the ephebe" (67).

15 John D. Rateliff notes, "The usage in *The Book of Lost Tales* establishes 'fairy' as a synonym for 'elf'" (59). I have found this to be the case in "On Fairy-stories" as well, where Tolkien writes, "*Fairy*, as a noun

more or less equivalent to *elf*, is a relatively modern word" (*MC* 112). Moreover, the fact that he gives the Faery King the name Alf (Elf) reaffirms this interpretation.

16   See also Scull and Hammond (*Reader's Guide* 277).

17   See also *Letters* (185). For a more detailed discussion of MacDonald's influence on Tolkien's Orcs, see Rateliff (140-141) and Green (69-71).

18   Later, Bloom adds, "A poet's stance, his Word, his imaginative identity, his whole being, *must* be unique to him, and remain unique, or he will perish, as a poet" (71).

19   C. S. Lewis observes, "One is tempted to say that almost the typical activity of the medieval author consists in touching up something that was already there; as Chaucer touched up Boccaccio, as Malory touched up French prose romances which themselves touched up earlier romances in verse, as Laȝamon works over Wace, who works over Geoffrey, who works over no one knows what. We are inclined to wonder how men could be at once so original that they handled no predecessor without pouring new life into him, and so unoriginal that they seldom did anything completely new" (*Discarded* 209). A couple pages later, he concludes, "The originality which we regard as a sign of wealth might have seemed to them a confession of poverty" (211).

20   Scull and Hammond write, "Some of [Tolkien's] earliest writings, such as the poems *Goblin Feet* and *The Princess Ní*, portray similar diminutive beings, and it was his intention in *The Book of Lost Tales* that in the future the Elves would actually fade and diminish and become transparent, and so become the 'fairies' as commonly conceived" (*Reader's Guide* 280). Rateliff references "Goblin Feet," "The Princess Ni," and "Tinfang Warble" as early examples of poetry in which Tolkien depicts little fairies. He claims, "Tolkien later came to disavow the idea of elves as cute little fairies and moved his own elves firmly in the direction of medieval elf-lore; the Rivendell episodes in *The Hobbit* mark virtually its last appearance in the 'main line' of his legendarium" (120).

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The Music and the Task: Fate and Free Will in Middle-earth

VERLYN FLIEGER

> It is nothing less than an attempt to justify God's creation of
> an imperfect world filled with suffering, loss, and grief.
>
> —John Garth, *Tolkien and the Great War*

During December and January of 1916-17, the very middle and depths of World War I, the young J.R.R. Tolkien, newly returned to England from the carnage of the Somme, began to write his great legendarium, the Silmarillion. This was intended to supply what Tolkien felt was missing from his country's literary pre-history, an indigenous English (not British) mythology on the order of the Finnish *Kalevala* and the Icelandic *Edda*s. He envisioned this ambitious project as "a more or less connected body of legend" ranging from the "large and cosmogonic" to the level of "romantic fairy-story" (*Letters* 144). In the process of creating his mythology, however, Tolkien did more than color in a blank space; he invented a cosmology whose operation depends on a paradox, a challenging teleological contradiction.

The contradiction resides in the simultaneous presence in his invented world of two opposing principles, fate and free will, imagined as operating side by side, sometimes in conflict, sometimes interdependent. The teleology provides that this paradox, established at the beginning in his myth's Creation narrative, will accomplish its end in both senses of that word—both as purpose and as completion—as described in the epigraph at the head of this article. The challenge arises when fate and free will intersect, for this collision of mutually contradictive forces engenders a cognitive disjunction that works against readers' acceptance of its operation in the Secondary World.

The trouble lies not with free will, but with fate. Readers who assume (and most do) that characters in Tolkien's invented world are free to choose, find the opposing notion that they are predestined hard to accept. And the idea that both principles are concurrently at work (and apparently at odds) is a concept even harder to encompass. It is, nevertheless, a concept integral to a mythology whose overarching scheme is that fate, conceived as a kind of divinely inspired and celestially orchestrated music, governs the created world—with one exception. Of all Middle-earth's sentient species, the race of Men (including Hobbits) is the only

group given the "virtue" to "shape their lives" beyond the scope of this music In contradistinction, the otherwise generally similar race of Elves, (both races being the Children of [the godhead] Ilúvatar) is, together with the rest of Creation, ruled by fate.

A Green Sun

In its apparent impossibility of reconciliation, this fate/free will dichotomy is what in his essay "On Fairy-stories" Tolkien termed a "green sun." That is to say, it is an element, a feature, or aspect intentionally contrary to the Primary world but essential and formative in the Secondary one. The concept goes to the heart of what he called "sub-creation," the making of a believable imaginary world. "Anyone," he wrote, "can say *the green sun*. Many can then imagine or picture it." But neither the phrase nor the striking image it evokes is by itself enough to make his point, and Tolkien went on to explain what more would be necessary. "To make a Secondary World in which the green sun will be credible," he wrote, "commanding Secondary Belief, will probably require labour and thought, and will certainly demand a special skill, a kind of elvish craft" (*MC* 140).

Labour and thought he most certainly gave it, as well as applying his own elvish craft, which was considerable. Yet for many even of his most devoted admirers, this departure of Tolkien's Secondary World from the laws or principles of the Primary World is not just a green sun, it is one green sun too many, putting a breaking strain on Secondary Belief already stretched by accepting Elves, Hobbits, talking eagles and walking trees. Perhaps for that reason it has been largely ignored in the search for the keys to his cosmology. The assumption that either of the principles in question by definition obviates the other has tended to conceal this particular green sun, so that most readers seem disposed to look past it rather than at it. Like Poe's purloined letter, it is hidden in plain sight, openly displayed but easily overlooked.

Readerly inattention notwithstanding, this green sun is not only a necessary and formative feature of Tolkien's Secondary World, it is the very mechanism by which it operates. In the Primary World the relative governance of fate or free will has been for millennia a topic for debate among philosophers and theologians, who argue the extent to which either factor may be in force. Tolkien had the daring and freedom of imagination to envision a world wherein both are co-existent, simultaneously in operation and co-operation.[1] So far as I am aware, this vision is unique in modern fantasy.[2]

Its uniqueness, however, is just what fosters its invisibility and permits scholars rather to view his cosmology through the lens of this or that more familiar and thus more readily perceived real-world philosophical

system.[3] The impulse to associate the unconventional with the familiar is not unlike that of early genre-critics who wanted *The Lord of the Rings* to be a fairy tale or an epic or a romance, all the while conceding that it was a novel, though it certainly didn't read like one. Of course it is *sui generis*, and of course it contains elements from many genres, just as it also invites comparison with real-world philosophical systems. Comparison and similarity, however, are not necessarily the same thing. Most of these real-world systems specify fate *or* free will, and even when, like Boethius, they include some version of both, they do not, as does Tolkien, assign each to a different group existing in the same world at the same time.

A good question to start with, then, is *why*? Why would Tolkien deliberately contrive a system so at odds with itself, so cross-grained and contrary that nobody wants to see it, much less accept it? I suggest that he had three reasons, one strategic, the second personal, the last sub-creative. The strategic reason was to forestall or at least defuse the inevitable comparisons with real-world systems. The personal reason related to a major and then quite recent external event in Tolkien's life, the loss in 1916 of two of his closest friends, killed in World War I. The sub-creative reason was to give to an ordered universe a plausible mechanism for change. I will tackle the strategic reason first, then the personal one, and save the sub-creative reason for more extended discussion

Elements in Solution

As to the strategy, I suggest that it was designed to assure that his mythology be taken on its own terms for the imaginative creation that it was, without being boxed in by any mythological, philosophical or literary look-alike. In a literary culture where comparison is a standard practice and source-hunting a favorite pastime, such independence is hard to maintain, but Tolkien did his best. While scholars such as Tom Shippey and Marjorie Burns have offered good and clear evidence in Tolkien's work of influences from Old and Middle English and Old Icelandic, and Tolkien himself acknowledged the influence of the Finnish *Kalevala* on both his Quenya language and his epic story of Túrin Turambar, in all these cases he re-configured the borrowed material to fit his new context. Where mythology intersected religion he did no less. He specifically objected to "the Arthurian world," as a candidate for England's myth since it was "involved in and explicitly contain[ed] the Christian religion," which seemed to him "fatal" (*Letters* 144*).* "Myth and fairy-story," he wrote to the publisher Milton Waldman, "must, as all art, reflect and contain in solution elements of moral and religious truth (or error), but not explicit, not in the known form of the primary 'real' world" (*Letters* 144). The operative word in this statement is *art*. Tolkien was writing fiction, not

theology. His dismissal of the Arthurian world, a probable allusion to Sir Thomas Malory's allegorical Grail section of *Le Morte D'Arthur* (even in its toned down translation-adaptation of the French *Queste del Sainte Graal*) was a repudiation of its preachy didacticism.

The problem in a work of mythopoeic fiction is how to include " elements of moral and religious truth (or error)" without inviting association with this or that familiar system of belief, an inevitable pitfall of which Tolkien was well aware. Here is an example. His statement to Milton Waldman that, "there cannot be any 'story' without a fall—all stories are ultimately about the fall" (*Letters* 147) not only implies a shared language of belief, but goes beyond such sharing to accept the premise that a story, by virtue of having a plot, involves some kind of situational imperfection, a conflict whose resolution provides the story. Yet he was also aware that in Western Judaeo-Christian tradition, *a* fall inevitably implies *the* Fall— the Eden story, the disobedience in the Garden, God's punishment, and man's expulsion from Paradise into a world of pain and suffering. For a story hoping to claim any originality, this is too much baggage to carry without collapsing under the weight, or inevitably turning into another and more familiar story. Writing as a Christian but trying not to write about Christianity, Tolkien avoided the pitfall by shifting his fall from creat*ed* humanity to the creat*ing* beings. He described it to Waldman as "a fall of Angels," hastening to add "though quite different in form, of course, to that of Christian myth" (*Letters* 147).

Different in form it certainly is, and we may suppose deliberately so. First of all, it is creation by committee, not by a single Creator. As Tolkien's creation story the "Ainulindalë" recounts, the "One," his fictive godhead, first called Eru and then (by the Elves whose myth this is) Ilúvatar, proposes a musical theme to "the offspring of his thought" the Ainur. These "offspring," separate aspects of "the One," make of his theme a "great music" which will be the blueprint for creation, but which is interrupted when one of their number, the rebellious Melkor, counters with his own theme. The performance is halted by Ilúvatar and started again with a new theme. This, too, is interrupted with a counter-theme by Melkor and halted by Ilúvatar. On the third attempt, Melkor's theme is taken up by Ilúvatar and woven in to his own theme so that there are "two musics progressing at one time." One is "deep and wide and beautiful, but slow and blended with an immeasurable sorrow," while the other is "loud, and vain, and endlessly repeated" (*S* 17). Tolkien has neatly captured the beauty and poignancy, as well as the pain and suffering of the world we live in. His fall is made to occur in the very act of creation so that the world thus set in motion is not, as in the familiar Judaeo-Christian story of Genesis "good" until marred by human error but faulty and imperfect from the beginning. The obvious parallel has been avoided but

the essential truth has been retained.

Both the truth and the human experience from which it derives—that the world is flawed, full of surprises, and seldom works the way we want it to—are dependent on and generative of the words used to express them. The names for things, as Tolkien well knew, operate to create the very world they describe. In the present context, such catchwords as *luck*, *accident*, *chance*, *happenstance*, *coincidence*, *fate*, *destiny*, all seek to name and thus to capture an aspect of human experience, the ways in which we categorize the ways things happen. They help us to relate to, if not always to understand, the incomprehensible, uncontrollable forces at work in our experiences with one another and with the world around us. Words are important, and an author's selection and use of words says much about the worldview he represents. It is therefore worthy of note that such conceptually significant proper nouns as *God*, *Heaven*, *Grace*, *Paradise*, *Providence*, *Salvation*, *Damnation,* do not figure in Tolkien's major fiction. Equally worthy of note are the words which do figure, and which in fact play an important role in the structuring of his world. These include, as already noted, the noun *fate* as either a general concept (uncapitalized) or a proper noun/personification (capitalized), the opposing phrase *free will*, as well as related nouns such as *doom* and *choice*, and verbs such as *choose*, *will*, *shall*, and *must*. These had for Tolkien more specific and special meanings than those used (rather loosely) in the 21st century. Therefore, honoring Tolkien's position as a lover of words and the history of words, we need to look at where the words come from and what they once signified before we can understand fully what he meant them to mean.

Happened, Spoken, Settled

Among the literatures which he studied and taught, the Old English epic *Beowulf* was surely Tolkien's chief, though certainly not his only lexical model, important both for its heroic and tragic ethos and for the vocabulary through which that ethos is expressed. A familiar Old English word, *wyrd* usually translated "fate," appears in that poem nine times (Branston 65).[4] It is there spelled in lower case, but can also be spelled with a capital W and personified, as it is in other Old English poems such as *The Dream of the Rood*. The word also appears (capitalized) as *Werdys* in the Middle English of Chaucer's *Legend of Good Women* (Branston 67), and culminates in the Shakespearean English of *Macbeth*'s Weird Sisters. In the second half of line 455, Beowulf declares *Gǣð ā wyrd swā hīo scel*, "Fate will go as it must" (l. 455), but later says, *Wyrd oft nereð / unfǣgne eorl, þonne his ellen dēah*, "fate often saves/ an undoomed man [i.e. one not appointed to die] when his courage holds" (ll. 572-73). Compare the more current aphorism, "God helps those who help themselves." If the *Beowulf* poet could give fate some wiggle-room, Tolkien could (and did) do no

less. Just how such wiggle-room might work both in *Beowulf* and Tolkien's own mythology, requires a brief dip into etymology.

Bosworth-Toller's Anglo-Saxon Dictionary glosses *wyrd*, related to the Old English verb *weorðan*, "to happen or become." as "What happens, fate, fortune, chance." Linguistically related is Old Icelandic *Urð*, described in Snorri's *Edda* as one of the three Norns or Fates, the others named as *Verðandi* and *Skuld*. *Urð* and *Verðandi* are respectively the past and present participles of the Old Icelandic verb *verða*. Cleasby-Vigfusson's Icelandic-English Dictionary gives the primary meaning of *verða* as "To become, happen, come to pass," with more specific meaning in sense IV as denoting necessity: "*one must, needs, is forced, obliged to do*." It further defines *Verðandi* (capitalized) as "*the 'Being', the Weird*, the name of one of the Norns." Both Snorri's *Edda* and the earlier *Poetic Edda* personify *Urð* as the guardian of *Urð's Well* (Snorri 17; *Poetic Edda 9*, "Völuspá" verses 19, 20); which lies beneath the root of the World Tree Yggdrasil. Such personification makes it philologically reasonable to see *Urð* and *Wyrd* as similarly-perceived forces, while *Skuld*, the present tense-preterite form of Old Icelandic *skulu*, implies "that which will have happened." Related to modern English "shall" or "should," it is closer in meaning to "must," Anglo-Saxon *motan*, with the force of necessity, and to sense IV (see above) of Old Icelandic *verða*.

Fate, the word most frequently used to translate both *Wyrd* and *Urð*, is defined by The American Heritage Dictionary as, "the supposed force, principle, or power that predetermines events." It comes from Latin *Fata* derived from *fātum*, the neuter past participle of *fārī*, to speak." Fate, then, is what is *spoken*, that which has been declared to be. And finally, *doom*, which in modern English has negative connotations, is derived from Anglo-Saxon *dóm*, and means simply "judgment, judicial sentence, decree." In both "sentence" and "decree," then, it is not unlike *fate* as "that spoken." Dictionary definitions can only go so far, however, and it should be emphasized that they are not absolutes but meanings embedded in the history of the usage of certain words, meanings themselves subject to subtleties of usage and context. It must be emphasized as well that the words themselves are not things but only the words for things, the sometimes ill-fitted handles by which we try to grasp the import of what we cannot control and do not fully understand.

No one was more aware of this than Tolkien, who declared repeatedly that his legendarium was generated to provide a home for his languages. Thus he built linguistic concepts similar to these real-world examples into the vocabulary of his invented languages Quenya and Sindarin. An entry in the very early "Gnomish Lexicon" lists *gwalt*, †*gwalod* as "good luck—any providential occurrence or thought" (*Parma* 11, p. 44). In the "Quenya Lexicon," the later Quenya *Amarto*, *Ambar(rt)* is capitalized

(therefore probably personified) as "Fate" (*Parma* 12, 34). ENGET(OR) is translated "fate, hap" (35) with *engetor* listed under the stem NETE as "fate, luck" (66). ENGETOR also occurs in the Valar name-list (*Parma* 14, p. 13-14, note 12). Gnomish *Bridwen* is listed as "fate personified" (*Parma* 11, 24), with lower case *pridwen* with the phrase *i-bridwen a-vridwen* glossed as "poetic justice, judgment of fate" (64). The Primitive Eldarin stem √MBAR (see *Amarto* above), "to make a decision" (i.e. to choose) occurs in primitive Quenya *umbar*, "fate," as in *Túrambar* "Master of Fate," with the verbal base √TUR, "dominate, master, conquer" as a prefix. Quenya *ambar*, "world," is also derived from √MBAR, with the meaning "settlement or abode," as in a "decision" about dwelling or occupying land. Primitive Eldarin *ambar*(a), Quenya *ambar*, Sindarin *amar*, therefore carried the sense of "settlement, appointed place," as in the Earth/Arda as the appointed dwelling or home of the children of Ilúvatar (*Parma* 17, 104-105). The other derivative of √MBAR, *umbar* meant an ordinance or decree and thus the circumstances proceeding from such a decree, and is not unlike the notion of *fate* as what is spoken. Used of the dispositions and will of Eru,

> *Umbar* could thus correspond to *History*, the known or at least the already unfolded part, together with the *Future*, progressively realized. To the latter it most often referred, and is rendered *Fate* or *Doom*. But this is inaccurate, so far as genuine Elvish, especially high-elvish, is concerned, since it was not in that use applied only to evil events (Tolkien quoted in *Parma* 17,105).

It is not difficult to see in *Umbar,* "fate," the notion of already-unfolded *History* and "the *Future*, progressively realized" a concept akin to Anglo-Saxon *Wyrd* and Norse *Urð* as "what happens" or "has "happened" or "will have happened." Though they are different words, the phonological connection between *umbar*, "decree or decision," and *ambar*, "appointed place" recalls Latin *Fata* in their concept of Arda as the appointed (i.e. fated) home or dwelling for Elves. They are confined to the circles of the world while it lasts, whereas Men, who "seek beyond the world and find no rest therein," are correspondingly unconfined.

   Some of Tolkien's unpublished notes on Elvish languages, many written after the publication of *The Lord of the Rings*, enlarge on such concepts, and, although they remain in his possession, have been made available by Christopher Tolkien. These are worth particular attention for their specifically Elvish perspective on the actions and lives of Men (a category which includes Hobbits). Only a portion is quoted here, for the whole is lengthy and detailed, concluding with a move beyond the scope of the present essentially linguistic discussion into what might better be

called theology, consideration of what may be unforeseen or unintended by characters in the drama, but is still present in the foreknowledge of Eru.

> [O]ne of the Eldar would have said that for all Elves and Men the shape, condition, and therefore the past and future physical development and destiny of this 'earth' was determined and beyond their power to change, indeed beyond the power even of the Valar, to alter in any large and permanent way. ([*Marginal note*:] They distinguished between "change" and redirection. Thus any 'rational [?will-user] could in a small way move, re-direct, stop, or destroy objects in the world; but he could not "change" into *something else*. They did *not* confuse analysis with change, e.g. water/steam, oxygen hydrogen.) The Downfall of Númenor was 'a miracle' as we might say, or as they *a direct action* of Eru within time that altered the previous scheme for all remaining time. They would probably also have said that Bilbo was 'fated' to find the Ring, but not necessarily to surrender it; and then if Bilbo surrendered it Frodo was fated to go on his mission, but not necessarily to destroy the Ring—which in fact he did not do. They would have added that *if* the downfall of Sauron and the destruction of the Ring was part of Fate (or Eru's plan) then if Bilbo had retained the Ring and refused to surrender it, some other means would have arisen by which Sauron was frustrated. Just as when Frodo's will proved in the end inadequate, a means for the Ring's destruction immediately appeared—being kept in reserve by Eru as it were.

Tolkien goes on to say that,

> They [i.e. Elves] would not have denied that (say) a man was (may have been) "fated" to meet an enemy of his at a certain time and place, but they would have denied that he was "fated" then to speak to him in terms of hatred, or to slay him. "Will" at a certain grade must enter into many of the complex motions leading to a meeting of persons; but the Eldar held that only those efforts of "will" were "free" which were directed to a fully *aware purpose*.

To point out the obvious, all of this is from the Elvish point of view and thus reflects what Tolkien intended to be a specifically Elvish understanding of the world. Important here are the subjunctive constructions: "would have said," "would probably also have said," "would have

added," "would not have denied," all suggest a projection of Elvish perception not just on language but the worldview it expresses. Given that this discussion is linguistically-based, given further that the languages and worldview concerned express perspectives generated and spoken by Elves (albeit invented by Tolkien), it is noteworthy that the entire discussion looks at how Elves "would see" the actions of Men within an Elvish concept of fate. Indeed, Tolkien was at pains on several occasions to reiterate that the mythology was Elf-generated and thus not anthropocentric. The "high legends of the beginnings are supposed to look at things through Elvish minds" (*Letters* 145), and "the point of view of the whole cycle is the Elvish" (*Letters* 147).

Greatness Meant

Now to the personal reason. I noted in my opening paragraph that Tolkien began serious work on his mythology in late 1916. The time is noteworthy for its proximity to his war experience and thus to the war-engendered deaths of two of his three closest friends. Rob Gilson, G.B. Smith, Christopher Wiseman and Tolkien had formed, when all four were at King Edward's School in Birmingham, an informal fellowship they called the TCBS. [5] This was more than an ordinary gathering of friends; it was a brotherhood. Continued in their university years, maintained in the face of separation by war postings, the TCBS was a deeply bonded friendship of like-minded young men who shared a somewhat inchoate but deeply felt sense of artistic mission. Rob Gilson was killed on the first day of the Battle of the Somme 1 July 1916. Geoffrey Bache Smith died behind the lines on 3 December 1916 of wounds from a stray shell.

By virtue of being the first, Gilson's death had the most dramatic effect. Tolkien's reaction was an almost physical one. "I don't feel a member of a little complete body now," he wrote to Smith (*Letters* 10). "I went out into the wood . . . last night and also the night before and sat and thought" (*Letters* 9). The scene is poignant, and the letter that came out of it shows Tolkien struggling with the third great loss in his life (his father when he was not yet four, his mother when he was twelve). Now he was in more than grief, he was in crisis over what Rob Gilson's death might portend for the three surviving members of their fellowship, and for his own sense of his place in the scheme of things.

The death of one man in a battle where in a single day 20,000 Allied lives were lost and nothing was won moved Tolkien to interrogate God's purpose not just for the dead but for the living. "I now believe," he wrote to Smith, "that if the greatness which we three certainly meant (and meant as more than holiness or nobility alone) is really the lot of the TCBS, then the death of any of its members is but a bitter winnowing of

those who were not meant to be great—at least not directly" (*Letters* 9).[6]
The repetition with changing connotation of the word *meant*—"greatness
which we *meant*," "*meant* as more than holiness," "those not *meant* to be
great"; the shifts from *meant* as "understood" to *meant* as "signified," to
meant as "intended"— suggest a quest for certainty as well as for mean-
ing. Was Gilson not "meant" to be "great" because he was killed? Was he
killed *because* he was not meant to be great?

Unexpressed but implied is the inevitable personal corollary: was
Tolkien alive because he was "meant" to be alive? "Meant" to be great?
While Tolkien was still in England, Smith, already in combat in France,
had urged him to publish his poems., declaring that Tolkien was "chosen
like Saul among the Children of Israel," and if he [Smith] were to be
"scuppered" [killed], there would still be "a member of the great TCBS
to voice what I dreamed and what we all agreed upon" (Garth 118).
Now Gilson, not Smith, had died, and Tolkien's sense "that the TCBS
was destined to testify for God and Truth" (*Letters* 10) was called into
question. What did *destined* mean? What did *chosen* mean? [7] Were their
lives and their ambitions in their own hands to direct? Or were they, as
events now overwhelmingly suggested, controlled by forces greater than
any individual? And if that was so, how did their hopes and dreams fit
into whatever larger scheme held sway?

Not long afterward, Tolkien fell sick with trench fever and was sent
back to England. Here he got the news that G.B. Smith was also gone,
like Gilson, killed in France; unlike Gilson, not in battle but by fragments
from a stray artillery shell behind the lines. Although Smith's wounds
were not life-threatening, they turned gangrenous, and he died four days
after he was injured, doomed because of a random explosion not aimed
at him. He and Tolkien had shared a particularly strong bond of like tal-
ents and ambitions. Both were poets, both critiqued one another's work,
both had ambitions for publication. After the war, Tolkien saw to it that
Smith's poems were posthumously published as *A Spring Harvest*, the title
a consciously ironic choice for the work of a young poet cut down before
he could ripen.

In the context of the hoped-for "destiny" of their fellowship, Tolk-
ien's own aspirations were then and afterward tangled with his feelings
of grief and loss and his struggle to see meaning in what had happened,
a struggle which would find an outlet in his own writing. In the years
leading up to the war he had been at work, albeit sporadically, on a body
of poetry loosely focused on what he called "the Lonely Isle"—later to
become Tol Eressea and later still Valinor—but not yet coalesced into a
structured mythology. Christopher Wiseman had written to him "You
ought to start the epic" (Carpenter 90). Reprieved from war by illness, he
now began seriously to consider the direction of his own writing.

I do not propose that Tolkien came home from war and consciously sat down to recreate his experience in words.[8] Unlike the war writers of his generation such as Edmund Blunden, Wilfrid Owen, Robert Graves, and Siegfried Sassoon (all of whom did exactly that), Tolkien turned instead to mythology, then fairy tale, lastly fantasy, and filtered his experience through the gauze of his imagination. Moreover, his most powerful depiction of the horror of war and its effect on those who fight it—the long ordeal of Frodo Baggins in *The Lord of the Rings*—emerged only years later and then in a conspicuously different frame. Filtering and delay notwithstanding, it is surely no accident that it was in 1916-17 and in the aftermath of two specific losses that Tolkien began the story of an unending war and its never-ending consequences, a legendarium that would as it developed come to explore the interweaving of human desires and impulses with a fixed and overarching design.

The earliest stories—"The Fall of Gondolin," an unabashed war-story written in 1916-17, "The Tale of Tinuviel," a love-story in a war setting written in 1917, "The Music of the Ainur," a creation story written some time between 1918 and 1920, and "Turambar and the Foalókë," an epic tragedy centered on warfare, and in existence by 1919— all came in the four years directly following his own war experience. While they would develop and change in the ensuing years, they did not alter their essential nature, and formed the vital heart of his "mythology for England," the "Silmarillion".

I am aware that biographical criticism is a perilous realm, with pitfalls for the unwary and dungeons for the overbold. The presence of biographical elements in a work of art is easy to overemphasize, and too much attention to such elements has the deleterious effect of privileging the creator over the work created. Such concerns notwithstanding, it would be naive and unrealistic to assume that the formative events of an author's life play a minor part in his creative process. To acknowledge the influence on his writing of an author's reading and at the same time to discount the influence of his immediate experience seems arbitrary and unnecessarily exclusive.

The Music and the Task

The sub-creative reason behind Tolkien's paradox will take us to the "Silmarillion" for a look at the earliest and subsequent versions of his creation story, the "Ainulindalë." This story, among the first he wrote, sets up the parameters for his Secondary World, parameters which remained, in one particular stipulation, unchanged throughout the course of many revisions. The first version, "The Music of the Ainur," was begun according to Christopher Tolkien between November 1918 and spring 1920 and set the tone for what was to follow. The theme of creation proposed

by the godhead Ilúvatar and orchestrated by the Ainur is broken by the discord of the rebellious Melko, who introduces an independent theme of his own. The disharmony thus introduced creates the world, for after absorbing Melko's theme into his own, Ilúvatar proclaims "*Eä!* Let these things be!" (*S* 20). The world thus brought into being is "a new thing: Eä, the World that Is"(20). The final verb is important. Eä is not the World that *Should Be*, or the World that *Ought to Have Been*, but the world that *Is*. It is a portrait in music of the real world as it really appears—unfinished, conflicted, containing harmony and discord, love and hate, war and peace. To this picture, Ilúvatar adds a surprise component—his Children, the two races of Elves and Men which come direct from him, with but not in the third theme. The earliest, "hastily-pencilled" draft says:

> ". . . to Men I [Ilúvatar] will appoint a task and give a great gift." And he devised that they should have free will and the power of fashioning and designing beyond the original music of the Ainu, that by reason of their operations all things shall in shape and deed be fulfilled, and the world that comes of the music of the Ainu be completed unto the last and smallest" (*Lost Tales I* 61).

This singling out of Men for something extra is explicit and must be deliberate. Men can transcend the Music. Their gift is free will, and their task is through the exercise thereof to "complete" and "fulfill" the heretofore unfinished Music. This is fine for Men, but what about Elves? Their omission from this proclamation is obvious, and its implication significant. A second text, fuller, written in ink, and dated to the same period, spells it out,

> " . . . when the Eldar come they will be the fairest and most lovely . . . .But to Men I will give a new gift, and a greater." Therefore he [Ilúvatar] devised that Men should have a free virtue whereby within the limits of the powers and substances and chances of the world they might fashion and design their life beyond even the original Music of the Ainur that is as fate to all things else (*Lost Tales I* 59).

The conjunctions "but" and "therefore" convey consequentiality, the words "as fate" define the Music, and the sweeping "all things else" must by default include Elves. The change of "will" to "virtue," with the retention of "free" says the same thing more obliquely. Tolkien is here using the word *virtue* not in its usual sense of moral excellence but in the older, now obsolete sense of "particular power, efficacy," definition # 11 in the Oxford English Dictionary. Nonetheless, this free virtue is still bestowed

only on Men. I propose that the free virtue/will of Men is Ilúvatar's wild card, and can affect fate. In thirty years of re-vision this plan never changed. Of the "Ainulindalë" Christopher Tolkien has written that,

> there is a direct tradition, manuscript to manuscript, from the earliest draft to the final version: each text is directly based on the one preceding. Moreover, and most remarkably, the earliest version, written when my father was 27 or 28 and embedded still in the context of the Cottage of Lost Play, was so evolved in its conception that it underwent little change of an essential kind. . . . the fall of the original sentences can continually be recognized in the last version of the *Ainulindalë*, written more than thirty years later, and even many phrases survived. (*Lost Tales I* 61-62)

Another version, called by Christopher Tolkien Ainulindalë B and dated to "between 1930 and the end of 1937" (*Lost Road* 107), keeps the same plan.

In the following years Tolkien wrote a further series of revisions called by Christopher Ainulindalë C*, C and D (*Morgoth* 3-4, 36-43). In all these revisions the relevant passage remains essentially intact. Although he cautions there is "no proof" that Tolkien was working on a revision of the "Ainulindalë" as early as 1946, Christopher cites "a torn half-sheet" with a passage from "Ainulindalë" among the "notes and jottings on the Adûnaic language" adjunct to the 1946 *Notion Club Papers* (*Morgoth* 4). More reliably, he says there is "certain evidence" that Ainulindalë C* "was in existence by 1948" (*Morgoth* 4). The version in *The Silmarillion* of 1977, the one most familiar to most readers, is expanded from but in all essentials the same as the preceding versions.

> 'the Quendi . . . shall have and shall conceive and bring forth more beauty than all my Children; and they shall have the greater bliss in this world. But to the Atani I will give a new gift.' Therefore he willed that the hearts of Men should seek beyond the world and should find no rest therein; but they should have a virtue to shape their life, amid the powers and chances of the world, beyond the Music of the Ainur, which is as fate to all things else; and of their operation everything should be, in form and deed, completed, and the world fulfilled unto the last and smallest.   (*S* 41-42)

Elves will have beauty. They will have greater bliss "in this world." But the specific and explicit "virtue" to shape their lives is reserved for Men. The scope of that "virtue," however, is left undefined. "Go beyond" does

not necessarily mean that Men *always* use free will, just that they have license to. Rather than prescribing free will as a constant factor, Ilúvatar simply allows for its operation. Nor will Men always choose rightly. While this is addressed most explicitly in the early "Ainulindalë," the notion carries over in all the versions with the provision that Men, "being set amid the turmoils of the powers of the world, would stray often, and would not use their gifts in harmony" (*S* 42). Tolkien's vision encompasses the obvious fact that not only are good intentions not always enough, they can sometimes—and, in the case of a character like Túrin Turambar, often—lead to apparently bad outcomes.

Nevertheless, it is important to recognize the remarkable consistency with Tolkien has retained Ilúvatar's declaration. Men have free will. All things else, including Elves, are ruled by fate. As noted above, this is hard for readers to accept, and perhaps accounts for the fact that this aspect of the "Ainulindalë" has been under-examined by scholars of Tolkien's work. Dan Timmons' article on "Free Will" in *Tolkien Encyclopedia* notes that "Ilúvatar . . . grants beings the ability to contribute to the "Music" according to their "will" (*Encyclopedia* 221), but does not identify those "beings" as Men, or note that Ilúvatar's grant excludes "all things else." In *Tolkien and the Great War*, John Garth correctly observes, "Whereas the cosmogonic Music prescribed the fate of the Elves . . . humans were granted a 'free virtue" to act beyond it" (Garth 275) but adds that, "Tolkien seems not to have tried to illustrate the implication that the Elves, the Valar, and Melko lack free will, which would surely have blighted his narrative" (275).[9] Others have voiced much the same objection. Three essays in vol. 1 of the recently-published *Tolkien and Modernity* (Weinreich, Fisher, and Fornet-Ponse) argue that both Elves and Men have free will. Only one (Fornet-Ponse) addresses the crucial statement by Ilúvatar, and then only to declare that it "contradicts the whole structure of *The Silmarillion"* (*Tolkien and Modernity*, 183). Therefore, in this reading, Ilúvatar could not possibly have meant what he said. This is most people's reaction, and one of the major reasons I am writing now.

However, it is one thing to parse the "Ainulindalë," quite another to show its consequences in action. Ilúvatar's statement in all its versions seems simple, declarative, unequivocal. Its playing-out in the actions and interactions of characters within the story, however, is murky and deliberately ill-defined. It is when we leave the concept and look at its practice that the notion becomes problematic, and Tolkien has—I think wisely—allowed it to be so. He was not designing an inter-office flow chart by which responsibility could clearly be traced from one department to another; he was creating characters and situations through which he hoped to show how confusing the complex interaction of competing but interactive forces can be to actors and beholders alike. It would be both

taxing and tedious if the reader had continually to be deciding if this or that action was the result of fate or free will. Moreover, such assignment would, if carried to its extreme, reduce the Elves to automata in a clockwork universe, moved by some external though hidden force. It would rob their actions, and consequently their story, of all narrative uncertainty and all readerly suspense.

Furthermore, it is important to remember that Tolkien's characters and situations are his inventions. They are not real people in a real world, but fictive characters in an arbitrary and invented one. In that sense they are all fated, their actions determined by their author's plan.[10] They have no independent existence, no lives beyond what the text gives them, no autonomy separate from Tolkien's intent. We cannot inquire what this or that character "would do" in a given situation, only accept what he or she actually does in the situation created by the author. And those situations are designed to reflect humanity's confusing perceptions of the operations of the real world. For while the narrative voice sometimes alludes to a character's "fate" (most clearly in the tale of Beren and Lúthien, but also in the story of Túrin Turambar[11]), the characters themselves, with two exceptional instance to be discussed below, nowhere make it explicit that any one of them is consciously invoking free will or fate.

The few statements which seem to indicate free will are spoken by the characters themselves (for example, Frodo's "I will take the Ring" at the Council of Elrond). Likewise, statements implying an external controlling force—for example Gandalf's comment to Frodo that "something else" was at work (though he does not say what) in Bilbo's finding of the Ring, or his further statement that Bilbo was "*meant* to find the Ring" in which case Frodo also was "*meant* to have it" (*FR,* I, ii, 65)—seem deliberately vague and obscure. They recall Tolkien's comment, cited above, that Elves "would have said" that Bilbo was 'fated' to find the Ring but not necessarily fated to surrender it. These are presumptive Elvish interpretations of events made at second hand and after the fact. Within the narrative, Bilbo's finding of the Ring is made to seem accident or chance, while his surrender of it is portrayed as a reluctant act of will (Bilbo needs a little help from his friend). Tolkien was first of all trying to depict the complex, often impulsive and unpremeditated ways in which we respond to circumstances, ways in which separate people's separate actions perforce impinge upon one another and upon the world around them. Second, he was offering a structure within which those actions could be both framed and accounted for—the paradox introduced at the beginning of this discussion.

In support of that paradox, and operating on the assumption that Tolkien intended Ilúvatar to mean what he said, I will move now to some illustrative examples. These, I hope, will demonstrate that Ilúvatar's

original statement, far from "contradicting" or "blighting" *The Silmaril-lion*, instead enriches and complexifies it, and furthermore that it enriches and complexifies its continuation which is Tolkien's masterpiece, *The Lord of the Rings*. I have chosen to look at the curious case of Fëanor and the Silmarils, at the conflicted triad of Beren, Lúthien and Thingol,[12] and to examine in some detail Tolkien's handling of key moments of decision in the representations of Aragorn, Sam Gamgee, and the dyad of Frodo and Gollum.[13]

The "Silmarillion"

Fëanor Against the Valar

As an Elvish example I offer the most exceptional of the instances cited above, the perplexing passage in *The Silmarillion* wherein, after the Darkening of Valinor, Yavanna asks Fëanor to give her the Silmarils to renew the Two Trees. His response is explicit and noteworthy. "This thing I will not do of free will" (*S* 79). If we are to believe Ilúvatar, Fëanor does not have free will, thus its deliberate introduction here is confusing—superfluous if Fëanor has free will, and even more superfluous if he doesn't. Or else Tolkien is making a point. I choose to think he's making a point, and that he intends the phrase to operate at two different levels. One level is Fëanor's, his response to his perceived coercion by the Valar to give up the jewels. The other, larger level is Tolkien's, for when the tidings come that Melkor has stolen the Silmarils, he, in the voice of the narrator, adds the otherwise unnecessary comment that, "The Silmarils had passed away, and all one it may seem whether Fëanor had said yea or nay to Yavanna; yet had he said yea at the first, before the tidings came from Formenos, it may be that his after deeds would have been other than they were. But now the Doom of the Noldor drew near" (*S* 79).

This, as I read the situation, is exactly Tolkien's point. Fëanor is fated to lose the Silmarils, and the Silmarils are fated to pass out of his keeping. He could not give them to Yavanna if he chose, for they are no longer his. But the editorial addendum implies that his answer to Yavanna, regardless of whether he could act on it, would affect his subsequent actions. While Christopher Tolkien includes this comment in "The Later *Quenta Silmarillion*" as published in *Morgoth* (295), the passage does not appear in the earlier "Quenta Silmarillion" as given in *The Lost Road*. Here Fëanor, "distraught with grief for the slaying of his father, and anguish for the rape of the Silmarils," vows to pursue Morgoth (*Lost Road.* 234). The Oath of Fëanor and the flight of the Noldor are essentially as in *The Silmarillion*.

Three verb forms are critical in *The Silmarillion*'s version: the subjunctive "*had* he said" and the conditional "it *may* be" and "*would* have

been." All three convey a sense of contingency, the possibility that things might have turned out differently. But *could* they? Could Fëanor have said otherwise than he said, done otherwise than he did? How much is in the Music? It seems *wyrd* in all senses of the word. Tolkien has again muddied the waters by suggesting that if Fëanor's response had been different, that difference might have affected his subsequent deeds. *But now* (my emphasis) his choice brings on the Doom of the Nolder. Free will can apparently invite fate. As noted earlier, *doom* is derived from Anglo-Saxon *dòm*. While its primary meaning is: "I. judgment, decree, ordinance, law," it has also a rare usage listed as IV. "Will, free will, choice, option" (Bosworth-Toller). Thus Fëanor's impracticable choice to deny Yavanna the Silmarils, and his consequent oath to pursue Morgoth bring on the choice of the Noldor to follow him, which leads to their Doom. Though that doom is spoken in the voice of Mandos, it is the Noldor who in effect doom themselves.

If, as Ilúvatar decrees and as I argue, Fëanor is bound by the Music, his "after deeds" must be in that Music, therefore not subject to change. How then, could those deeds have been "other" than they were? The parallel passage from the Later, post-*Lord of the Rings* version of the *Quenta Silmarillion* written in 1951-52 (*Morgoth* 141) reads, "had he said yea at the first, *and so cleansed his heart* ere the dreadful tidings came, his after deeds *would have been other than they proved*" [my emphasis] (*Morgoth* 295). Here the potential for change in Fëanor is explicit; to have said "yea" would have "cleansed" his heart, which because of his intransigent "nay" remained filled with anger and resentment. The unequivocal comment that his deeds "would have been other" is far stronger than the conditional "it may be." But the question remains: how might his deeds have "been other" if they were in the Music? The problem seems deliberately unsolvable, but Tolkien's word *other* may offer a solution. Traditionally an adjective modifying a noun, *other* is here employed in its rarer adverbial usage of "otherwise, differently, in another way" as modifying a verb, in this case the implied verb *done*, as in "after deeds have been [done]" otherwise.

Tolkien may be saying that while the deeds themselves would inevitably be done, Fëanor's "yea"—if he had said it—could have changed his motive and perhaps his way of doing them. In that case, their quality might have turned out to be "other" than they "proved." The distinction, like that between killing for revenge and killing in self-defense, is in the motive behind the act. In the case of Fëanor the distinction is between getting back the Silmarils to be "lords of the unsullied light" (*S* 83), and recovering them to re-illumine Valinor. That in the end he cannot do either does not invalidate or alter Tolkien's point. I offer this as the best rationale I can think of for that otherwise inexplicable and unnecessary

coda in two separate versions. It seems clear that Tolkien felt the addition served a purpose. Fate—the Music—cannot be changed by an Elf. Thus, the Silmarils are gone, their fate already decided and out of Fëanor's control. But his interior psychology could be changed, and that change could affect the nature of his subsequent actions.

Aragorn at the Falls

My Mannish example is Aragorn, who at the Falls of Rauros is forced to make a choice with too little information to go on. Realizing that Frodo is gone and Merry and Pippin have been captured, Aragorn must choose what to do next. His options are: to follow Frodo, to keep his promise to Boromir to go to Minas Tirith, to rescue Merry and Pippin. There is no easy or obvious choice, and his emotionally charged dialogue with himself signals his confusion and ambivalence. Hearing Boromir's horn as he comes down from the high seat he laments his absence from this crisis. "Alas! An ill fate is on me this day and all that I do goes amiss" (*TT,* III, i, 15). Faced subsequently with Boromir's dying injunction to go to Minas Tirith, Aragorn asks without expectation of answer "What shall I do now?" (16).

Shall is here more than a simple future tense; it has, especially in the personified form of Old Norse *Skuld*, the force of *skulu* with its connotation of something already decided. Aragorn is questioning fate, and again comments, "All that I have done today has gone amiss"(17). Torn between following the Ringbearer or going after Merry and Pippin, he declares, "An evil choice is now before us" (17), and finally, deciding to follow the young hobbits, says, "now may I make a right choice and change the evil fate of this unhappy day" (21). Unhappy," here, does not mean "sad," but "unfortunate, unlucky," the older, medieval usage as given in definition 4 under *unhappy* in the OED, "Of conditions: marked by misfortune or mishap." Aragorn's words constitute the closest the narrative comes to making explicit the interaction between the two forces, and is the only direct reference I can think of in *The Lord of the Rings* to the power of Men to go beyond the Music. It is significant for its clear implication that Aragorn is aware this power. A more oblique reference comes only a few pages later, when in answer to Éomer's question "What doom do you bring out of the North?" Aragorn replies, "The doom of Choice" (*TT,* III, ii, 36).

Thingol, Beren, Lúthien

Let us move now to the more complex interactions of Elves with Men. When free-willed Man meets fated Elf, who does what to whom? Tolkien has left the answers deliberately opaque. The story of Beren, Lúthien and Thingol is the most tangled, for here Tolkien has inverted

the language, using "fate" and "doom" for Beren and "free" for Lúthien, which makes it difficult to figure out who is doing what to whom. I argue that this is deliberate, intended to reflect the confused and confusing perceptions that characterize Tolkien's internal story-tellers, in this case those of his fictive bard, Daeron the minstrel. (It is also worth noting that Beren was originally an Elf and was later changed to a Man.) Beren comes to Doriath because it is "put into his heart that he would go down into the Hidden Kingdom." He passes through the mazes Melian has woven as she foretold, for "a great doom lay upon him." As Lúthien looks on Beren "doom fell upon her, and she loved him" (*S* 164-65). Of Beren's meeting with Lúthien Tolkien writes that, "he [Beren] began the payment of anguish for the fate that was laid on him; and in his fate Lúthien was caught, and being immortal she shared his mortality; and being free received his chain" (*S* 165-66).

This is piling contradiction on paradox. Lúthien is described as "being free." But free from what? Beren has a fate that "was laid on him." By whom? Are we to understand that Beren is fated and Lúthien has free will? Beren tells Thingol that his "fate" led him to Doriath, where he found what he "sought not," that is, Lúthien. Melian's statement that, "not by you [i.e. Thingol] shall Beren be slain; and far and free does his fate lead him, yet it is wound with yours" (167) muddies the water even further, yet the word "free" in this context, juxtaposed against "fate," suggests that Beren's fate is to make a free choice. If that is the case, however, freedom to choose doesn't always work. When he cuts the Silmaril from Morgoth's crown "it came into Beren's mind" (cp. "it was put into his heart" above) that he would go beyond his vow and take all three. "But," the narrative, is at pains to point out, "such was not the doom of the Silmarils." The knife snaps, Morgoth stirs, and Beren and Lúthien flee with one Silmaril.

Let us suppose, since that is "what happens," (i.e. *wyrd*) that Thingol's fate in the Music is to die by violence.[14] That fate is directed by the free action of Beren, a Man whose appearance in Doriath and love for Lúthien arouse Thingol's anger and spark his request for a Silmaril, which leads to his obsession with the jewel which in turn leads to his death. That this death does not come about as a direct result of Lúthien's marriage to Beren but takes place years later and under other circumstances, is evidence of Tolkien's method of "winding" Thingol's fate with Beren's free will. Beren's free acceptance of Thingol's demand brings Thingol a Silmaril and wins Beren Lúthien, while Thingol's fated possession of the jewel becomes his doom as his greed conjoins the Silmaril and the Dwarf-necklace, leads to his quarrel with the Dwarves, and results in his death at their hands. The point seems to be simply that the choices of Men can trigger the fates of Elves and the fates of Elves can tilt the lives

of Men, while both can affect the world they both inhabit.

Turning now from Elves and (Big) Men to Hobbits, my examples will show Tolkien working even more precisely at the lexical level, and will illustrate his careful and exact use of language, especially three verbs— *will*, *shall*, and *must*, whose history I have already discussed—as well as *choice*, *choose*, and *fate*.

Samwise at the High Pass

My first Hobbit example is Sam Gamgee. It is not by accident that an important chapter in the plot's development is titled "The Choices of Master Samwise." Finding Frodo's dead (as he thinks) body, Sam goes through an agony of indecision over how to respond. His first despairing question to himself is "What shall I do, what shall I do" (*TT*, II, x, 340). His options are to go home, to stay with Frodo, to kill Gollum, to kill himself, or to take the Ring and go on. He has no information that will help him to make a right decision. Having considered and rejected the first four options, Sam then considers "the hard answer," which is to take Frodo's burden and go on to the Cracks of Doom. The key words *will* and *must* follow one another now in rapid succession as Sam tells himself "I must make up my own mind. I will make it up" (341).

Knowing the precision with which Tolkien uses words, and the weight of internal historical evidence that lies behind them, we can see that Sam is not merely lecturing himself; he is unknowingly invoking both his destiny and his free will. He *must* make up his own mind. He must think for himself. He must choose to do. Nonetheless, Tolkien shows him still indecisive. "I've made up my mind," he says to himself, but the narrative adds, that "he had not," moreover, that "what he was doing was altogether against the grain of his nature." This leads Sam to self-doubt. "Have I got it wrong?" he asks, and then, as if there were someone present to tell him: "what ought I to have done?" (342). Sam's dilemma is that of someone facing a job he does not want but knows he has to do.

That having decided, he then changes his mind and starts back to Frodo, is not so much evidence of Sam's vacillation as of Tolkien's intent to underscore the perennial human problem of how to act in light of too little information. The missing information, that Frodo is alive, leads Sam to his last and most practical question. "Now what is to be done?" (350) The difference between his earlier, despairing, semi-rhetorical "what ought I to have done?" and the pragmatic, down-to-business, "what is to be done?" is more than grammatical. The later phrase implies acknowledgment that there is a task appointed, while the former indicates helplessness, indecision, and despair.

Frodo and Gollum in the Looking-Glass

My last example is the dyad of Gollum and Frodo, who within themselves and with each other best embody Tolkien's fate-free will conjunction. When the Council of Elrond learns that Gollum has escaped the Wood-elves and is again on the loose, Gandalf reacts dismissively. "Well, well. He is gone. We have no time to seek for him again." And then he adds what seems an unnecessary tag: "He must do what he will" (*FR,* II, ii, 269). This says it all. Tolkien has placed Gollum at a nexus of fate and free will in which each acts on the other and both act on Gollum. His wish (*willan*) for the Ring becomes necessity (*motan*), controlling his subsequent actions, especially his last and most desperate action at the Cracks of Doom. He is fated to follow his own desire. Gandalf's statement foreshadows Frodo's similar but opposite declaration on Amon Hen. Released from the Eye of Sauron on Amon Hen, and in the liberation of being "free to choose" to take off the Ring, Frodo declares, "I will do now what I must" (*FR,* II, x, 417). In both their similarity and difference the two statements mirror one another, and both derive directly from Ilúvatar's pronouncement concerning fate and free will at the close of the "Ainulindalë".

Tolkien clearly shows Frodo, Gollum's opposite and alter ego, voluntarily (*willan*) committing himself to the fate (*motan*) appointed for him. His free will accepts his fate. Other examples are easily passed over in the flow of the narrative, but stand out clearly when words like *fate*, *choice*, *must*, and *will* are highlighted. At the Falls of Rauros, when the Company must decide which way to go from there, Aragorn tells Frodo that even if Gandalf were there to advise them, "the choice would still wait on you. Such is your fate" (*FR,* II, x, 412). Finding the Black Gate of Mordor closed, Frodo accepts Gollum's suggestion that they take the secret path of Cirith Ungol. "I must trust you once more," he tells Gollum. "Indeed it seems that I must do so, and that it is my fate to receive help from you, where I least looked for it, and your fate to help me whom you long pursued with evil purpose" (*TT,* IV, iii, 248). Responding to Sam's suspicions both of him and the secret path, Gollum states that "If master says *I must go* or *I will go*, then he must try some way" (*TT,* IV, iii, 251)

That he and Gollum both freely participate in the Ring's destiny to arrive at the Cracks of Doom shows *their* free will collaborating with *its* fate. *Doom* and *choice*, must and *will* are interlocking systems, cogs turned "by small hands" which move the wheels of the world while "the eyes of the great are elsewhere " (*FR,* II, ii, 283). The final confrontation at the Cracks of Doom brings the conflict down to a contest of "small hands"—Frodo's hand now wearing the Ring and Gollum's hands as they "draw upward to his mouth" and then "[hold] aloft the Ring" as he

falls into the fire (*RK*, VI, iii, 224). But the wheels of the world are turned as much by words as by hands large or small, and it is in his words that we must look for clues to Tolkien's design. The key lies in Frodo's "I will" at Rivendell, where he reluctantly volunteers for a job he does not want, and does not think he can do. "I will take the Ring," he announces, and the narrative adds the significant comment, "as if some other will was using his small voice" (*FR*, II, ii, 284). Given what we know about the background mythology and the intent of Ilúvatar for Men it seems reasonable to interpret this "other will" as Ilúvatar's. But Ilúvatar's will was to give Men free will. His will in this instance, therefore, must be that Frodo, like Beren, make a free choice. To complicate the matter, Frodo's "I will" is modified by Elrond's "this task is appointed for you, Frodo," echoing in what is surely no accident Ilúvatar's, "to Men I will appoint a task." Elrond's comment that, "if you take it freely, I will say that your choice is right" (284), suggests that the rightness lies not just in acceptance of the task of carrying the Ring but also (though Frodo is unaware of it) in acceptance of the "task" of Men that is to transcend the Music.

The Ring, however, like the Silmarils and "all things else," is bound by the Music, making it difficult to interpret this situation except as the interjection of free will into the operation of fate. Frodo's journey, and its yet-to-be-decided outcome, will affect the fate of all Middle-earth. Nowhere will this appear more completely than in the fate of Elves. Galadriel states it plainly to Frodo,

> Do you not see now wherefore your coming is to us as the footsteps of Doom? For if you fail, then we are laid bare to the Enemy. Yet if you succeed, then our power is diminished, and Lothlórien will fade and the tides of Time will sweep it away. (*FR*, II, vii, 380)

At the other end of Frodo's journey, as he claims the Ring at the Cracks of Doom, he again makes a declarative statement, now reversing his words at Amon Hen. "I do not choose now to do what I came to do. I will not do this deed" (*RK*, VI, iii, 223). It seems a backhanded exercise of free will—to choose not to do. Nevertheless, the fact that in the manuscript this sentence is written above the line, replacing an earlier "I cannot do what I have come to do" (Marquette Archive Series 3, Box 8, Roll 11, p. 39), makes it clear that Tolkien intended that Frodo, as Christopher Tolkien points out, "fully willed his act" (*Sauron* 38). And although Christopher also comments that he "does not think that the difference is very significant," it is notable that Frodo's "I will not do this deed" harks back not just to his statement on Amon Hen but also to his earlier declaration at the Council of Elrond. It is at Mount Doom, in a climactic intersection of *will* and *must*, that the task appointed for Frodo, who now *will not*

"do what he must," is inadvertently accomplished by Gollum, who *must* follow his will, wrest the Ring from Frodo and carry it where it is fated to go—into the fire. Frodo's and Gollum's inadvertent yet combined actions at the Cracks of Doom, actions of will both inevitable and spontaneous, between them operate to save Middle-earth.

The Point of the Paradox

This leads back to my opening *why*, and Tolkien's sub-creative rationale for his green sun paradox, which was to provide a plausible mechanism for change in an ordered universe. *The Lord of the Rings*'s dramatic resolution in the destruction of the Ring by the conflicting and freely-willed actions of Frodo and Gollum points thematically toward the telos, the final end of Tolkien's paradox. Tolkien described this telos as, "a vision of the end of the world, its breaking and remaking, and the recovery of the Silmarilli and the 'light before the Sun'—after a final battle which owes, I suppose, more to the Norse vision of Ragnarök than to anything else, though it is not much like it" (*Letters* 149). Although at the story level he never reached this point, the concept makes clear that he envisioned an apotheosis in which the discord of the original Music would be harmonized in the Second Music, which explicitly includes Men in its performance. This is made clear in his letter to Waldman, where he states explicitly that "[t]he making, and nature, of the Children of God", the "two chief secrets" of "the Creator" withheld from the Valar, are intended "partly to redress the evil of the rebel Melkor, partly for the completion of all" (*Letters* 147). All the evidence points to his clear intention for Men to join in the Second Music, in which the themes will be played aright because the task of Men has been to enable that playing.

The Silmarillion states, "of old the Valar declared to the Elves in Valinor that Men shall join in the Second Music of the Ainur; whereas Ilúvatar has not revealed what he purposes for the Elves after the world's end, and Melkor has not discovered it" (*S* 42). That this was Tolkien's plan from the beginning is clear from a similar passage in the second 1919-20 draft in *The Book of Lost Tales I* which states that, "Never was there before, nor has there been since, such a music . . . though it is said that a mightier far shall be woven before the seat of Ilúvatar by the choirs of both the Ainur and the sons of Men after the Great End. Then shall Ilúvatar's mightiest themes be played aright; for then Ainur and Men will know his mind and heart as well as may be, and all his intent" (*Lost Tales I* 53). It seems clear that in this "mightier far" music the "mightiest themes" will be played aright because the actions and choices of Men will have enabled their playing. The role of Elves in this finale is deliberately left obscure, for "while the Sons of Men will after the passing of things of a certainty join in the Second Music of the Ainur, what Ilúvatar has devised for the Eldar

beyond the world's end he has not revealed" (*Lost Tales I* 59-60).

I mentioned earlier that the words *God*, *Heaven*, *Grace*, *Paradise*, *Providence*, *Salvation*, *Damnation*, make no appearance in the mythology. Nor does the word *Redemption*. Like the others, it is a name for a concept for which Tolkien chose his own term, *free will*. By free actions over many years, his free-willed Men will have changed the Music and the world from what it is to what it has the potential to be. They will have fulfilled and completed the world and brought it to its intended but unforeseen apotheosis. Acting individually, sometimes acting wrongly, and acting always in ignorance of the ultimate outcome of their choices, they will over the course of time have the totality of their actions exert a self-correcting function that will lead them—and the Elves whose lives they intersect—to the right purpose and fulfillment of the Music of creation. While the inevitable comparison is with Saint Augustine's notion of the Fortunate Fall that expels humankind from Paradise but brings it the hope of heaven, the differences between Tolkien's imaginative vision and Augustine's Judaeo-Christian one are important. In Tolkien's work the Fall is Melkor's, not Adam's. Tolkien's sub-created cosmos has no Paradise from which humanity is driven out, only a world flawed in the making into which they are introduced in order to change it. Elves and Men will carry the responsibility for illustrating, both in their interactions with one another and across the gap that divides them, just how living in an imperfect world might serve a larger plan.

The post-*Lord of the Rings Athrabeth Finrod ah Andreth*, according to Christopher Tolkien written some time in 1959 (*Morgoth* 304) supports this view. In a dialogue about death, the human woman Andreth remarks, "among us some hold that our errand here was to heal the Marring of Arda" and "'Arda Healed' (or Remade) shall not be 'Arda Unmarred', but a third thing and a greater" (*Morgoth* 351). Ilúvatar's original theme corrupted by Melkor into the Music would be replaced the Second Music when the themes of Ilúvatar would be played "aright." A late linguistic commentary by Tolkien published in Parma Eldalamberon XVII, *Words, Phrases & Passages in "The Lord of the Rings*," gives additional corroboration. His discussion of "The Knowledge of the Valar, or Elvish ideas and theories concerned with them" contains the following highly relevant comments:

> There was, however, one element in the design of Eru [Ilúvatar] that remained a mystery: the Children of Eru, Elves and Men, the Incarnate. These were said to have been an *addition* made by Eru himself *after* the Revelation to the primal spirits of the Great Design."

The same passage notes further that,

> Another purpose they [Elves and Men] had, which remained
> a mystery to the Valar, was to complete the Design by 'heal-
> ing' the hurts which it suffered, and so ultimately not to re-
> cover 'Arda Unmarred' (that is the world as it would have
> been if Evil had never appeared) but the far greater thing
> 'Arda Healed'. (*Parma* 17 177-78)

Together, these passages from the "Athrabeth" and *Parma* make it clear
that the "*addition*" of the Children and their purpose to "complete the
Design" were Eru-Ilúvatar's extended, drawn-out work in progress in-
tended to correct the harm done to the world by Melkor. They support
the initial and unchanged statement in "Ainulindalë" already discussed,
and help to clarify the "task" appointed to Men by Ilúvatar in the af-
termath of Creation. I suggest that the purpose of the Children—that
is, both Elves and Men—to complete the design must be twofold in its
action, for otherwise there would be no necessity for two separate races.
Unless the interaction of the two was formative, the power given to Men
to "shape their lives" would affect them alone without any wider conse-
quences for the world. Nor would there be wider consequences unless
there was some pre-existing circumstance on which that power could
work, the pre-determination of events that is the Music. The energy in
the contact of Men with Elves is the engine for change. The free will of
Men acting on and against the fate of Elves will bring about the desired
re-vision of the Music. It is worth noting that nothing is said in these
passages about free will or free virtue, but a further comment in the same
section that "the minds of the Children were not open to the Valar (ex-
cept by the free will of the Children" (*Parma* 17, 178) must be considered.
"Children" is clearly here an inclusive noun encompassing both Elves
and Men, and I take the operation of free will in this instance to be
along the lines of Fëanor's in saying yea or nay to Yavanna— an internal
process not affecting events but deeply influencing the inner nature of
individuals involved in those events.

Finally, and this will loop back to my opening discussion:, several
points should be re-iterated.

(1) Tolkien was writing fiction, not theology. He was not arguing
for the validity of either fate or free will.

(2) The entire concept should be seen as an imaginary sub-cre-
ation in which the contending forces of fate and free will con-
join to form a "green sun," an element or aspect deliberately
contrary to the Primary world but essential and formative in
the Secondary one

(3) The mythology in its entirety is meant to be read in the context

of Tolkien's narrative strategy of using a multiplicity of story-tellers and points of view rather than a single omniscient narrative voice. Among these fictive storytellers are the Elvish sage Rúmil, the mortal voyager Eriol/Ælfwine, the Elvish minstrel Daeron, the mortal woman Andreth, and the mortal hobbits Bilbo and Frodo Baggins and Sam Gamgee, all of whom are allowed to tell it as they see it. No one, it seems, was intended to have the final word. Except Ilúvatar, who tells Melkor, "no theme may be played that hath not its uttermost source in me, nor can any alter the music in my despite" (*S* 17), and leaves it at that.

By establishing and following his own rules Tolkien has succeeded in giving his invented world the "inner consistency of reality" he insisted was essential. The intersection of fate and free will replicates the real world, where these concepts are also inextricably intertwined and interdependent. Fate assumes the absence (therefore the conceptual presence) of choice, while the freedom of free will must rely on its opposite as that from which to be free. As there is no concept of up without its opposite down, or of inside without an outside, so with fate and free will each depends on the other for its meaning. It is well to remember, moreover, that fate and free will, for all humanity's engagement with them as ideas, are neither facts nor principles. They are not easily demonstrable, like gravity, nor clinically testable, like a controlled experiment. Rather, they are human interpretations imposed upon phenomena that may or may not have them in actuality.

Excluding the exceptional circumstances of prophecy or second sight, a pattern seen as fate is nearly always recognized in retrospect, organized with hindsight out of a selection of salient circumstances that appear to relate most directly to one another and thus to make a coherent design. Free will is fate's opposite but also its corollary and partner, dependent on the appearance of choice in major areas of life. Few would bother to invoke free will in the performance of the small tasks of daily life, bathing and dressing, eating and drinking. The concept of free will comes into play when the importance of choice is significant, when humanity's "virtue" to influence events for good or ill is seen as an essential part of human activity in the world.

What emerges in Tolkien's depiction of Eä, the "World that Is," is a picture of the confusing state of affairs in the world that really "is," a state of affairs as it appears to us humans, an uncertain, unreliable, untidy, constantly swinging balance between fate and human effort, between the Music and the Task. Unlike philosophers past and present, Tolkien was not attempting to solve the puzzle, nor was he intending to show that

one or the other principle governed the world and those within it. He was trying to show the world the way he saw it—as a place of hope and despair, cruelty and compassion. He saw it as a place where accidents happen, where plans go awry, where young men die in war and children lose their parents, where the right side can lose, where love is not always enough. But he also saw it as a place where human beings of good will and good intentions grope often blindly toward a more hopeful future that remains out of sight but not out of mind. His invented world deliberately included provisions for both fate and free will in order to reflect the often inevitable, sometimes unexpected, frequently incomprehensible unfolding of events as they happen in and shape humanity's perceptions of the real world. The whole elaborate enterprise was, as described in the quote from John Garth which forms my epigraph, "nothing less than an attempt to justify God's creation of an imperfect world filled with suffering, loss, and grief" (Garth 255).

The struggles undergone by the characters who inhabit Tolkien's fictive world require both order and spontaneity to justify them, to give them meaning, and above all to create that uncertainty of outcome which is a hallmark of effective fiction. The story needs its readers' awareness of both the Music and the task. Thus, we as readers must recognize that the original great theme, proposed by Ilúvatar and spoiled in the making by Melkor, is embedded first in the ensuing Music and then in the world created through that Music. We must see that this spoiled Music goes uncorrected by the godhead, who instead assigns that task to one race of his created beings. We must honor the decision (not really Eru's but Tolkien's) to introduce into this unhappy, unfinished world the two unanticipated races of Elves and Men; and the further decision to give one race, Men, the freedom to change their lives and through those lives to change the Music and thus the fate of Middle-earth and its inhabitants. Only then can we understand the paradox with which I introduced this discussion as Tolkien's ultimately hopeful vision for what he saw as a fallen world: that in a flawed and faulty Creation it is the task appointed for flawed and faulty human beings—struggling with the world around them, sometimes making false starts, often following twisting paths of which they themselves cannot always see the ends—to lead themselves and that world out of error and into light.

Notes

1   This is not to say that all readers have overlooked it. See the very thorough entry for "Free Will and Fate" in Scull and Hammond's *Reader's Guide*, vol. 2 of *The J.R.R. Tolkien Companion and Guide* (324-333). See also my own exploration in *Splintered Light: Logos and Language in Tolkien's World* (52-53).

1   It should be emphasized that the ensuing discussion is entirely literary, not theological or philosophical. I am not (nor was Tolkien), arguing the actuality or the validity of either fate or free will, merely their fictive representation as aspects of his invented world. Conceptually, of course, and semantically, each apparently independent element requires the other as its opposite corollary, as *up* needs *down*, or *dark* needs *light* for full comprehension. *Free* implies that from which to be free, a constraint removed or denied; while *Fate*, cf. the OED's first definition as the unalterable predetermination of events, implies restraint of what would otherwise be free.

2   My knowledge of modern fantasy, I hasten to add, is not encyclopedic. I welcome correction by those more familiar with the subject.

3   Such readings include Boethian, as both Shaun Hughes and Kathleen Dubs proclaim (Hughes review of *Tolkien and Modernity* in *Tolkien Studies* V (25); Dubs "Providence, Fate, and Chance: Boethian Philosophy in *The Lord of the Rings*" in *Tolkien and the Invention of Myth*); Boethian and/or Manichean, both of which are considered but rejected by Tom Shippey in his *Road to Middle-earth* (128-9); Augustinian as John Houghton maintains in his article "Augustine of Hippo" in *J.R.R. Tolkien Encyclopedia*.

4   *Wyrd* is one of several words used in the poem to denote an all-powerful supernatural force, others being *Metod*, "measure," *Dryhten*, "lord or The Lord" (often translated as "God") and *God* with specific reference to the Judaeo-Christian deity. The intended meanings and appropriate translations have been and still are the focus of the ongoing debate over the amount of Christianity in the poem. My purpose here is not to enter that debate, merely to note the worldview conveyed by *wyrd* in its original meaning.

5   The initials stood for "Tea Club Barrovian Society," after Barrows Store in downtown Birmingham, the meeting place of the four when they were students together at King Edward's School.

6   The phrase "what we three certainly meant" was an allusion to the "Council of London," a meeting among Tolkien, Smith, Gilson and Wiseman in December of 1914 that in some fashion crystallized the hopes and artistic ambitions of the four before they went off to war.

7   Although more than two decades separate Smith's words from Frodo's, that hobbit's outcry to Gandalf at Bag End, "Why was I chosen?" seems in context a direct response.

8   Though it should be noted that several critics have seen a connection

between Tolkien's war experience and his fiction, among them Brian Rosebury, who links Tolkien to the "lost generation" of World War I writers, (Rosebury 133-52), and Tom Shippey, who characterizes him as a "post-war writer" in the tradition of George Orwell, William Golding, and T.H. White (*Road* 288). John Garth's *Tolkien and the Great War* sheds new biographical light on the connection, and Janet Brennan Croft's *War and the Works of J.R.R. Tolkien* gives valuable insights into Tolkien's treatment of war in *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings.*

9   Careful reading of "Ainulindalë" shows that the Valar, who are outside—indeed are creators of—the Music, are for that reason independent of it. Indeed, Ilúvatar makes clear their autonomy when he invites them to adorn the Music "each with his own thoughts and devices, if he *will*" [my emphasis].

10   A note in Tolkien's unpublished linguistic papers is apposite here. He wrote that, "[t]he author is not in the tale in one sense, yet it all proceeds from him (and what was in him), so that he is present all the time. Now while composing the *tale* he may have certain general designs (the plot for instance), and he may have a clear conception of the character (independent of the particular tale) of each feigned actor. But those are the limits of his 'foreknowledge'. Many authors have recorded the feeling that one of their actors 'comes alive' as it were, and does things that were not foreseen at all at the outset and may modify in a small or even large way the process of the tale thereafter. All such unforeseen actions or events are, however, taken up to become integral parts of the tale when finally concluded. Now when that has been done, then the author's 'foreknowledge' is complete, and nothing can happen, be said, or done, that he does not know of and will/or allow to be. Even so, some of the Eldarin philosophers ventured to say, it was with Eru."

11   Turambar and the Foalókë," *The Book of Lost Tales* earliest version of The Children of Hurin, Tolkien applies the word *weird* explicitly to Túrin: ". . . soon too had he met his death—and his weird had been the happier thereby" (*Lost Tales* II, 85).

12   It is worth noting in this context that what Tolkien called the "three Great Tales" of his legendarium, the story of Beren and Lúthien, The Fall of Gondolin, and The Children of Húrin all involve the intrusion of a free-willed Man into a fated Elvish stronghold with direct effect on the lives of the elves therein, as well as on the outcome of the story.

13 Considerations of space preclude examination of the greatest exemplar of the intricate interconnections of fate and free will, Túrin son of Húrin, whose chosen epithet, Turambar embodies the Quenya morpheme *mbar* (fate), and whose free choices bring disaster on himself and those around him, both Men and Elves.

14 The fairy tale model for the whole episode is the story of "Culhwch and Olwen" in the Welsh *Mabinogion*. The story is an exemplar of the tale-type called by folklorists The Giant's Daughter. Its plot hinges on the efforts of a supernatural parent whose death, it is foretold (i.e. fated), will occur when his daughter marries, to forestall the marriage by setting the suitor an impossible and deliberately lethal task. When the suitor, with the aid of magic, accomplishes the task, the parent is accordingly killed. Variants on this type can be found in the Finnish *Kalevala*'s wooing stories of two of that mythology's heroes, Ilmarinen and Lemminkainen. Ilmarinen succeeds. Lemminkainen does not.

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Fate and Free Will

J.R.R. TOLKIEN

Edited by Carl F. Hostetter

Sometime after January 1968, Tolkien turned again to considerations of two Quenya words encountered and glossed in *The Lord of the Rings*, *ambar* 'world' and *umbar* 'fate,' and of their precise meanings and etymological and semantic relationship.[1] Amidst a linguistic discussion of certain points of Elvish phonology, Tolkien cited the Eldarin base MBAR underlying both these Quenya words, as well as the related Sindarin forms *amar* 'world' and *amarth* 'fate' :

MBAR: basically "settle, establish" but with a considerable semantic development, being especially applied to 'settlement', sc. the settling of a place, occupation (permanently) and ordering of a region as a 'home' (of a family or people) > to erect (permanent) buildings, dwellings?[2]

Tolkien goes on to cite various derivatives of this base, including:

Q[uenya] and T[elerin] *ambar*, S[indarin] *amar* 'world,' 'the great habitation.'

Beneath these glosses he added a note of clarification:

The full implications of this word cannot be understood without reference to Eldarin views and ideas concerning 'fate' and 'free will.' (See note on these points.) The sense 'world'—applied usually to this Earth—is mainly derived from sense 'settlement': 'the great habitation' (οἠκουμένη) as 'home of speaking creatures' esp. Elves and Men. (*ambar* 'world' differed from *Arda* in reference. *Arda* meant 'realm' & was this earth as the *realm* ruled by *Manwe* (the Elder King) vice-regent of Eru, for benefit of the Children of Eru.) But though *mbar-* was naturally mostly used of the activities and purposes of rational creatures, it was not limited to these. It thus could refer to the conditions and established (physical) processes of the Earth (as established at its Creation directly or mediately by Eru), which was part of Eä, the Universe. And so approached in some uses the sense 'Fate', according to Eldarin thought on the subject. Thus Q. *ambar-menie* "the way of the world" ("world" by the way never meant "people"), the fixed, and by 'creatures' unalterable, conditions in which they lived.

Then, a little further on in this discussion of derivatives of MBAR, Tolkien cites:

S[indarin] *amarth*, 'Fate.' This sense is an application of the basic sense, augmented by its formation, of *mbar*: 'permanent establishment/order'; 'Fate' especially (when applied to the future): sc. the order and conditions of the *physical* world (or of *Eä* in general) as far as established and pre-ordained at Creation, and that part of this ordained order which affected an individual with a *will*, as being immutable by his personal will.

The "note on these points" that Tolkien refers to here in connection with fate and free will arose in an earlier version of this same discussion of certain strictly linguistic points, beginning on a sheet which Tolkien subsequently titled "Fate" (after bracketing the discussion of MBAR and striking out the more strictly linguistic discussion that preceded it), and continuing on for four more pages, the first of which Tolkien titled "Fate and Free Will." Part of the note exists in two versions, sc. those paragraphs numbered here as §4 through §6. I give here the reading of the second version, which for the most part follows the first version very closely, but interpolate into the body of the text one significant paragraph (here numbered §7 and set in brackets) of the first version that is lacking in the second version.

As is typical of Tolkien, he begins in a careful hand, but soon lapses into an increasingly hasty scrawl, with the result that some words, and particularly the final paragraphs, are very difficult to interpret. I give all uncertain readings in square brackets with a query mark. I have editorially omitted a few brief technical passages of strictly phonological discussion (indicated by ellipses), silently incorporated all insertions, provided some necessary punctuation, altered some of Tolkien's square brackets (of no apparent special significance) to parentheses, expanded some abbreviations, repositioned some notes to stand nearer to their antecedent text, and numbered each paragraph. All other editorial alterations and indications are set in square brackets.

§1. MBAR 'settle, establish' (hence also, settle a place, settle in a place, establish one's home) also to erect (permanent buildings, dwellings, etc.); extended form *m̥barat-* with greater intensity . . . > Common Eldarin *m̥bar'tă* 'permanent establishment' > *fate* of the world in general as, or as far as, established and pre-ordained from creation; and that part of this 'fate' which affected an individual person, and not open to modification by his free will.*

§2. *E.g. one of the Eldar would have said that for all Elves and Men the shape, condition, and therefore the past and future physical development and destiny of this 'earth' was determined and beyond their power to change, indeed beyond the power even of the Valar to alter in any large and permanent way. ([*Marginal note*:] They distinguished between "change" and redirection. Thus any 'rational [?will-user]' could in a small way move, re-direct, stop, or destroy objects in the

world; but he could not "change" into *something else*.[3] They did *not* confuse analysis with change, e.g. water / steam, oxygen hydrogen.) The Downfall of Númenor was 'a miracle' as we might say, or as they a *direct action of* Eru within time that altered the previous scheme for all remaining time. They would probably also have said that Bilbo was 'fated' to find the Ring, but not necessarily to surrender it; and then if Bilbo surrendered it Frodo was fated to go on his mission, but not necessarily to destroy the Ring—which in fact he did not do. They would have added that *if* the downfall of Sauron and the destruction of the Ring was part of Fate (or Eru's Plan) then if Bilbo had retained the Ring and refused to surrender it, some other means would have arisen by which Sauron was frustrated. Just as when Frodo's will proved in the end inadequate, a means for the Ring's destruction immediately appeared—being kept in reserve by Eru as it were.

§3. In Q. *m̩bar'tă* > *umbart* > *umbar* (genitive *umbarto*) 'Fate'. . . in S. *amarth*. . . . The word from the simple stem *mbar-* . . . was *ambara* 'establishment', Q. *ambar* 'the world', T. *ambar*, S. **amar* (not found). This was to [the] Eldar more obviously related to *m̩bar'ta* than we might feel it to be, since 'fate' so far [as] they recognized it was conceived as a much more physical obstacle to will.

§4. They would not have denied that (say) a man was (may have been) "fated" to meet an enemy of his at a certain time and place, but they would have denied that he was "fated" then to speak to him in terms of hatred, or to slay him. "Will" at a certain grade must enter into many of the complex motions leading to a meeting of persons; but the Eldar held that only those efforts of "will" were "free" which were directed to a fully *aware purpose*. On a journey a man may turn aside, choosing this or that way—e.g. to avoid a marsh, or a steep hill—but this decision is mostly intuitive or half-conscious (as that of an irrational animal) and has only an immediate object of easing his journey. His setting-out may have been a free decision, to achieve some object,* but his actual course was largely under *physical* direction—and it *might have* led to/or missed a meeting of importance. It was this aspect of "chance" that was included in *umbar*. See L.R. III p. 360: "a chance-meeting as we say in Middle-earth." That was said by Gandalf of his meeting with Thorin in Bree, which led to the visit to Bilbo. For this "chance," not purposed or even thought of by either Thorin or Gandalf, made contact with Gandalf's "will," and his fixed purpose and designs for the protection of the NW frontiers against the power of Sauron. If Gandalf had been different in character, or if he had not seized the opportunity, the "chance" would, as it were, have failed to "go off" (misfired). Gandalf was not "fated" to act as he did

then. (Indeed his actions were most odd, idiosyncratic, and unexpectable: Gandalf was a powerful "free will" let loose, as it were, among the physical "chances" of the world).[4]

§5. *Thus if a man set out on a journey with the *purpose* of finding his enemy, and the purpose then of doing this or that (pardoning him / asking his pardon / cursing him / seeking to slay him): That purpose governs the whole process. It may be frustrated by "chance" (—in fact he never met him—) or it may be helped by chance (—in fact against likelihood he did meet him), but in the latter case if he did evil he could not [?throw] the blame on "chance".

§6. *Umbar* thus relates to the net-work of "chances" (largely physical) which is, or is not, used by rational persons with 'free will.' That aspect of things which *we* might include in Fate—the 'determination' that we each carry about with us in our given created character (which later acts and experience may modify but not fundamentally change) was *not* included in *Umbar* by the Eldar; who said that if it was in any way similar it was on a different 'plane.' But the ultimate problem of Free Will in its relation to the *Foreknowledge* of a Designer (both of the plane of *Umbar* and of the *Mind* and the blending of both in Incarnate Mind), Eru, "the Author of the Great Tale," was of course not resolved by the Eldar.

[§7. But they would have said it is the continual clash of *umbar*, the 'chances' of *ambar* as a fixed arrangement which continues to work out inevitably (except only for 'miracle' a direct or mediate intervention of Eru, from *outside umbar* and *ambar*), and purposeful *will* that [?ramifies] a story [or] tale (as an excerpt from the total drama of which Eru is the Author or as that Drama itself). Until the appearance of *Will* all is mere preparation, interesting only on a quite different & lower plane: like mathematics or observing the physical [?events] of the world or in a small way the workings of a machine. *Will* first appeared with the Ainur/ Valar, but *except for Melkor* and those he dominated their wills being in accord with Eru effected little change in *Ambar* or deflected *Umbar*.][5]

§8. They said that, though this likeness is only a 'likeness,' not an equation, the nearest experience of the Incarnates to this problem is to be found in the author of a tale. The author is not in the tale in one sense, yet it all proceeds from him (and what was in him), so that he is present all the time.* Now while composing the *tale* he may have certain general designs (the plot for instance), and he may have a clear conception of the character (independent of the particular tale) of each feigned actor. But those are the limits of his 'foreknowledge.' Many authors have recorded

the feeling that one of their actors 'comes alive' as it were, and does things that were not foreseen at all at the outset and may modify in a small or even large way the process of the tale thereafter. All such unforeseen actions or events are, however, taken up to become integral parts of the tale when finally concluded. Now when that has been done, then the author's 'foreknowledge' is complete, and nothing can happen, be said, or done, that he does not know of and will/or allow to be. Even so, some of the Eldarin philosophers ventured to say, it was with Eru.

§9. *If one 'character' in the tale is the author then he becomes as it were only a lesser and partial picture of the author in imagined circumstances.

The note originally ended here, about a third of the way down the page; but at a later point (judging by the change of writing implement), Tolkien added one more very rough and faint paragraph (readings marked here as uncertain are for the most part very uncertain indeed), apparently applying the simile of "the author of a tale" to his cosmogonic myth:

§10. [? ?] Music of Ainur ancient legend from Valinorean days. Firs[t] stage the music or 'concert' of voices and instruments—Eru takes up alterations by [?the] created wills ('good' or bad) and adds of His own. Second stage the theme now [?transformed is provided with] a Tale and presented as visible drama to the Ainur [?bounded but great.] Eru had not [?complete] foreknowledge, but [?after it His] foreknowledge was [?complete] to the smallest detail—but [?He] did not reveal it all. He veiled the latter part from the eyes of the Valar who were to be actors.

NOTES

> I am grateful to Christopher Tolkien for providing me with a photocopy of these texts and for his assistance in reading the more nearly illegible portions; and further to the Tolkien Estate for their kind grant of permission to publish these texts here.

1   These notes date to no earlier than 1968, since they were written on discarded Allen & Unwin publishing notices dated January 1968. Tolkien had already written extensively on the same topic in notes dating to the mid-1960s: see Tolkien's "Words, Phrases & Passages in *The Lord of the Rings,*" published in *Parma Eldalamberon* XVII (in particular 104–10, 123–4, and 163–4). These earlier notes likewise range beyond strictly linguistic discussion into the nature and relations of fate and the created world, and as such have direct bearing on the discussion presented here and should be consulted by the reader.

2   The query mark is Tolkien's own. The symbol ">" is commonly used in linguistics to mean "yielded", either in form (by phonological development) or meaning (by semantic variation). Here the meaning is that from the basic sense 'settle, establish' arose the sense "to erect permanent buildings or dwellings."

3   In keeping with the sense of the rest of this marginal note, Tolkien's intent here may have been to write "he could not change them into *something else,*" referring to the preceding objects, which can be altered in form or state (as water to steam) or even analyzed into constituent elements (oxygen and hydrogen), but cannot be changed into another thing entirely.

4   Cf. also Gandalf's statement, "I did no more than follow the lead of 'chance'" in "The Quest of Erebor" (*Unfinished Tales* 322).

5   This paragraph, interpolated from the first version of the note, continues with a partial sentence: "Ambar is complex enough, but only Eru who made and designed both Ambar (the processes of Eä)." Tolkien interrupted the sentence at this point to provide an etymological note on *Eä*, which reads: "*Ea* 'it is' only = the total of Ambar: the given material and its processes of change. Outside *Ea* is the world/sphere of aware purpose and will." This was followed at the bottom of the page by an etymological note on the Quenya word for 'will' :

> ?DEL: Q. *lēle*, v[erb] *lelya* (*lelinye*). To *will* with conscious purpose, immediate or remote. To be willing, to assent, consent, agree—quite different, for it partakes of *will* but is an additional [?accident]. A man may say 'I [?wish], I agree, I will' to some proposition of another without special purpose of his own (but he may also have reflected that it fits in with some design of his own and so agree to it as he might not otherwise have done).

The top of the next page begins the second version of the text.

Works Cited

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J.R.R. Tolkien and *The Wanderer*: From Edition to Application

Stuart D. Lee

Towards the end of his Valedictory Address, presented on the 5th June 1959, Professor Tolkien chose, by way of conclusion, to read the famous *ubi sunt* lines from the Old English poem *The Wanderer*:

> If then with understanding I contemplate this venerable foundation, I now myself *frōd in ferðe* am moved to exclaim:

> *Hwǽr cwóm mearh, hwær cwóm mago? Hwǽr cwóm máþþumgyfa?*
> *Hwǽr cwóm symbla gesetu? Hwǽr sindon seledréamas?*
> *Éalá, beorht bune! Éalá, byrnwiga!*
> *Éalá, þéodnes þrym! Hú seo þrág gewát,*
> *genáp under niht-helm, swá heo nó wǽre!*

> Where is the horse gone, where the young rider? Where now the giver of gifts? Where are the seats at the feasting gone? Where are the merry sounds in the hall? Alas, the bright goblet! Alas, the knight and his hauberk! Alas, the glory of the king! How that hour has departed, dark under the shadow of night, as had it never been! (*MC*, 239)

Douglas Gray, who was present at the lecture recalls:

> . . . there was a stillness in the room as if the Green Knight himself had come in. He really understood, as few medievalists do, the importance of "performance" for medieval literature. (21)

Over thirty years before his final lecture, Tolkien remarked that these lines were:

> Deservedly famous.[1] One of the best expressions of this motive in literature . . . we do not gain much from the argument of scholars as to whether it is a native or a learned motive. We might say it is a human motive! . . . And the question "where are" of the departed has been asked (as one might expect) in many languages. (A 38, f. 36v)[2]

For many reasons the choice of these lines was fitting. They focus on transience, and no doubt Professor Tolkien himself saw this as a moment

of passing. More importantly, as we shall see by consulting Tolkien's work (predominantly his unpublished material), he engaged with this poem on a regular basis; and, by exploring these interactions, we can draw some interesting conclusions about Tolkien and his scholarship.

Before proceeding with the analysis of Tolkien's interaction with the poem, it is worth reminding ourselves of the original text. *The Wanderer* is an Old English poem. It survives in a single copy in *The Exeter Book* (ff. 76v-78r), and is usually described as an elegy (and thus part of a series of Old English elegies, including such poems as *The Ruin*, *The Seafarer*, etc.). It is a powerful poem detailing an individual's exile from society, his lonely wanderings, and at the same time it touches on themes of general loss.

The structure of the poem is fairly straightforward in one way, in that it has an opening and closing (almost like a prologue and epilogue), and in between is a lengthy speech by a single protagonist (but, as we will see later, the number of people speaking in the poem is not without debate). It begins with an image of a lonely individual suffering hardship (ll. 1-4). This, it is generally assumed, is the wanderer of the title, who we discover to be an outcast, pacing the earth without the solace of friends, relations, or lords (ll. 8-10)—a near death-sentence in the early Middle Ages. The poet then proceeds to explore a range of ideas and topics familiar to other Old English poems opening up from a single incident (the exiled wanderer of the poem's title) to wider issues concerning the nature of suffering, and the transitory nature of existence.

As it stands it is a Christian poem. Yet, on the face of it is not concerned with any great theological debate, but instead concentrates on the plight and personal loss of a single human being, who dreams of the past and contrasts it with the harsh present. In his mind he can summon up images of bygone joys and friends, but he cannot capture them forever. On wakening they simply disappear and "swim away" (ll. 41-8). He extrapolates from his own loneliness the observation that all worldly glory and comforts seem transitory. Although one is tempted to cry in despair at the loss of the horse, the warrior, and the hall (ll. 92-96—the passage quoted earlier), the wanderer reminds us that everything must pass. Thus a person should not bemoan his loss and instead must hold resolute—seen as a virtue. For suffering, the wanderer concludes, can in itself lead to wisdom (ll. 64-5). The poet appeals, therefore, to all lonely voyagers and wanderers in exile—which to a Christian is everyone, i.e. we are all exiled from Eden and temporarily from Heaven.

It is a tale, therefore, of personal loss, but to many readers it also offers consolation. It begins and ends with mention of *ar* or "mercy." Thus, although we open with the harshness of the present, by the end we are guided to look to the brighter future of salvation.

Bearing this briefest of synopses in mind, let us now consider Tolkien's interactions with the text. From the outset, however, it should be noted that Tolkien never published a final edition of *The Wanderer* (though there is evidence to suggest that he had every intention of doing so),[3] or for that matter, wrote any articles solely directed at an analysis of the poem.[4] Nevertheless, contained in his unpublished notes are a series of studies directly or indirectly analyzing the text. Table 1 presents a complete list of the manuscripts containing his notes on *The Wanderer* and this will be used throughout this article.

The earliest datable mention of the poem appears in material supporting his lectures for Oxford's English Faculty in Hilary Term 1927.[5] This was just under two years after he had arrived back at Oxford from his Readership at Leeds University, and for that term Tolkien was listed as teaching:

Exodus
Gothic (class)
Old Icelandic: *Völsunga Saga*
Old English Philology (Morphology and Vocabulary)
The Verse of Sweet's *Anglo-Saxon Reader*
King Horn (Textual and Dialectal Comparison of the MSS)
Discussion Class[6]

Supplementing his lecture on "The Verse of Sweet's *Anglo-Saxon Reader*"[7] we find in his notes a translation of *The Wanderer* (A30 C, ff. 13-15), some introductory remarks on the poem (A30 E, ff. 22-25), and a more detailed textual analysis (A30 F, ff. 26-39). The evidence presented by the lecture list indicates that these notes by Tolkien all date from the period 1926-27.

From around the same time we also have another collection of notes (A38 A, ff. 1-8, and A 38 B, ff. 9-12). Included therein is a reading list that includes texts by Nora Kershaw and W. J. Sedgefield (both from 1922) and a reference to W. P. Ker's *English Literature: Medieval* (originally published in 1912 but reissued in 1925). A38 B, ff. 9-12, are more problematic to date, and we shall return to this collection later on.

At this point there is a gap of a few years, but it is possible that material from this period are now lost. As noted earlier, Douglas A. Anderson (19) states that after the launch of the Methuen Old English Library in 1932, Tolkien and E. V. Gordon signed up to be the senior partners on the editions of *The Wanderer* and *The Seafarer*, respectively. Anderson states that, "these editions were essentially complete by the mid-1930s." The assumption is that Tolkien sent his notes and drafts to Gordon for final revision, but if he did so, the papers no longer survive.

Next we have a series of drafts and redrafts of a talk entitled a "short

Table 1. Tolkien's notes on *The Wanderer* (*TW*) in chronological order

Shelfmark	Possible date	Comments
A38 (D), ff. 16-21	Hilary Term, 1927	Hilary term lecture list for 1927, but notes not directly related to *TW*.
A38 (C), ff. 13-15	1926-7	Preparatory notes and lecture for 1927 lecture. E = lecture, F = word by word notes of *TW*, C = translation of *TW*.
A 38 (E), ff. 22-25	1926-7	"
A 38 (F), ff. 26-39	1926-7	"
A 38 (A), ff. 1-8	1927?	Typed up version of A38 (E), ff. 22-25. Clearly later as in A38 (E) f22v there is a pencil insertion of: "presented to the Cathedral by Leofric— Bishop of Ex. 1050-1072." This appears in the typescript of A38 (A), as "in the library of Exeter Cathedral, to which it was presented by Leofric, Bishop of Exeter 1050-1072." A38 (E) also has handwritten reading list that corresponds to A38 (A)'s opening.
A 38 B ff.9-12	1930s/1940s?	Eight sides with three further general statements about *TW*.
A30/1 (A1), ff. 1-5	1937 completed by January 14th 1938	Radio talk
A30/1 (A2), ff. 6-13	"	"
A30/1 (A3), ff. 14-22	"	"
A30/1 (A4), ff. 23-40	"	"
A30/1 (A5), ff. 41-68	1942	Adaptation of radio talk. Renamed "The Beginnings of English Poetry."
A30/1 (A6), ff. 69-82	1943-1948	"
Valedictory Address	5th June 1959	
A30/1, ff. 107-168	1964-65	Response to Burton Raffel's translations. F.106 has sheet from *The Daily Telegraph and Morning Post*, dated Saturday, September 21, 1963.

Lecture on Old English Verse" or occasionally just "Anglo-Saxon Verse" (A 30/1, ff. 1-82). This was the nucleus of a 15-minute broadcast given by Tolkien in 1938 for the BBC's National Programme, which formed part of the series entitled *Poetry Will Out: Studies in National Inspiration and Characteristic Forms*. It was broadcast on the 14th January in the late evening from 10.45-11.00 pm. Christopher Tolkien, when attempting to derive the chronology of these pieces in 1985, provided a lengthy note on a flyslip to the collection:

> There are many different interconnected versions of which I have not precisely determined the relations.
>
> Those labelled A1, A2, A3 seems [sic.] certainly to have been produced in that order, though emendations were incorporated in A3.
>
> A4 has a different beginning (the Battle of Brunanburgh), but the reference to "1000 years ago last autumn" shows it to belong to the same time. A2 has the headnote "submitted as script for talk Jan. 14 1938," A3 the headnote "revised and timed," and A4 "revised according to your suggestions" [8] (whose?) together with notes in another hand referring to the delivery of the talk on BBC radio.
>
> A5 and A6, also beginning with the Battle of Brunanburgh, are later and differently conceived. On the third page of A5 is reference to "1942," while the ref. on p.1 of A6 to "1006 this summer" shows it was written in 1943.[9]

We now know the answer to some of these questions. For example, the mysterious person addressed in A4 who probably offered Tolkien suggestions on the broadcast was C. V. Salmon (see Scull and Hammond's *Chronology* 206ff.). However, piecing together the exact timeline of these drafts takes much more effort, as Christopher Tolkien realized.

The collection of material contained in A 30/1, ff. 1-82, is illustrative of two issues one has to face when dealing with Tolkien's manuscripts. First, as is widely known, he was a great rewriter and adapter of his own work and this talk alone has four separate drafts preparing for the 1938 radio broadcast (across ff. 1-40). Second, the exact dating of a manuscript is not always easy. For example, although we know the date of the radio talk (14th January 1938) it is evident that Tolkien used the short talk at a later stage for a much longer presentation, expanding it to produce the set of notes found in ff. 41-68, and ff. 69-82, at two separate moments in time. Evidence within the text of the talk, as we shall see, clearly suggests that these range from 1942 to 1948. A precise chronology is difficult, but

clues emerge within the body of the text and also in occasional margi-
nalia. For example, in the various versions there is the running reference
to the Battle of Brunanburgh as noted by Christopher Tolkien (which
occurred in the year 937). In the scripts for the BBC broadcast (A 30/1,
ff. 1-40), completed over the Christmas of 1937 and New Year of 1938,
Tolkien refers to the battle as being "1000 years ago last autumn." How-
ever, in the later notes (A 30/1, ff. 41-68), this was changed to "1003"
(years ago) and "1005" with an interlinear note of "1942" (f. 42). In the
final version (A30/1, ff. 69-82) Tolkien recorded "1000 years ago—1006
this summer \autumn/ to be precise" (f. 69), subsequently changing
"1006" to "1008," then to "1012," and eventually settling on "1011 last."
In addition, on f. 69v he writes "1943" and then "1945."

Christina Scull and Wayne Hammond (*Chronology* 257) suggest that at
some point in 1943 Tolkien revised "a talk on Old English Verse, prob-
ably to give at the Oxford High School for Girls." However, as we can
see from the above, evidence indicates that he began to rewrite this the
year before, in 1942 (i.e. f. 42). The reference to "tonight" on A 30/1 f.57
(by this time the talk had become "The Beginnings of English Poetry")
is quite probably the evening talk of 1943 for the School as identified by
Scull and Hammond. However, evidently from the note on f. 69v, he was
also still using the talk at least 1,011 years after the battle, i.e. extending
its lifetime to 1948 or beyond.

The talk, in its various forms, sweeps across *The Battle of Brunanburgh*
and *Cædmon's Hymn*; a discussion of meter, kennings, and alliteration; the
fusion between Germanic beliefs and Christianity; a brief look at Old
Norse; cursory discussions of *Beowulf*, the Old English riddles, *The Dream
of the Rood*, and *The Battle of Maldon*; and most importantly a brief men-
tion of the two elegies *The Wanderer* and *The Seafarer*. Of the latter poems
Tolkien at one point states:

> These are the words of men who knew the northern seas in
> small boats. Anglo-Saxon verse has many echoes of the cold
> waves, and the cry of the seabirds. It is, perhaps, not surpris-
> ing that the reflective poetry of a people with the traditions
> of the cold north seas, frozen in winter, should show two ele-
> giac poems, in which the sorrows of the lonely seafarer are
> a leading theme, and a symbol of desolation of spirit. These
> two remarkable poems of individual sentiment, are also pre-
> served in the Exeter Book, and are now usually known as the
> Wanderer and Seafarer.
>
> In the *Wanderer* the poet passes before the end of the poem
> to the vision of a ruin, and a lament for the days devoured

by time, a poignant expression of a dominant Anglo-Saxon mood: with this epitaph on antiquity, I will end this brief echo of the now long-vanished Anglo-Saxon days.[10]

It is interesting to note how he sees *The Wanderer* as a closing down, an epitaph, and this perhaps explains why it resurfaced twenty years later as the appropriate text to be used at the close of his Valedictory Address.

As a slight digression, in A 30/1, ff. 41-68, there is a noteworthy comment on the contemporary situation in Europe. Although this was crossed through at some point by Tolkien, it is a good example of what we shall see later on, namely "application" or his use of medieval literature to reveal insights into contemporary events:

> Europe & Britain—perhaps Britain in particular—have an intricate complex history racially and culturally. Nearly all the worst errors come from attempts at false simplifications in the service of this or that theory. I am not a simplifier, dealing with plain polemic discussions in Nordic and Latin, civilized and savage. There is not time to go into all that. I only warn you in case you should suspect that I was a secret Nazi and had gone all Nordic, because I wish to emphasize certain things which the bewildered and tragic nonsense talked in modern Germany has made suspect. Believe me I hate it—though as nonsense it only beats by a narrow margin much that has been written by H. Belloc in the History of England. (f. 45)

As we noted at the beginning of this article Tolkien drew on *The Wanderer*, quoting it during his Valedictory Address of 1959. Finally, from 1964-65 we have the most comprehensive analysis of the poem in an unpublished response to Burton Raffel's set of translations entitled *Poems from the Old English*, to be discussed below.[11]

Considered together these manuscripts and typescripts provide us with transcriptions, translations, glossaries, and analyses all related to *The Wanderer* ranging from the 1920s through to the 1960s with six main peaks of concerted effort (1927, 1938, 1942, 1948, 1959, and 1964-65) plus a possible "missing" period related to his work for Methuen with Gordon in the 1930s. It is tempting, of course, to consider whether it is possible to collate these to present something approaching Tolkien's edition of the poem. Table 2 suggests that this might be possible. By way of example, here we have a collation of all the "transcriptions" and translations he produced of the *ubi sunt* lines (there is no evidence to suggest Tolkien actually transcribed from *The Exeter Book* itself, but its facsimile appeared in 1933). To an ill-informed observer, this may look like the real

Table 2: Hypothetical edition

The Wanderer ll. 88-96 (ed.) **J.R.R. Tolkien**

Se þonne þisne wealsteal   wise geþohte
and þis deorce lif   deope geondþenceð,
frod on ferðe   feor oft gemon (90)
wælsleahta worn.   And þas word acwið:
"Hwær cwom mearg, hwær cwom mago, hwær cwom maþþumgyfa?
Hwær cwom symbla gesetu?   Hwær sindon seledreamas?
Eala beorht bune!   Eala byrnwiga!
Eala þeodnes þrym!   Hu seo þrag gewat, (95)
Genap under niht-helm,   swa heo no wære!"

————————————————

MS: W2 = A38, f 14v [1926-1927]; W8 = A30, f.13 [1937-8];
W9 = A30, f. 21 [1937-8]; W10 = A30, f. 33 & ff. 37-8 [1937-8];
W11 = A30, f. 44 [1942 or later]; W13 = Valedictory Address [1959]

===

88-9]] omitted W9; 92] mearg | mearh, W9, W13;
maþþumgyfa | maþmgifa, W9.

The Wanderer ll. 88-96 (ed.) **J.R.R. Tolkien**

"He then who these foundations with understanding
and this dark life deeply considereth,
old in heart he will oft remember (90)
many a cruel war long ago afar off. And these words will speak:
"Where now the horse, where now the rider; where now
the giver of gold?
Where now the places of feasting? Where are the glad voices
of the hall?
Alas, the bright goblet! Alas, the mailed knight!
Alas, the glory of the kings! How that time has passed, (95)
dark under night-shade, as had it never been!"

===

90] oft | omitted W9, W10; 91] afar off | omitted W9, W10; 92]
horse | steed, rider | knight, W2; 93] glad voices | revelries, W2;
94] bright goblet | goblet bright, W2, mailed | mailclad, W2,
W10, mailed \clad/, W10 ff. 37-38; 95] kings | king, W2, W10;
has | hath, W9, W10; 96] "obscured under the cloak of night as
had it never been," W11, "faded dark beneath the cloak of night,
as had it never been!," W2.

thing. Yet is this really a glimpse of an edition by Tolkien? The answer is, of course, an emphatic "no." If Tolkien had wanted to produce an edition of *The Wanderer* he would have done so, probably as part of the ambitious plan he devised with E. V. Gordon (mentioned earlier). What we simply have here are the kinds of notes one would expect to find in any lecturer's filing cabinet who has repeatedly taught a text. Simply collating these does not an edition make. They are still what they appear to be at face value—notes; the collected notes of a scholar over many years, some datable, some not, some incomplete, some contradictory. An edition by Tolkien would have presented his final views on the punctuation, spelling, and so on—in a far more cohesive form. That is not to denigrate in any way the depth to which Tolkien clearly interacted with the text (a sophistication, it has to be said, that goes beyond the standard expected of basic background teaching material), but it is important to step back and consider for a moment how Tolkien himself might have felt about someone else producing an edition in his name from this material. One would suspect he would have been somewhat dismayed.

Collectively, though, what we do have is a series of analyses of the poem by Tolkien over several years which give us an insight into some of the issues he considered worthy of exploring. We also have, as has been recognised elsewhere[12] and will be discussed towards the end of this article, his attempts to apply the poem both to his fiction and to his theories of literature.

Let us begin with his discussions of the poem. Here, again, we must be guarded in our use of the material and rather than cite randomly for effect, we should restrict ourselves to only drawing on:

> a) material that taken together shows patterns of consistency from across the years, i.e. points of interest he came back to again and again;

> or

> b) material that appears towards the end of his career and perhaps illustrates his conclusions on the poem after a lifetime's study of the text and its context.

First, there is the title of the poem. Benjamin Thorpe named it *The Wanderer* in 1842, but many scholars throughout the years (e.g., R. A. Peters) have been less than content with this, preferring something along the lines of "The Exile." Tolkien also disliked Thorpe's suggestion and in 1926-7 was already toying with replacing the term "wanderer" with "an exile" (A38, f. 13), or even "alone a banished man" and the "survivor" (A38, f. 23). In 1964-65 he was still arguing for a new title suggesting

"The Exile's Lament" was more appropriate, drawing a parallel to the German "Des Elenden Klage" (A 30, f.115). Tolkien, we can therefore assume, agreed with C. T. Onions who, in his edition of Henry Sweet's *Anglo-Saxon Reader* (1922), remarked that the poem dealt mainly with exile and only incidentally with wandering.[13]

The title, however, was really only a touchstone to Tolkien's greater concern, namely who was the character or characters at the center of the poem—the so-called "anhaga" and "eardstapa." We begin to get an understanding of Tolkien's views in his long exploration of the poem contained in the lengthy notes dating from 1964-65 (A30/1, ff. 107-68). He headed these:

> Some thoughts on the translation of poetry—especially Old English as aroused by reading "*Poems from the Old English, translated by Burton Raffel*" and his Introduction. With some particular comments on the text and interpretation of *The Wanderer* and *Riddle 8/9*. (A30, f. 107)

It would appear that the American scholar Burton Raffel sent Tolkien a copy of his book of translations (Raffel 1960)[14] plus an article entitled "On Translating *Beowulf*" from the *Yale Review* (Raffel 1965). As a token of respect Raffel prefaced this with the address "Old English re-creations for a far greater re-creator, whose hobbit-lore has bewitched my whole family" (A30, f. 121).

Tolkien, in a series of unpublished notes, was extremely critical of Raffel's method of translation or "re-creation." We can perhaps get an insight into why this might have been by looking briefly at Raffel's theories on translation as outlined in the introduction to his book (Raffel 1965, 11-14), which would seem at odds with Tolkien's own views (Tolkien 1940). Raffel began by suggesting that translating was "a minor art . . . almost impossible." He argued that the "translator's only hope is to re-create something roughly equivalent in the new language" and talked of "life in a new form." By way of example, he used line 1 of *The Wanderer* saying that it literally meant "Often the lonely one asks [prays for] mercy [grace]," or "The lonely one often asks for grace." Yet even then Raffel is not content, stating this is "not completely *scop*-like work" (13), and instead settles on "This lonely traveller longs for grace" claiming "it is probably about as much as the modern reader can be expected to tolerate" (13). Tolkien's disgust was evident in his acidic reposte.[15] He described Raffel's work as "conceited nonsense" and detected in it "the unwanted impudence of a parasite" (A 30, f. 161 and f. 121 respectively). In a further insight into his own views on translation theory Tolkien remarked that "The making of translations should be primarily for private amusement, and profit. . . . But publication of the result needs some

defence" (A 30, f. 107r). He warned that the translator should not "in-trude any sentiment" of one's own "nor to disarrange the order of word and thought in the old poem, in an impertinent attempt to make it more pleasing to myself, and perhaps to others" (A 30, f. 121r).

However, what is interesting for the purposes of this article is that in these notes Tolkien takes the opportunity to not only attack Raffel, but also to perform a fairly extensive analysis of the poem itself. In particular he centered exactly on who or what the main protagonist might be (or for that matter, how many there were). The "anhaga," Tolkien wrote, "does not mean just "lonely one," but refers to a man living in special condi-tions and is not applicable (for instance) to a man in a boat" (A30, f.113). The given title of the poem, to Tolkien's distaste, derived from the "eard-stapa" (l. 8) brought with it connotations of pointless wandering (A30, f. 117), and Raffel, it is worth noting, almost dutifully supplied "aimlessly" at line 5 of his translation. Tolkien argued that the main person of the poem had a purpose, namely to "reach a land where he had some hope of being allowed to live unmolested . . . this is in fact what the survivor says that he had done," and equally important he was trying to find peo-ple in whom he could confide (A30, f. 117). For Tolkien then, "anhaga" more probably meant "a man who dwells alone"[16] or who has a "solitary abode" (A30, f. 140) reinforcing this with occurrences found elsewhere in Old English.[17] This, it should be noted, is in keeping with the stance of many other editors. Roy F. Leslie (1966 and 1985), T. P. Dunning and Alan Bliss (1969), Bernard J. Muir (1994), Andy Orchard (2002 5 n. 15), Elaine M. Treharne (2004), Bruce Mitchell and Fred C. Robinson (2007), and the *Old English Thesaurus,*[18] etc, all suggest something along the lines of "solitary man/one/being" or "one who dwells alone."

Tolkien also discussed the possible historical context for the main character. He suggested, again in 1964-5, that:

> [the] Wanderer, and Seafarer all seem to be concerned with nameless "types." No names are at any rate mentioned. But "types" are derived from individuals, known by expression or from report and story, and it is by no means certain that these pieces had not, or at least that the material they adapted had not, at one time recognizable references to actual named fig-ures of story: \e.g./ *Seafarer* to a mariner-adventurer a north-ern Ulysses-like character in his old age: *Wanderer* to an exile-survivor of a national disaster, sole champion of a King's *gesiþas* to escape. (A30, f. 152)

Tolkien also turned his attention to an issue that has arisen again and again in scholarship surrounding *The Wanderer*; namely the number of

speakers represented in the poem (usually manifested by the punctuation decisions of modern editors). For example, one could indicate lines 1-5 as direct speech (as Leslie does, but rejected by George Krapp and Elliot Dobbie,[19] Mitchell and Robinson, and Treharne). Moreover, one could also close the "main" monologue at l. 110 or alternatively allow it to continue to the end of the poem (Mitchell and Robinson, Treharne, and Muir, all close at l. 110, Leslie lets it continue to the end, whilst Krapp and Dobbie open speeches at l. 8, and at l. 92, but only close one of them). Similarly, should one strongly indicate the intervention of the "poet-philosopher" at any point as Dunning and Bliss do at ll. 88-91?

As early as 1927 Tolkien was already considering many of these complex issues, remarking that:

> At the outset we have a difficulty. A speech is begun by someone unnamed (an *eardstapa*) at line 8. Where does it end? Sweet (and Onions)[20] never closed the inverted commas—though new ones are put in at l. 92. Should we close them in the middle of l. 29 at *wynnum*? Or at 62 at *maguþegnas*? Or even at 87 with *stódon*? All these have been suggested." (A38, f. 15v)

Notably this is four years before Krapp and Dobbie began to publish the *Anglo-Saxon Poetic Records* and nine years before their attempt at *The Exeter Book*. It is sixteen years before Bernard F. Huppé's discussions of such matters (Huppé 1943), and twenty-three years before Robert M. Lumiansky's seminal article (Lumiansky 1950). By 1964-5, despite all the work published in the meantime which suggested a single speaker, Tolkien was still arguing for multiple roles—three in total: the "anhaga" as distinct from the "eardstapa," and the poet:

> . . . the *eardstapa* is not identical with the *anhaga* of line 1: he is a similar case introduced as an illustration . . . , the general *oratio recta* of the piece is interrupted in lines 88-95b to introduce the similar case of the *anhaga* who finds his situation of (?) and persecutions in his own land insupportable . . . I personally believe that the *eardstapa* and his reported lament ends probably at wynnum 29a /where *ic/me* gives way to *se/he* etc\, and certainly goes no further than *wynn eal gedreas* [36b]. The *anhaga* of 40 is the *anhaga* of 1." (A30, f. 152v)

On a broader level Tolkien also recognized that the poem dealt with important themes common to Old English poetry. In 1937-38 he noted it as a poem of "individual sentiment" (A30, f. 20), and, as already observed, "an epitaph on antiquity" (A30, f. 21). In 1942 he suggested it

provided "glimpses of ancient things, echoes of an old world that has now forever vanished" (A30, f. 44), but later added that it was also "timeless" (A30, f. 81v). He recognized that along with *The Seafarer* it captured the "horror and allurement of the sea" (A30, f. 81v) but argued that there was no evidence of sailing *per se*, stating categorically that the "hreran mid hondum hrimcealdne sæ" (l. 4 of the poem) had nothing whatsoever to do with boats (A30, f. 146).

Tolkien observed that the initial motivation of the poem (notably the exile of the "anhaga") was presented by the poet as a result of "wyrd." This was a concept that clearly interested him and he came up with this attractive description:

> What is wyrd? History . . . [This] can be viewed as an ineluctable series of events that marches on, without regard to any man, Cæsar or churl; or as a flowing stream of things that can by some great men, or by many men united in some hope or passion, be turned this way or that: yet even so . . . it runs down inevitably to the Great Sea at last (A38, f. 9)

Tolkien did not see "wyrd" as being in opposition to God, however, or that the fusion of pagan and Christian beliefs in *The Wanderer* was in any way "muddle-headed" (A38, f. 9). Instead he remarked that:

> Past beliefs cast their shadow behind: the mood long outlives them. The dominant note of paganism is regret, or indeed despair. It may have fair gods or foul gods (or both); but at any rate it has little hope (A38, f. 9v)

He did recognize that the poem was "touched by Christian sentiment" (A38, f. 12v) but stated that "this is a poem of mood . . . not of philosophy and religion" (A38, f. 12v).

Finally, there was the dating of the poem. Other scholars have suggested a wide range of dates for the original composition (e.g. Leslie suggests the end of the eighth century, whilst Dunning and Bliss argue for the first half of the tenth century). Tolkien's view was that it could not be placed before the eighth century and favored a late eighth/early ninth century composition (linking it to the ominous sacking of Lindisfarne in 793, Jarrow in 794, and the rain of blood in York and dragons in the sky—A38, ff. 10-12). In a sideswipe at some unnamed critics he argued:

> We have, it is nonetheless murmured, the hackneyed hour before dawn; the same old generous patron (the *goldwine*); the wintry sea, of course; the crumbling ruin, alas!; the transitiveness of earth, yes, yes. But why not? These things are fundamental at all times; and they must have touched very

near the heart in England (especially the North of England) round about the year A.D. 800. (A38, f. 12)

Tolkien accepted that the poem contained the stock images one associates with the Old English elegies, and recognized that some critics tired of these (hence "hackneyed"). However, he saw nothing labored in their use. Instead, to him they captured a range of very human and timeless sentiments, and would have been clearly appropriate in late eighth/early ninth century England with the Viking attacks. The Old English poet, in other words, was capturing the spirit of his time but in a manner that was "timeless" and cannot be criticized for that.

The title of this article suggests another way of approaching Tolkien's engagement with *The Wanderer*, namely his application to a particular literary or social context. As we shall see in both his fiction, and in his comments on contemporary events, he attempts to apply the message (as he saw it) of *The Wanderer* in ways that again help to illustrate his interpretation of the text. In his poetry, for example, elegiac images, intermingled with wanderings or journeys are evident—as in "The Town of Dreams and the City of Present Sorrows" (originally entitled "The Wanderer's Allegiance"),[21] or "Ides Ælfscyne" and "Ofer Widne Garsecg."[22] However, it is equally likely that these reflect his interest in *The Seafarer*. Scull and Hammond in their *Reader's Guide* (482) suggest a stronger link between *The Wanderer* and his poem "The Last Ark," mirroring the questioning repetition at the opening of each stanza of Tolkien's poem with the *ubi sunt* passage. This, however, is not entirely convincing.

Leslie A. Donovan (697-8) notes that the poem has themes also recalling the Noldor Elves' exile in Middle-earth, the link with the Ents in l. 87 of the poem, the portrayal of the Dúnedain, and sees parallels with Legolas's longing for the sea in the depiction of the sea-birds of the poem (though one suspects again that a closer parallel can be found in *The Seafarer*).

The most obvious application of *The Wanderer* by Tolkien is its reuse in *The Lord of the Rings* as has been regularly commented on. In the chapter entitled "The King of the Golden Hall" (*TT*, III, vi, 496-7) Aragorn recites a piece of Rohirrim poetry which he then translates into Common Speech for his comrades.[23] Aragorn explains that the poem is by a "forgotten poet of Rohan" and is related to the story of Eorl the Young, but obviously this is a paraphrase of the *ubi sunt* passage.

Michael D. C. Drout (2004) considers the poem recited by Aragorn and compares it to its Old English "original" and describes this as transformation, noting that "if not for the very obvious parallel in the first line (horse and rider), it would be difficult to demonstrate that the one is derived from the other." This is certainly true when one compares the

treatment Tolkien gives to lines from *The Seafarer* in the *Lost Road* where there are much closer parallels.[24] Yet the influence is clear. We have the repeating of the direct questioning at the beginning of each poem (two lines in the Old English of five questions, four lines in Tolkien's poem of five longer questions). These are then followed by lines of mournful reflection lamenting loss and passing. The Old English is more concise in its longing, but Tolkien feels the need to revert to the questioning mode at the end of his poem.

Both use images one would associate with Germanic heroic poetry (horse/rider/horn/helm/hauberk/harp—Tolkien; horse/rider/treasure-giver/feast/hall/cup/warrior—Old English). However, unlike the Old English, Tolkien makes heavier use of end-rhyme (blowing/flowing/glowing/growing, etc.), with an AAAABBAA pattern (though the last two lines are slightly different in terms of stressed syllables). He does not always attempt to retain the alliteration of the earlier text but occasionally retains the flavour (ll. 1, 2, 3 "a," 5 [mountain/meadow], and so on). Moreover, Tolkien makes interesting use of meter—generally maintaining five (lines 5, 6, and 8) or six stresses (the rest), even utilizing what used to be known as the fourth epitrite (/ / / X) in lines 2-4 and 7—"*bright hair flowing*," "*red fire glowing*," etc.

Yet Tolkien is consistent in his purpose. Bringing the analysis above together, we can note that he is primarily accentual in his verse structure, establishing a rhythm with lines 1-4, changing this with lines 5-6 (and thus the end rhyme), and finishing with a mixture of both (6 and 5 stress lines for 7-8). The reader, however, is brought along because the rhythm, reinforced by verbal repetition and parallelism, is not lost. Although the syntax, rhyme structure, and stress patterns change, it is always stands out, and is performed with a sense of purpose. Even the pattern ending lines 2, 3, 4, 7, and possibly 8, imitates the syllabic-accentual pattern of Old English "D" verse (/ / \ X)[25].

It is entirely appropriate that Tolkien chose Aragorn to recite from *The Wanderer*, for he himself is a Ranger, one of "the wandering folk" (*FR*, I, ix, 153), though, of course, again he is not aimlessly wandering. The "eardstapa" (literally "the earth-stepper") of the poem mirrors Aragorn's nickname "Strider" given to him by the men of Bree (see also Donovan 2007, 698). Like the subject of the Old English poem, Aragorn is in exile, looking for his home, seeking peace and the joys of the hall. He is suffering, knowing the pressure on him to face the challenge of Sauron, and at the same time bears the burden of his seemingly hopeless love for Arwen. Yet unlike the Old English wanderer, Aragorn does not seek a Lord or protector for himself, as he is destined to be King; what he lacks, at least at the beginning, is a kingdom.

As noted above a paraphrase of the famous *ubi sunt* lines from *The*

Wanderer is linked directly with the Rohirrim. The connections between the men of the Mark and the Anglo-Saxons have been well studied, as in the excellent analysis by Tom Shippey in *The Road to Middle-earth* (111-16, 182). Yet, as is equally well known, Tolkien attempted to downplay the relationship to such an extent that he tried to argue that the similarities were there only in a "general way due to their circumstances" (*RK*, Appendix F, II, 1110). Clearly there is an inconsistency. Modern scholars consistently study the link, but Tolkien seemed at pains to distance himself from it. The answer again lies in his unpublished notes. In previous work (Lee and Solopova 2005, 200-202) Tolkien's reply to Raffel's dedication of "Old English re-creations for a far greater re-creator . . ." was noted. He specifically cited the example of the paraphrased lines from *The Wanderer* and it is worth now citing this in full:

> I have never attempted to "re-create" anything. My aim has been the basically more modest, and certainly the more laborious one of trying to make* something new. No one would learn anything valid about the "Anglo-Saxons" from any of my lore, not even that concerning the Rohirrim; I never intended that they should. Even the lines beginning "Where now the horse and the rider," though they echo a line in "The Wanderer," are indeed not much further removed from it verbally, metrically, or in sentiment than are parts of Raffel's "translation," are certainly *not* a translation, re-creative or otherwise. They are integrated (I hope) in something wholly different, the only excuse for the borrowing: they are particular in reference, to a great hero and his renowned horse, and they are suppose\d/ to be part of the song of a minstrel of a proud and undefeated people in a hall still populous with men. Even the sentiment is different: it laments the ineluctable ending and passing back into oblivion of the fortunate, the full-lives, the unblemished and the beautiful. To me that is more poignant than any particular disaster, from the cruelty of men of the hostility of the world. But if I were to venture to translate "The Wanderer"—the lament of the lonely man withering away in regret, and the poet's reflexions upon it—I would not dare to intrude any sentiment of my own, not to disarrange the order of word and thought in the old poem, in an impertinent attempt to make it more pleasing to myself, and perhaps to others. That is not "re-creation" but destruction. At best a foolish misuse of a talent for personal poetic expression; at worst the unwarranted impudence of a parasite. (A30/1, f. 121)

Tolkien's focus on "re-creation" is, of course, reminiscent of his views on the fantasy explained in his essay "On Fairy-stories." Indeed he goes on to state "I might say "sub-create," indicating that if successful the result may be new (in art), though all its material is given" (A30/1, f. 121). Yet, again as noted (Lee and Solopova 202) this extract explains why he downplayed the link between the Anglo-Saxons and the Rohirrim. It clearly arises from his dual role as an academic and a writer. The former, at this point, overtook the latter—i.e. he abhorred the idea that anyone might read about the Rohirrim in *The Lord of the Rings* and feel they had a true understanding of the Anglo-Saxons, or Old English for that matter.

The second instance where Tolkien sought to apply the message of *The Wanderer*, so far unrecorded, appears in the collection labelled A38, ff. 91-12. Underlying this is Tolkien's theory of "eucatastrophe"—the ultimate form of consolation in which a sudden joyous turn in a narrative presents the reader with the denial of "universal final defeat" at the hands of evil, or more positively an *evangelium* in which the reader glimpses evidence of the eternal joy. He related this to the "happy ending" in fairy tales, but evidence uncovered suggests that this also begins to explain another attraction of *The Wanderer* to Tolkien. The poem presented to him, and to his fellow countrymen, a glimpse of light at a time of incredible darkness:

> I at least find more sustenance and support in "The Wanderer," amid the present catastrophe (which seems likely to leave Europe in ruins whichever way it turns) than in all the pretty prattle . . . There is no happy ending to cyningas or caseras \of this world/, whichever new names they may give themselves, and whichever side they may be on, left or right, black or white. (A 38, f 12v).

The comments here tentatively suggest that these notes date from the mid-to-late 1930s or possibly the 1940s. The reference to Europe being in ruins either refers to the build up to the Second World War, or the War itself (it is too late to refer to World War One). If this is the case then it follows that the new names that the *cyningas* or *caseras* give themselves, may well refer specifically to "Führer." The mention of "whichever side they are on, left or right, black or white" is even more interesting as Tolkien also wrote "red or white" as an interlinear gloss. Thus this may well refer to the ideological struggles raging throughout Europe at the time between Fascism and Communism. As we saw earlier, Tolkien was not against directly criticising the Nazis and disassociating himself from their warped version of Germanic culture, but he may also be referring to threat of communism from Stalinism. Tolkien was not shy of criticising Stalin (see *Letters*, 64, 65, 66, and 91) even after the Soviet Union became

an ally in the fight against the Third Reich. However, Tolkien found consolation in what he saw as the message of *The Wanderer*, by inverting the usual negative connotations in the poem linked to transience into a positive, much as *Deor* does. The eucatastrophe is the realization that although all things fade, so too will evil men (such as Hitler and Stalin). Evil can never win and its power is transient—the quintessential glimpse of eternal joy. As he remarked in his conclusion "The Old English poets knew that at any rate" (A 38, f 12v).

This article has demonstrated that *The Wanderer* was a poem that Tolkien turned to throughout his career and his engagements with the text illustrate his academic beliefs, and the complex relationship that existed in his imagination between his studies and his fiction. It could not be argued that his notes contain anything new about the poem, although in some areas he was perhaps tackling issues earlier than others. However, clearly it was a poem that he sought to apply in interesting ways not only to his fiction but also to the events he was witnessing in the wider world.

Notes

1 The fame of this passage was long-standing, see, for example, Bright's early article (1893).

2 References are to the unpublished manuscripts held in the Modern Manuscript room in the Bodleian Library, University of Oxford. All materials cited from these are copyright of the Tolkien Trust (2009).

3 See Anderson (19). Correspondences with Bridget Mackenzie, daughter of Eric and Ida Gordon, suggest that if Tolkien did send papers, or a near final draft of *The Wanderer* to E. V. Gordon, they do not survive.

4 There are several bibliographies of Tolkien's published material available, of which the best is in Scull and Hammond's *Chronology* (813-73). Drout (2007) attempts a more interesting analysis than the usual bibliographies, but unfortunately his study contains some errors (e.g. Tolkien, 1926, is listed as 1925; Salu, 1955, is listed as 1958; Tolkien, 1940, was actually entitled "Prefatory Remarks on Prose Translation of *Beowulf*" and not "On Translating *Beowulf*").

5 The 1927 lecture list is contained in A38, f. 16. Evidence (unsurprisingly) suggests that Tolkien continued to lecture on *The Wanderer* in subsequent years. See, for example, Scull and Hammond's *Chronology* (154) where they note it was taught under "Old English Minor Poems" in Michaelmas Term 1930.

6 A38, f. 1, provides the reading list for these lectures. This included

Wyatt (1919); Sweet (1922); Kershaw (1922); and Sedgefield (1922). See Scull & Hammond's *Chronology* (139).

7   The poem appeared on pp. 159-163 of the 9th edition of Sweet's *Reader*.

8   This note is written in red ink, the same used at the base of A 30/1, f. 21.

9   Copyright of Christopher Tolkien (2009).

10 Actually in variant forms across A30/1. The text on f. 33 presents a good example of this, showing the multiple alterations on this single folio alone:

> These are the words of [deleted: people] men who knew the northern seas in small boats. \[Red ink]Anglo-Saxon verse has many echoes of the cold waves, and the cry of the seabirds [deleted: In particular these are] [deleted: It is, perhaps, not surprising that the reflective poetry of a people with the traditions of the cold north seas, frozen in winter, should show] two elegiac poems, in which the sorrows of the [deleted: solitary] *lonely* seafarer are a leading theme, and a symbol of desolation of spirit. These two remarkable poems of individual sentiment, \[deleted: timeless naming no man or people]\ are \also/ preserved in the Exteter Book, and \are\ now usually known as *Wanderer* and *Seafarer*.
>
> In the *Wanderer* the poet passes before the end of the poem to the vision of a ruin, and a lament for \the days devoured by time/ [deleted: mirth and glory swept away by destroying time] \a poignant expression of a dominant [deleted: mood in this earliest English verse] Anglo-Saxon mood\: [deleted: an] \with this/ epitaph on antiquity, [deleted: with which] I will end /this brief echo of/ [deleted: as an epitaph on] the now long-vanished Anglo-Saxon days.'

11 Scull and Hammond in their *Chronology* (250 and 323), also note correspondences between Tolkien and the poet W. J. B. Owen (1941 and 1947 respectively) concerning *The Wanderer*, yet Tolkien's letters cannot be found.

12 E.g. Shippey (*Road*, 114, 160, 163, and 297).

13 For other discussions of this issue see Lewis (1957).

14 A 2nd edition appeared in 1964. Raffel originally produced his translations for the *London Magazine* 6 no. 2 (July 1959): 22-4.

15 Whilst considering this it is interesting to note that in 1971 Raffel again described his theories, citing R. K. Gordon's translation of the opening two lines of *Beowulf* ("Lo! We have heard the glory of the kings of the Spear-Danes/in days gone by, how the chieftains wrought mighty deeds") as being far worse than Pound's treatment of *The Seafarer*. Gordon, he argued, had "failed to breathe life into his re-creation," suggesting it was impossible to do so unless you can force yourself "away from the original" (Raffel 1971, 86).

16 See his notes for a 1927 lecture when, even at that early stage in his career, he suggested "Oft doth he that dwelleth alone \live to/ know . . ." (A38, f.13). Similarly, in his translations for the radio lecture of 1938, he provided "lonely man" for "anhaga" (A30/1, f. 13, & f. 37).

17 Tolkien considered various other Old English texts where the term occurs. He dismissed the occurrence in *Guthlac (B)* l. 997 of "anhoga," suggesting this was corrupt and should have read "āndaga" or "appointed day." He considered a scribe substituted "anhaga" as it may have suggested to them the idea of "hermit." With the occurrence in the *Phoenix* l. 87, and l. 346ff, Tolkien argued that this implied a "unique and solitary phoenix" (A 30/1, f. 141), i.e. who dwells alone. With the appearances in the *Gnomic Verses (Cotton)* l. 17 ff, or as they are now known *Maxims II*, he accepted the emendation of "earn" to "earm anhaga" as it suggested to him a lone wolf separated from or abandoned by the pack, or "'one living alone" (A 30/1, f. 141v). The appearance of "anhaga" in *Andreas* at l. 1351 led Tolkien to argue that "He [Andreas] is called anhaga here, plainly because he has been shut alone in a prison-cell" (A 30/1, f. 141v) and this is "comparable to an outcast" (f. 142). In *Beowulf* l. 2367ff this is an appropriate description for Beowulf because of his isolation and bereavement (f. 142v), and similarly in *Elene* l. 604 as Judas is now alone "deprived of all friends" (f. 142v). Tolkien struggled with the reference in *Hymn IV* l. 88 (now known as *Resignation*) to "anhoga leodwynn leas" stating it was "far from clear; but it is equated with 'wineleas wrǣcca' 'forlorn outcast'" (f. 142v). He added "this piece, though far inferior as poetry, or even as verse, has close connexions with the kind of composition best known and exemplified in *Wanderer* and *Seafarer*" suggesting "its basis is older verse dealing with varieties of the *anhaga*, but that the particular kind \here/ dealt with \wa/is the outlaw or outcast from the society of men in his *own* land" (ff. 142v-3). He concludes "[as with *The Wanderer* and *The Seafarer*] the sea again comes in, for the lamenter thinks of the sea (97)" and thus he "must have had some dwelling or refuge in which he dwelt, friendless and alone" (f. 143).

Tolkien also looked at the "Shield" Riddle, but missed the reference in *Psalms* 101:8 (Lindelöf, 1909-14, l. 1576).

18 <http://libra.englang.arts.gla.ac.uk/oethesaurus/>; cited 19/5/08.

19 Krapp and Dobbie (1931-1953).

20 The 9th edition revised by Onions was published in 1922.

21 *Lost Tales II* (294-8).

22 Published in 1936 in *Songs for the Philologists* with E. V. Gordon.

23 It is interesting to note, as an aside, that Tolkien's first drafts of these chapters for *The Lord of the Rings* all date from around the end of 1941 and 1942, coinciding perhaps with his subsequent adaptations of the 1938 radio talk.

24 See Lee and Solopova (2005, 254-55).

25 With thanks to Dr. E. Solopova for her input on this.

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Essence of Elvish: The Basic Vocabulary of Quenya

Christopher Gilson

J.R.R. Tolkien concluded his 1931 essay on the "Secret Vice" of language invention with some specimens of his own efforts in what he called

> the one language which has been expressly designed to give play to my own most normal phonetic taste . . . and which has had a long enough history of development to allow of this final fruition: verse. It expresses, and at the same time has fixed, my personal taste. Just as the construction of a mythology expresses at first one's taste, and later conditions one's imagination, and becomes inescapable, so with this language. I can conceive, even sketch, other radically different forms, but always insensibly and inevitably now come back to this one, which must therefore be or have become peculiarly mine. (*MC* 212–13).

The language to which Tolkien was referring is represented in three of the specimen poems, "Oilima Markirya" ("The Last Ark"), "Nieninque" and "Earendel" (*MC* 213–16). It can now be traced back in all of its details, insofar as they were recorded by Tolkien in surviving documents, to its emergence in the *Qenyaqetsa* or "Qenya Lexicon" compiled about fifteen years earlier. It was in this dictionary with two and a half thousand entries that some of the earliest of Tolkien's mythological or legendary names were first recorded, or those that appeared in his contemporary poems were given linguistic explanations. In 1917 Tolkien compiled the lexicon of another invented language called *Goldogrin* or "Gnomish," many of whose words he designed to have etymological connections with Qenya, and words from the earlier language were cited in the "Gnomish Lexicon" to elucidate these connections. In *The Book of Lost Tales*, composed over the next few years, Tolkien elaborated and consolidated the mythological conceptions that appear in the early poetry and in some of the entries of the lexicons. The tales included a fictional history of the Elves and Gnomes for whom Tolkien imagined that his invented languages were their native speeches. In the early 1920s Tolkien wrote a grammar of Qenya which shows numerous conceptual associations with the Qenya Lexicon, but also expanded and revised some features of the inflexional patterns of the language that could be observed in specimens incorporated into earlier works. In the later 1920s

Tolkien continued this revision, recorded in a sequence of successively more elaborate paradigms, and he also compiled various Qenya word-lists. During the 1920s Tolkien also worked on Gnomish, writing a grammar of that language and various word-lists in which a prominent feature continued to be the etymological relation of the two languages, which underwent some theoretical changes as well.

This is the history of development to which Tolkien was referring in the essay, and the "one language" that he concluded had become peculiarly his is Qenya, although he does not give its name in the essay. The fourth specimen poem in the essay was composed in Gnomish, which is simply identified as "a totally different if related language" (*MC* 217). A study of the vocabulary of the poems included in the essay, as well as the draft versions that preceded them, has revealed that Tolkien used some words that go back to the Qenya Lexicon, and others that emerged in the later revisions to Qenya during the 1920s. It is apparently in this sense that Tolkien meant that the history of development of Qenya would "allow this final fruition: verse," insofar as it provided a sufficient accumulation of vocabulary for the variety of expression needed in poetry. And it is in this regard that the earliest invented words of Qenya would still have been part of the language unless Tolkien had consciously rejected them or intentionally replaced them with something else.

In 1926 Tolkien had written a "Sketch of the Mythology" (revised around 1930), in which he summarized the features of the Lost Tales necessary to an understanding of the long poems based on the "Tale of Turambar" and the "Tale of Tinúviel" that he was composing around that time (*Shaping* 11). Successive expansions and revisions of the sketch would produce the various annals and historical narratives on which Tolkien worked at various times throughout his life. He would refer to these collectively as "The Silmarillion," and under this name a version edited by Christopher Tolkien was published in 1977. In all of these texts the Elves whom Tolkien imagined as speakers of Quenya continued to appear. During the 1930s and 1940s he also wrote a more elaborate "Quenya Grammar," detailing the sound-system of the language, its inflexions, and their etymological connection through a theoretical common ancestry with other of his invented languages, including Noldorin (i.e. 'Gnomish'), for which he wrote similarly elaborate grammars. These texts have not yet been published, but "The Etymologies," in which Tolkien collected words from his invented languages that he derived from various shared "primitive" roots, has been published (*Lost Road*, 339–400). This includes thousands of Qenya and Noldorin words, though not as much vocabulary as in the early lexicons. It dates from around 1937, at which point Tolkien was beginning to compose *The Lord of the Rings*. Since Tolkien had included Elves, the imagined speakers of his invented

languages, as part of the background to *The Hobbit,* it was perhaps inevitable that he should include some characters who spoke these languages in the story he wrote as its sequel, and so incorporate further specimens of the languages as well. And indeed Tolkien stated in Appendix F that "High-elven or *Quenya*" is one of the languages found in the book (*RK*, Appendix F, 405). It should be noted that *Qenya* and *Quenya* are two spellings of the same word, like English *color* and *colour.*

We might ask then whether this later usage exemplifies Tolkien's impression that he always comes back to the same invented language. In "A Secret Vice" he asserts that the language inventor is free to make choices of "word form in relation to meaning" (*MC* 211). Given this freedom, and indeed the knowledge in retrospect that Tolkien continued to invent new Quenya words over an extensive period, both before and long after composing the essay, we might suggest that he delighted in changing his invented languages and that the urge to do so was the primary motive behind the developments in his conception. But we will see that on the whole such developments can be understood as elaborations or refinements of the same overall linguistic form, and that this fits the evidence better than the idea that Tolkien has ever transformed Quenya into an essentially different language. In this paper we will examine the basic vocabulary of Quenya as it developed in Tolkien's conception, and we will see how these words and their relation to each other are comparable over Tolkien's lifetime and exemplify that linguistic form to which he kept returning.

Before beginning to examine its vocabulary, we should briefly consider certain aspects of the nature of Quenya as a language. Without insisting on a specific definition of the term *language,* we can nevertheless infer from what Tolkien says in "A Secret Vice" that he considered an invented language to be an arbitrary system of words, consisting of phonetic forms and related meanings, together with grammatical devices—added elements and syntactic rules of combination for expressing relations among words. He said that the eventual fruition of the invented system was its use in compositions that satisfy some of "the instincts that go to make poetry" (*MC* 217); so at the very least Quenya provides a means to express ideas that have never been expressed before with precisely the same "relations between symbol and significance" (*MC* 218). Fortunately, when we take into account the many variations in Tolkien's choices of association of word-forms with meanings, we can observe that the actual documentation of such changes takes the form of revisions to texts where the larger context includes other words of Quenya that remain unchanged. Our focus here will be on those words of the invented language that survived as fixed and consistent features over extended periods of time.

Also, from the very earliest of Tolkien's writings about Quenya he envisioned the language as having varying forms which he described as "dialectal" and "historical," and for which he occasionally cited examples. The language of the Qenya Lexicon, for instance, is introduced as "the dialect of Kortirion" and "the language of the Qendi, who are the remnants of the Eldalie living now in Toleressea" (PE 12, 1). In the lexicon certain words are said to be from distinct dialects, e.g. *felpa* 'seaweed' is the Solosimpe form of the Qenya word *filqe* 'fern'.

Tolkien's appeal to aspects of a language that depend on its situation within an historical time-frame leads us to another distinction that we should make with regard to the nature of Quenya as an invention. In the stories and fictional histories, such as *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Silmarillion,* Tolkien included characters whose native language is called "Quenya" and within the fictional world, which we are induced to imagine as we read the stories, Quenya has thousands of years of history both as the native speech of the Noldor in the First Age and as a second language learned by their descendants and other peoples friendly to them in the Second and Third Ages. Most of what Tolkien had to say about these speakers and their culture is written in English, with only a relatively infrequent mention of how their concepts and ideas were expressed in Quenya. This suggests that what we are told about this language is only a fraction of what we are intended to imagine must have been known by one of its speakers, such as Galadriel, who had experienced so much of its history herself.

To put it baldly, the "Quenya" of the stories is largely an illusion, a fiction that Tolkien evokes for us by the careful selection of terminology and construction of nomenclature using the words and devices of his own invented language. This invented Quenya, on the other hand, while it is not the native language of any speakers and is just the personal pursuit of a sole inventor, is nevertheless quite real, in contrast with the sense in which Galadriel's Quenya is only fictional. Although much of what Tolkien wrote about Quenya is couched in the same feigned historical framework as his stories, the essay "A Secret Vice" is one of the occasions where Tolkien clearly discussed Quenya as an invention per se. Here and in other such discussions it becomes clear that the corpus of invented Quenya is not simply part of a notionally larger fictional Quenya that Tolkien had in mind whenever he worked on its invention. Indeed he stated that his invented languages were logically "antecedent" to the stories and have an existence independent of them.

We see this reflected in the fact that some of the texts Tolkien composed in Quenya were never integrated into his mythology. The poems "Nieninque" and "Earendel" belong to the mythology insofar as they allude to specific characters from the Lost Tales or the Silmarillion; but the

connection of "Oilima Markirya" is much more tenuous. In this poem the *níve qímari* ('pale phantoms') aboard the *kirya ninqe* ('white ship') that no one sees *oilima ailinello lúte* ('leave the last shore') might be faded Elves, for instance, but that is only one possible interpretation (*MC* 213–14). About twenty years later Tolkien translated the "Our Father" and "Hail Mary" into Quenya. Of course the frame-story of *The Book of Lost Tales* appears to take place in the Christian Era, and in later stories such as "The Lost Road" and "The Notion Club Papers" Elvish history is ultimately connected with fictional versions of our own time. But the latest version of Tolkien's prehistory in *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Silmarillion* takes place long before this. So the "Átaremma" ('Our Father') and "Aiya María" ('Hail Mary') appear to exemplify Tolkien attempting to use Quenya in a way that was, at least at that point, independent of its fictional use in the legendarium. In this sense invented Quenya and fictional Quenya overlap each other to the extent that Tolkien used examples of the one to represent the other; but they are not the same.

From Tolkien's writings we know many words of invented Quenya, with their phonetic forms and associated meanings, and an assortment of grammatical devices for combining these words into phrases and sentences, such that we can construct Quenya utterances using only these words and devices. Of course there are many concepts for which words exist in English (or other languages) that have no equivalent in the Quenya invented by Tolkien, as was inevitable not only because new concepts continue to be given lexical expression in the world's living languages long after Tolkien has ceased to invent new Quenya words, but also because there are many concepts in our cultures or those imagined by Tolkien which he either had no interest in giving lexical expression in Quenya or simply never got around to doing so. We might identify such gaps, but we can only know about the words of actual invented Quenya; and these will be our focus for now.

So let us start with a list of nouns from the Qenya Lexicon, giving their form and the associated meanings indicated by the accompanying English glosses, words for concrete objects and abstract concepts from the domains of both nature and culture: *oro* 'hill', *niqetil* 'snow-cap', *tumbo* 'dale, vale', *tol* 'an island', *nen* 'river; water', *kelume* 'stream', *tinwe* 'star', *aure* 'sunlight, sunshine, gold light, warmth', *lōme* 'dusk, gloom, darkness', *vilya* 'air'; *ner* 'man, husband', *wendele* 'maidenhood', *atar* 'father'; *alqa* 'swan', *lōke* 'snake', *wilwarin* 'butterfly', *úvanimo* 'monster'; *hen* 'eye', *nie* 'tear', *pē* 'the two lips, the (closed) mouth', *lambe* 'tongue', *karka* 'fang, tooth, tusk', *mā* 'hand', *rāma* 'wing'; *alda* 'tree', *lasse* 'leaf', *lōte* 'a flower, bloom', *miruvōre* 'nectar, drink of the Valar, sweet drink', *laure* 'gold', *telpe* 'silver'; *ondo* 'stone', *anga* 'iron', *tie* 'line, direction, route, road'; *lūme* 'time', *tuile* 'spring; a budding', *lasselanta* 'the fall, autumn', *ambar* 'fate',

olor 'dream', *ōma* 'voice', *parma* 'skin, bark; parchment, book, writings'; *lie* 'people, folk', *noldo* 'gnome', *tāri* 'queen', *heru* 'lord', *makil* 'sword', *sanga* 'throng', *tirion* 'a mighty tower, a city on a hill', *nōre* 'native land, nation, family; country', and *mar* 'dwelling of men, land, the Earth'. Most of these words will be familiar to a reader of *The Lord of the Rings* and other late writings of J.R.R. Tolkien's, since all of these words occur there in essentially the same forms and the same or closely similar meanings.

In regard to the semantic side of these resemblances, we have to bear in mind that Tolkien never compiled any list of Quenya words comparable to the early Qenya Lexicon in either scope or detail. While some of these words are cited in the lexicon with the same succinct glosses that we are more familiar with from the later materials, the lexicon often gives more detail about the meanings of words, usually in the form of alternative, sometimes more specific, translations into English. For example *karka* 'fang, tooth, tusk' appears in "The Etymologies" of the late 1930s as *karka* 'tooth' and in the Appendix to *The Silmarillion* as *carca* 'fang'. From this evidence we might conclude that there was a narrowing and subsequent wavering in Tolkien's conception of the meaning of the Quenya word. But another interpretation that seems more plausible is that we are seeing the consequences of different purposes in the texts where this word is glossed in different ways. The Qenya Lexicon, explicitly subtitled "Qenya dict[ionary]," provides a record of the *diction* of the language, indicating ranges of established meanings of words, while in the Etymologies the focus is on the words of the Qenya, Noldorin, and Ilkorin languages with common origins, so that meanings are cited that illuminate these connections. In the Appendix to *The Silmarillion* words are selected to help explain the meanings of the nomenclature in the text. We might infer then that *karka* 'tooth' was glossed so as to make clear the etymologically significant relation of this word to *karkane* 'row of teeth', cited in the same entry; while *carca* 'fang' may have been cited because this meaning of the word better explains the sense of Sindarin *carch* that occurs in the name *Carchost* 'Fang-fort', mentioned to help explain why the name *Carcharoth* is translated 'the Red Maw' in the text (*S* 180).

Another example is *tol,* whose full gloss in the lexicon is 'an island; any rise standing alone in water, plain of grass, etc.' In the Etymologies this is not glossed explicitly but derived from a Primitive Eldarin form *tollo* 'island' (*Lost Road* 394). In *The Silmarillion* Appendix *tol* 'isle' is given with the further parenthetical qualification, "rising with steep sides from the sea or from a river." This citation actually represents both the Quenya and Sindarin words and the qualification is phrased to help explain the examples of Quenya *Tol Eressëa* 'the Lonely Isle' and Sindarin *Tol Galen* 'the Green Isle', one of which is in the sea and the other in a river. It is clear that Tolkien was not necessarily excluding types of water other than

the sea or a river as possible surfaces from which a *tol* can rise; and this particular logical possibility is supported by the Sindarin name *Tol Brandir* for an island in a lake. By the same token it is possible that Tolkien did not mean the later definition to exclude surfaces other than water; so that we cannot be sure that the 'plain of grass, etc.' in the Qenya Lexicon gloss of *tol* has been forgotten. Perhaps more noteworthy is the additional idea present in the later explanation of the word that a *tol* has "steep sides." This elaboration is a kind of change in Tolkien's presentation of Quenya words that we frequently encounter, where he gives a further nuance to a long-standing conception.

We might also see a connection between this late explanation and the fact that in the Etymologies there is another Qenya word partially synonymous with *tol,* namely *lóna* 'island, remote land difficult to reach'. What these two words can refer to are not mutually exclusive, for *lóna* is a component in an alternative name for the island of Tol Eressea, *Avalóna* 'the outer isle'; but having conceived of the particular kind of island to which *lóna* refers may have led Tolkien eventually to consider more deeply the kind of island that is implied by the use of the word *tol* instead of *lóna.* And it will be seen that this sort of explanation of Tolkien's language-invention process only makes sense if we suppose that in writing a later text he retained some of the essential concepts of an earlier text; so that unless he explicitly rejects an earlier concept, we should investigate whether there is a way to understand a later text as an addition to or elaboration of an earlier one that discusses the same forms or similar meanings of Quenya words. Of course Tolkien does sometimes reject linguistic concepts, and we must take these into account in our overall view of his invented language. Even in such cases, since the rejected word or device will usually be replaced by something else (or we would not know it had been rejected), a full understanding of the process will require us to consider what has remained unchanged in the larger context of the replacement. For this occurrence of new words alongside retained words in a shared context can lead to the development of more subtle nuances in their respective meanings.

Another example where we can observe Tolkien's varying explanation of what seems to be essentially the same invented word begins with the Qenya Lexicon item *sanga* 'throng, tight mass, crowd', which appears in the Etymologies as *sanga* 'crowd, throng, press'. In both places the word is associated with a sword-name *Sangahyando* 'Throng-cleaver', which occurs untranslated in Appendix A of *The Lord of the Rings,* where it is used as the name of a Gondorian rebel. In a letter of 1964 Tolkien explained that the literal meaning 'Throng-cleaver' is to be understood in the sense 'hewer of hostile ranks', and he adds: "In Quenya this word meaning 'press, pressure' had as one sense the meaning 'press, throng'" (PE 17,

116). In a letter of 1972 Tolkien again glossed *Sangahyando* 'Throng-cleaver' and noted that 'throng' is to be understood in the sense of 'a closely formed body of enemy soldiers'. The latest allusion to the meaning of the Quenya word *sanga* is the most narrowly specific, but that is clearly due to the context, and as the slightly differently worded explanation from eight years earlier shows, Tolkien was not saying that *sanga* itself only refers to the "press" of enemy soldiers, but rather that this is the particular application in the compound name *Sangahyando.* Also, while the explanation that the sense 'press, throng' is a concrete application of a more abstract sense 'press, pressure' is newly conveyed as an explicit concept in the letter of 1964, the idea was already implicit in the Qenya Lexicon, where the noun *sanga* is grouped with the verb *sanga-* 'pack tight, compress, press'. This exemplifies a sense in which a full understanding of the thought behind Tolkien's later discussions of the Quenya vocabulary requires us to consider what he said in the earlier writings, even when the specific details are not recapitulated in their entirety every place he discusses a particular word or group of related words.

On the other hand there are naturally many cases where the conception of a Quenya word has been further elaborated to include meanings that were not already present at the outset. For example *tinwe* is glossed simply as 'star' in the Qenya Lexicon, although it is there associated with such words as *tintele* 'a sparkling, twinkling as of frosty stars', *tint* '(silver) spark', and the verb *tintya-* 'sparkle'. In the Etymologies *tinwe* is glossed as 'sparkle', with 'star' given in parentheses as an alternative meaning, presumably a figurative extension. In the Notes on Galadriel's Lament in *The Road Goes Ever On,* Tolkien explained this explicitly: "The Q *tinwe,* 'spark', was, like S *gil* . . . often used in [the] sense of 'star'" (61). The idea that the oldest meaning for *tinwe* in Tolkien's conception should be seen as a secondary development from a more basic meaning 'spark' in the context of the imaginary history of the language, arose naturally from its relation to other words in the Qenya Lexicon.

But we can also see that the conceptual change was probably occasioned by the emergence in the Etymologies of a close synonym *él, elen* 'star'. The history of this word was eventually connected with a primitive exclamation *ele* 'lo! behold!' which was uttered "by the Elves when they first saw the stars" (*Jewels* 360). In "Words, Phrases and Passages," Tolkien's own commentary on the Elvish and other linguistic features of *The Lord of the Rings,* written in the late 1950s or early 1960s, he gives a detailed explanation of how *eleni* refers literally to the visible stars in the sky, while *tinwi* 'sparks' is applied to images of the stars, which Varda placed in the dome over Valinor. This addition to the mythology seems to have arisen at least in part from reconsideration of the poetic imagery in Galadriel's Lament, where she compared the long years to *lintë yuldar*

. . . *mi oromardi lisse-miruvóreva / Andúnë pella, Vardo tellumar / nu luini yassen tintilar i eleni / ómaryo airetári-lírinen* 'swift draughts of the sweet mead in lofty halls beyond the West, beneath the blue vaults of Varda wherein the stars tremble in the song of her voice, holy and queenly' (*FR,* II, viii, 394). Galadriel's use of the word *eleni* would make her simile of the remembered bliss in the halls of Valinor all the more poignant if the stars she can see each night are metaphorically identified with the *tinwi* of Varda's domes that she can only recall, both having been devised by Varda as *Tintalle* 'the Kindler'. On the linguistic side this came to imply that *elen* and *tinwe* coexisted as words for 'star' in Quenya, but each with a more particular nuance and different associations through related words: *tinwe* to verbs meaning 'sparkle' and 'kindle'; *elen* through the application of is adjectival form *elda* 'of the stars' to the Elves as the "People of the Stars."

A similar example is the Qenya word *alda* 'tree'. In the "Gnomish Lexicon" of 1917 Tolkien devised a word *orn* 'tree' which was cognate to a Qenya stem *orond-* 'bush'. Apparently the closest relatives of Qenya *alda* in Gnomish were the words *âl* 'wood', *altha* 'shoot, sprig, scion, sapling' and *alwen* 'tree', the last marked as an archaic or poetic synonym of *orn* (PE 11; 19, 62). Modifications to the Gnomish phonology led to the conception in the mid-1920's "Noldorin Dictionary" of a noun *alt* 'bough, branch' cognate with Qenya *alda,* while Noldorin *orn* 'tree' was supplied with a Qenya cognate *orne,* in both cases the Qenya words being left unglossed (PE 13; 159, 164). In the "Qenya Word-lists," probably composed not long after the Noldorin Dictionary, Tolkien listed Qenya *orne* 'tree' and *alda* 'branch'; and a few years later in the Etymologies he cited *alda* under the base GÁLAD 'tree', and *orne* 'tree, high isolated tree' under a stem ÓR-NI 'high tree'.

The earliest explicit consideration of the co-occurrence of these two words for 'tree' in Quenya is in a statement by the character Lowdham in "The Notion Club Papers": "*Alda* means a 'tree'—it was one of the earliest certain words I got—and *orne* when smaller and more slender like a birch or rowan" (*Sauron* 302). Tolkien would continue to think about this remarkable difference between the vocabulary of Quenya and that of English, where we have various synomyms for our word *tree* but none that expresses precisely the nuance of the distinction between Quenya *alda* and *orne,* and he explains the difference at later times. The mention of these words in "The Notion Club Papers" remains perhaps the most interesting for our purpose, insofar as we might suspect that the fictional assertion that *alda* 'tree' "was one of the earliest certain words" that Lowdham knew of the Elven-latin is an echo of the fact that *alda* 'tree' appeared already in the Qenya Lexicon.

We have concentrated so far on the nouns whose essential place in

the Quenya language is attested over the whole lifetime of Tolkien's conception. Essential to Quenya in the same sense there are also many adjectives, words that convey ideas of quality, quantity, or relationship abstracted from their application to particular objects. Thus the Qenya Lexicon has *qanta* 'full', *otso* 'seven', *minqe* 'eleven', *eressea* 'lonely'; *ninqe* 'white', *morna, morqa* 'black', *karne* 'red', *laiqa* 'green', *malina* 'yellow'; *tāra* 'lofty', *ūmea* 'large', *vane* 'fair, lovely', *voronda* 'faithful', *aina* 'holy, revered', *tūrea* 'mighty'; *vanwa* 'gone, on the road, past, over, lost', and *nūme* 'west'. As with the nouns we listed above, some of these adjectives have exactly the same gloss in the latest materials.

Others were later given more elaborate definitions, e.g. *quanta* 'filled, full'; *ninqe* 'white, chill, cold, pallid'; *malĭna* 'yellow, of golden colour'; *úmea* 'large; teeming, thronging'; and *voronda* 'steadfast in allegiance, in keeping oath or promise, faithful'. An example with extensive documentation is *vanwa,* which is glossed in the Etymologies as 'gone, departed, vanished, lost, past' and as 'lost' in *The Lord of the Rings,* in the translation of Galadriel's Lament. It is also mentioned more than once in "Words, Phrases and Passages": in relation to Sindarin *govannen* 'met' it is cited as *vanwa* 'gone, departed'; in the notes on the lament Tolkien says *vánie-* "is the perfect-past of a verb stem appearing in *vanwa,* adjective 'gone, past, lost'," and in the notes on the word itself, *vanwa* is "an old participial formation = 'having departed', hence 'gone, lost'," and also glossed 'gone' with the meanings 'past, vanished, over, lost' given parenthetically. The essay "Quendi and Eldar" has *vanwa* 'gone, lost, no longer to be had, vanished, departed, dead, past and over'. This somewhat redundant set of definitions illustrates that, while we can talk about Tolkien's *conception,* in the narrow sense of what he specifically had in mind when he wrote a particular explanation of a word, nevertheless we can also talk about a deeper sort of *conception* that runs through all the explanations of the word and depends on their cumulative weight of evidence for our understanding of Tolkien's full thought about it.

Our main concern so far has been with the varieties and variations of the meanings associated by Tolkien with a given word-form in Quenya. We have discussed some synonyms like *alda* and *orne,* or *tinwe* and *elen.* There are also cases where closely similar forms are associated with the same meaning, and Tolkien may cite them together, suggesting that they constituted a single lexical entity. An example is the adjective *morna, morqa* 'black', where one of the forms *morna* is also attested later, with the gloss 'gloomy, sombre' in the Etymologies; and in Treebeard's phrase *Taurelilómea-tumbalemorna* 'Forestmanyshadowed-deepvalleyblack', part of a long name for Fangorn Forest, in later notes on which *morna* is glossed as 'black' and also as 'dark'. Other adjectives with two forms listed in the Qenya Lexicon include *ande, andea* 'long'; *aswa, aksa* 'of bone'; *iswa, isqa*

'wise'; *orwa, orda* 'lofty'; and *pirūkea, pirukenda* 'pirouetting'.

There are also nouns similarly cited with two forms, such as *finie, finde* 'cunning'; *hil, hilde* 'child'; *híse, histe* 'dusk'; *koi, koire* 'life'; *losse, losille* 'rose'; *niqetil, niqetilde* 'snow-cap'; and *olor, olōre* 'dream'. It will be seen that the kind of variation is sometimes repeated, as between shorter *hil* and *niqetil* and their longer forms *hilde* and *niqetilde*. The pattern of *olor, olōre* is also similar to that of *Valinor, Valinōre,* a name that is widely attested from the early to the late materials; and Tolkien explains the variant form of the ending in *nor* by the fact that the word *nóre* was "in composition often reduced to *nor*" (PE 17, 107). These examples of parallel variation show that such alternation of forms with identical meanings is a deliberate feature of Tolkien's invented language with underlying explanations.

In a case like *morna, morqa* 'black', while there is no parallel variation, we can see that each of the two formations is part of a more general pattern of adjective derivation attested by other entries in the Qenya Lexicon. Thus the syllable *qa* has been added to the root syllable to form several adjectives, such as *arqa* 'arid, parched, dry'; *fenqa* 'keen, cutting'; *hulqa* 'naked'; *ilqa* 'oily'; *laiqa* 'green'; *naiqa* 'painful'; *nelqa* 'cornered; square'; *rinqa* 'round, circular'; *saiqa* 'hungry'; and *torqa* 'blazing hot'. The formation of *morna* is also parallelled by a somewhat smaller set of adjectives in the lexicon, including *aina* 'holy, revered'; *melna* 'dear'; *qalna* 'dead'; *rīna* 'scattered, sown'; and *tumna* 'deep, profound; dark or hidden'.

Of the adjectives derived with the suffix *qa* only *laiqa* 'green' is attested in Tolkien's later writings, and for this particular word he decided—at some point not very long after the publication of *The Lord of the Rings,* apparently the better to explain the cognate element in the beginning of the name *Legolas* 'Greenleaf'—that the Quenya word was *laika* 'green' rather than *laiqua* (cf. PE 17, 84). But there is also late evidence for the derivative suffix itself in the essay "Quendi and Eldar," where Tolkien was discussing the stem *KWA, which "evidently referred to 'completion'," and mentioned its use "in the formation of adjectives from nouns," comparable to the English suffix *ful* (*Jewels* 392). It seems likely enough that the conception of a suffix meaning 'completely' continues the idea behind the formation of such adjectives as *naiqa* 'painful', *rinqa* 'circular', *torqa* 'blazing hot', etc., even though this was never explained by Tolkien at that earlier time.

In a later note the adjective-forming suffix *na* is explained as the "simplest form of participle" (PE 17, 68). An example of this is the adjective *melda* 'dear, beloved', said to derive from **mel-nā,* which continues the conception in the Quenya Lexicon of *melna* 'dear', but with the added effect of the later phonological feature that in Quenya medial *ln* shifted to *ld.* Since the verb *mel-* means 'to love', the etymological development of the adjectival meaning is apparently from 'loved' > 'beloved' > 'dear'.

And we can perhaps see here a sort of retroactive explanation of why there are two adjectival forms *morna* and *morqa* both meaning 'black'. The etymological sense of 'darkened' for *morna,* taken to refer to the resulting attribute, has approached the etymological sense of 'completely dark' for *morqa,* so that they come to be felt as mere euphonic variants expressing the same basic sense of 'black'.

Synonymous pairs of etymologically related forms continue as a feature of Tolkien's conception of Quenya. Among Tolkien linguistic notes from the period of the late 1950s and early 1960s we have such pairs as *albe, alve* 'elm'; *ambo, ambona* 'hill'; *finde, findele* 'tress'; *norie, norme* 'race, running'; *úvano, úvanimo* 'a monster'; *vanie, vanesse* 'beauty'; *yō, yondo* 'son'; *alcarin, alcarinqua* 'glorious'; *ascene, ascénima* 'visible, easily seen'; *finwa, fînëa* 'dextrous'; *lempe, lemne* ('five'); *taura, túrea* 'mighty, masterful'; and *vane, vanya* 'fair'. In each of these examples the pair of Quenya words occurs together in the same context, showing that each must have co-existed in Tolkien's conception at that time; but we can add that he was not obliged to mention both synonyms every time he might want to mention one form out of a pair of this sort. So the logical possibility has to be allowed that sometimes two etymologically related forms with the same meaning could be separately cited on different occasions without the later form necessarily implying Tolkien's rejection of the earlier form. Thus in the Qenya Lexicon we had *tūrea* 'mighty', then in the Etymologies Tolkien cited *taura* 'mighty'; but the latter apparently did not replace the former. For later, in a group of etymologies for words meaning 'large' and 'small' (probably dating from the early 1960s), under the stem TUR- 'strong, mighty, in *power*', he cited the derivatives *taura, túrea* 'mighty, masterful' (PE 17, 115).

Quenya verbs show the same kinds of patternings in Tolkien's conception that we have seen for nouns and adjectives. Some examples of verbs whose stems and meanings in the Qenya Lexicon are repeated in later writings include: *lava-* 'lick', *mat-* 'eat'; *karin* 'I make, do', *tulu-* 'bring, carry, fetch; move, come; produce, bear fruit', *lant-* 'drop, fall', *anta-* 'gives', *qanta-* 'fill, complete'; *tiri-* 'watch; keep, guard, preserve; look at, gaze at, observe', *kala-* 'shine', *mel-* 'to love'; *ista* 'know', *qet-* 'speak, talk'; and *tupu-* 'roof, put lid on, put hat on, cover'. For some of these the later glosses of the Quenya verb are less elaborate; e.g. in the Etymologies *tirin* 'I watch' is cited and "Words, Phrases and Passages" mentions *tir-* 'gaze, look at, watch'. The repetition in the latter citation of three of the glosses from the original lexicon entry shows that when Tolkien gave only the meaning 'watch' for this verb in the Etymologies, it was for economy of expression in that context, rather than a reduction of the conception of the semantics of the verb down to this meaning alone.

We also see elaborations or clarifications of the verbal meaning. In

the Etymologies *anta-* 'give', for example, is derived from a primitive stem **anta-* glossed as 'to present, give'. In a late note on the origin of the comparative construction in Quenya, Tolkien mentioned that the verb *anta-* can be used in two kinds of sentence construction, either as in *antanen parma sen(na)* 'I gave a book to him' or as in *antanenyes parmanen* 'I presented him with a book'. Here two ideas that are close enough in meaning to refer to the same situation are differentiated in English using distinct words *give* and *present*, while in Quenya the difference is expressed solely by the grammar of the context. If the direct object of the verb *anta-* is the thing that changes ownership and the recipient is marked explicitly as dative (or allative) then the translation of the sense of the verb is 'give'; but if the receiver is the direct object and the gift is described as the means by which the action is performed then the translation of the verb is 'present'.

This is one of the more clearcut examples of how meaning does not necessarily correlate word for word from language to language, a well-known fact about natural languages which apparently Tolkien intended also to apply to his invented ones. This is shown from the inception of Quenya by the multiple glosses of words we have already looked at, like *karka* 'fang, tooth, tusk', *vanwa* 'gone, past, over, lost', *tulu-* 'bring, carry, fetch; move, come', etc. We also see this from the opposite perspective, where more than one Quenya word is glossed by the same word in English; thus in the lexicon we have *helke* 'ice' and *yalka* 'ice'. The former is related to *helka* 'ice-cold' and *hilkin* 'it freezes', while the latter is related to *yalle* 'a hollow ring'; which may suggest the kinds of contexts where one or the other of the words for 'ice' would be appropriate, in that *helke* seems to emphasize the feeling of ice, while *yalka* emphasizes the sound it makes, in each case by virtue of a sort of appeal to knowledge about the meanings of these related words.

A more extensive illustration is provided by the following adjectives: *oiwa* 'glossy', *silwa* 'glossy', *latwa* 'smooth, glossy', *ilqa* 'oily, smooth, glossy' and *silkina* 'rich, fat, glossy'. When we consider some of the words related to these adjectives—*oine* 'unguent', *silwin* 'birch', *latsin* 'level, smooth', *ilin* 'milk', *ilma* 'oil', and *silqe* 'glossy hair'—we may begin to see how Qenya can have so many synonyms for English *glossy*. Different surfaces such as that of milk in a cup, the bark of a birch-tree, hair that has been brushed, and skin that has been rubbed with oil or unguent, are each smooth and shiny in a distinctive way; although for none of them do we have a separate specific adjective in English.

As another example of inter-language variation consider the verb *nosta-* which is defined in the lexicon as 'give birth to; cause', while in "Words, Phrases and Passages" it is glossed as 'to beget'. In English "give birth to" and "beget" are often used to distinguish the mother's and

father's role in the procreation of a family, and so we might be tempted to see a shift in the conception of this verb from having one of these meanings to having the other. But in fact the later mention of *nosta* is in the explanation of Treebeard's addressing both Galadriel and Celeborn as *vanimalion nostari* 'parents of beautiful children'. And of course we use both "beget" and "give birth to" metaphorically when referring to artistic creation or other forms of causation in the abstract, an application already suggested for the verb *nosta-* in the Qenya Lexicon by the definition 'cause'.

It is also interesting to note that in the Etymologies the verb *nosta-* is not cited, but *onta-* 'beget, create' is given and a derived noun *ontaro* 'begetter, parent'. This might suggest that a sort of conceptual shuffling back and forth by Tolkien has occurred as to whether *nosta-* or *onta-* is the Quenya verb that refers to parenting. But these words are from etymologically related roots or bases NŌ and ONO and under the former in the Etymologies Qenya *nosse* is cited, equated with Noldorin *noss* 'clan, family; house' and apparently continuing the conception of the noun *nosse* 'folk, kin, people', related to *nosta-* in the lexicon (*Lost Road,* 378–9). And in a late note these related roots are listed together as ON/NO 'beget/be born', with the words *onta* 'beget', *onwe* 'child', and two occurrences of the form *nosta*, the first apparently intended as a synonym of *onta* and the second glossed as 'be begotten' (PE 17, 170). That the same form *nosta-* should mean both 'beget' and 'be begotten' is supported by the existence of other verb pairs with corresponding transitive and intransitive meanings, such as transitive *orta* 'cause to rise' and intransitive *orta-* 'rise'. In the context of a sentence they are distinguishable by whether the verb has both subject and direct object or only a subject.

We are left wondering if there is a distinction in nuance between *onta-* and the transitive sense of *nosta-* along semantic lines different from our English distinction between "give birth to" and "beget." We saw that *onta-* is connected with *onwe* 'child' while *nosta-* is connected with *nosse* 'folk, kin, people'. These associations could make *onta-* more evocative of the literal sense of parenting of children, while *nosta-* would evoke the relation of an ancestor to several generations of descendants that constitute a group of kin larger than the nuclear family. This could explain Treebeard's choice of the word *nostari* for 'parents' since his word *vanimalion*, literally 'of some (or many) beautiful ones', must allude not only to Celebrían but also to *her* children Elladan, Elrohir and Arwen, and perhaps also prophetically to Arwen's future descendants.

The same variety of conceptual connections is found in many Qenya words. Without going into the same level of detail we can consider the following pairs of items, each consisting of an entry from the Qenya Lexicon followed by a formally close or identical word with varying

meaning from *The Lord of the Rings* or some other late text: *ainu* 'a pagan god', *Ainur* 'the Holy Ones'; *anto* 'jaw', *anto* 'mouth'; *arda* 'a place, spot', *arda* 'region'; *elda* 'beach-fay', *elda* 'Elf'; *finwa* 'acute, sagacious', *finwa* 'dexterous'; *harin* 'remains', *hára* 'stay'; *hilde* 'child', *hildi* 'the followers, after-comers'; *kalma* 'light', *calma* 'lamp'; *kelu-* 'to flow', *kelussë* 'freshet'; *kemen* 'soil', *kemen* 'the Earth'; *koi, koire* 'life', *coimas* 'life-bread', *coirë* 'stirring'; *kuru* 'magic, wizardry', *curu* 'skill; craft'; *loa* 'life', *löa* 'growing, blooming'; *losse* 'rose', *losse* 'a laden inflorescence of white flowers'; *lumbo* 'dark lowering cloud', *lumbo* 'gloom; dark, shade'; *māra* 'mighty, powerful, doughty; good, useful', *māra* 'good, fitting, proper, desirable'; *masta* 'bread', *masta* 'a cake or loaf'; *mindon* 'turret', *mindon* 'lofty tower'; *niqis* 'snow', *niquis* 'ice-flake or snowflake'; *ongwe* 'pain', *ongwe* 'crime'; *pata-* 'rap, tap (of feet)', *pata-* 'walk'; *pole* 'oats', *poli-* 'meal; grist'; *ringa* 'damp, cold, chilly', *Ringarë* ('December'); *sili-* 'gleam, glint', *sil-* 'shine (with white or silver light)'; *silma* 'a ray of moonlight', *silma* 'crystal'; *sūlime* 'wind', *Súlimë* ('March'); *ungwe* 'spider', *ungwe* 'spider's web'; and *Valar, Vali* 'the happy folk', *vala* 'angelic power'.

There are also many examples of close semantic correspondence with variation in the formal shapes. Thus consider the following items from the lexicon, paired with their later synonyms: *alalme* 'elm', *albe* 'elm'; *alkara* 'brilliant', *alcarin* 'glorious, brilliant'; *ama* 'mother', *amya* '(my) mother'; *amun* 'hill', *ambŏna* 'hill'; *ande* 'long', *Andafalasse* 'Langstrand'; *awin* 'departs', *auta-* 'go away'; *ektele* 'fountain', *ehtelë* 'issue of water'; *falas* 'shore', *falasse* 'a wave-beaten shore'; *falmar* 'wave as it breaks', *falma* 'breaking wave'; *findl* 'lock of hair', *findele* 'tress, lock'; *kaima-* 'lie quiet', *cai-ta* 'lie (down)'; *koivie* 'awakening', *cuivië* 'awakening'; *lemin* 'five', *lempe* 'five'; *līse* 'sweet', *lisse* 'honey-sweet'; *lūne* 'blue', *luine* 'blue'; *masta* 'bread', *masse* 'bread'; *matsima* 'edible', *mātima* 'edible'; *māwe* 'gull', *maiwi* ('gulls'); *naiqa* 'painful', *naica* 'bitterly painful or grievous'; *norne* 'oak-tree', *nordo* 'oak'; *orda* 'lofty', *orna* 'high, lofty'; *tasarin* 'willow', *tasar* 'willow'; *Ūri* 'the Sun', *Úrin* 'Sun'; *wendi* 'maiden', *wende* 'maiden'; and *yāva* 'fruit, produce', *yávë* 'fruit'.

In many of these comparisons we see that the semantic distance or the formal distance is no greater than we find in actual citations from a particular text of diversity of meanings for the same form, as with *karka* 'fang, tooth, tusk' and *vanwa* 'gone, past, lost'; or the alternative forms of the same word, as with *morna, morqa* 'black' and *taura, túrea* 'mighty'. It is possible in all these cases that Tolkien considered the later meaning for the same form or later form with the same meaning to be a replacement of the earlier one. These comparisons of early and late forms might be viewed as typical changes resulting primarily from Tolkien's urge to change Quenya. We have seen, however, that such an interpretation would involve an oversimplification of his actual process of invention,

leaving unexplained why there is so much in common between the basic vocabulary of the earlier and later conceptions of the language.

Tolkien clearly did delight in the invention of new word-forms and associated meanings that, as he expressed it in "A Secret Vice," would "give play to my own most normal phonetic taste" and together constitute "a long enough history of development to allow" for creative expression in the language (*MC* 212). Obviously such a history must involve a cumulative elaboration of the invented language. Added words that are rejected must be replaced by newer additions, with the remainder of the language surviving intact and a net increase in the size of the vocabulary, if the language inventor is to achieve the possibility of writing poetry in which, again as Tolkien puts it, you "courageously abide by your own rules" (219). And indeed, if poetry in the invented language is to employ such traditional devices as the different degrees of metonymy or assonances of various types, then the language must have such synomyms and homonyms as we have discussed, from which the poet can make his particular choices of expression. Such a history of development must also inevitably produce a clearer understanding of the diction, in the sense of how context will be reflected in nuanced word-choices, if the language is to become more suitable for writing.

A final example, with which we are probably all familiar, but may not have considered in this light, is the word *Elda* 'Elf'. We listed its earliest gloss above, the full definition in the Quenya Lexicon being *elda* 'a beach-fay or *Solosimpe* (shore-piper)'. This entry occurs with *Eldamar,* which is explained as: "the rocky beach in Western Inwinóre (Faëry), whence the Solosimpeli have danced along the beaches of the world. Upon this rock was the white town built called Kor, whence the fairies came to teach men song and holiness" (PE 12, 35). These entries are among the earliest in the lexicon, and on the same page in the original notebook there is a rejected entry for *Erinti* "the Vali of love, music, beauty and purity," who dwells "among the Inweli, Noldor, Eldar, and Teleri in Inwenóre" (36). Each of the other three kindreds mentioned here also has an entry for the corresonding singular term: *inwe* 'fairy', *ñoldo* 'goblin' (changed to 'gnome'), and *Teler* 'little elf'. These represent the earliest categorizing of the imaginary peoples of Tolkien's mythology.

In later entries and revisions to the Qenya Lexicon the term *Eldar* clearly includes more than the Solosimpeli; the word *inwe* is redefined as '1 of the royal house of the *Eldar*' (PE 12, 42) and the entry for *Solosimpe* 'Shoreland-pipers' also refers to them as a "tribe of *Eldar*" (PE 12, 85). In the Gnomish Lexicon *Egla* is the "name of the fairies given by the Gwalin [i.e. the Valar], and adopted largely by them," meaning literally 'a being from outside' and equated with Qenya *Elda.* The name *Eglobar* 'Elfinesse' is listed after *Egla* and equated with Qenya *Eldamar,* i.e. 'Elfhome', "the

land on the edge of *Valinor,* where the fairies dwelt and built *Cor*" (PE 11, 32).

Tolkien later gave two other explanations of the name *Elda,* both found in the Etymologies. First there is the base ELED 'go, depart, leave', in the entry for which Qenya *Elda* is glossed as "'departed' Elf." This was replaced by the base ÉLED glossed as "'Star-folk', Elf," with various cognates including Qenya *Elda,* and compounds derived from these, such as Qenya *Eldamar* 'Elvenhome'. The entry for the base ELED 'go, depart, leave' was rejected from the manuscript of the Etymologies, but the related base LED 'go, fare, travel' was retained. And indeed both explanations of the word for 'Elf' would survive, eventually alluded to in the familiar statement in *The Lord of the Rings,* Appendix F: "*Elves* has been used to translate both *Quendi,* 'the speakers', the High-elven name of all their kind, and *Eldar,* the name of the Three Kindreds that sought for the Undying Realm and came there at the beginning of Days . . . They were a race high and beautiful, the older Children of the world, and among them the Eldar were as kings, who now are gone: the People of the Great Journey, the People of the Stars" (*RK,* Appendix F, 415–16). In certain late 1950s "Notes on Names" Tolkien explained this by saying that when Quenya *Elda,* which partly comes from *elenā,* an "adjectival derivative of √ELEN 'a star'," was used "as a term for the Elves that set out for Valinor," it became "associated (in Quenya) with √LED 'go, proceed' . . . and *Eldar* was interpreted both as 'star-folk' and as the 'journeyers'" (PE 17, 139).

Over the years Tolkien had also considered other roots as sources for or influences on the word *Elda,* with such meanings as 'eldest', 'first-born'; 'exile'; and 'the fair' (*Lost Road* 356, 368; PE 17, 139). Insofar as a language can be used to tell many stories, there is a sense in which a word such as *elda* remained fixed in the language, while the stories that involved the use of the word grew and were transformed in Tolkien's imagination. In this regard *stories* would of course include fictional prose, poetry, and feigned historical annals, where the Eldar continued to appear as characters. Tolkien's changes to descriptions of their nature and history would give new meanings to the word *elda,* but it would remain the same word in invented Quenya. This is analogous to the fact that the English word *elf* is the same word it was a century ago, even though it has meanings for many English speakers now that it did not have then, largely as a result of Tolkien's use of the word in *The Lord of the Rings.* In a more abstract sense we can also regard etymological notes, philological essays, letters to readers, and any sort of writing that might give play to Tolkien's invented words, as different kinds of *stories.* We have seen that although Tolkien devised a new etymology for *elda* that involved a new story about the Elves and the stars, this did not necessarily preclude the continued existence of the story behind the older etymology for *elda* connected with

their journey to Valinor, or an eventual reintegration of the ostensibly divergent linguistic details into a more inclusive explanation. Whether or not such details about a Quenya word were altered, the word itself would still be the same word in the invented language; and we recognize this by virtue of what the separate applications of the word have in common.

Because Quenya is Tolkien's invention, we are unavoidably dependent on his explanations of the language in English for any understanding we have. As we have seen, where these are glosses or translations they do not always convey completely and exactly everything Tolkien may have intended as the meaning in Quenya. So if we are to avoid mere speculation or guess-work as to what Tolkien might have intended, we must consider the collective evidence over a period of time and throughout a variety of texts that is sufficient to observe whatever scope of reference or nuance we deem him capable of inventing. As the examples discussed here illustrate, we need to consider all of Quenya from the earliest layer of words in the *Qenyaqetsa* to the latest philological commentaries on the culture of the characters in *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Silmarillion*, if we want to fully understand the essence of the language. What ties these all together as parts of the same language are the meanings shared by various forms, the words with varieties of meanings, and the associated groupings of related words and names that persist from the beginning to the end of Tolkien's lengthy process of inventing Quenya. As this language grew through elaboration and refinement, and to the extent that the basic vocabulary continued to be intimately interconnected with the rest of the language at each step of its growth, through shared use in Tolkien's mythology and poetry and by mutual consideration in his linguistic writings, these words constitute an essential and persistent part of Quenya that ties together the different phases of its growth. It is in this regard that they can be seen as episodes in the development of the same invented language. And in this sense Quenya is the language to which Tolkien always came back.

Quenya Words and Names Cited

PE = *Parma Eldalamberon.*
NT = "Notes and Translations" in *The Road Goes Ever On,* 1967.
VT = *Vinyar Tengwar.*

aina 'holy, revered' PE 12.34, 'holy' *S* 355.
ainu 'a pagan god' PE 12.34.
Ainur 'the Holy Ones' *S* 15.
albe, alve 'elm' PE 17.146.
alcarin, alcarinqua 'glorious, brilliant' PE 17.24.
alda 'tree' PE 11.19, 12.29, ('bough, branch') 13.159, 'branch' 16.139,

('tree') *Lost Road* 357, 'tree', *Sauron* 302, *RK*, App. E 401.

alkara 'brilliant' PE 12.30.

alqa 'swan' PE 12.30.

alqua 'swan' *S* 355.

ama 'mother' PE 12.30.

Amarto, Ambar 'Fate' PE 12.34.

ambar 'fate, doom' PE 17.66.

ambo, ambŏna 'hill' PE 17.90.

âmi, ambi, amaimi, amis 'mother' PE 12.30.

amun(d) 'hill' PE 12.30.

amya '(my) mother' PE 17.170.

Andafalasse 'Langstrand' PE 17.135.

ande, andea 'long' PE 12.31.

anga 'iron' PE 12.31, *RK* 401.

anta- 'gives' PE 12.31, 'give' *Lost Road* 348, 'to give; to present a thing *to* a person' PE 17.91.

antanen parma sen(na) 'I gave a book to him', *antanenyes parmanen* 'I presented him with a book' PE 17.91.

anto 'jaw' PE 12.31, 'mouth' *RK*, App. E 401.

arda 'a place, spot' PE 12.32.

arda 'region' *RK*, Appendix E 401.

arqa 'arid, parched, dry' PE12.32.

ascene, ascénima 'visible, easily seen' PE 17.148

aswa, aksa 'of bone' PE 12.33

atar 'father' PE 12.33, *S* 356.

aure 'sunlight, sunshine, gold light, warmth' PE 12.33, 'day(light)' *RK*, Appendix D 385, 'sunlight, daylight' PE 17.120.

auta- 'go away, leave (the point of the speaker's thought)' *Jewels* 366.

Avalóna 'the outer isle' *Lost Road* 370.

áva márie 'go happily!' PE 17.162.

avin 'departs' PE 12.33.

cai-ta 'lie (down)' PE 17.72.

calma 'lamp' *RK*, Appendix E 401.

carca 'fang' *S* 357.

carnë 'red' *S* 357.

coimas 'life-bread' *S* 338.

coirë 'stirring' *RK*, Appendix D 386.

cuivië 'awakening' *S* 357.

curu 'skill' *S* 330, 'craft' PE 17.83.

ehtelë 'issue of water, spring' *S* 360.

ektele 'fountain' PE 12.35.

él, elen 'star' *Lost Road* 355.

elda 'a beach-fay or *Solosimpe* (shore-piper)' PE 12.35, *Elda* 'a being from

outside' 11.32, '"departed" Elf'; ('"Star-folk," Elf') *Lost Road* 356, 'an Elf' *Letters* 281.

elda 'of the stars' *S* 358.

Eldalië 'people of the Eldar' *S* 190, 'the Elven-folk' 326.

Eldamar 'Elfhome' PE 11.32, 'Elvenhome' *Lost Road* 356.

Eldar 'the People of the Great Journey, the People of the Stars' *RK*, Appendix F 415–16, 'star-folk; journeyers' PE 17.139.

eldarissa 'the language of the Eldar' PE 12.35.

eldasilqe 'maidenhair fern'; 'elf's hair' PE 12.35.

ele 'lo! behold!' *Jewels* 362.

eressea 'lonely' PE 12.36.

Eressëa 'the lonely isle' NT 62, *Tol Eressëa* 'the Lonely Isle' *S* 59.

falas(s) 'shore, beach' PE 12.37.

falasse 'a wave-beaten shore' PE 17.135.

falma 'wave, breaking wave' PE 17.73.

falmar 'wave as it breaks' PE 12.37.

felpa 'seaweed' PE 12.38.

fenqa 'keen, cutting' PE 12.38.

filqe 'fern' PE 12.38.

finde, findele 'tress, lock' PE 17.119.

findl 'lock of hair' PE 12.38.

finie, finde 'cunning' PE 12.38.

finwa 'acute, sagacious' PE 12.38.

finwa, finëa 'dextrous' PE 17.119.

(hára) máriesse, '(stay) in happiness' PE 17.162.

harin 'remains' PE 12.39.

harma 'treasure, a treasured thing' *Lost Road* 360.

harya- 'possess' *Lost Road* 360.

helka 'ice-cold' PE 12.39.

helke 'ice (in icicles, etc.)' PE 12.39.

hen 'eye' PE 12.40, ('eye') *Lost Road* 364.

henfanwa 'eye-screen, veil upon eyes' PE 17.176.

henulka 'evileyed' *Sauron* 68.

heru 'lord' PE 12.40, *S* 359.

hil, hilde 'child' PE 12.40.

hildi 'the followers, after-comers; Men' PE 17.101

hilkin 'it freezes' PE 12.39.

híse, histe 'dusk' PE 12.40.

hulqa 'naked' PE 12.41.

ilin 'milk' PE 12.42.

ilma 'oil' PE 12.42.

ilqa 'oily, smooth, glossy' PE 12.42.

inwe 'fairy' >> '1 of the royal house of the *Eldar*' PE 12.42.

ista 'know' PE 12.43, 17.77.
iswa, isqa 'wise' PE 12.43.
kaima- 'lie quiet' PE 12.46.
kala- 'shine' PE 12.44.
kalma '(day)light' PE 12.44.
kaluva 'shall shine' *UT* 22, 51.
kare '(to) do' PE 17.68.
karin 'I make, do' PE 12.45.
karne 'red' PE 12.48.
karka 'fang, tooth, tusk' PE 12.48, 'tooth' *Lost Road* 362.
kelu- 'to flow' PE 12.46.
kelume 'stream' PE 12.46, 'flowing, flood (tide), stream' *MC* 223.
kelussë 'freshet, water falling out swiftly from a rocky spring' *UT* 426.
kemen 'soil' PE 12.46.
kemen 'the Earth (as an apparent flat floor under *menel*)' PE 17.24.
koi, koire 'life' PE 12.48.
koivie 'awakening' PE 12.48.
kuru 'magic, wizardry' PE 12.49.
laika 'green (of leaves, herbage)' PE 17.159.
laiqa 'green' PE 12.52.
laiqua 'green' PE 17.153.
lambe 'tongue' PE 12.52, *RK*, Appendix E 401.
lant- 'drop, fall' PE 12.51, *lanta-* 'fall' 17.62.
lasse 'leaf ' PE 12.51, 17.62.
lasselanta 'the Fall, Autumn' PE 12.51, *lasse-lanta* 'leaf-fall; fading' *RK*,
App. D. 386.
latsin 'level, smooth' PE 12.51.
latwa 'smooth, glossy' PE 12.51.
laure 'gold' PE 12.51, 'gold; golden light, especially sunlight' NT 62.
lava- 'lick' PE 12.51, *lav-* 'lick' 17.72.
lemin 'five' PE 12.52.
lempe, lemne ('five') PE 17.95, *lempe* 'five' VT 47.10.
lie 'people, folk' PE 12.53.
līse 'sweet' PE 12.55.
lisse honey-sweet' PE 17.64.
loa 'life' PE 12.52, *löa* 'growing, blooming; a sun-year' PE 17.159.
lōke 'snake' PE 12.55, *hlóke, lóke* 'reptile, snake, worm' PE 17.160.
lōme 'dusk, gloom, darkness' PE 12.55, *lómë* 'night' *RK* 385, 'night, dark-
ness' PE 17.81.
lóna 'island, remote land difficult to reach' *Lost Road* 370.
losse 'a laden inflorescence of white flowers (e.g. of hawthorn)' PE
17.160.
losse, losille 'rose' PE 12.56.

lōte 'a flower, bloom (usually of large single flowers)' PE 12.55, *lóte* 'flower, a single bloom' 17.26.

luine 'blue' PE 12.66.

lumbo 'dark lowering cloud' PE 12.57, 'gloom' 17.72, 'dark, shade' 17.168

lūme 'time' PE 12.56, *lúme* 'time, hour' 17.13.

lūne 'blue, deep blue' PE 12.57.

mā 'hand' PE 12.57, *má* 'hand' 17.70.

maiwi ('gulls') *MC* 222.

makil 'sword, broadsword' PE 12.58.

makilya 'his (or their) sword' PE 17.130.

malina 'yellow' PE 12.58, *malĭna* 'yellow, of golden colour' 17.51.

mar 'dwelling of men, land, the Earth' PE 12.60, 'dwelling, mansion' 17.64, *mar* 'a region settled by a community or group' 17.164.

māra 'mighty, powerful, doughty; (of things) good, useful' PE 12.57, 'good; fitting, proper, desirable' PE 17.74, *mára* 'good, as it should be, in right or proper form or state, in health, well' PE 17.162.

márië 'goodness; good estate, being well' PE 17.162.

masse 'bread' PE 17.52.

masta 'bread' PE 12.59.

masta 'a cake or loaf' PE 17.52.

mat- 'eat' PE 12.59.

mătie 'eating' PE 17.13.

mātima 'edible' PE 17.68.

matsima 'edible' PE 12.59.

māwe 'gull' PE 12.60.

mel- 'to love' PE 12.60, 'love' *S* 361.

melda 'dear, beloved' PE 17.56.

melina, melna 'dear' PE 12.60.

mindon 'turret' PE 12.61.

Mindon Eldaliéva 'Lofty Tower of the Eldalië' *S* 341.

minqe 'eleven' PE 12.61.

minque 'eleven' VT 48.6.

miruvōre 'nectar, drink of the Valar, sweet drink' PE 12.61, 'a mead or nectar drunk in Valinor' PE 17.64.

morna, morqa 'black' PE 12.62, *morna* 'gloomy, sombre' *Lost Road* 373, 'black' PE 17.73, 'dark' 17.81.

naica 'bitterly painful or grievous' PE 17.151.

naiqa 'painful' PE 12.65.

namárie 'be well' PE 17.162.

nelqa 'cornered; square' PE 12.65.

nen (nēn· or *nend·)* 'river; water' PE 12.65.

nēn 'water' PE 17.52.

ner 'man, husband' PE 12.65.
nernehta 'man-spearhead' *UT* 282.
nie 'tear' PE 12.68.
nieninquëa ('like a snowdrop') PE 16.96.
ninqe 'white' PE 12.66.
ninque 'white, chill, cold, pallid' PE 17.168.
niqetil, niqetilde 'snow-cap' PE 12.66.
niqis 'snow' PE 12.66.
níquetil 'snow peak' PE 17.168.
niquis 'ice-flake or snowflake' PE 17.168.
ñoldo 'goblin' >> 'gnome' PE 12.67, *noldo* 'one of the kindred of the Noldor' *RK*, Appendix E 401.
nor 'oak' PE 12.67.
nordo 'oak' PE 17.25.
nōre 'native land, nation, family; country' PE 12.66, 'generation, people, folk, large group regarded as of common ancestry' PE 17.26.
norie, norme 'race, running' PE 17.169.
norne 'oak-tree' PE 12.67.
nosse 'folk, kin, people' PE 12.66, ('clan, family; house') *Lost Road* 378.
nosta- 'give birth to; cause' PE 12.66, *nosta* 'to beget' 17.111, 'be begotten' 17.170.
nostari 'begetter[s]' PE 17.111.
nūme 'west' PE 12.68, *nūme, nūmen* 'the 'West'' PE 17.18.
oine 'unguent' PE 12.71.
oiwa, oiqa 'glossy' PE 12.71.
olor, olōre 'dream' PE 12.69, *olor* 'dream; *clear vision*, in the mind, of things not physically present at the body's situation' *UT* 396.
ōma 'voice' PE 12.69, *óma* 'voice' 17.67.
ondo 'stone' PE 12.70, *S* 359.
ongwe 'pain' PE 12.70.
ongwe 'crime' PE 17.170.
onta- 'beget, create' *Lost Road* 379, *onta* 'beget' PE 17.170.
ontaro 'begetter, parent' *Lost Road* 379.
onwe 'child' PE 17.170.
orme 'tree' PE 16.139.
orna 'high, lofty' PE 17.186.
orne ('tree') PE 13.164, 'tree' 16.139, 'tree, high isolated tree' *Lost Road* 379, 'tree; when smaller and more slender like a birch or rowan' *Sauron* 302.
oro 'hill' PE 12.70, *oro-* 'hill' 17.83.
orond- 'bush' PE 11.62.
orta 'cause to rise' PE 17.70.
orwa, orda 'lofty' PE 12.70.

oryă, orta- 'rise' PE 17.64.

otso '7' PE 12.71, 'seven' *S* 364.

parma 'skin, bark; parchment, book, writings' PE 12.72, 'book' *RK*, Appendix E 401, 'bark; (skinning, peeling off), parchment, book' PE 17.171.

pata- 'rap, tap (of feet)' PE 12.72.

pata- 'walk' PE 17.34.

pē 'the two lips, the (closed) mouth' PE 12.72, 'the *closed* mouth' 17.126.

pirūkea, pirukenda 'pirouetting' PE 12.74.

pole (i) 'oats' PE 12.75.

poli- 'meal; grist' PE 17.181.

qalna 'dead' PE 12.76.

qanta 'full' PE 12.78.

qanta- 'fill, complete' PE 12.78.

qet- 'speak, talk' PE 12.77, 17.126.

quanta 'filled, full' PE 17.68.

quanta- 'to fill' PE 17.68.

Quendi 'the speakers; Elves' *RK*, Appendix F 415.

queta Quenya! 'speak Quenya!' PE 17.138.

rāma 'wing' PE 12.78, *ráma* 'wing' 17.63.

rīna 'scattered, sown' PE 12.80.

ringa 'damp, cold, chilly' PE 12.80.

Ringarë ('December') *RK*, Appendix D 388.

rinqa 'round, circular' PE 12.80.

saiqa 'hungry' PE 12.82.

sanga 'throng, tight mass, crowd' PE 12.81, 'crowd, throng, press' *Lost Road* 388, 'press, pressure; press, throng' PE 17.116, 'throng; a closely formed body of enemy soldiers' *Letters* 425.

sanga- 'pack tight, compress, press' PE 12.81.

Sangahyando 'Throng-cleaver' PE 12.81, *Lost Road* 388, *Letters* 425, (unglossed) *RK*, Appendix A 328, 'hewer of hostile ranks' PE 17.116.

sil- 'shine (with white or silver light)' *S* 364, PE 17.13.

sili- 'gleam, glint' PE 12.83

silka, silkina 'rich, fat, glossy' PE 12.86.

silma 'a ray of moonlight' PE 12.83.

silma '(white) crystal' PE 17.23.

silqe 'glossy hair' PE 12.86.

silwa 'glossy' PE 12.83.

silwin 'birch' PE 12.83.

Solosimpe 'Shoreland-pipers' PE 12.

sūlime 'wind' PE 12.86.

Súlimë ('March') *RK*, Appendix D 388.

tāra 'lofty' PE 12.87, *tára* 'lofty' *S* 364.

tāri 'queen' PE 12.87, *tári-* 'queen' 17.67.

tasar 'willow' PE 17.81.

tasarin 'willow' PE 12.90.

taura 'mighty' *Lost Road* 395, *taura, túrea* 'mighty, masterful' PE 17.115.

Taurelilómea-tumbalemorna 'Forestmanyshadowed-deepvalleyblack' *TT,* III, iv, 70, *RK,* Appendix F 409.

Teler (teleř) 'little elf '; *Teleř* 'one of the Elf-kindreds' PE 12.91.

telpe 'silver' PE 12.91, *UT* 266.

tie 'line, direction, route, road' PE 12.90, 'path; road, way' 17.72.

tint '(silver) spark' PE 12.92.

Tintalle 'the Kindler' *FR,* II, viii, 394.

tintele 'a sparkling, twinkling as of frosty stars' PE 12.92.

tintya- 'sparkle' PE 12.92.

tinwe 'star' PE 12.92, 'sparkle (star)' *Lost Road* 393, 'spark; star' NT 61.

tiri- 'watch; keep, guard, preserve; look at, gaze at, observe' PE 12.93, *tir-* 'gaze, look at, watch' 17.25.

tirin 'I watch' *Lost Road* 394.

tirion 'a mighty tower, a city on a hill' PE 12.93.

Tirion 'great watch-tower' NT 65.

tol 'an island; any rise standing alone in water, plain of grass, etc.' PE 12.94, ('island') *Lost Road* 394, 'isle; (rising with steep sides from the sea or from a river)' *S* 365.

Tol-eressea 'Lonely isle' PE 12.94, *Tol Eressëa* 'the Lonely Isle' *S* 59.

torqa 'blazing hot' PE 12.94.

tuile 'spring; a budding' PE 12.96, *tuilë* 'spring' *RK,* Appendix D 385–6.

tulu- 'bring, carry, fetch; move, come; produce, bear fruit' PE 12.95.

tumbo 'dale, vale' PE 12.95, 'deep vale' PE 17.81.

tumna 'deep, profound; dark or hidden' PE 12.95.

tupu- 'roof, put lid on, put hat on, cover' PE 12.95.

tūrea 'mighty' PE 12.95, *taura, túrea* 'mighty, masterful' 17.115.

tyelpe 'silver' *UT* 266.

ūmea 'large' PE 12.97, *úmea* 'large, of throng; teeming, thronging' 17.115.

ungwe 'spider' PE 12.98.

ungwe 'spider's web' *RK,* Appendix E 401.

untúpa 'is covering over' PE 17.73, 'down-roofs' NT 59.

Ur, Ūri 'the Sun' PE 12.98.

Úrin 'Sun' PE 17.148.

utúlien 'I have come' PE 17.103.

úvanimo 'monster' PE 12.99, *úvano, úvanimo* 'a monster, corrupt or evil creature' 17.150.

vala 'angelic power' *RK,* Appendix E 401.

Valar, Vali 'the happy folk' PE 12.99.

Valinor, Valinōre 'Asgard' PE 12.99, *Valinor, Valinóre* 'land of the Gods in the

West' *Lost Road* 350, 'Land of the Valar' PE 17.26.

vane (i) 'fair, lovely' PE 12.99, *vane (vanĭ)* 'fair' 17.56.

vanie, vanesse 'beauty' PE 17.56.

vanimalion nostari 'parents of beautiful children' *RK,* VI, vi, 259, *Letters* 308.

vanwa 'gone, on the road, past, over, lost' PE 12.99, 'gone, departed, vanished, lost, past' *Lost Road* 397, 'lost' *FR,* II, viii, 394, 'gone, departed' PE 17.16, 'gone, past, lost' 17.63, 'gone (past, vanished, over, lost)', 'having departed; gone, lost' 17.74, 'gone, lost, no longer to be had, vanished, departed, dead, past and over' *Jewels* 366.

vanya 'fair' PE 17.56.

Vilya 'air (lower)' PE 12.101, *vilya* 'air, sky' *RK,* Appendix E 401.

vorond, voronda 'faithful' PE 12.102, *voronda* 'steadfast in allegiance, in keeping oath or promise; faithful' *UT* 317.

wende 'maiden' PE 17.190.

wendele 'maidenhood' PE 12.103, 17.191.

wendi 'maiden' PE 12.103.

wilwarin 'butterfly' PE 12.104, *S* 354.

yalka 'ice' PE 12.105.

yalle 'a hollow ring' PE 12.105.

yāva 'fruit, produce' PE 12.105.

yávë 'fruit' *S* 365.

yō, yon, yondo 'son' PE 17.190.

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Book Reviews

Tolkien's essay "On Fairy-stories," which most of us know from its 1964 publication together with the story "Leaf by Niggle" in *Tree and Leaf*, had been through two public appearances and several versions before that date. In 1938 Tolkien was asked if he would give the annual Andrew Lang Lecture at the University of St Andrews, Scotland, and chose the topic of fairy tales, which had been very much a concern of Lang's. Tolkien had already been thinking about the association of fairy tales with children, and the lecture gave him the chance to argue that this association was in fact an accident. He was intending to write a major fairy tale, and wanted to argue that such writing was and always had been matter for adults. A public platform on which to demonstrate this came at just the right time. Immediately after the lecture he resumed the writing of *The Lord of the Rings*, which he had begun in December 1937.

Though we have what is probably a draft of the lecture, we do not have a copy of the lecture itself, only commentaries on it in two newspaper reports that are given here. In the chaos of the war beginning it never saw print. However in 1943, Tolkien was invited to contribute to a festschrift for Charles Williams, and began revising and enlarging the lecture on fairy tales for this. Possibly he felt this piece was most appropriate for Williams, who, like himself, wrote in the fantasy mode; and perhaps the Christian character of Williams's work also made Tolkien begin stressing the potentially Christian happy ending of fairy tale. Tolkien's work on the essay exists in manuscript in the Bodleian, and Verlyn Flieger and Douglas Anderson have here done admirable work in transcribing it through all its vagaries. The collection, *Essays Presented to Charles Williams*, was not published until 1947, by which time Williams's death in 1945 had turned it from festschrift to memorial.

For the next years Tolkien was continually absorbed in *The Lord of the Rings*, but in 1955, with the completion and early success of that work, he complained that the essay was long out of print. However it was not till 1959 that his publishers Allen and Unwin agreed to a contract for it, and then only if he included an illustrative fairy-story to pad out what otherwise would have been too thin a volume. Tolkien made a few revisions to the essay as it had appeared in the Williams volume, but it was a further

five years until the essay actually appeared in *Tree and Leaf*.

Tolkien On Fairy-stories gives us a very full picture of the changing content of Tolkien's essay, which was revised during the composition of *The Lord of the Rings*. Flieger and Anderson first reprint the final version of 1964 in its entirety, adding their own notes and commentary. Then they summarise the entire manuscript and publication history behind this final version, noting and commenting on all the changes made by Tolkien. This summary is followed by two contemporary newspaper reviews of the original Lang lecture, one of these taken from the other: but the main one, from the *St Andrews Citizen*, and evidently using shorthand, summarises the content of the lecture in great detail. The remainder of the book transcribes two manuscripts, called "A" and "B," the one purportedly a draft of the Lang lecture, and the other both a second draft of the lecture and a series of interpolated observations and notes Tolkien made over the years prior to the Williams collection. These manuscripts are annotated.

Astonishingly, these two manuscripts, from the Bodleian Library in Oxford, have never previously been published. "A," which is numbered consecutively, only starts at page 5, and ends at page 28 in the midst of discussing "escape" in fairy stories. The editors believe that these missing pages were recycled in Manuscript "B," "whose introductory pages overlap closely the presumed but missing beginning of A, and which picks up and continues from where A breaks off" (173). In other words Tolkien simply lifted these pages from his first draft to use in his second.

The editors conclude with a bibliography of the works consulted in preparing their edition, and with another listing the works Tolkien read or cited in preparing the essay "On Fairy-stories" itself. The only deficiency here is the absence of a list of works written to comment on or explicate the essay, particularly in relation to *The Lord of the Rings*, for which it was the ground plan.

In appearance this volume is very attractive, with its jacket front an apposite painting by Tolkien himself, "The Shores of Faery" (1915). This painting is of two bent and poisoned trees framing a semi-circular image of Valinor. It is shot through with long golden and white spears of light cast by the final moon- and sun-fruits of the dying trees; and this is so reminiscent of Blake, that one begins to wonder how much Tolkien may have owed to him in other respects. The book itself is a stout black hardback which is easy to open out and does not crack, printed on thick paper with very readable type. Unfortunately, however, all the page references for the annotations to A and B are wrong by two and three pages respectively (these are corrected in the second printing).

As for the ordering of the material in the book, with the final 1964 version of the essay coming before all the preceding versions, I do not

myself feel very comfortable with this. Since the book is showing the changes to "On Fairy-stories" over the years, it would seem natural to place the final form last. Again, it might seem more appropriate to place Manuscript A, if it is being seen as a draft of the lecture, before the newspaper reports of the lecture itself. And if one can identify the pages from 1 to 4 and from 28 to the end that have simply been lifted from Manuscript A and slotted into Manuscript B, might it not have been better to replace them in A while noting their re-use in B? I can see the wish to place published material all in one place, and manuscripts in another, but I cannot find any other reason for the arrangement as it stands. Certainly it caused me some confusion in mentally leaping back and forth.

What then does this assemblage show us? The very detailed record of Tolkien's original Lang Lecture in the *St Andrews Citizen* shows that its central point was that the fairy-story was not about fairies but "Faërie." This led to a dismissal of various forms hitherto seen as fairy-stories, such as beast-fables. In this Tolkien's lecture was initially directed at the more inclusive views of Andrew Lang and other nineteenth-century scholars of fairy-stories, in contact with which he began to form his own ideas. The lecture in that sense seems to have been introspective in character, Tolkien feeling his way.

After Tolkien had stated his idea of fairy-story in contrast to these figures, he seems to have spent a good part of the time left on the nature of escape in fairy-story. Here he was beginning to look more towards his own work, and to providing it with a philosophic underpinning. As part of this, that the association of fairy-stories with children was a historical accident, and that the outlook of fairy tales has no essential link with childhood. While allowing that "Escape" was an essential characteristic of fairy tale, he denied that this was any failure of maturity, and used the comparison of the prisoner's natural wish to escape confinement to justify a flight from modern "reality" and mechanised culture. (After this Tolkien engaged at length in a discussion of Victorian clothing that became a digression. These remarks were to be so truncated by the time of the 1964 publication of the essay as to be well-nigh incomprehensible: Tolkien had here let a hobby-horse run away with him.)

The Lang lecture is marking out the ground of the fairy-tale as Tolkien saw it, and building its perimeter fence. We find Tolkien saying much more what the fairy tale is not than what it is. On "escape," for instance, he tells us that the fairy tale gives us release from modernity, industrialism, poor taste in clothes, hunger, pain, poverty, injustice and death: that is, he says much more about what the escape is from than about what it is towards. He is not yet moving outwards, into his own territory.

As well as "escape," it seems clear that Tolkien did in the lecture touch on what he later called "Recovery" as one of the criteria of fairy-story,

but the *Citizen* reporter seems rather to have garbled what he said. How-ever, since it is mentioned under the sub-heading "Origin of Fairy Sto-ries," it appears that Tolkien made this process of "renewal and return" analogous to returning to the beginnings of fairy-stories themselves. This is perhaps another way of saying that the fairy story should be of a tradi-tional rather than a radically novel character. Moreover, Tolkien is not so much talking about the reader doing this self-renewing as the fairy-story itself. This makes the point about "recovery" more a literary drinking at the springs of Helicon than a moral benefit to its audience. Here again it would seem that the lecture was inward looking and literary-scholarly in character.

The sense of enclosure seems continued in what Tolkien ends by say-ing about the "happy ending" of fairy story. He sees it as a mere literary device, a frame to a picture, "no more to be the real end of the story than the picture-frame was of the visionary scene or the window-casement of the outer world" (169). It is only in his later thinking that Tolkien sees the happy ending as an essential part of fairy story, no mere literary device but an image of Truth itself. It would seem that in the lecture Tolkien portrayed fairy-stories as diversions from reality rather than as giving us a new and truer Reality.

The content of the lecture seems reflected in its somewhat apologetic tone, whereby Tolkien starts by saying he is not a student of fairy stories as Andrew Lang was, proceeds by declaring it is sometimes "dangerous for him to ask too many questions [as a traveller in the land of fairy story]" (165), and goes on to say he is at as disadvantage in not being a Scotsman. This tone is more fully seen, as the editors of *Tolkien On Fairy-stories* remark, in the opening folios of Manuscript B, which are probably the draft pages for the opening of the lecture taken from Manuscript A (206ff).

From the report we have, it would seem that Tolkien's lecture con-tained little reference to the association of children and fairy tales to which he devoted much attention in the draft. Neither lecture nor draft mention the categories Fantasy, Imagination and Enchantment as Tolk-ien was later to do, nor do they make any reference to Consolation, which after Fantasy, Recovery and Escape was to be Tolkien's fourth main cri-terion for a successful fairy-story. In particular the lecture does not touch on that aspect of Consolation that Tolkien was later to endow with po-tential Christian power. Of course, part of this is down to the fact that Tolkien is giving a lecture, which is usually no more than 7,000 words, and things in his draft had to go. But it is also a question of what became relevant. He was talking and arguing with Lang and other scholars, and attacking the "realism" that rejects fairy-stories as escapist. Later he was to become less an apologist for the genre and a more assured advocate

of it. This was partly because from now on he wrote rather than had to lecture on it; but also because his writing of *The Lord of the Rings* gave him increasing confidence in the truth of what he had said and in the literary worth of fairy-stories themselves.

However, the lecture and its draft show how seriously Tolkien took fairy-tales as literature. He is the first in British literature since George MacDonald to do so, and the most prominent since the German Romantic writers and theorists of the Kunstmärchen (c.1790-1820). In doing this he turns three assumptions on their heads, namely, that fairy tales are about fairies, that they are for children and that the escapism at their core is contemptible. In this one lecture we already have no mere scholar arguing a dusty corner, but a major mind contributing new insights. And those insights are going to guide what he writes afterwards.

Turning now to Manuscript B, we find the growth of the Tolkien's later ideas on fairy-story, which reached broadly final form by the end of the war. It is here that he develops his ideas of Fantasy, Recovery, Escape, Consolation and Evangelium, and here that he has much more to say about the craft of making. Where the lecture and Manuscript A talk of isolating the fairy-story as a genre, or of how its nature is changed by continual additions over centuries, or of whether escapism in literature is a good or bad thing, now we talk much more about the individual human maker, struggling to make his materials come together into an enchanted whole. While keeping all the theoretic material of the lecture, Tolkien now becomes a little more practical. How do you make a fairy-story? What sort of a story will it be? How will it affect people? What was relatively introverted in the essay now works outwards, through Tolkien to his audience.

And this is because, across the whole period of Manuscript B, Tolkien is struggling his way through the writing of *The Lord of the Rings*. He once wrote to me, "*The Lord of the Rings* was a deliberate attempt to write a large-scale adult fairy-story" (letter dated 8 February 1967). This may well have grown to be the case, but it can hardly have been so from the outset, when he had not yet formulated his criteria for a successful fairy tale. But it is striking that he says that his fantasy was written to express his theories: it suggests a degree of deliberateness in every choice that goes far beyond mapping, dating or language-construction in imposing coherence on the story. However, we should not take every statement Tolkien makes absolutely at face value. After all, he once said that like his other stories *The Lord of the Rings* was written simply to provide a context for its invented languages (*Letters* 219).

We must not, I think, consider Manuscript B as the final stage of Tolkien's thinking for the essay. Much that we find in Manuscript A is repeated, and topics treated there are dragged forth once more to be

gnawed over. If Tolkien called the fairy tale a soup of bits and pieces picked up over the ages, bits and pieces is still what his essay remains in Manuscript B: his own soup is still very far from the table. Sometimes the thinking and the writing run clear, and we get passages that we shall see again in the final version. But most of the material discusses once more the topics of fairy-story origins and of children as their readers.

On fairy-story origins Tolkien is driven by his linguistic instinct for source hunting. Despite his assertions that the importance of fairy-stories is in what they are now, and that he will only "lightly touch" on the theme of origins, page after page canvasses the various mutations of fairy-tales down the ages, their relation to myth, and whether their origins are through independent creations of the same basic narratives or transmission from a culture center.

On children Tolkien continually ties himself in knots with generalizations (for instance, that if children were uniquely suited to reading fairy tales they would write only stories of that sort) or arguments based merely on his own individual experience as a child. But of course, he is often scribbling down stray thoughts, and we must not give them the scrutiny we would apply to a settled essay. What is obvious is continued obsession with this subject, and the reason is not far to seek. He is embarked on a fantasy for adults more than children, and he is not sure that he will find a market.

When we consider all the material here, it is plain that the essay "On Fairy-stories" came at no time to Tolkien as a unified literary programme. Each of the subjects—definition, origins, children, recovery, escape, loathing for modern civilization, is treated in isolation from the others. There is never any sense of any stream of thought running through everything, nor does Tolkien make much attempt to join one area of his thinking with another, so that the "origins" material is in a separate box from that on "recovery" or "escape". There is nothing necessarily wrong with that—it is justifiable to proceed by an additive or "spectrum" method of description: but what is worrying here is Tolkien's ability to contradict himself, and his habit of digressing from the point. Moreover the way he continually returns to worry a subject suggests that even in print we will not have his settled views.

It must be said that, so far does Manuscript B seem from an essay, it is almost a miracle that Tolkien managed to bring everything together for the Williams collection. He had of course the organisation forced on him by the 1939 lecture, and to that he must have returned for his broad outline. Into this outline he injected the quite new matter on dreams and drama, on children and fairy-story, on "Elvish" and human fantasy, on the nature of Fantasy, Imagination, Enchantment and Secondary Belief, and, most of all, and at considerable length, on four criteria of the

successful fairy-story—Fantasy, Recovery, Escape and Consolation. All this would seem further to confuse the situation.

Instead, by some miracle or touch of the wand, it makes all the random lines turn straight. Tolkien's idea of Fantasy as "the realisation, independent of the conceiving mind, of imagined wonder" leads in quite clear sequence to the notion of re-enchanting our perception of the world through Recovery of a sense of the elemental "this-ness" of things. From thence the idea of Escape from our industrial environment to a primal unappropriated world was quite natural. Finally, Tolkien's fourth category of fairy-story, Consolation, concerning the various joys that are offered through the "happy ending," also follows clearly from the topic of Escape.

Then we see that in fact all of Tolkien's four new criteria, Fantasy, Recovery, Escape and Consolation involve a return to beginnings, a stripping away of our blinkering experience. And that brings us back to the material on the origins of the fairy-story, which now acquires a late and unconscious relevance: to understand what the fairy story is you must go backwards, and to understand what it does you must go backwards in perception.

Now this leads us to the topic of children: while Tolkien denies that they are fairy-stories' true readership, he argues that all readers should be child-like—that is aesthetically innocent, entirely open to them. And thus, by indirections direction is found out: the essay, composed of a series of aperçus, begins at as primal a level as that by which fairy-stories themselves operate, to come together like disjoined limbs coming together to make a living body. It is the "realization, independent of the conceiving mind, of imagined wonder" (35). To say the least it is remarkable, "a sudden and miraculous grace: never to be counted on to recur" (75).

For the more general character of Tolkien's views on the fairy tale, however, it must be striking to any open-minded reader how much he is arguing with Victorian rather than modern scholars of the genre, as if nothing significant had been written about the fairy tale since the 1890s. Not one word does he write about Sigmund Freud, who saw fairy tales as emerging, like dreams, from the tangled undergrowth of the libido, and whose views had transformed twentieth-century thought. Tolkien thought that sex was something you really did not talk about, where Freud believed that, directly or indirectly, you talked about nothing else. For Freud as for Tolkien, fantasy was the true idiom of literature: but where Freud sees fantasy as the new realism, Tolkien sees it as an escape from reality.

This reminds us of just how much Tolkien's thinking is an islanded intellectual survival in his own time. More broadly it reminds us how

England managed to keep Victorian and Edwardian views the socially dominant ones for forty years after the First World War. Tolkien's thinking passes back through fantasy writers such as E.R. Eddison, John Masefield, Kenneth Morris, Lord Dunsany and Kenneth Grahame to William Morris's late romances and the nostalgic, pastoralist Georgian poets of his childhood. It is there that he belongs, rather than with such writers of his adult years as Eliot, Lawrence, Wyndham Lewis or Auden.

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Words, Phrases and Passages in Various Tongues in "The Lord of the Rings," by J.R.R. Tolkien, edited by Christopher Gilson. Mountain View, CA: Parma Eldalamberon, 2007. 220 pp. $35.00 (oversize paperback) [no ISBN]. *Parma Edalamberon XVII*.

Any reader of *The Lord of the Rings* who has jotted down lists of Elvish vocabulary and puzzled endlessly over the significance of unglossed words and names such as *Rhudaur*, *edraith* and *Tol Brandir* will have dreamed of a book in which all the words are laid out, all the riddles are answered and—this being Tolkien—new vistas are opened up to delight the imagination. As a child of ten or twelve, I literally dreamed of stumbling across such a volume in a bookshop, of opening its pages, and of glimpsing those new vistas. Of course, as is the way with elfinesse, when I woke up all the details were forgotten. But here at last, reassuringly solid, is that book—a linguistic companion to *The Lord of the Rings* that should satisfy for quite some time those who love Sindarin and Quenya.

Yet the book is certainly not as I dreamed: Tolkien envisaged it but never finished it, and his shifting ideas on almost every detail produce a palimpsest, a tangle of variants and downright contradictions. There is not one text but many, yet they involve multiple passes through the same material: the instances of invented language in *The Lord of the Rings*. There is the impression of a mind swooping down to circle repeatedly around particular points of grammar or meaning that troubled their creator, from the meaning of *Galadriel* to the various forms of the Quenya first person plural. Other points get the briefest flicker of attention, though to many readers these, including a wealth of previously unpublished names, will be of the greatest immediate interest.

In contrast with earlier issues of *Parma Eldalamberon* which have presented Tolkien's work in Elvish from c. 1915 to the early 1930s, the texts included here cover that most familiar phase of Tolkien's creative career, *The Lord of the Rings* as it was when complete. Thus, perhaps, most readers will find these texts more immediately satisfying than the Qenya Lexicon

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which Tolkien compiled as an undergraduate and soldier in the First World War, or the grammars of Noldorin he wrote in the 1920s, or even "The Etymologies" published in *The Lost Road*. The territory surveyed is engagingly familiar. The dusty excavation seen in editions of these earlier linguistic papers has given way to the study of forms that are given vivid life in Tolkien's greatest literary work.

Perusing those notes is like meeting old friends again, and getting to know them more closely than ever. Those who love only the sense of mystery produced by an untranslated phrase in *The Lord of the Rings* such as "naur an edraith ammen" should steer well clear; yet even for the keenest *lambendil* there will be new mysteries open up here: for example, *Arvernien* is translated as "the land beside the Verna," but nowhere are we told what the Verna is.

It is fascinating to see *Lúthien* translated here as "daughter of flower," suggesting that the proposal in 1977's *An Introduction to Elvish* that *Luthien Tinuviel* was intended to evoke "Florence Nightingale" may have been near the mark. We are also told the Quenya name for Barad-dûr and the Dwarvish original for *Nargothrond*; the river-name *Narog*, too, is derived from the Dwarven language Khuzdul. Among many others, *Asfaloth*, *Nûrnen*, *lebethron* and *Orodreth* are explained at last, as is the final element in the place-names *Eregion* and *Sirion*. The explanation of *Dol Baran* proves that even the most apparently transparent Sindarin name may have more than meets the eye: it does not, after all, contain the element *baran* "golden-brown" seen in *Baranduin*. It is a surprise to learn that the first elements in *Druadan* and *Rhovanion* are etymologically related. The regional name *Rhudaur* has long proved opaque; yet now it is revealed as none other than the Sindarin for "Trollshaw," which has always appeared right next to it on the *Lord of the Rings* map: the solution was staring us in the face all along. On the other hand, since the materials presented are sometimes little more than jottings, there are frustrations: the glosses on *huorn* are tantalisingly illegible.

Perhaps most interesting of all for this reader is the translation of Sauron's bynames *Thû* and *Gorthu* as "horrible darkness, black mist" and "Mist of Fear" respectively, with a related root THUS meaning "evil mist, fog, Darkness." The ideas anchor him in the primal night represented in *The Book of Lost Tales* by Ungweliantë the spider; in the Black Breath of his Nazgûl, the fog of the Barrow-downs, the grey mist of fear that flows from the Paths of the Dead and brings Gimli to his terrified knees; and ultimately, I suspect, to Tolkien's experience of smoke barrages, gas attacks and "animal horror" on the Somme.

Much of the value of these papers lies not in strictly linguistic items of vocabulary, grammar, phonology or morphology, but in their broader philological aspects. There is, for example, an excellent summary of the

influence of Finnish and Welsh on Quenya and Sindarin respectively; how that influence changed as Tolkien refined his languages; and how Sindarin differs from Quenya as Welsh differs from Latin. There is also much on the dialects of Sindarin in Beleriand, predicated on (and sometimes contributing to) Tolkien's complex historical view of the era.

Subtle are the ways of philologists, and Tolkien was certainly no exception. He coined a Quenya equivalent for *Gilthoniel*, then deleted it, presumably because there was no warrant for one historically (it was Varda's name among the exiles, who spoke Sindarin not Quenya). One note lists the linguistic indications that Galadriel's lament, "Namarië," is in a specifically Third-Age form of Quenya. A statement that the Sindarin vision-word *fân* "being elvish . . . has no implication either of uncertainty or unreality" is best understood by reading "On Fairy-stories."

Tolkien particularly seems to hate just concocting a new root to explain a word already invented by now found to be somehow problematic, as when he coins then rejects WOR "exude" as an element in *miruvor*. On the other hand he is content to create new derivatives of existing roots, e.g. *mbassē* beside *mbasta* from MBAS (52).

The introduction shows that Tolkien sometimes consciously wrote or revised his fiction as a direct "consequence of thinking about the points raised" by an analysis of linguistic elements. His thoughts were exercised in particular by the inconsistencies which had inevitably arisen during the long and hugely complex development of *The Lord of the Rings*. Work on these points led to him doing "a great deal of work" on "The Silmarillion," as he said (perhaps a little defensively) to Rayner Unwin in February 1960. Any anxieties the publisher might have felt were justified, however. The catalyst for this burst of work was a fan's compilation of words and names in *The Lord of the Rings*—the kind of letter that must have seriously distracted Tolkien from direct composition on "The Silmarillion" in his last two decades.

In Tolkien's niggling with languages the potential for distraction was infinite. By the time *The Lord of the Rings* was published, the grammar and morphology of Quenya and Sindarin were sufficiently well developed (in fact had been so since his earliest lexicons of c. 1915 and c. 1917 respectively) to allow alternative explanations for many words: for example, *omentië* is derived from either a gerund *omentië* "meeting" (with verbal ending *–ië*) or a noun compound "meeting of pathways" (where the final element is the noun *tië* "path") (13).

All in all, his notes constitute a rich mine indeed, whether you are interested in vocabulary alone, or grammar, phonology and morphology, or you want more data on Middle-earth, or wish to see how Tolkien uses philology to deepen his creation (as in the entry on *fân-* which becomes a mini-essay, 173-80; or that on *sule*, 124-5). There is probably

more fresh information on Sindarin in this publication than anywhere else. Snippets from letters otherwise unpublished enrich the stew, such as the one in which Tolkien describes how "the 'languages' have, of course, changed . . . hardening at last with age." (40)—though a reconsideration of the meaning of *Noldo* suggests the hardening was never actually a sure thing.

Aragorn is given a slightly different interpretation from the one provided in *The Peoples of Middle-earth*; the explanation of *Nimrodel* precedes the version furnished in *Unfinished Tales*; and *Gilraen* is translated quite differently here from the gloss seen in *Vinyar Tengwar* 42. Occasionally Tolkien sees the existence of two possible explanations for one form as an artistic boon—a pun—rather than a problem; for example when he derives *Fanuilos*, Elbereth's byname, from *fanui* "cloudy" and *los* "snow" on one hand and from *fân* "white" and *Uilos*, the Sindarin name of Mount Oiolossë in Valinor.

For those seeking to write in Sindarin or Quenya, there are complete present tense paradigms for two verbs ("make" and "grow") in each language, plus possessive pronoun suffixes for Quenya. But on page 57, one of these verb paradigms appears for Quenya in a different form, with many divergences. Even at this late stage, Tolkien had not settled on questions he had started answering in the 1920s or even earlier.

The compilation gives the lie to the idea that Tolkien's invented languages became immutable and orderly once *The Lord of the Rings* had been completed. His delight was still in finding new or improved words, forms, derivations and grammatical patterns, so even if the forms in *The Lord of the Rings* were fixed he now found multiple ways to explain many of them. And in some cases he was even prepared to alter those that had already appeared in print, having found them aesthetically inferior or in some way technically flawed.

A further realization, adumbrated in *The History of Middle-earth* but acutely clear here, is that Tolkien's conceptions shifted both generally and in detail while he was writing and revising *The Lord of the Rings* for its first publication—an eighteen-year process almost as long as the lifespan of his two chief Elvish tongues prior to *The Lord of the Rings*. He now found inconsistencies everywhere, presumably because at any given time he had either been attending more closely to the narrative than the language and nomenclature, and so had been careless; or (more likely) he had held a view at the time of writing which he had since left behind. One thing that these notes do *not* tell you is what Tolkien intended when he first coined most of the material in the process of writing *The Lord of the Rings*. His interpretations are a retrospective examination of items he now saw as exposed to public view and therefore requiring justification or polish.

Tolkien's purpose is often to reconsider the linguistic bases of elements in "The Silmarillion"—the names of the sons of Finwë, the nomenclature of the Elven diaspora—to make his mythological work ready for public consumption. He is often willing to contemplate major changes—he hates the names *Fingon* and *Felagund* and finds many others wanting, deciding at one point to alter *Glaurung* to *Angruin* (but never carrying this through). Yet this dislike of old forms is hardly surprising: these names had been coined, in some cases, in the 1920s or earlier. They no longer reflected his ideas about his invented languages, technically or aesthetically.

However, there are hints of a more seismic shift, already seen in *Morgoth's Ring* in relation to narrative. *The Book of Lost Tales* had inhabited the realm of the fabulous, but now Tolkien wanted to appeal more strongly to realism and internal consistency. *Noldo* was now reconsidered to mean "dark-haired" rather than "wise" because he felt the second kindred would have been named before their cultural or spiritual tendencies had become a fixed idea. This prosaic later notion was surely not an improvement on the simpler, emblematic original.

A key passage from a letter quoted herein helps to underline the problem. It sets out Tolkien's two principal purposes in inventing languages: firstly, as the best means of differentiating peoples in a story "without 'lecturing'" by introducing massive cultural detail; and secondly, as a pleasure in themselves, separate from the story. For the first purpose, complete lexicons and other data are actually an impediment, he admits—because they increase the degree of "lecturing" and threaten to overwhelm the story. But for the second purpose they are highly desirable.

After witnessing at length the first decade or so of Tolkien's fifty-eight-year love affair with his "Middle-earth" languages—a period when he had little or no audience—we see the activity he had dubbed his "secret vice" finally exposed to the public; and we sense his overwhelming relief and pleasure at discovering that other people were interested, even fascinated and delighted by these tongues. I suspect this revelation that his vice need no longer remain a secret was a catalyst in his failure to achieve publication in any form of "The Silmarillion." Now he had even more excuses to focus on perfecting the languages (purpose no. 2) at the expense of pursuing the stories which they served (purpose no. 1). In ways which his readers would recognize and deprecate even if Tolkien himself did not, the brain was taking over from the heart.

The notes often consist of simple declarative statements, where Tolkien is sure of his ground and especially when dealing with Quenya. He also frequently writes not as inventor but as student, calling the Black Speech "*evidently* an agglutinative language" with a verbal system which "*must have* included pronominal suffixes expressing the object, as well as

those indicating the subject" (10-11; my emphases). Yet at other times Tolkien writes openly as author, confessing his creative thinking, his dilemmas and doubts, and even his disappointments with his own work.

We see Tolkien's sense of phonaesthetics determining the choice of forms—there can be no other explanation for his rejection of the root DEL "thick, dense" as a component of the name *Glorfindel* because "it does not provide suitable Quenya or Sindarin forms." One may or may not agree that the ephemeral forms *delch* "dense," *delw* "thick," or Quenya counterparts *lelya, nelta, delta, delya* are not "suitable"; it is a matter of taste—one may guess that Tolkien would have preferred the root vowel to be pronounced further back in the mouth (*o, u*) rather than at the front like *e* to indicate the sense of denseness. And indeed, in the root index we see *lelya* as a Quenya word for "lovely, beautiful" under root DEL or "fine, beautiful" under root DĔL (151).

The reason why Tolkien revised *omentielmo* > *omentielvo* in the second edition is revealed—that the *m* here and in *met* in Galadriel's lament must derive from the same origin, yet the former is inclusive ("our," i.e. "yours and mine") while the latter ("us two," i.e "me and a third party, but not you") is exclusive. Tolkien worked with typical industry and ingenuity to resolve this, but his solutions created further disturbances in the wider grammatical system—so he then decided that Frodo had simply made a mistake. Thus pedantry defeats romance. Tolkien was frustrated with himself, dismissing his efforts as "all this to-do" (130). Yet the second edition allowed him freedom to smooth over the cracks, altering Frodo's word to *omentielvo*, along with introducing other changes to meet his highly self-critical standards. Illuminating these processes, a deft introduction by editor Christopher Gilson makes good use of the just-published *J.R.R. Tolkien: A Companion and Guide*.

The backbone of *Parma Eldalamberon* 17 is Tolkien's commentary, "Words, Phrases and Passages," abandoned when he reached Lórien. But Gilson has also taken the opportunity to publish numerous linguistic lists, notes, letter and mini-essays, all (very) roughly contemporary. Coverage of the songs "A Elbereth Gilthoniel" and "Namárie" means that there is significant overlap with Tolkien's linguistic appendix to Donald Swann's *The Road Goes Ever On* (1967); and there is also a great deal of material already seen in alternative versions in his guide for translators as published in Jared Lobdell's *A Tolkien Compass* (1975) and Wayne G. Hammond and Christina Scull's *The Lord of the Rings: A Reader's Companion* (2005)—especially as drafts of these are included, discussing Dutch and Swedish translations of Isengard and Isenmouthe (32-33).

From multiple options for presentation, Gilson has chosen one that is more practical than purist. Rather than presenting each note or text or sheaf as a separate whole (arranged, for example, chronologically),

he has organised all these items into two large sections. Firstly, there is a comprehensive word-list such as Tolkien had planned—a single analytical commentary that is notionally a fuller form of "Words, Phrases and Passages." Secondly, various etymological notes under root-headings are presented as an appendix, into which, usefully, the editors interpolate a list of all roots mentioned elsewhere in these texts, to form an index. This means *Parma Eldalamberon* 17 functions as a linguistic companion to *The Lord of the Rings* (complementing *The Lord of the Rings: A Reader's Companion*) and as a "sequel" to "The Etymologies" of the late 1930s. Additionally, Gilson provides an index of glosses, organised by language.

The sheer volume of information here precludes the kind of wide-ranging editorial cross-references and analysis seen in previous issue of *Parma Eldalamberon* and its sister publication *Vinyar Tengwar*. Full commentary and references would have swelled this volume to at least three times its length, as may be seen by comparing the treatment of a list of Elvish words for modes of thought here with the much more discursive analysis of the same fragment in *Vinyar Tengwar* 41; or the terse presentation of notes on *Lhûn* and *-ló* (Ringló, Gwathló) here with the full discussion seen in *Vinyar Tengwar* 48, "The Problem of Lhûn." The disquisition on words for "and," as well as Tolkien's lengthy notes on comparatives, would certainly have benefited from *Vinyar Tengwar*-style commentary. Doubtless some notes will indeed receive more comment and analysis in later issues of *Parma Eldalamberon* or *Vinyar Tengwar* when relevant to new material.

But within this publication the apparatus is mostly functional, restricted to major cross-references and bibliographical description. Where Tolkien fails to translate a word, the editor usually leaves it unglossed. Where Tolkien revisits a concept and revises his ideas, there is little or no discussion of the changes he makes. Though all dating information is provided, there is no real attempt to put entries in chronological sequence to show the development of his thought. It all demands a great deal of the reader. But on the other hand it provides much scope for inquiry and analysis by those who wish to work on Elvish: what does each untranslated word mean; what does this or that form indicate about grammar or phonology?

The cross-references and indexes are rendered less useful due to the reference system used: not by page within this issue, but by page references to *The Lord of the Rings*, which stand at the head of each entry or series of entries. These page references are small, indented, and spaced as if they belong to the entries preceding, not those following. Though some entries span many pages, there are no headwords to help readers find their place. There is no index of unglossed forms, and none *by* gloss. A few apparent typographical errors appear, and readers would be advised to check the errata published periodically online at <www.elvish.org>.

None of this should detract from the considerable achievement of bringing such intractable materials to light. And these notes will no doubt increase in value, and become easier to understand, when *Parma Eldalamberon*'s chronological coverage of Tolkien's language invention reaches to the 1950s and 1960s—though to judge by the volume and complexity of the material published so far, that must still be a long way off.

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Arda Reconstructed: The Creation of the Published "Silmarillion," by Douglas Charles Kane. Bethlehem, Pennsylvania: Lehigh University Press, 2009. 280 pp. $65.00. ISBN 9780980149630.

Douglas Charles Kane's diligently researched book takes the reader through the process behind an earlier diligent effort, that of Christopher Tolkien (assisted by Guy Gavriel Kay) in editing the 1977 *Silmarillion*. Kane minutely details the delicate task Christopher undertook in stitching together elements of his father's oeuvre, disparate in genre (from annals and glossaries to full-fledged narratives) and in composition-date (from the 1930s to the 1960s, including work composed both before and after *The Lord of the Rings*).

Kane goes through all of *The Silmarillion*, beginning with the "Ainulindalë" and proceeding on until the end of the "Quenta Silmarillion," with the final defeat of Morgoth by Eonwë (the "Akallabêth" and, especially, "Of the Rings of Power and the Third Age," are less extensively treated, as Kane deems there to be fewer textual questions). In each chapter, Kane details exactly what sources Christopher used and the truly astonishing inventiveness he showed in assembling them into a steady narrative. He also supplies extensive charts and tables detailing the editorial process in a blow-by-blow way. This graphic element lends clarity and organization to what might otherwise be an overwhelming amount of detail. Finally, the potential dryness is relieved by absorbing illustrations supplied by Anushka Mouriño; these, more realistic in terms of human portraiture than most Tolkien-inspired art, subtly fortify Kane's tacit argument that the "Silmarillion" material has more moments of gripping interpersonal drama than the published version revealed. Mouriño's depiction of the spirit of Míriel appearing before Mandos and Manwë has a Pre-Raphaelite lushness, and also embodies Kane's point that Christopher's recension excessively cropped back Míriel's role.

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One of the questions Kane's study puts to rest totally is the old conjecture about whether *The Silmarillion* is all Tolkien's work. Other than a very few instances (such as tying the Nauglamir more closely to Thingol

<div align="center">255</div>

in "The Ruin of Doriath") no significant line in the book was "written by the editor" (24). Kane's well-known online epithet, "Voronwë," is very suitable for his execution of this task, as watchful and respectful as Mardil the Good Steward's rule no doubt was in the wake of the disappearance of King Eärnur. Kane's textual scholarship is rigorous and is a model not only for Tolkien scholars but for scholars of more canonical authors, whose textual study is often pursued with less enthusiasm. Where Kane's treatment is less complete is in his own evaluation of the merits of Christopher's editing and editorial choices. Kane makes some very good points, and convinces the reader there was good material in the sources available to Christopher that he did not sufficiently deploy. Although acknowledging that *The Silmarillion* choices were motivated by "the most coherent and literary text possible" (26), Kane often gives short shrift to the ways in which these choices were motivated by purposeful literary intent.

In assessing the "Valaquenta," for instance, Kane notes (40) that Christopher Tolkien changed "With Manwë now dwells Varda" to "With Manwë dwells Varda." The deletion of the "now," though, is understood when one realizes the genre to which the "Valaquenta" belongs, a mythography of a tradition long passed on but now very remote. The final redactors (within the Middle-earth framework) of the "Silmarillion" material would have a sense of the existence of the Valar, but not so much their current existence in the same temporal moment; what we have now seems somewhat like an account of the Olympian gods by a writer such as Hesiod who believed in them but had no firsthand experience of their might, and such a tone is appropriate for the distance of the "Valaquenta" from its material (one assumes its ultimate source is from lore passed on through the returning Noldor in Beleriand).

Many of Christopher Tolkien's choices can be explained thus, in literary terms. Kane wonders why the Ents are spliced into the Aulë and Yavanna chapter, and he notes that it is most likely to give "some explanation of the Ents" (55). But Kane does not mention the overall context of both editor and author himself needing to suture a First Age narrative, not originally designed with *The Lord of the Rings* in mind, into being a background work to a novel set in the Third Age that is effectively its sequel. Much of the "Silmarillion" was fixed in print by *The Lord of the Rings* in ways that could not be altered. "Inglor" Felagund could be handily changed to "Finrod" in the 1966 revision of *The Lord of the Rings*. But, though Tolkien, according to Kane, considered making Galadriel Finrod's daughter, this revision would have given her a degree of closeness to the Beren-Lúthien story that is neither implied or evinced in *The Lord of the Rings*, and perhaps for this reason it was not made. Furthermore, roughly the first half of *The Lord of the Rings* was composed with only a

vague sense of its relation to the First Age mythos; only later on did the historical world of Frodo and company become identifiable as a later phase of that of the First Age Eldar. For instance, it is clear that when mention is first made of Gil-galad, Tolkien was looking for the general resonance of a past Elven-king, not assigning him an assured place in a Noldorin genealogy in which he had not been mentioned before—because Tolkien had not yet invented him. The question that Merry asks of Aragorn, "Who is Gil-galad?" (*FR*, I, xi, 197) was no doubt one, on a meta-level, Tolkien was asking himself! As Kane shows, Tolkien never quite answered it. Aragorn's turn to the story of Beren and Lúthien was thus not just to a tale that avoided Mordor but to a tale, unlike that of Gil-galad, whose full scope the author composing the text already knew. Gil-galad's ancestry is never made determinate. Even as late as the "Tale of Aldarion and Erendis," when Gil-galad identifies himself in his correspondence with Meneldur of Númenor as "Ereinion Gil-galad, son of Fingon," neither Gil-galad's paternity nor his proper name are decisively firm. The "final" product in *Unfinished Tales* is solely an outcome of a judgment made by Christopher Tolkien.

The overall thread here, which Kane understands but about which he could be much more articulate, is that Tolkien and later Christopher Tolkien were revising and re-presenting the "Silmarillion" to an audience used to *The Lord of the Rings*, that liked *The Lord of the Rings*, and one which wanted *The Silmarillion* to fit conveniently into the world of *The Lord of the Rings*. In the initial years after the quest of the Ring was introduced to the reading public, Tolkien was tempted to make "fundamental changes" (122) to the "Silmarillion." For instance, he considered eliminating what Kane rightly sees as a winning feature of the earlier mythos: the Sun and Moon as later, contingent creations from the fruit of the slain Trees, rather than being astronomically primary. Tolkien himself, then later Christopher, wisely retrenched from this wholesale re-conception. But in many less obvious ways—due to the need to insert such later-conceived characters as Galadriel, Gil-galad, and Gandalf back into primeval history—the earlier material not only had to be made generally unified and comprehensible but this had to be done in such a way that would reassure *The Lord of the Rings* readers looking for particular characters, and also in a general sense keep Middle-earth congruent with the knowledge they already had of it.

We now have had thirty years to absorb *The Silmarillion*. To us Maglor and Orodreth may be as familiar as a pint of good ale at *The Green Dragon*. But this was not the case for the 1977 readers, and Christopher Tolkien was laboring to produce a text that would satisfy the simultaneous desires of those readers for something new from Tolkien as well as for something anchored in the Tolkien they already knew. On the other

side, doubling or repetition had to be avoided. Kane notes an instance where a description of Nerdanel's voice as "deeper than woman's wont" is deleted because the same was said in *The Lord of the Rings* of Galadriel's speech-tones (*FR*, II, vii, 370). Kane also notes (91) the deletion of the characterization by Fëanor of Melkor as "gangrel," and I would add here that this deletion most likely occurred because Frodo describes Gollum as a "wretched gangrel creature" (*TT*, IV, iv, 266). Gollum and Morgoth were similarly evil, but on vastly different scales and depths, and the doubling of the word would have been unadvisable. Other changes, on the part of both Tolkien and his son, seem prompted by external considerations. The elimination of the children of the Valar (which made Fionwë, the son of Manwë, become Eonwë, the herald of Manwë, and which accounted for the famously foreshortened ending of the First Age) surely has to do with not wanting to rival Christian ideas of the incarnation of the Son of God. Similarly, the shift Kane chronicles in the location of Hildórien probably has to do with Tolkien not wanting the land of man's origin equated with a discernible point on our own Eurasian land mass. Underlying all this suturing, shifting, and substitution was a need to make *The Silmarillion* readable and as tightly knit a unit as the truly heterogeneous nature of the material could yield.

Though a broader compositional perspective is thus only lurking in Kane's analysis, at times he makes his own views explicit. Kane notices that revisions in *The Silmarillion* consistently "lessened the female presence" (83) in the stories, especially lamentable given the common complaint that Tolkien generally under-represented women. This is particularly true, argues Kane, of the women in Fëanor's life: both his mother, Míriel, and his wife, Nerdanel, have unconventional and tragic life stories which get short shrift in the 1977 version as compared to what could have been pieced together with the resources at hand. Kane is on to something here, and this cannot be explained away by merely compositional rationales. Yet *The Silmarillion* already has far more to do with gender relations than *The Lord of the Rings*; even the happier of the two full-fledged great tales, that of Beren and Lúthien, is full of untold suffering amid the glory of a great love. The material Tolkien added latest to the "Silmarillion" cycle, such as the story of Maeglin, his ill-starred mother, Aredhel Ar-Feiniel, and her marriage "beneath herself" to a Dark Elf, is one of a series of Tolkien's late tales about the complicated relationships between men and women (for example, Aldarion and Erendis, even Celeborn and Galadriel). It adds tremendously to the emotional depth and moral realism of *The Silmarillion*. Kane's suggestions that expanded roles for the Fëanorian ladies would have amplified this strength are well argued.

As welcome as the scrupulous registering of minute changes is, the book excels most when it points to these larger choices. The discussion

of Fëanor's career is especially revelatory; we learn that it is originally not Maedhros but his father Fëanor, who reports on the death of Finwë. This leads to the provocative conclusion that in *The Silmarillion* the sons of Fëanor, especially the two eldest, are tragic antiheroes as much as their father is. Indeed, in *The Silmarillion* we see little of Fëanor, despite the extravagant praise Gandalf gives Feanor's art (*TT*, III, xi, 204), leaving the 1977 reader who knew only *The Lord of the Rings* but not yet the History of Middle-earth material somewhat caught short. Similarly, compositional issues—especially Tolkien never having completed his retelling of the fall of Gondolin, the beginning of which appears in *Unfinished Tales*—led to Gondolin not being nearly as vividly rendered in *The Silmarillion* as the less fabled Nargothrond. Kane points this out, as well as the foreshortening of the story of Eärendil, surely one of the pivotal moments in the history of Middle-earth, but given only one or two degrees more space than the abbreviated defeat of Morgoth by Eonwë. As reiterated by Kristine Larsen in her important talk, "Sea Birds and Morning Stars: Ceyx, Alcyone, and the Many Metamorphoses of Eärendil and Elwing" (delivered at the 2008 Mythopoeic Society conference in Connecticut), the story of Eärendil is a moving and bittersweet tale whose power, in *The Silmarillion*, is seen only in flashes—certainly, the Mariner's arrival in the Undying Lands is one—of its conceivable power and scope. The under-representation of both Gondolin and Eärendil means that the Beren narrative is, along with the more sorrowful tale of the Children of Húrin, the centerpiece of the "Quenta Silmarillion" in a way it otherwise would not have been. Perhaps in a sense Tolkien would not have been displeased, given how important this story was to him personally.

Many of Kane's criticisms fall into the genre of Monday-morning quarterbacking; the reason he is able to make them is because we have reams of posthumously-published Tolkien material, and the reason we have these reams is that *The Silmarillion*, as edited by Christopher Tolkien, was commercially successful enough to spur publication of all the rest. Pertinent here is the well-known T. S. Eliot quote, "Some one said: 'The dead writers are remote from us because we know so much more than they did.' Precisely, and they are that which we know." We know more than Christopher Tolkien did when he compiled *The Silmarillion* because he compiled *The Silmarillion* in the way he did, and the book sold enough copies for the publisher to present the later, more archival material in The History of Middle-earth. *The Silmarillion* had to pilot Tolkien through the beginning of his *nachleben*, and indeed it partially guaranteed that there was one at all. Though I share Kane's high valuation of "Athrabeth Finrod ah Andreth"—a lyrical, philosophical meditation that embodies Tolkien's depth and craftsmanship at their finest—one can see how the inclusion of this, as well as the speculation concerning the

second prophecy of Mandos and Morgoth's final defeat at the end-time, would have imbalanced the tableau. *The Silmarillion* was published in 1977 in a way that plausibly could have been Bilbo Baggins's translations from the Elvish, for readers who would be as attuned to hobbit expectations of the Elder Days as was Bilbo himself. Kane points to this when, in his otherwise sketchy discussion of the "Akallabêth," he demonstrates that Christopher Tolkien took out those aspects of the tale which depended on it being told by Pengoloð, the external narrative focalizer in the "Silmarillion"-era tales before the Baggins-manuscript frame became available. This emphasis on what the hobbit-reader would have found as reassuring possibly explains the curtailment of the philosophical and religious aspects of *The Silmarillion*. It also gives a rationale for the excision of some more psychologically probing details in what was already, compared to the Tolkien writings that had been published previously, a far more somber set of narratives.

The year *The Silmarillion* was published was the year the first *Star Wars* movie came out. (Kane amusingly connects the two universes when he compares [79] the inversions in Míriel's speech to those of Yoda). In both universes, the prequels (in Tolkien's case, of course, originally conceived far earlier), *The Silmarillion* and the late 1990s-early 2000s *Star Wars* films, had the difficult task of maintaining narrative continuity while dealing with far darker subject matter. Kane's absorbing study shows that Christopher made choices the reader might regret. But he generated a published text that paved the way for the continuing posthumous growth of Tolkien's reputation.

Nicholas Birns
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New York, New York

A convincing argument may be made that the early twenty-first century is a new golden age of Tolkien criticism. Along with recent and noteworthy works by long-established masters of Tolkien scholarship, outstanding book-length studies by "new" writers like John Garth, John D. Rateliff, and Diana Pavlac Glyer have swelled the Middle-earth scholar's bookshelves with more absolutely essential tomes.

To the forefront of that honor roll, add Alison Milbank's magnificent *Chesterton and Tolkien as Theologians*, first published in hardcover in late 2007 (ISBN 9780567040947) and now released in trade paperback.

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Prodigious and polymathic in its allusions to fiction, folklore, theology, philosophy, economics, papal encyclicals, and literary criticism, it is rooted deeply in insightful comprehension of the works of both authors. It weaves Elvish ropes linking the two together in ways few—if any—other critical works have done.

Of course, writing an opus like this one is fraught with perils for those who would link Faërie to the Cathedral. "Therein lies the problem with books of this sort," wrote this reviewer of Stratford Caldecott's *The Power of the Ring: The Spiritual Vision behind "The Lord of the Rings"* (2005). "The reader perforce has two subjects to weigh and balance: literary scholarship and theological interpretation" (294).

This long and narrow bridge over the abyss Dr. Milbank has crossed sure-footedly. A lecturer at the University of Nottingham, she has described herself in an online interview as "a literary scholar of the Victorian period and the Gothic novel, with interests in all manner of non-realist fiction: fantasy, horror, and mystery. I am also an Anglican priest."

As one who has written and spoken on the spiritual links between the Shire and the Flying Inn, taught university classes linking the two writers (as she has), and discussed Chesterton's influence on Tolkien with (among others) Priscilla Tolkien and George Sayer, this reviewer was impressed from the first page of the preface, which sets forth the order of the book, to the conclusion wherein Milbank looks back lucidly on her topic in a fine finale linking Father Christmas, Santa Claus, and Tom Bombadil.

By only the second page, Milbank conjoins Tolkien's greatest tale to Welshman David Jones's wartime epic, *In Parenthesis* (1937), which "juxtaposes ordinary soldier talk of a range of periods with mythic tales in order to give heroism and significance to the common people" (ix). The power and the glory of this study is foretold, and, like all foretellings in Tolkien and Chesterton, the prophecy is fulfilled.

One virtue of this work is the author's mastery of existing criticism of Chesterton and, especially, Tolkien. She stands tall and sees far because she stands on the giants' shoulders. Likewise, her understanding of Dante provides a connection between her subjects and his *Divine Comedy*. Her small "c" catholic incorporation of sources as variegated as the Pre-Raphaelites, Agatha Christie, E. M. Forster, David Hume, Thomas Aquinas, Eric Gill, Jacques Maritain, Alfred Noyes, *Peter Pan*, Pope Leo XIII's *Rerum Novarum*, and J. K. Rowling—all these in the introduction alone—is stunning and superb.

A few immediate quibbles: while the text, typography, editing, and layout are impeccable, the book is bound too tightly. Words in the inner margins roll into the gutter; the spine resists overmuch, and thus annoyingly many words are lost in the crack. Also, for coherent reading, two bookmarks are required: one for text, one for endnotes, located at the

end of each chapter. Footnotes would have been more felicitous.

The first of Milbank's five chapters, "Making Strange: The Fantastic," is the *Introit*. Immanuel Kant, Joan Aiken, Phillip Pullman, and Gertrude Stein lead her to this declaration: "We believe in ents, dwarves, etc., because we experience them through hobbit eyes; we believe in the hobbits . . . because they are our focalizers" (41). Throughout, she generously lards her study with fat quotes from Tolkien and Chesterton. Beware the side effect: readers will go clambering up their shelves for *The Ball and the Cross* (1909) and other books too long unread.

Her exegesis of the delay at Moria due to the password "Speak, Friend and Enter" sapiently suggests that "Legolas and Gimli had been bickering, and the door gave an example . . . of the friendship the Fellowship themselves need if they are to complete their task" (46). The coupling of the risen Gandalf's reappearance in *The Two Towers* with Jesus's two encounters with Mary Magdalene in John 20 and Luke 24 underscores Milbank's priestly mastery of scripture.

The second chapter, "The Grotesque," begins by connecting Dante Gabriel Rossetti's and John Millais's religious paintings, and the outcry they evoked to these authors. "Chesterton's vision of controlling a million monsters finds a parallel in Tolkien's attitude to 'the wilderness of the dragons' of the Northern pagan past"(60-61). Treebeard gets especial attention as Tolkien's best grotesque creation, and Milbank takes her subtle knife to the difference between Tolkien's text and Peter Jackson's films. The dwarves embody "this created action of the grotesque . . . [they] are short, stone-hard and fierce, reflected also in their greed for gold and antipathy to trees" (65). Gimli's daring but unmaterialistic request for a single hair from Galadriel betokens the coming transcendence of the dwarves. Milbank might have noticed that in the First Age, Galadriel denied Fëanor, the most cunning of the Eldar, a single hair. But, as she says: "Arabesque elf and grotesque dwarf [rise above] their origins in their friendship and in the growth towards understanding of each other's aesthetic" (65).

Shelob, Gollum, and Ungoliant draw their due as grotesques. Though in this review, Milbank's comments on Tolkien are the focus, her alliance of his views to Chesterton's is well-woven throughout. Her exposition on the artwork of both shines further light on their fictive fellowship. Here, too, the elements of Dante in both are astutely itemized. Tom Bombadil, who will play a major role in her conclusion, is the final puzzle-piece introduced.

In her third chapter, "Paradox and Riddles," Milbank links Chesterton's infatuation with paradox to Tolkien's with riddles, noting that Bilbo, Bombadil, and Aragorn are all riddles and riddlers. Indeed, paradox applies to Frodo and Sam as well. "The true happy ending of the novel lies

beyond the pages of the book, and yet is anticipated in moments such as Sam and Frodo's descent from Mount Doom, when Sam, a true Bunyan-esque 'Hopeful', leads the lost and broken Frodo to safety" (111).

"Can I thank no one for the birthday present of birth?": Chesterton's humble query from *Orthodoxy* (1908), begins the fourth chapter, "Fairy Economics: Gift Exchange." Here this study begins to rise on the wind beneath its wings. Milbank writes: "For us gift-giving belongs to the private realm: we take off the price tag and wrap a commodity in tissue paper to remove it from the world of market-value and exchange; we turn it into a present, and thus restore it to the sacred: we enchant it, as it were" (118). This contrasts with Saruman's dehumanization of his wage-slave workers in contrast to *Beowulf*, Belloc, Chesterton, and Tolkien's economic philosophy of Distributism, hallowed by Pope Leo XIII. Niggle's eucatastrophe—"It's a gift!"—joins hands with the pub sign in *The Flying Inn* (1914): "Beer is freely given under the inn sign from what appears to be a Cana-like never-emptied barrel" (122).

"It is no accident that Niggle's subject is a tree because trees have been emblematic of the divine gift right back to the Garden of Eden and its Tree of Life" (126-27). The chapter's last three pages on Galadriel's gifts to the Fellowship, with the "binding rite" of the Norse and Anglo-Saxon cup which she performs, brilliantly bind that moment to the tale of the Ring.

The fifth and final chapter, "Fairy Poetics: Make Believe," wraps this superlative gift in the finest Yule finery. A tender commentary on Tolkien's twenty years of Father Christmas letters—will his children's letters in reply, a gift indeed, ever be published?—harmonizes with Dickens's Scrooge, the Magi chronicle in Matthew, and Chesterton's observations about Father Christmas in *The Everlasting Man* (1925). Milbank's identification of Tom Bombadil, a figure looming large throughout this book, with Father Christmas is the perfect *Ite, Missa est*.

A five-page conclusion begins with the poetic "A, a, a, DOMINE DEUS" by David Jones, from his *The Sleeping Lord and Other Fragments* (1974), and ends with this benediction: "Tolkien's 'other' world is always in relation to our own, and his fantastic opens a space in which we can imagine and entertain the seemingly impossible in such a way that we can both literally and metaphorically 'assist in the effoliation and multiple enrichment of creation.' For it is only through the re-enchantment of the world by our creative vision that we will find the courage and resources to prevent its rape and destruction" (168-69).

In the review of Stratford Caldecott's *The Power of the Ring* mentioned above, this reviewer declared: "Reducing *The Lord of the Rings* to a Christian allegory similar to C.S. Lewis's Narnian tales is mistaking a crucial part for the whole. As critics as diverse as Tom Shippey and Joseph

Pearce point out, one need not share the author's faith to cherish his tale. Many other things are at work in it: Tolkien's love of trees and loathing of technology, his enjoyment of good food, good friends, good cheer, and good beer, his nostalgia for the 'little England' of bygone days, his experiences in the trenches of World War One. Caldecott's book is colored by viewing all these through the stained-glass lens of faith" (297). With all respect to Caldecott, who Milbank cites with approbation in *Chesterton and Tolkien as Theologians*, Catholicism's stained-glass becomes clear and bright as the light of Eärendil. Through her puissant and polished prose, we can see clearly now.

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The Lord of the Rings is a house built on many foundations. Almost a decade ago, the late Daniel Timmons pointed out that "detractors rarely recognize that the literary aspects of Tolkien's work have been prominent in Western literature from Homer to the present day" (Clark and Timmons 3). Worse, it would seem that many of Tolkien's *proponents* are equally unaware of this heritage. Timmons went on to say that "although criticism exists on Tolkien's works in relation to medieval literature and twentieth-century fantasy, relatively few studies situate the author in a broader context. Tolkien's writings have links to every major period of English literature from Old English to Renaissance poetics to religious epic to nineteenth-century popular narrative" (5). It is this large gap in the scholarship that Martin Simonson aims to spotlight in his new study, *The Lord of the Rings and the Western Narrative Tradition*, which expands on his previous work, published in volume three of *Tolkien Studies* (2006), as

Pearce point out, one need not share the author's faith to cherish his tale. Many other things are at work in it: Tolkien's love of trees and loathing of technology, his enjoyment of good food, good friends, good cheer, and good beer, his nostalgia for the 'little England' of bygone days, his experiences in the trenches of World War One. Caldecott's book is colored by viewing all these through the stained-glass lens of faith" (297). With all respect to Caldecott, who Milbank cites with approbation in *Chesterton and Tolkien as Theologians*, Catholicism's stained-glass becomes clear and bright as the light of Eärendil. Through her puissant and polished prose, we can see clearly now.

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well as in various collections from Walking Tree Publishers.

Source-scholars have long argued that a wide variety of literary sources forms one foundation on which *The Lord of the Rings* is built. Simonson attempts to extrapolate a larger, more generalized theorem from this argument—that *The Lord of the Rings* may be regarded as an accretion not merely of sources, but of *genres*, revealing the influence of the major milestones in the history of western (that is to say, European) narrative literature: the mythic, epic, romantic, and novelistic traditions. In parallel to this, Simonson attempts to apply Northrop Frye's theory of modes—though not so much his theory of genres (both expounded in *Anatomy of Criticism*)—to *The Lord of the Rings*. The book consists of five chapters, of vastly disproportionate lengths: the first and final chapters, no more than an introduction and afterword, are each less than five pages; the fourth chapter is more than one hundred. The second provides a general summary of the western narrative tradition, without reference to Tolkien. The third chapter introduces Frye's mode of ironic myth in the context of Tolkien and several Modernist writers. The fourth, the centerpiece of the book, examines many aspects of *The Lord of the Rings* in the context of what Simonson calls the "intertraditional dialogue." While a certain amount of background material may be necessary, fully one-third of the book (19–93) has almost nothing to say about *The Lord of the Rings* or its author, barring only occasional (and superficial) points of contact.

From the outset, a main contention is that it is difficult to assign *The Lord of the Rings* to a discrete genre. What Simonson never makes clear, however, is why this should present a problem for readers or scholars. Walking Tree series editor Thomas Honegger offers a preemptive answer in his Preface: "Its defiance of traditional critical categories and the critics' difficulties to link it to a definite genre seems [sic] to lie at the heart of many a dismissive response" (5). Yet there are questions left unanswered. For instance: why is it inadequate to identify the genre as "prose romance," "heroic quest," or simply "fantasy," as many sympathetic critics have done?

Frye himself called *The Lord of the Rings* "quest romance" (*Notebooks on Romance* 80) and "sentimental romance" (*Notebooks for Anatomy* 111, 274). Frye's own generalized definition of romantic literature, particularly its second clause, seems perfectly applicable to *The Lord of the Rings*:

> (1) A fictional mode in which the chief characters live in a world of marvels (naive romance), or in which the mood is elegiac or idyllic and hence less subject to social criticism than in the mimetic modes. (2) The general tendency to present myth and metaphor in an idealized human form, midway between undisplaced myth and "realism." (*Anatomy* 367)

That *The Lord of the Rings* may exhibit aspects of other genres at diverse points should present no difficulty. Frye points out that "the forms of prose fiction are mixed, like racial strains in human beings, not separable like the sexes" (*Anatomy* 305). And what of Honegger's explanation, that critics may dismiss *The Lord of the Rings* because they cannot identify its genre? Frye admonishes such careless critics: "William Morris should not be left on the side lines of prose fiction merely because the critic has not learned to take the romance form seriously. Nor . . . should his choice of that form be regarded as an 'escape' from his social attitude" (loc. cit.). The reprimand applies equally well, *mutatis mutandis*, to Tolkien's critics.

As for Edmund Wilson, who infamously dismissed Tolkien's masterpiece as "juvenile trash," Frye has an answer for him too: "Romance is older than the novel, a fact which has developed *the historical illusion* that it is something to be outgrown, a juvenile and undeveloped form" (*Anatomy* 306, emphasis added). Frye described his own reading of *The Lord of the Rings* as "with great & almost uncritical pleasure" (*Notebooks for Anatomy* 284), but I daresay no one would accuse him of exhibiting "a life-long appetite for juvenile trash." Insatiably curious researchers are invited to visit the Special Collections of Victoria University Library (in the University of Toronto system), which holds a copy of *The Lord of the Rings* personally annotated by Frye.

The primacy of genre may be questioned from another angle as well. Richard West has contended that Tolkien's work "usually suffers when current genre theory is applied to it;" instead, "it is more reasonable to attempt to establish a new genre that more accurately limns the outlines of this type of narrative . . . 'the twentieth-century romance'" (West 9). Simonson sidesteps the more fundamental questions of genre in his zeal for advancing the view that Tolkien's masterpiece represents all the major genres of the western narrative tradition combined. Admirers of Tolkien (myself included) will be sympathetic to his enthusiasm, and fortunately, Simonson's analysis, *in extenso*, is more convincing than not.

Where Simonson is at his best is in his demonstration that there is a progression of "intertraditional dialogues" at work in *The Lord of the Rings*, a discovery which has the potential to add a great deal to our understanding of the work. But before he can lay out this argument, Simonson must set up the necessary background on the history of the western narrative tradition. In his second chapter, he traces its development with great care, from the epic tradition (represented by Homer, Virgil, Appolonius, Rhodius, and the anonymous *Beowulf*-poet) to the romance (medieval, renaissance, and modern); thence, to the "fantasy novels" of Tolkien's immediate forebears, George MacDonald and William Morris. Such a backdrop is clearly important because "the study of genres is

based on analogies in form" (Frye *Anatomy* 95), and those formal analogies will come up again and again in Simonson's subsequent analysis. This historical review might have benefited from including the Bible; though not strictly part of the western narrative tradition *per se*, its influence on that tradition is beyond question. Where Simonson's survey begins with epic literature, incorporating the Bible into his study would have offered him a bridge further back in time, to *mythic* literature. Neither does Simonson make room for relevant "extraliterary" material—the bestiaries, chronologies, hagiographies, and annals that provided Tolkien with inspiration. This material lies outside a self-imposed ambit but could have buttressed his case. To his credit, Simonson deftly handles the material he chose to include.

Simonson begins his third chapter with a short appraisal of critical opinion on the question of the genre of *The Lord of the Rings*. But I find the survey too abortive to support any extended analysis with genre at its heart. Simonson reflects only three opinions: those of Tom Shippey, Jared Lobdell, and Eduardo Segura. He errs in calling these "the most recent ones" (73): Shippey's view certainly antedates the publication of *Author of the Century*, and Lobdell's is demonstrably almost thirty years old! (Simonson cites the 2004 edition of Lobdell's book, *The World of the Rings: Language, Religion, and Adventure in Tolkien*, but this is essentially a reissue, with a new title and some new material, of his 1981 book, *England and Always: Tolkien's World of the Rings*; it therefore only appears to be recent.)

The balance of the chapter is concerned with an intriguing, and mostly convincing, comparison between Tolkien and several Modernist writers (to whom he is seldom likened): T. S. Eliot, Ezra Pound, James Joyce, David Jones, and an assortment of contemporary war poets. Here, Simonson owes an unacknowledged debt to John Garth—particularly in the comparison to Wilfred Owen. The yardstick against which Simonson measures each author's work, including Tolkien's, is Frye's mode of ironic myth, which in Simonson's interpretation "would seem to imply an encyclopaedic incorporation of the total literary heritage of the past, ironically contrasted with the present" (80). The author's decision to ignore Frye's other modes—the mythic, romantic, low and high mimetic—is questionable. Though *The Lord of the Rings* demonstrates all five at various times (and occasionally, all at once), the ironic mode is more often than not the least pertinent (Shippey *Author* 221–3; see also Shippey *Road* 210–2). While it may certainly be found in *The Lord of the Rings*, it is really more applicable to a work like *The Hobbit*. In Frye's words, "the central principle of ironic myth is best approached as a *parody* of romance" (Anatomy 223, emphasis added), but I do not think most scholars would so describe *The Lord of the Rings*. Shippey feels (as I do) that the most often applicable of Frye's five modes—to which Shippey suggests adding a

sixth, "true myth"—is the romantic.

In spite of these misgivings, I find much of interest in the chapter on ironic myth. The best comparisons are with David Jones and T. S. Eliot. Jones drew on the traditions of northwestern Europe to assemble a mythic backdrop for his poem, *In Parenthesis*—published the same year as *The Hobbit*. In much the same way Tolkien wished to recreate a lost English mythology, Jones was attempting to extrapolate a sense of "Britishness" to contextualize his poem, and both authors mined similar mythic ore to do so. For Eliot's *Four Quartets*, Simonson has something to say about each of its four constituent poems, published 1935–1942, but particularly "East Coker" and "Little Gidding." Jared Lobdell, too, noticed the relevance of the latter (1, 71); the original title of his book, *England and Always*, is an answer to Eliot's lines: "Here, the intersection of the timeless moment / is England and nowhere. Never and always."

From here, Simonson proceeds to an extended comparison between Tolkien and the triumvirate of Modernism: Joyce, Eliot, and Pound. More often, these authors are vigorously *contrasted* with Tolkien, but Simonson observes that all four achieved a remarkably self-referential literature through an intensive use of allusion. What chiefly (but not always) differs is their source material. They are also unanimously concerned to reflect a "simultaneity of traditions" (101); it is which traditions they chose, and how they reflected them, that varies. And finally, they may all be scrutinized through the lens of Frye's ironic mode. The difference is that with the Modernists, the irony is internal and intentional; with Tolkien, external and accidental (102).

The real bulk of the book—more than half of its 225 pages—is taken up by the fourth chapter. From its first pages, the author sets up his key questions: How do the four major narrative traditions—the mythic, epic, romantic, and novelistic—interrelate with one another over the course of *The Lord of the Rings*, and what are the limits to this intertraditional dialogue? To answer them, the author puts forward a bewilderingly intricate rubric (114–6). Building in part on Bakhtin's concept of the "literary chronotope," Simonson defines three narrative levels, each of which consists of several sublevels. His system includes: I) the Generic Narrative Level, consisting of the 1) mythic, 2) epic, 3) romantic, and 4) novelistic traditions; II) the Situational Narrative Level, consisting of five main influences: 1) physical space, 2) characters, 3) theme, 4) action, and 5) focalization; and III) the Transitional Narrative Level, consisting of seven transitional types, in two groups: A) Prepared Transitions, comprising the 1) accepted invitation, 2) rejected invitation, 3) dialogue, 4) mélange, and 5) meta-dialogue; and B) Unprepared Transitions, comprising the 1) intruder and 2) arrested intruder.

Out of this elaborate nomenclature, the most important pieces by far

are the four generic traditions (mythic, epic, romantic, and novelistic). Simonson devotes most of the chapter to these, as well as to the mélange—the intermingling, or "intertraditional dialogue," as he frequently refers to it—between them. He illustrates them with a series of loosely organized studies of important characters and settings in *The Lord of the Rings*. Other elements in his highly systematized approach are given less attention, but Simonson offers some particularly astute observations on "focalization" (129, 211, 217) and the "arrested intruder" (133, 180, 185). Put concisely, focalization refers to a sudden change in the active narrator—as when Shelob renders Frodo unconscious, necessitating an immediate focal shift to Sam. An arrested intruder, on the other hand, makes a *failed* attempt to introduce elements drawn from other generic traditions into the one currently dominating the story—as when Bilbo calls for a lunch-break during the Council of Elrond, but the attempted intrusion of quotidian, novelistic concerns fails to interrupt the epic proceedings.

Simonson's character studies (Aragorn, Gandalf, Frodo) and his analyses of some of the novel's key locations (the Shire, Rivendell, Moria) are absorbing, if selective, and they offer new insights. Throughout, Simonson is at pains to demonstrate "the intricate fabric of narrative strategies Tolkien had to weave" (137). In my view, he makes too little use of the draft material published in the middle volumes of the History of Middle-earth. While he acknowledges that this is not his aim (117), I hope that future scholarship will build on Simonson's work by demonstrating *how* these interwoven strategies came to be assembled so coherently over such a protracted period of writing and revision. "What Tolkien's sometimes maddening hesitations show," Shippey notes, "is exactly how difficult he found that blend of ancient and modern, realistic and fantastic, which in the end he developed so successfully" (*Road* 321). Likewise, there is insufficient contextualization with *The Hobbit*. There are only hints of it in Simonson's study, as where he notes that the "Last Homely House" image of Rivendell from *The Hobbit* has really become the image of Bree and The Prancing Pony in *The Lord of the Rings*. Rivendell, then, must become something greater and must draw nearer to an epic, romantic, and even mythic mélange. I would have liked more of this.

I find Simonson's discussion of the final book of *The Lord of the Rings* especially engrossing and his interpretation nuanced and sophisticated. By the point of the novel's *dénouement*, Simonson observes, the three principal protagonists, Frodo, Aragorn, and Gandalf, have largely lost the "intertraditional flexibility" each had previously demonstrated, resulting in "a much flatter narrative, resembling a regular prose romance, in which the epic and mythic elements practically disappear from the tale" (219). At the same time, he points out that the return journey to the Shire

is a "physical *and generic* return," in which the hobbits "disencumber the narrative of the characters and the sceneries that used to imply changes in the intertraditional dialogue" (218, my emphasis). Finally, in Simonson's view:

> Frodo comes to embody Tolkien's particular approach to ironic myth, describing with his example and in his narrative a circular movement from the novel and back towards myth, incorporating in the process other narrative traditions of the past with great fluency while at the same time yielding space to twentieth-century concerns. (217)

As worthwhile as Simonson's conclusions, and as thorough the evidence he marshals to make them, one could wish for greater elaboration. For example, Simonson relegates the "decidedly novelistic character" of Saruman to a mere footnote (193). Of Éomer, he writes only that he is "firmly rooted in the epic and chanson de geste traditions" (208). Even Gimli and Legolas are given short shrift. Simonson ascribes them both "narrative neutrality" (164), but he does not explain why this should be or what its significance to the larger interplay of characters and traditions. He says almost nothing at all about Galadriel and Lothlórien.

His treatment of the intertraditional dialogue in its various manifestations is likewise abbreviated. Simonson notes that "the present analysis is not an attempt at disclosing all the aspects of the interaction between traditions in *The Lord of the Rings*— this would be impossible in a work of this limited extension" (116). But any limits were self-imposed; the book could easily have been longer. What Simonson does, he does well, but the survey of intertraditional dialogues, as well as the character- and scene-studies, seem needlessly selective and curtailed.

Reviewers, more than casual readers, are apt to notice errors and oversights. In Simonson's list of "publications that have most frequently included articles on Tolkien" (13 n1), the omissions of *Tolkien Studies* and *VII: An Anglo-American Review* are startling. The Ivy Bush and The Green Dragon inns were not in Hobbiton (121), but rather on the Bywater Road and in Bywater, respectively. Simonson's declares ominously that "[the Ringwraiths] have come to find the One Ring and will stop at nothing until they find it" (123), but this is certainly hyperbolic. Other examples of hyperbole: calling the War of the Ring a "global conflict" (179)—at most, it is continental; and calling Sauron "Ilúvatar's enemy" (216)—true, but irrelevant.

During his discussion of Gandalf, Simonson calls it a "mysterious assertion that Boromir 'escaped' before he died." Simonson continues:

> Escape from what? And what did the hobbits have to do with
> it? One possible interpretation is that . . . Boromir's soul was
> saved due to his repentance, and the hobbits provided him
> with a just cause that helped him achieve heroic redemption
> in battle. (192)

One *possible* interpretation? Is this not—precisely and unambiguously—
the intended reading? But in an article published several months after
his book, Simonson has reconsidered. He still finds Gandalf's assertion
mysterious (I do not), but now it is "the only possible interpretation"
("Similarities and Differences" 7).

The book, overall, is clear and well-written; however, a fair number
of isolated peculiarities of style, spelling, and usage catch the eye—e.g.,
"such an approach would only refrain the reader" (14), "without hardly
any" (116, 146), and "humoristic" (125, 128, 170, *passim*), to give but a
few examples. Also, it is Edoras, not Édoras (172). I suspect that some
of these irregularities arose because of the author's movements between
English and Spanish, a guess corroborated by spelling errors such as
"antropomorphic" (Spanish *antropomórfico*) and "ortography" (*ortografía*).

Turning to paratextual elements, the index is serviceable, but incom-
plete. I noted many omissions, both in entries and in page references.
The index also has an interesting idiosyncrasy: Simonson gives the full
names of literary figures, but abbreviates the first names of scholars and
critics. So, we have "Chaucer, Geoffrey," but "Frye, N." In the bibliogra-
phy, Simonson provides two separate lists: primary sources and second-
ary. The latter is further subdivided into sections containing scholarship
on genre and theory, on the Great War and Modernism, on Tolkien spe-
cifically, and finally, the not particularly useful "Dictionaries" (containing
one specialized dictionary and one encyclopedia).

Taken as a whole, *The Lord of the Rings and the Western Narrative Tra-
dition* is an ambitious and intriguing new study. While neither faultless
nor comprehensive (so very few studies can be either), it nevertheless ad-
vances the study of Tolkien's masterpiece in new directions. As I have
said, I hope it will prove to be the starting point for further research by
Simonson himself and others, examining *The Lord of the Rings* in both
greater breadth—taking into account its development, history, and con-
text among Tolkien's other writings—and depth—exploring characters
and settings relegated to the sidelines in Simonson's book. Until that
time, it provides another solid foundation (one of many) for approaching
The Lord of the Rings.

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organized by the editor) at Leeds University's 2006 International Medieval Congress, which had the theme "Emotion & Gesture."

Maria Raffaella Benvenuto's brief essay, "From *Beowulf* to the Balrogs: The Roots of Fantastic Horror in *The Lord of the Rings*," argues that the darker, gothic, side of Tolkien's work has been ignored in favor of its brighter realms. H. P. Lovecraft, she points out, traced much of modern horror fiction back to medieval sources, and in fact the terrifying elements of *The Lord of the Rings* regularly have earlier and more recent parallels and antecedents: various critics have pointed out resemblances between the Balrog and Surtr, Gollum and Grendel, the Ringwraiths and vampires, Sauron and the deathless sorcerer. All of these are, Benvenuto says, masterpieces of horror, and they illustrate the range of topics available for further research in Tolkien's dark side.

Jessica Burke, in "Fear and Horror: Monsters in Tolkien and *Beowulf*," asks "what the monster is and how it exists in relation to appetite, corruption, the quest for power, and the nature of evil" (15). Drawing on sources as diverse as Darwin's studies of emotion and feminist biblical scholarship, she considers Melkor, Sauron, Ungoliant, Shelob, Gollum, Grendel, Grendel's mother and Cain. Monsters are deformed versions of ourselves, used since the Middle Ages as a tool of self-understanding; pushed to the margins, they are both warnings against and scapegoats for the violation of society's rules. Even in the safety of reading, they excite terror, particularly when they invite us to imagine our being unmade. Thus, the *Beowulf*-poet terrifies by showing a world in which monsters and heroes alike will be unmade. Melkor seeks to unmake Arda, Grendel, Heorot. Gollum resembles both Grendel and Shelob in monstrous ways: nonetheless, he is finally horrifying because we identify with him and can imagine how we might be unmade in the face of a challenge too great for us. The discussion of evil (28-31) misconstrues the Augustinian/Boethian position, and there are some errors in detail, e.g., Tolkien suggests that Shelob came from drowned Beleriand, not Númenor (32) and the *Beowulf*-poet says that Cain, not Grendel, is the father of all monsters (36, cf. lines 111-115).

In "Of Spiders and (the Medieval Aesthetics of) Light: Hope and Action in the Horrors of Shelob's Lair," Reno E. Lauro begins an overview of medieval aesthetics with a historical sketch of the Early Middle Ages (anachronistically identifying St. Patrick as an agent of Anglo-Saxon Christianity, the missionaries to the English as Augustinians, and Charlemagne as Holy Roman Emperor), then contrasts the medieval Neo-Platonist and Aristotelian philosophies of light. Tolkien's imaginative reconstruction of the *Crist*'s reference to "earendel" recovers (à la Barfield) an "ancient semantic unity" deeply tied to a metaphysics of light. Beginning with the Flame Imperishable in the "Ainulindalë" (which Lauro, citing

Tolkien's letter to Milton Waldman, connects, with little textual support, directly to the Two Trees), light is a fundamental element of the legendarium, as also is its absence, darkness as a privation of the good. Shelob's Lair harkens back to the darkness of the Void, and the light of Eärendil not only gives hope to Sam and Frodo, but calls them to action. Similarly, for Tolkien creativity, sub-creation, is a form of recovery of semantic unity which constitutes "*a call to confront, resist and transform* the world" (70, emphasis in original). Sub-creation as practiced by the Elves at their best is a form of revelation, art used in the service of recovery; as practiced by Sauron, it is possessive, dominating, corrupting. All this recalls the philosophy of Heidegger, for whom both Art and Technology are ways of revealing the truth (*a-leitheia*, "that which is unhidden"), though the use of Technology always carries the risk of alienating ourselves "from our existential state of poetic dwelling" (74). Tolkien depicts not only horror but also, through his light imagery, our appropriate response to it: courage that comes from recovery of our basic way of being in the world.

Rainer Nagel's essay, "Shelob and her Kin: The Evolution of Tolkien's Spiders," considers both internal development of *The Lord of the Rings* and English etymology in response to claims that Shelob is ill-conceived because she does not grow out of folkloric roots. In early drafts, Frodo was to fall victim to a group of spiders like those in *The Hobbit*: successive versions saw them become more like the huge spiders of Beleriand and then come together in one great opponent. Bilbo calls the spiders in Mirkwood "Attercop," from an Old English word for spider, "attorcoppe," literally "poison-cup, poison-head," where "-cop" itself already means spider, as in "cobweb." "She-lob," on the other hand, uses Old English "lobbe" (spider). Tolkien, Nagel suggests, would have noted that Old English sources use "attor-cope" only in secular contexts, "lobbe" only in religious ones, even when translating the same Latin word (and would also have appreciated that "spider" apparently replaced "lobbe" historically because the latter could, inconveniently, mean both "spider" and "fly"). Her name, then, encapsulating spiritual menace, indicates that Shelob holds an appropriate place among Tolkien's monsters.

In "The Shadow beyond the Firelight: pre-Christian Archetypes and Imagery Meet Christian Theology in Tolkien's Treatment of Evil and Horror," Shandi Stevenson argues that Tolkien achieves a new synthesis of Christian theology with the worldview of the pagan north, thereby creating an "implicit 'theory' of evil" (93). Beginning with a brief account of the Germanic world's "melancholy" outlook (95), she considers Tolkien's use of seven "elements" (such as darkness, forest, and monsters) borrowed from that world. The relevant distinction for Tolkien in dealing with these is always between good and evil, and the introduction of that moral element evokes the moment when the northern world

encountered Christianity (Stevenson does concede that the pagan culture could conceive of the world as evil [113]). In Tolkien's Augustinian view, only good is creative; good "cherishes the 'other'," as opposed to seeking dominion over it; and the good will eventually conquer evil. Whereas the pre-Christian North feared what evil might do, destroying even the gods themselves, the new Christian society, while confident of the final triumph of good, fears instead corruption: the possibility that one might become evil. Unfortunately, the argument for this valuable insight relies heavily on secondary sources and untenably subsumes all the encounters between the several Germanic tribes and various strands of Christianity under one broad category.

"*The Cry in the Wind and the Shadow on the Moon*: Liminality and the Construct of Horror in *The Lord of the Rings*" by Michael Cunningham gives an overview of the association of horror with the peril of liminal moments, at literal or symbolic thresholds in Tolkien's Secondary World: such thresholds often mark off "zones or theatres of conflict" in which characters can interact with the landscape. He traces examples from the Woody End encounter with the Black Rider through the Old Forest, the Barrow Downs, Moria, Minas Morgul, and Cirith Ungol to the land-scape of Mordor itself.

Amy Amendt-Raduege's "Barrows, Wights, and Ordinary People: The Unquiet Dead in J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*" discusses the Barrow-wight in terms of Icelandic barrow-dwelling *draugr* and *haugbúi*, of treasure-hoarding dragons, of St. Guthlac's demons, and of spirits who haunt their own graves. Noting that Tolkien shows us three sets of barrows—those on the downs, those lining the road to Edoras (sig-nificantly "mounds" rather than "barrows"), and the Dwimorberg—she argues that the Barrow-wight, some follower of the treacherous Witch-King now revived by his near presence, shares with those who gather at the Stone of Erech the crime of oath-breaking. Thus in Middle-earth those "who have committed no evil beyond the usual complement of faults and failings" rest at ease, like those in the Chamber of Mazarbul, under *simblemynë* or in Rath Dínen: the unquiet dead are those who "must atone before they can find peace" (148). This holds out the hope that, whatever death is, it is not the horror of being confined forever under-ground with a decaying corpse.

Romuald Ian Lakowski's essay, "Horror and Anguish: The Slaying of Glaurung and Medieval Dragon Lore," surveys the complex develop-ment of Glaurung and Túrin in light of medieval (and, Spenser being included, Renaissance) dragon lore mentioned in Tolkien's unpublished Dragon Lecture, noting from the beginning that Túrin's several failures radically differentiate his saga from its models. In early stages of the saga, Glorund shows a typical Germanic dragon's interest in hoarded

treasure; as the tale develops, malice and (paradoxically) bestiality become his prime characteristics. At each stage, Glorund/Glaurung has specific similarities to Fáfnir, not least in the manner of his death, as well as to the *Beowulf* dragon. In early versions, Túrin battles the dragon for three days, reminiscent of the Redcrosse Knight's symbolic struggle with the Dragon: Tolkien may have removed this detail in order to avoid the parallel of Túrin to Christ. Sigurd's reforged sword Gram contrasts with Túrin's reforged Gurthang, while Fáfnir's *ægishjálmr* ("helm of terror"—cf. Gorthol) and Prince Arthur's dragon crest in *The Faerie Queene* both provide parallels to the Dragon-helm of Dor-lómin. With dragons, then, as in other areas, Tolkien consistently draws on medieval lore while reshaping it to suit his purposes.

In "Shadow and Flame: Myth, Monsters and Mother Nature in Middle-earth," Kristine Larsen considers human fear of the natural world. Drawing on Dorothy Vitilliano's concept of geomythology—the idea that cultural stories both etiologically "explain" natural occurrences and euhemeristically preserve memories of great geological events—and expanding it to include astromythology, she discusses various key elements of Tolkien's legendarium considered as late-recorded versions of mythological events. In some cases, this approach is clearly correct: Tilion's love for Arion is certainly an etiological account of solar eclipses (179-180). The red glow in the north when the Valar attack Morgoth just after the Elves awaken or as the dragons attack Gondolin also matches in form accounts of the Aurora Borealis as seen from relatively southern latitudes. Eärendil's battle with Ancalagon may, then, logically be a euhemeristic account of a meteor shower coming from the direction of the planet Venus (186), and the trenches which trip Fingolfin in his battle with Morgoth may give an etiological account of the land around an active volcano (190). But given that (as Strider points out) Bilbo transcribed these latter stories in the home of Eärendil's son, the fit is less comfortable. The problem is not Larsen's, but Tolkien's: partly the incomplete reconciliation between Tolkien's early and late conceptions of the mythology, partly a basic incompatibility between his interest in the change of cultural elements (language, mythology) over time and his conception of elves as fundamentally undying. Galadriel, for example, would have had first hand accounts both of the battle of the Valar and of how it looked from Cuiviénen, and is unlikely to have mistaken her uncle's futilely heroic death for his tumbling into a fumarole.

After initial observations on the evil image of wolves in folklore, their near extinction, and the threatened status of their traditional enemy the wolfhound, "Evil Reputations: Images of Wolves in Tolkien's Fiction" by Julie Pridmore catalogues wolf encounters in *The Lord of the Rings*, *The Hobbit* and various stages of the "Silmarillion"—also considering, in the

latter case, the development of Huan. Pridmore then discusses possible sources for these wolf and hound episodes (e.g., the hound in *Njal's Saga* sets the example for Huan's loyalty). Finally, the author discusses images of wolves (and wolfhounds) in Tolkien illustration and in the Bakshi and Jackson films.

As a whole, the collection would have benefited from closer proof-reading: there is a distracting array of typographical (and even, in a few cases, grammatical) errors.

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Myth and Magic: Art according to the Inklings, ed. Eduardo Segura and Thomas Honegger. Zollikofen, Switzerland: Walking Tree Publishers, 2007. [6], iv, 342 pp. $21.25 / £10.35 (trade paperback) ISBN 9783905703085. Cormarë Series no. 14.

This collection of essays undertakes a discussion of a subject of great importance. Segura and Honegger explain in their Preface that their goal is to work towards "a profounder understanding of what the Inklings considered the key of literary creation, and of Art" (ii). The editors cite their hope that the volume will "become a first stepping-stone in the process of reconstructing those conversations in which the Inklings discussed, argued, and thoughtfully debated on Myth and Language" (iii). The essays in the volume engage these central concerns from various perspectives, examining the notions of myth-making and subcreation, of magic and art, as Lewis and Tolkien theorized about them in their critical writing and embodied them in their fiction.

In drawing its readers into this complex and invigorating discussion, the book very appropriately directs our attention to the questions and debates that lie near the center of Inkling studies. Lewis and Tolkien's inquiries into the nature of myth and art and into the relationship between language, imagination, and subcreation inform almost all of their personal and intellectual interests, such as linguistics, medieval literature, fairy-stories, poetry, and Christian apologetics. This is the fascination that drew the Inklings to each other and that unites their very different fictional worlds. Segura and Honegger have done a great service to Inklings scholarship in raising these questions so evocatively.

The first chapter of the book is "Recovering the 'Utterly Alien Land': Tolkien and Transcendentalism" by Martin Simonson. In this essay, Simonson establishes a fascinating and fruitful new context for Tolkien's concept of Recovery, articulated in his essay "On Fairy-stories," linking it

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not only to the thinking of the English Romantics, but also to the theories of the American Transcendentalists Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau. Simonson aptly indicates that Emerson and Thoreau's emphasis on language makes their thought particularly germane to Tolkien's artistic undertaking: Thoreau, for instance, was attempting to develop a "mythic language of the wild to express a modern perception of the eternal and to recover a fresh perception of the world" (9). Through the linguistic roots of his fiction and his dedication to unfolding the reality of his secondary world, Tolkien "updates Thoreau's comparatively lame attempts at expressing a vision of timeless nature with a mythic grammar for the contemporary reader" (17).

In "New Learning and New Ignorance: Magic, Goeteia, and the Inklings," Tom Shippey points out that the fiction of both Tolkien and Lewis manifests their reflections on the different senses in which the word "magic" can be used, and the very different moral and spiritual implications of those senses. In this essay, Shippey engages primarily with the criticism and fiction of Lewis, beginning with his long discussion at the beginning of *English Literature in the Sixteenth Century, Excluding Drama* of the differences between the medieval conception of magic, associated with Faerie, and the Renaissance *magia* of books and spells, which is closely linked both to *scientia*, scientific inquiry, and to *goeteia*, witchcraft or the summoning of spirits. Shippey begins by challenging the strict dichotomy that Lewis asserts between medieval and Renaissance concepts of magic (27), and then turns to an exploration of Lewis's various depictions of magic and its relation to both religion and science, focusing especially on Lewis's Space Trilogy. In an attempt to illustrate the complex inter-relations among the four primary concepts involved, Shippey schematically summarizes Lewis's "attitude to magic" as a square which shows religion and *magia* on the one side opposed to scientism and *goeteia* on the other (43).

Dieter Bachmann's essay, "Words for Magic: *goetia*, *gûl*, and *lúth*," examines Tolkien's terms for magic and serves as an excellent complement to Shippey's consideration of C.S. Lewis's approach to the same question. Bachmann argues that, like Lewis, Tolkien appealed to the distinction between natural magic (*magia*) and ceremonial magic (*goetia*) but that he insisted "that the moral distinction lies in the magician's motive or purpose, not in the technical question of whether he is acting on matter or on a spirit" (50). Bachmann thus derives a "fourfold division of different kinds of 'magic'" (52). When ceremonial magic is used for power, it is manifested in necromancy, Renaissance witchcraft, or the "deceits" of Sauron; when its goal is wonder and "aesthetic pleasure," it is manifested in the magic of Faerie, in elvish enchantment (52). When natural magic is applied for domination, it results in industrialization and "the vulgar

devices of the laborious, scientific magician," but natural magic can also be manifested in the wholesome delight in making, as evidenced in the Silmarils or Gandalf's fireworks.

In "When is a Fairy Story a Faërie Story*? Smith of Wootton Major*," Verlyn Flieger gives us an excellent and refreshing essay on a much-neglected piece of Tolkien's fiction. Flieger demonstrates how *Smith of Wootton Major* serves as a "practical application" of the criteria of a true fairy-story that Tolkien laid out in his essay "On Fairy-stories" (57). In his essay, Tolkien asserts that the heart of fairy-stories is the wonder of humans who somehow enter the Perilous Realm of Faërie, and Flieger argues that in *Smith*, Tolkien attempts to capture that marvelous and elusive atmosphere of Faërie (58), providing his protagonist and his readers a glimpse of its wonders, even if not understanding. For this reason, Flieger pays *Smith* a most unusual sort of compliment, calling it "Tolkien's severest, most uncompromising, least accessible piece of fiction" (62). Flieger goes on to suggest quite compellingly that Tolkien's story of the craftsman in Faërie can also be understood as "dramatizing the relationship of the artist with the world of imagination," thus encapsulating the experience of both the reader and the writer of fairy-stories.

"Myth, Fact, and Incarnation" by Colin Duriez explores Lewis's contemplation of the relationship between the abstract and the concrete, between history and truth. Duriez argues that Lewis finds this link in the imagination, claiming that a "thing captured by the imagination . . . belongs to the world of experience, sensation, and contingency and yet embodies general qualities of meaning by the very nature of imaginative perception" (74). The essay goes on to show that Lewis viewed myth as "the greatest achievement of the imagination," as it had "the ability to make concrete what would otherwise remain abstract" (89). Finally, Duriez argues that for Lewis the "complete reconciliation of the abstract-concrete division" is the "incarnation of the divine in the human," the moment at which "myth became fact" (96).

Patrick Curry compares Tolkien's concerns about the modern world and its perspective with those of social philosopher Max Weber in "Iron Crown, Iron Cage: Tolkien and Weber on Modernity and Enchantment." Curry claims that the two writers' "diagnoses of modernity . . . were tantalizingly similar" (99), stating that the heart of this similarity lies in their conceptions of magic and enchantment. Curry says that, for Tolkien, "the hallmark of magic is *will*, whereas that of enchantment is wonder" (100), concepts he also asserts to be intricately involved in Weber's analysis of modern society (101). The essay is novel and establishes an unusual connection, but the argument itself lacks the clarity and linearity that would make it compelling. The central concepts of magic and enchantment, themselves a fascinating link between the two authors,

get lost in digressions on the later impact of Weber on social theory or discussion of the various mythological and historical associations with the mineral iron.

In "A Mythology for England?: Looking a Gift Horse in the Mouth," a wide-ranging and authoritative essay, Thomas Honegger outlines how Tolkien attempts to place "his mythopoeic writings within a framework that would allow him to dedicate it to England, his country" (110). Honegger begins from the well-known premise that Tolkien "bemoans the fact that his country lacks a genuinely English mythology" (110), and he walks his readers clearly and compellingly through Tolkien's early writings to show how Tolkien set out to fill this national mythological gap. The "linking of Tolkien's Legendarium with England," Honegger explains, "is achieved predominantly, though not exclusively, by means of the frame narratives" (116-7), whose central figures are pseudo-historical Anglo-Saxon men who encounter Elves and transmit the stories of Elvish legends. Moreover, in early versions of the Legendarium, Tolkien explicitly identifies Tol Eressëa with the British Isles themselves. Although Tolkien's later writings moved away from these explicit ties between Elvenhome and England, Honegger argues that *The Lord of the Rings* remains mythologically tied to England through the literary activity of the hobbits, who capture "some of the best elements of 'Englishness'" (126).

In "Lewis's View of Myth as a Conveyor of Deepest Truth," Devin Brown argues that, despite Lewis's numerous expositional writings, Lewis believed that fiction serves as a more powerful vehicle for spiritual truth, enabling him not merely to state, but to suggest (133). In his fiction, therefore, Lewis attempts to "express truth through a mythic format" (133). The essay concludes with several pairs of long quotations, examples of particular spiritual ideas that Lewis has explored in both a fictional and a non-fictional setting. The device is a happy one, although the larger argument about the nature of myth might have been more effectually furthered by a more detailed analysis of the passages thus juxtaposed.

Miryam Librán-Moreno's essay, "'A Kind of Orpheus-Legend in Reverse': Two Classical Myths in the Story of Beren and Lúthien," contains a remarkably thorough catalogue of similar elements in Tolkien's story of Beren and Lúthien as it evolved through the years in which Tolkien developed it and in many different Greek and Latin versions of the myths of Orpheus and Eurydice and Protesilaus and Laodameia. Librán-Moreno's establishment of the Protesilaus and Laodameia connection in addition to the more common link to Orpheus is an intriguing one, but the essay on the whole contains very little direct discussion of Tolkien's story, and concludes only that these two myths exerted "an influence on Tolkien's own idiosyncratic material" (182). The essay demonstrates extensive

research, yet to this reviewer it illustrates the impulse that Tolkien cautioned against in his "soup" metaphor in his essay "On Fairy-stories": the impulse to look past the soup itself, the "story as it is served up by its author," in a desire to discover the "bones of the ox out of which it has been boiled," the story's "sources or material" (*MC* 120).

In "A Monster that Matters: Tolkien's Grendel Revisited," Eugenio Olivares-Merino sets out to "provide a systematic description of how Tolkien conceived Grendel, the hero's first foe in the Anglo-Saxon poem *Beowulf*" (187). The essay provides, at great length, a summary and discussion of Tolkien's argument about Grendel in his great essay "*Beowulf*: The Monsters and the Critics," as well as an interesting discussion of *Beowulf* and its critical reception prior to Tolkien's seminal essay. Olivares-Merino's essay, though quite readable, seems rather out of place in this collection, as it does not explicitly engage any of the central themes of the book. He remarks at the end of the essay: "I assume that much could be said about the relevance of Grendel behind some of the creatures in *The Hobbit* or *The Lord of the Rings*," but no such discussion follows, nor any treatment of the implications that Tolkien's literary analysis of *Beowulf* and its monsters may have for his concept of myth or of storytelling. The essay raises many questions, but posits few answers.

"A Tale as Old as Time, Freshly Told Anew: Love and Sacrifice in Tolkien, Lewis and Rowling" by Margarita Carretero-González examines the "centrality of love and sacrifice" in the works of Tolkien, C. S. Lewis, and J. K. Rowling (247). Carretero-González focuses on a comparison between the magical effects of Lily Potter's sacrifice of her life to protect her son Harry in Rowling's books, of Aslan's sacrifice to redeem the life of Edmund in Lewis's *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*, and of Gandalf's sacrifice on the Bridge of Khazad-dûm in *The Lord of the Rings*. The treatment of each author is rather brief and glancing, though the essay dwells somewhat longer on the reception of J. K. Rowling and the appropriateness of her inclusion in a conversation on the Inklings.

The next chapter is "The Hidden Meanings of the Name 'Ransom': Strange Philology and 'Contradiction' in C.S. Lewis's Cosmic Trilogy" by Fernando Soto and Marta Garcia de la Puerta. This essay's central concern, a philological investigation of the name of Ransom, the protagonist of C.S. Lewis's space trilogy, seems an appropriate undertaking. The conclusion to which the authors are led by this analysis—that Ransom is "a Christlike figure"—seems unobjectionable, though their supposition that Ransom's title of Director in *That Hideous Strength* is intended to mask or remove Ransom's "redeemer persona" is unconvincing (282). Not content to analyze what Lewis actually wrote, the authors instead premise much of their argument on what they wish Lewis had said, but did not. Soto and Garcia de la Puerta allude to the fictitious

etymology that Lewis gives for Ransom's name in *Perelandra*, explaining that it derives from "Ranolf's son" (270), but they opine that Lewis "might have been more linguistically consistent" if he had named the ancestor "Ramolf" instead (270). If Lewis had done this, they suggest, then Ransom's name would not be Ransom but Ram-son, which would connect "Ransom/Ramson" (as they proceed to refer to him) with a lamb, and therefore Christ.

In "'As Under a Green Sea': Visions of War in the Dead Marshes," John Garth argues that in the chapter "The Passage of the Marshes" in Book IV of *The Lord of the Rings*, we can perceive Tolkien's "expressive powers quickened again by memories of the First World War, seen through the prism of the Second" (311). This essay sifts very carefully through the evidence of Tolkien's letters, both those expressing his thoughts during World War II, while he was writing Book IV, and those containing his memories and reflections on his harrowing personal experiences in the trenches in World War I. Garth does a remarkable job of combining this evidence with a close and sensitive reading of Tolkien's descriptions of the Dead Marshes, augmented by thoughtful and evocative comparisons of Tolkien's imagery to that of other World War I writers. The weakness of the essay is a tendency at times to lay on some of Tolkien's phrases in his letters more weight than their context may easily support, but nevertheless the case that Garth makes in this essay is a very strong and suggestive one.

In the final chapter, "*Leaf by Niggle* and the Aesthetics of Gift: Towards a Definition of J.R.R. Tolkien's Notion of Art" Eduardo Segura considers the relationship between Tolkien's understanding of human art and his Christian worldview. He begins with some audacity by challenging the uncritical way in which Tolkien's oft-quoted dislike of allegory is often accepted. In his rejection of allegory, Tolkien expresses preference for an alternative approach to the composition and reception of stories: "history" and "applicability." Segura argues that this preference is rooted in his understanding of the "relation between myth and truth" (316), a relationship that depends both on his Christian outlook and his aesthetic theories. The centerpiece of the essay is a reading of "Leaf by Niggle," which Segura treats as a very personal reflection on both artistic and spiritual realities, in which Tolkien shows that human art as well as the relation between myth and truth has, at its core, grace, the free gift of God. In the end, Segura argues, Tolkien shows that he sees art "as a means to be redeemed, and to redeem others" (335).

This collection is a noble undertaking, and it contains much learning and several very important and enlightening studies. There is no denying, however, that its contents are rather uneven—uneven in some superficial though jarring ways, such as the length of the chapters: one essay is over

five times the length of one of its near neighbors. More importantly, the essays vary significantly in how fully they engage with the fascinating central concerns of the collection. Some essays engage Lewis and Tolkien's notions of myth and art very directly and very fruitfully. Others are only connected to this central theme tangentially, and some seem disinclined to engage the primary concepts involved in the discussion.

The collection, therefore, leaves a sense of disappointment that may recall Gimli's sober assessment of human endeavors: "It is ever so with the things that Men begin: there is a frost in Spring or a blight in Summer, and they fail of their promise" (*RK*, V, ix, 149). Perhaps, however, we can join Legolas in recalling that "seldom do they fail of their seed," and hope that this collection will stimulate much further discussion on this important subject.

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The Silmarillion: Thirty Years On, edited by Allan Turner. Zollikofen: Walking Tree Publishers, 2008. [4], iv, 168 pp. $17.00 / £8.30 (trade paperback) ISBN 9783905703108. Cormarë Series no. 15.

Has it really been more than three decades since *The Silmarillion* landed in bookstores to the bewilderment of some and the delight of others? A lot of water has flowed under the bridge to Nargothrond since then, giving us new perspective on Christopher Tolkien's first attempt to publish a portion of his father's sprawling legacy.

With the multi-volume History of Middle-earth now behind us, shall we consider *The Silmarillion* simply as a piece of literature in the Tolkien canon or can we still continue to use it as resource for study? Both, I think. Although I've read *The Lord of the Rings* many times, I've always preferred *The Silmarillion*, embracing it first as a work of art and only later as a resource to be mined for knowledge of Tolkien's legendarium. And I still find myself returning to it for study, because there are passages and precise turns of phrase that occur nowhere else in the vast archive of material published by Tolkien's son Christopher.

As *The Silmarillion: Thirty Years On* ably demonstrates, there is still much to be gleaned from that early presentation of Middle-earth mythology and legend. Allan Turner's well-balanced and thoughtful collection of essays chosen to commemorate the thirty-year publication anniversary of *The Silmarillion* is a welcome addition to Tolkien scholarship. The volume is slim at 176 pages, but the depth and breadth of thought encompassed in these essays makes it well worth owning. Topics range

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from Northernness to eucatastrophe, from mythopoeia to narratology, from nostalgia to theologisation, all displaying unique, carefully argued, and sometimes contrasting points of view.

The collection begins with Rhona Beare's "A Mythology for England," bringing *The Silmarillion* commentary full circle, so to speak, for it was she who queried Tolkien about *The Lord of the Rings* via letters in 1958 and the early 60s with persistent questions of the detailed, nit-picking type that many authors dread and never answer—"What were the colours of the two wizards mentioned but not named in the book?" "Did the Witch-king ride a pterodactyl at the siege of Gondor?" (Letter 211, in *Letters*). Luckily for us, Tolkien answered her candidly and at some length on many topics, adding immensely to our understanding of his conception of Middle-earth. Some forty years later, Beare published a pamphlet titled *J.R.R. Tolkien's "The Silmarillion"* (New Lambton, Australia: Nimrod Publications, 1999), which I recall reading with some distaste because of its study-guide style. Happily, the section from that guide reworked for this new collection of criticism is much improved, incorporating a connection between Eärendil and the *Bickling Homilies* into her discussion of the "North-western temper and temperature" toward which the legendarium is slanted.

Beare's analysis of "northern" and "southern" myths and legends as the product of climate and landscape—the "warm dry climate of Greece" vs. the "cool, cloudy, misty and damp" environs of England and the Celtic lands—remains sound, as does her discussion of Tolkien's debt to *Beowulf*. All this is common knowledge for most readers of *The Silmarillion*. The transition from Northern "race-memory" of sea-faring peoples to Tolkien's recurring dream of Atlantis and the way in which it surfaces in the Akallabêth is of more interest, but Beare's added insight into the possible derivation of Eärendil is where her essay provides new avenues of thought for the curious. "Myths leave traces on language" (20), she explains, and for Tolkien, this meant looking for clues in Old English. Following traditional usage for *earendel*, "Eärendil" is both name and noun, both hero and the Morning Star. Beare's thoughtful discussion of traces in both *Crist* and the *Homilies* is well-supported with numerous examples, making this the highlight of the essay.

A more difficult read is Anna Slack's "Moving Mandos: The Dynamics of Subcreation in 'Of Beren and Lúthien'." Slack's premise—that Tolkien's theory of eucatastrophe can be traced through song and oath in this great tale from *The Silmarillion*—is a valid topic of inquiry with an interesting, unique approach. The article suffers, however, from a vagueness and turgidity of language that might discourage less determined readers. Slack's tendency to quality her points by piling on multiple prepositional phrases where just one would do is only part of the problem:

"The dynamics of subcreation, or the relations between and effects of performative utterances on and in the historical and eternal worlds, are set out at length by Tolkien in 'On Fairy Stories', where these dynamics highlight the contrasting natures of eucatastrophe and dyscatastrophe" (60). Ambiguous word choice and misplaced modifiers add to the confusion. For example, in discussing Lúthien's association with the eternal, Slack writes, "As well as being undeniably the most beautiful of Ilúvatar's children, the narrator here represents in the secondary world (the account we are reading) a historical figure who is undoubtedly an embodiment of the eternal" (70). Obviously, it is Lúthien who is most beautiful and not the narrator, but such constructions impede the flow of the argument, especially when it is unclear whether the word *represents* should be read as "presents" or "stands for."

Writing style aside, Slack's argument for Tolkien's use of oath and song to invoke eucatastrophe is a fertile topic for which ample evidence can be found. The first part of the essay establishes the groundwork for her theory, presenting what Slack terms the two textual modes of the "Beowulf Syndrome" (dyscatastrophe or tragic outcome) counterbalanced by the "Eagle Effect" (eucatastrophic outcome). "For the eucatastrophic to be a credible and effective device," Slack explains, "there had also to be dyscatastrophe" (62). Once this concept of balance in the eternal world is laid out, with evidence from the "Ainulindalë," Slack applies it in the second part of her essay to the archetypal tale of Beren and Lúthien. Here the concepts of oath-taking and song-making as agents of both types of modes are presented, in which oaths are strongly associated with the negative aspects of Melkor, and songs are "agents of eucatastrophe." As Slack points out, the "power of the oath is in its ability to bind the speaker, and the great danger in oaths is in breaking them" (68). For example, the conflicting oaths of Thingol and Beren bind them both to the curse of the Silmarils. In counterbalance, we have "song as a subcreative act" that brings joy and a glimpse of the eternal, however brief and fleeting, in a world chilled by Melkor's presence. Lúthien's legacy to Middle-earth, asserts Slack, is this power of song to instill hope in even the smallest of hearts, in the darkest of places.

Next up is Michaël Devaux's textual study, "The Origins of the *Ainulindalë*: The Present State of Research," translated from its original French to English by editor Allan Turner. The article's first premise—to identify trends in interpretation—required comparison of earliest to latest versions of *Ainulindalë* according to the texts published in Christopher Tolkien's History of Middle-earth series. Sorting out the versions of authority relied on by various essays focusing on Tolkien's creation myth is essential, Devaux asserts, in distinguishing "elements of Christianity and those of the Northern matter for any given period" (82). Devaux includes

two chronological charts that graphically demonstrate the evidence of Tolkien's relentless urge to revise.

Basing the structure of the second part of his essay on Tolkien's five stages of creation as revealed in the "Ainulindalë," Devaux discusses how these stages—Creation of the Ainur, Communication of Eru's Design to the Ainur, the Great Music (theme and variations), the Vision of Eru, and the Achievement or Realization of the vision—relate to Tolkien's Catholicism. In other words, he undertakes to establish the degree to which "theologisation" of the legendarium can be charted through the various versions of Tolkien's creation myth. In the earliest version (from *The Book of Lost Tales*), for example, there is no "Eä!" or equivalent of the Word of God that causes things to be, which suggests a more Northern mythological outlook. Only in subsequent versions does the Christian concept of a "creation" become evident. And what are we to make of the various versions of the "divine song" through which the Ainur and the world are sung into existence? Devaux's insightful and meticulous discussion of the roles played by the Creator and his sub-creators (the Ainur) through Tolkien's endless revisions provides the real meat of this essay.

Of special interest to me as a reviewer is Jason Fisher's article, "From Mythopoeia to Mythography: Tolkien, Lönnrot, and Jerome," because it reflects in some degree my own study of the *Kalevala*'s influence on Tolkien. Fisher's essay focuses first on the similarities of content and language (epic themes and linguistic borrowings) found in the Finnish national epic, *Kalevala*, and *The Silmarillion*—the "Mythopoeia" section of the article. He then points out that in style, these two works are quite different. The style of *The Silmarillion*, as many have said, could be better described as biblical, which provides Fisher a segue into his extended discussion of the Bible's influence (in particular the Latin Vulgate) on Tolkien's work. Says Fisher, these contact points "between the Bible and *The Silmarillion*, we will see, extend beyond the purely stylistic and into the domain of content and theological influence as well" (123).

In the "Mythography" segment of his essay, Fisher concentrates on Christopher Tolkien's role as literary executor for his father's vast and sprawling creative output. Having convincingly established the resonances of both the *Kalevala* and the Vulgate within *The Silmarillion*, Fisher takes an in-depth look at the ways in which Christopher Tolkien's handing of his father's legendarium resembles the work done by the compilers/editors of those influential works, namely, Elias Lönnrot and St. Jerome. In clear, logical prose, Fisher explains the major focus of his study: whereas "J.R.R. Tolkien may have been emulating the *product* of Lönnrot's and Jerome's efforts, Christopher Tolkien was emulating the *process*" (127). Of particular significance is Fisher's discussion of Christopher's editorial choices—and changes—that produced the 1977 volume. Fisher suggests

that Christopher Tolkien, with assistance from Guy Kay, added more than mere compilation expertise in creating the *Silmarillion* manuscript, in particular, the section titled "The Ruin of Doriath." Whether such editorial liberties enhance or detract from the final outcome remains debatable, but there can be no question, according to Fisher, that "the published *Silmarillion* more accurately represents a daunting complex of choices" (135) that reveal as much about Christopher Tolkien as the endless revisions do about his father.

Nils Agøy's essay, "Viewpoints, Audiences and Lost Texts in *The Silmarillion*," addresses a problem I recall experiencing the first time I read the book: from whose point-of-view is it told? It took me some time to adjust to just reading the stories for their own sake and not worrying about whose handed-down text each tale might purport to be. As it turns out, this very dilemma comprises Agøy's fascinating discussion of the possible approaches to viewpoint in *The Silmarillion.*

The problem of shifting viewpoint, Agøy suggests, is implicit in the fact that what lends Tolkien's Middle-earth its sense of authority is the frequent reference to and reliance on "lost texts" of the Edain and Eldar. This problem is compounded by the fact that "for the great majority of Tolkien readers, [the 1977 *Silmarillion*] is the standard, authoritative source of 'information' about the Elder Days" (141). Agøy convincingly argues that the question of provenance is at the heart of the problem—whereas earlier versions of the "Silmarillion" material contain some statement of their supposed authorship or attribution (Rúmil, Eriol, Ælfwine, or someone else), no such explicit framework was created for *The Silmarillion*, hence many readers' sense of confusion when confronted with the "Ainulindalë," "Valaquenta," and "Quenta Silmarillion," "Akallabêth," and "Of the Rings of Power and the Third Age."

Agøy tackles the difficult question of general approach as well—are the tales told from a "Mannish" perspective or from an Elvish viewpoint? As Agøy demonstrates, Tolkien himself struggled with the problem of viewpoint and provenance, ultimately discarding "both Ælfwine and the notion that the 'Silmarillion' material was almost purely Elvish" (161) because he was unable to reconcile the text's inaccurate astronomical concepts with twentieth-century facts. Agøy's conclusion, that the "lost text" approach does not work for *The Silmarillion* and that it should be read "without trying to place it with Ælfwine or Bilbo or Pengolod or Rúmil or Númenórean or Gondorian loremasters" (161), makes perfect sense.

I've saved Michael Drout's revelatory essay, "Reflections on Thirty Years of Reading *The Silmarillion*," for last because my reaction to it is complicated. Drout's lucid, intelligent prose, free from academic jargon and unnecessarily convoluted syntax, is always a pleasure. The fact that

he chose to present a tight, cogent argument for nostalgia as an effective literary technique and frame it within his own memoir is noteworthy—the fact that it works so well is even more remarkable.

Reading this essay sent me back to my own "Silmarillion moment" in 1977. Confined at home with a newborn and a raging case of post-partum blues, I embraced the lofty misery of *The Silmarillion* with my heart and soul, devouring Tolkien's majestic prose and weeping aloud at the tragic beauty of it all—the book was epic in the grandest way and has remained so emotionally imprinted in my psyche that to this day I cannot read "Thus fell the High King of the Noldor; and they beat him into the dust with their maces, and his banner, blue and silver, they trod into the mire of his blood" (*S* 194) without a lump in my throat.

Drout's understanding of how and why nostalgia works to create the overwhelming sense of loss and longing that permeates *The Silmarillion* carries added weight when couched in his own experience of these emotions as a young reader. As he so aptly demonstrates, for each small ray of light penetrating the unrelenting grief of the so-called "Great Tales," a dark result is waiting—what goes up must come down, sometimes much further down. And yet, as unlikely as it seems, this experience of loss or embracing the knowledge that things will never be the same again is precisely what Tolkien used to create high literature—in Drout's words, "making loss and longing into art" (36).

Drout's discussion of Tolkien's aesthetic technique approaches *The Silmarillion* from two perspectives: the big picture ("the epic sweep of darkness and the heroic resistance to it") and "the beautiful passages" down at the sentence level. Time and again, sweetness and light are tempered by the bitter darkness in the rise and fall of Tolkien's diction—Drout's example is a passage that stopped me in my tracks the first time I read it, and it still does: "Thus King Finrod Felagund, fairest and most beloved of the house of Finwë, redeemed his oath; but Beren mourned beside him in despair" (42). And as Drout explains, Tolkien's transformative art takes this one step further and allows the despair to create a sense of painful beauty: Finrod's burial mound remains green and inviolate. Time and again throughout *The Silmarillion*, Drout explains, we encounter the "but"—that "undercutting of the victory"—as well as the "and yet" which tempers the darkness with yellow flowers growing on a burial mound. When this "pattern of building and loss, triumph and fall, beauty and wreckage" that permeates *The Silmarillion* gets under the skin, we are "ripe," to use Drout's term, for the "ache of nostalgia" (48). It is, Drout concludes, what seems to "lie beneath all of human history," from personal, individual tragedies to the sweep of nations. Which goes a long way toward explaining why *The Silmarillion* moves some of us the way it does.

As you can see, I'm very favorably impressed by the offerings of *The Silmarillion: Thirty Years On*. Its technical faults (another proofreading round for typos would have been advised) are small, and its contributions to Tolkien scholarship are considerable. Each of the authors in the volume has valuable ideas for readers to draw on and perhaps carry further. The book confirms that, even after three decades, the importance of Christopher Tolkien's first attempt at bringing his father's astonishing subcreated world to light has not dimmed with the years.

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Tolkien, Race and Cultural History: From Fairies to Hobbits, by Dimitra Fimi. Basingstoke, Hampshire, and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009. xvi, 240 pp. £50.00 / $85.00 (hardcover) ISBN 9780230219519.

Tolkien, Race and Cultural History: From Fairies to Hobbits is the product of Dimitra Fimi's extended academic interest in the development of Tolkien's writings. Fimi is a lecturer at the University of Cardiff and has been teaching courses on the professor's work for several years. She has also published various articles on Tolkien, some of which have been re-used for two of the chapters.

The basic approach of the study is biographical-historical. Fimi links events from the professor's life and times with the growth and transformation of what is usually referred to as Tolkien's legendarium. She establishes three main foci, which correspond to the three main parts of the book: Part I discusses Tolkien's concept of fairies/elves; Part II looks at his imaginary languages and his theory of language aesthetic; and Part III analyses the effects that his published fiction (predominantly *The Hobbit*) had on the further development of the legendarium.

Fimi proceeds in all three parts in a similar manner. First she presents the relevant published (or accessible) material from Tolkien's writings and, to a lesser extent, also drawings and paintings. She then goes on to discuss the contemporary opinions and theories on the topic and finally works out the relevance of these elements for the inception and further development of Tolkien's work.

The discussion of fairies/elves starts with some of the early poems (e.g. "Wood-sunshine," "Goblin Feet," "Kortirion among the Trees," "An Evening in Tavrobel,"). The fairies/elves (Tolkien predominantly used the term "fairy") in these early pieces are still very much indebted to the Victorian and Edwardian folk-tradition, which presents them as sprites of diminutive size. The discussion of the fairy tradition up to Tolkien's time offers the reader a well-written and informative introduction to the

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predominant concepts. Fimi traces the diminutive size of the fairies back to Shakespeare's sprites that may constitute, next to Michael Drayton's creations, the major models for all the diminutive beings of later centuries. She deals with fairies in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *The Tempest* yet does not mention the Queen Mab sequence from *Romeo and Juliet*, which might be due to the fact that the main focus is on the Victorian and Edwardian depictions of fairies—in poetry as well as pictorial art and drama. Modern readers are most likely familiar with the tiny Tinker Bell (from *Peter Pan*), a typical product of the "diminishing process" and more or less contemporary with Tolkien's early poems. Fimi also provides a brief overview of the rather confusing and confused terminology (goblin, fairy, sprite, elf, etc.), which is, to some extent, also reflected in Tolkien's early work. Even the professor needed some time to work out the exact differences between the various categories of beings, and traces of the initial "confusion" can be still found in *The Hobbit*, where "goblin" and "orc" occur side by side as synonyms.

The material analyzed and the conclusions drawn in this section are coherently and clearly presented albeit not really new. This is not Fimi's fault but rather due to inaccessibility of the unpublished fiction and poetry. Some of the early material has been edited in the volumes of The History of Middle-earth, yet the full text of "Wood-sunshine," which Humphrey Carpenter had obviously been able to read in its entirety, remains unpublished. Fimi, like any other reader, has to rely on the passages quoted in Carpenter's biography. This state of affairs may not bother those who use the new criticism method, i.e. who focus on the published text of a work and interpret it without recourse to biographical or historical information. However, Fimi has explicitly chosen a different procedure and is thus hampered by these restrictions. Further potential pitfalls of such an approach become evident later on when she relies on the text of "On Fairy-stories" as published in *The Monsters and the Critics*. Verlyn Flieger and Douglas Anderson's edition of the various drafts (published as *Tolkien On Fairy-stories*), which shows that some of the key concepts and ideas were obviously not yet extant in the early versions, came out too late for consideration. In the case of Fimi's study, there is, luckily, no (or only very little) damage done, yet such instances raise troubling questions concerning the textual status of the other essays used ("A Secret Vice," one manuscript c. 1931, revisions c. 1951; "English and Welsh," lecture given 1955, printed 1963, several drafts). The manuscripts and drafts of these essays are, together with additional notes, available at the Bodleian, but no critical editions exist as yet. As a consequence, scholars must be careful when discussing the possible influence of these "theoretical" texts in their published versions on Tolkien's (earlier) fictional writings.

At the end of the discussion of fairies in Victorian and Edwardian

times, the reader cannot but agree with Fimi's convincingly argued and illustrated conclusion that Tolkien's early writings are "'in character' when viewed within the context of the Victorian and Edwardian fascination with fairies" (39). Her survey of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century traditions concerning fairies constitutes an important contribution to Tolkien studies. Previously the focus had been mainly on the medieval inspirations for the "later" elves (e.g., by Tom Shippey), and a full and coherent study of the more or less contemporary context had been missing.

The development of Tolkienian fairies away from the contemporary "sprites with antennae" towards the more grandiose concept of "heroic elves" is the topic of her next chapter. Fimi identifies three points of interest that are responsible for shaping the future elves: 1) the metaphysical question as to how the fairies/elves are part of God's creation, 2) the idea of making them the link between the ancient lost mythology of England and contemporary folklore, and 3) the decision to establish them as the speakers of Qenya. The information made available in The History of Middle-earth provides the basis for this knowledgeably argued chapter, yet Fimi also takes into consideration some of the non-legendarium works such as *The Father Christmas Letters* to further strengthen her argument. As she is able to illustrate convincingly, it is mainly the creative tension between the fairies as part of a lost "mythology of England" on the one hand, and their metaphysical status as part of God's creation on the other, that is responsible for the further development of the legendarium.

The second part of the book, comprising chapters five to seven, discusses Tolkien's linguistic work, i.e. his invented languages as well as his theories of "phonetic fitness" and "linguistic aesthetic." Fimi starts with an important observation: basic elements of Tolkien's legendarium had been in existence before or independent of Qenya—and challenges all who have too readily given credence to Tolkien's famous (though certainly somewhat exaggerated) characterisation of his literary work as being "linguistic in inspiration." Basing her analysis mainly on the two lectures "English and Welsh" and "A Secret Vice," Fimi then summarises Tolkien's ideas on language and aesthetics and succinctly outlines the main linguistic theories on this topic. Attention is also paid to such artistic-literary movements as Dadaism and Velimir Khlebnikov's sound-symbolic language "zaum." Again, it becomes clear that Tolkien was not so much an erratic (and heretic) block in the linguistic landscape, but that he rather belonged to a strong minority group of dissenters (such as Edward Sapir and Otto Jespersen) who were, to varying degrees, opposed to the reigning Saussurean paradigm. Tolkien's attempts at creating alphabets for his invented languages (be they runic or otherwise) also

reflect contemporary (and much older) efforts at spelling-reforms and the creation of "ideal" alphabets that would re-establish a one-to-one correspondence between letter/symbol and sound. Fimi's discussion of this rather specialized topic is always clear and dispenses with any unnecessary jargon. It is one of the strengths of this book that the author is able to combine the work of specialists in the relevant fields (e.g. Umberto Eco, Olga Pombo or Marina Yaguello in matters of invented "ideal" languages) with that of Tolkien scholars and her own ideas. The result is a study with academic qualities yet which can be also enjoyed by the general reader.

There is, however, a gap in Fimi's coverage of the relevant secondary literature on this very topic—which is to be blamed on the lengthy production process in publishing her work. Many of the topics Fimi covers in this chapter on "linguistic aesthetic" have also been discussed by Ross Smith—first in his article 'Fitting Sense to Sound: Linguistic Aesthetics and Phonosemantics in the Work of J.R.R. Tolkien' (*Tolkien Studies* 3, 2006) and more significantly in his book *Inside Language: Linguistic and Aesthetic Theory in Tolkien* (2007). Fimi's typescript had been submitted before Smith's book was published and it was not possible to alter the chapter in question. (On the strong and weak points of Smith's study, see Jason Fisher's thorough review in *Mythlore* 103/104, and also Fimi's own review of the book in *Tolkien Studies* 5.) Fimi will wish to take into consideration Smith's ideas in a future edition of her study (where the inevitable remaining typos, etc., may also be cleaned up for good). Maybe, too, some of the out-of-the way (yet topical) publications can be considered, such as Alex Lewis and Elizabeth Currie's *The Uncharted Realms of Tolkien* (2002) on the contemporary influences on Tolkien, or relevant articles in foreign languages, such as Dieter Bachmann and Thomas Honegger on race, blood and hereditary memory, or Laurent Alibert's application of Georges Dumézil's theory of the three Indo-European estates onto some of Tolkien's categorisations of people (Tolkien knew Dumézil and his work). Yet these latter items are desiderata of a specialist and their absence in the present work is of no relevance for Fimi's overall argument or the value of her study for the general reader.

The third and final part of the book, then, discusses the impact of Tolkien's publication of his literary fiction (especially *The Hobbit*) on the further development of his legendarium. Tolkien's efforts to harmonise the various parts of his creative work (language invention, literary fiction, mythological writings) have been discussed by scholars before Fimi; however, she is, to my knowledge, the first to stress the great importance of the fact that, with the publication of *The Hobbit* in 1937, a fixed point existed. The fluid and changing matter of the legendarium now has to be brought into accordance with the narrative fiction of *The Hobbit* and,

later on, *The Lord of the Rings*, and the novelistic style of the latter heralds the transition from the mythological to a historical discourse. This new focus on history brings to the fore questions concerning the origin of Men, their subdivisions and racial specification. Fimi again offers a very helpful exploration of contemporary theories on race (and, incidentally, on language) and on Tolkien's position—as far as it can be established with certainty. Here, the biographical-historical approach of the book shows its strength to the full. Instead of an anachronistic, post-modern, post-WW II evaluation, Fimi gives a balanced and valuable presentation of Tolkien's position(s) from within the spirit of the time, so to speak. She also shows how contemporary events find their repercussions in Tolkien's attempts to link the "pre-historic" cultures of, for example, Númenor, Gondor and Rohan, to historical models—and the problems and complications that such an attempt created.

Fimi's study is well worth reading for the specialist as well as (or even more so) for the general reader. The author brings together (often for the first time) relevant research from cultural history and lays out her arguments fair and square. The Tolkien scholar may miss some of the more exotic publications on some of the topics discussed, but this can be seen as part of the overall strength of the book: it keeps to the middle road of academia and does not loses itself in a wild-goose chase for comprehensiveness, nor does it try to push any monomythic interpretation of Tolkien's work. Fimi's approach is subtler, and yet it forces us to reconsider some well-beloved clichés. Thus, it will no longer be possible to talk naïvely about the linguistic inspiration of Tolkien's fiction without adding at least some qualifying remarks. Whether Tolkien really intended to use his (artistically and commercially) successful literary output as a *post festum* justification of his work on invented languages may have to be investigated further—Fimi's book has given us some answers but has also opened up some avenues for future research. What more can we ask for?

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Tolkien's "The Lord of the Rings": Sources of Inspiration, edited by Stratford Caldecott and Thomas Honegger. Zurich and Jena: Walking Tree Publishers, 2008. [vi], 242 pp. $25.00 / £12.60 (trade paperback) ISBN 9783905703122. Cormarë Series No. 18.

In the Foreword to the Second Edition of *The Lord of the Rings*, J.R.R. Tolkien attempted, emphatically and ultimately unsuccessfully, to shape the reception of his masterpiece and, in so doing, to mute discussion of its motive, meaning, and sources. In his now-famous words: "I should like to say something here with reference to the many opinions or guesses that I have received or have read concerning the motives and meaning of the tale. The prime motive was the desire of a tale-teller to try his hand at a really long story that would hold the attention of readers, amuse them, delight them, and at times maybe excite them or deeply move them. . . . As for any inner meaning or 'message', it has in the intention of the author none. It is neither allegorical nor topical. . . . Its sources are things long before in mind, or in some cases already written . . . " (*FR*, Foreword, 6).

That the author was unconvincing and unsuccessful in this attempt is no surprise. The result of this failure, we know, has been the development of scholarship on Tolkien. Stratford Caldecott and Thomas Honegger's collection contributes to a growing scholarly tradition and thereby participates in a larger shaping of the critical appreciation of, and exegetical approaches to, *The Lord of the Rings*. Many of these ten essays result from a Tolkien Studies conference held in 2006 at Exeter College, Oxford. Caldecott, in his Introduction, characterizes the conference as a sign of "the 'coming of age' of Tolkien Studies" (5) and finds significance in the fact that it was held at Tolkien's former college at the initiative of the Rector, Frances Cairncross. Completing the circuit from Tolkien's student days to the current day is indeed noteworthy. Especially when viewed against the backdrop of the political, social, and economic realities of the intellectual and collegiate world, the imprimatur of Exeter on a Tolkien conference does in fact signify a milestone for the field.

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underlying Tolkien's project is generally acknowledged; the journal in which this review appears bears the scholarly stamp of a university press. A number of very high-quality scholarly publications on Tolkien have appeared over the course of the last two decades and more; among the best of these have been produced by the editors and contributors to this very journal. Still, it may be early to claim a coming of age. Such publications could be more common; and the list of scholars could be longer. Taking these latter factors into account, it is fair to say that the field is established but that it remains nascent. Only time will tell if it will blossom and endure. There are good reasons to be optimistic, of course. The field has excellent material to work with and a strong base of scholars; still, it has its limits and weaknesses both foreseeable and unforeseen.

Some of these limits and weaknesses are present in this volume, and they make themselves apparent in subtle ways from the cover art, through some of the essays, and on to the final credits. In general, I believe they arise from and contribute to an unresolved tension in the field: Many of us—most of us? all of us?—came to Tolkien Studies because his work succeeded exactly as the author intended. It held our attention, it amused us, delighted us, and at times maybe excited or deeply moved us. Hence the question, and the tension: is it possible to bracket this kind of affection for the work and the author and, from there, to apply the kind of dispassionate critical perspective to his text that the norms of scholarship require? If it is possible, one might further ask, is it desirable? Is it beneficial? Is it even necessary? I am not sure of the answer to these questions. One answer, my own, is that, unless this kind of affection intrudes on one's willingness to critique Tolkien and to critique other scholars of Tolkien, it should be considered beneficial. Scholarship infused by passion for the subject is a good thing. At its best, that is what I believe Tolkien Studies can be and ought to be. But it needs to get past a few things. Scholars need to get past being worried about studying and *enjoying* a work that other critics have frankly not enjoyed and have chosen not to study. They need to get past concerns about self-legitimacy, past the very kinds of anxieties that one discerns in expressions related to the field's status, such as Caldecott's comment on its "coming of age."

In brief, the field needs to focus on the serious work of scholarship itself, for it is the quality of the scholarship that will be most convincing over time. Tolkien Studies needs to continue to demonstrate that it does as other fields do: it situates its subject; creates and disseminates new knowledge; reinforces and affirms foundational knowledge; shares conflicting opinions; challenges assumptions and develops new ones; seeks out new critical perspectives and approaches; inspires future research directions; and broadens the impact of critical discoveries. If scholarship in any field does not do these things, then it risks becoming the monotonous

domain of the already converted, and thus meaningless and inconsequential to those beyond the inner circle. To its credit, this volume does contain a number of very powerful essays. They advance our knowledge, reinforce foundational information, situate Tolkien historically and intellectually, provide new critical approaches to his texts and inspire new directions. The book also contains some arguably inconsequential essays, and, at times, struggles to make the connection between the promise of its title—sources of inspiration—and its full content.

The volume is divided into three sections: Part One—Biographical; Part Two—Mythos and Modernity; and, Part Three—Mythos and Logos. The first part is clearly the strongest of the three. It contains excellent essays by John Garth and Verlyn Flieger and an enlightening entry by Peter Gilliver, Edmund Weiner, and Jeremy Marshall, all editors on the *Oxford English Dictionary*. Garth's essay, "Tolkien, Exeter College, and the Great War," satisfyingly extends and amplifies knowledge and insights from his very fine book, *Tolkien and the Great War* (2003). Readers of this piece will enjoy a kind of insider's view on Tolkien's time at Exeter, one that is infused by intimacy and buttressed by detail, depth, and documentation. It will not surprise anyone that Tolkien enjoyed company and language. He did not, however, possess or practice habits associated with the best student. He founded a society that was playful in spirit, slightly intellectually subversive, characterized by the importance of male companionship and defined by a love of literature and learning. He was President of the Stapeldon Society, failed at Classics, was once described by the Sub-Rector at Exeter as "v. lazy" but, inspired by Edith Bratt, eventually became disciplined, switched to English and finished successfully. Those, at least, are the outlines of Garth's portrait of Tolkien at Exeter. To say more would be unfair to Garth's essay, which should be read in its entirety. Suffice it to say that any future discussion of Tolkien's biography will want to draw on Garth's research on his life at Exeter or be considered incomplete.

The Gilliver, Weiner and Marshall chapter offers an excellent glimpse of Tolkien as a lexicographer and philologist. The extended riff, in Gilliver's section, on Tolkien's "ability to make a task take longer than expected"—in reference to his association with a Chaucer volume for Oxford University Press (begun in 1922 and ended, inconclusively, in 1960)—is particularly gratifying. The Weiner section offers illuminating research on how "apparently dry, dull, and uninspired linguistic items" and texts that are not compelling for their imaginative quality fired Tolkien's creative imagination and gave him sources for important names, places, and terms in his lexicon, such as Brand, Hammerhand, Oliphaunt, Orc, Hollin, Treebeard, Warg, Mirkwood, and eleventy. Marshall's section is notable for its review of Tolkien's use of the plural "dwarves" and provides

valuable commentary on the usage patterns of that peculiar morphology prior to and subsequent to Tolkien. Scholars researching Tolkien and language will almost certainly want to include this essay among their references in future work.

Paraphrasing Tolkien himself, the most disappointing feature of Verlyn Flieger's essay "Gilson, Smith, and Baggins" is its length: at just about ten pages, it is too short. Still, it represents a brilliant beginning and a novel insight into the effect of the deaths of dear friends on Tolkien and into the ways in which the author, through his fiction, found a way to represent them and "honor the meaning of their lives" (85). For Flieger, Tolkien created Frodo to give meaning to Gilson's meaningless death. In the four hobbits, he "recreated that 'little complete body,'" known as the T.C.B.S., that was torn apart by death and war. In doing so, he "reared a structure 'to be destroyed that we may regret it'" (92-93). Following this brief summary, I imagine that other readers will also wish to hear more from Flieger on this subject. It is my hope that she will continue and expand what she has done so very well in this brief piece. As it is, the essay could be an excellent feature in an undergraduate or, under the right circumstances, graduate course on Tolkien.

The second set of essays, organized under the rubric "Mythos and Modernity," are promising but, on the whole, not of the same quality as those in the first section. This reviewer found Patrick Curry's essay "Enchantment in Tolkien and Middle-earth" insufficiently developed and, at times, somewhat lacking in coherence as it shifted from Max Weber to Karen Blixen to Buddha and to Jan Zwicky. His characterization and discussion of Frodo's "delight of the living tree itself" in Lórien as a "lyric experience" (108) also left me slightly puzzled, not just for the unexpected focus on lyric, but also for what the analysis omitted, viz. a discussion of Tolkien's notion of Recovery and commentary on his conception of Machine. Marek Oziewicz's essay "From Vico to Tolkien: The Affirmation of Myth Against the Tyranny of Reason" is a beneficial attempt at situating Tolkien's significance within a larger historical frame by illustrating parallels between Tolkien and Vico's careers, works, and passions, and drawing interesting inferences from each man's novelty, academic marginalization, and popular success. In Vico and Tolkien, Oziewicz sees authors who "offered a viable humanistic philosophical alternative to the deterministic, hegemonic, and oppressive modernity" and who "affirmed the value of myth and poetic understanding in the construction of human individuals and societies" (122). This is a thorough, coherent, and illuminating essay that creates the possibility for future research directions. One could similarly characterize Peter M. Candler, Jr.'s essay "Frodo or Zarathustra: Beyond Nihilism in Tolkien and Nietzsche." Candler's observation that "Tolkien's world is every bit as

anti-Zarathustrian as Nietzsche's is anti-Christian" (156) is certainly apt and insightful, though, given the points of comparison, it is less incisive than Oziewicz's observations on Tolkien and Vico.

Part three of the volume, "Mythos and Logos," contains essays by Leon Pereira, a Dominican friar; Alison, Milbank, a professor of Literature and Theology; and Guglielmo Spirito, a Franciscan friar. These are followed by a chapter by Stratford Caldecott, one of the volume's editors, the organizer of the Oxford conference, and the director of the Thomas More College Center for Faith and Culture. God, religion, and faith obviously are important topics in Tolkien Studies, and they should not be ignored. As Pereira makes plain: "The issue of God and religion is not peripheral to an understanding of Tolkien and his work. In fact it is essential. You do not need to be Catholic to understand Tolkien, nor do you need to believe what he believed in order to grasp his meaning, but you must understand what he believed in order to appreciate his writings, especially the world of Middle-earth" (175).

To the extent that this affirms the importance of historical context, culture, and personal biography to the study of an author and/or work, it is a worthwhile and essentially standard scholarly guidepost. There is no doubt that Tolkien was a man of deep faith, and that his Catholicism shaped his identity, his outlook, his worldview, and ultimately his work. He has told us as much in his own words. In these final essays, many of Tolkien's letters are rightly and extensively quoted to provide perspective on his work and religion. On this subject, his well-known letter to Milton Waldman deserves special attention. In this letter, reprinted as part of the Preface to the Second Edition of *The Silmarillion*, Tolkien carved out a space for his creative work so that it might fill a void he perceived in the history and mythology of England. He also famously lamented the shortcomings of Arthurian legend, calling it "imperfectly naturalized, associated with the soil of Britain but not with English." He continued, stating that the Arthurian world "does not replace what I felt to be missing. For one thing its 'faerie' is too lavish, and fantastical, incoherent and repetitive. For another and more important thing: it is involved in, and explicitly contains the Christian religion." In the next line, starting a new paragraph, Tolkien said bluntly: "that seems to me fatal. Myth and fairy-story must, as all art, reflect and contain in solution elements of moral and religious truth (or error) but not explicit, not in the known form of the primary 'real' world" (*S* xii).

In the light of this comment, reading Caldecott's claim at the end of the volume: "I think you can detect a 'hidden code' that refers to Catholic themes and ideas, such as the Eucharist and the Blessed Virgin Mary, in *The Lord of the Rings*": this reviewer wondered about the efficacy of a critical approach that tries to make explicit in Tolkien's art things that the

author expressly believed would be fatal to the art itself. Tolkien could be explicit about his faith when he wished to be and he did use other means beyond his fiction to honor that faith and his commitment to it. His letters show that; his Epilogue to "On Fairy-stories" shows that. And his letter to Milton Waldman clearly demonstrates that, to make art of the kind he considered worthy of his making, Tolkien believed he should not explicitly inscribe it with the Christian religion as Arthurian legend so fatally did. There is something, of course, beautiful and moving in Tolkien that should not be denied or suppressed. And it is hopeful and satisfying to think that there is a spirit in his fiction that brings readers joy. In this connection, the essays in part three should be commended for showing how Tolkien's own personal inspirations may in turn inspire us as we take on the "new challenges and new horizons" that Thomas Honegger, in his concluding essay, predicts for the field (236).

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Tolkien's Oxford, by Robert S. Blackham. Stroud, Gloucestershire: The History Press, 2008. 144p. £12.99 (trade paperback) ISBN 9780752447292.

Of the ancient English universities, Oxford holds a special place in the public imagination that not even Cambridge (despite its at least equal academic reputation and its equally historic buildings) can quite match. This perception probably has some roots in a degree of snobbery, but it is most evident in literary writings of the last century and a half, from Gerard Manley Hopkins' "Towery city, and branchy between towers," through such works as *Gaudy Night*, to *Brideshead Revisited* and beyond—a series of nostalgic idylls that help feed the tourist industry of this big post-industrial city that happens to have a university in the middle. Most of this literature has been written by those who were students or visitors there—temporary residents with rosy memories. Those who look rather more steadily at the city and the university will find that this idyllic picture needs a certain degree of modification. For example, Oxford is not quite as hospitable or as pleasant as might be thought. In the nineteenth century, the notorious Master of Balliol, Benjamin Jowett, exemplified the Oxford attitude; when the equally famous (outside Oxford) Professor John Stuart Blackie of Edinburgh said, "You mustn't think too hardly of us, Master!" Jowett replied, "We don't think of you at all," and a modified form of this attitude is still occasionally perceptible. In a different sense, those getting to grips with the one-way system soon realize that

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if you have business in Oxford you will know your way around, while if you do not know your way around you have no business being in Oxford. Moreover, the Town vs. Gown hostility still flourishes, especially on the Town side. Although university rags are much less antisocial these days than in the times when the highjacking of a bus by students was a fairly normal event and upper-class undergraduates were frequently heard baying for broken glass, students still can get picked on by locals, especially around Carfax on a Saturday night. Hopkins was not so enthralled as to ignore its underside, when he spoke of the city's "base and brickish skirt," and even the besotted Dorothy L. Sayers found her heroine's punt going past the municipal tip. Moreover the university is often seen by its denizens as less than the ideal academic haven. As Joseph Wright said to the young Tolkien:

> "What do you take Oxford for, lad?" "A university, a place of learning." "Nay, lad, it's a factory! And what's it making? I'll tell you. It's making *fees*. Get that into your head, and you'll begin to understand what goes on" (*Letters* 336).

Tolkien however was not a temporary resident, but spent most of his adult life in Oxford, mainly working; hence the glamour was tempered by grammar, both in the figurative and literal senses, and mundaneity played a greater part in his life than either rosy memories (his early nostalgic romantic vision was of Warwick rather than Oxford) or, conversely, horror stories of snobbery or isolation. He and his family were part of the everyday life of Oxford—shops, schools, pubs and the like—and had their very normal place as moderately high-status locals. A great deal has been written in various places about Tolkien's everyday life, not least by Tolkien himself in his letters and elsewhere, and there are various walking tours, real or virtual, of Tolkien-related places in Oxford. All the same, somewhat surprisingly, the life story and the locations have seldom if ever been brought together—certainly not in a thorough study.

Until now, that is. Enter Robert Blackham, known to British Tolkienists for his entertaining and informative presentations, particularly at Oxonmoot, and more widely for his book *The Roots of Tolkien's Middle-earth*, reviewed by Tom Shippey in *Tolkien Studies* IV (2007). This latter is a survey of Tolkien's connections with Birmingham and district, which is obviously extremely important for the light it sheds on Tolkien's formative years, and one would think had been pretty thoroughly covered elsewhere. Despite this, I believe that Blackham's work breaks new ground, and does it splendidly, with brief excursions from the Birmingham area into Worcestershire, Warwick and Oxford. Now he has taken on even more frequently trodden territory in his new book *Tolkien's Oxford.* There is obviously a great deal of competition here, and readers will no doubt

want to know how Blackham stands up to it.

The answer is: very well, in fact, by virtue of doing something different. This is not a guide book, nor strictly speaking a biography. Above all this, like its predecessor, is a picture book that consists of photographs, paintings, sketches and maps (all contemporary whenever possible) linked by a mainly chronological text, often with considerable detail. It begins by tracing Tolkien's almost certain steps in December 1910 from the Great Western Railway station, along Park End Street, past the Castle Mound on the New Road, past Carfax, along the High Street, down King Edward Street to Merton Street and Corpus Christi, where he would be resident while sitting his entrance examination. Then there follow the two routes by road from Birmingham to Oxford, one of which he would have taken when he was a given a lift in Dickie Reynolds's motor car when he went to Exeter College in 1911, together with a route map and photos of places he is likely to have seen on the way. When he gets to Oxford there is less detail, but still plenty of photos of colleges and houses, together with places such as the Sheldonian Theatre and the Radcliffe Camera, and a humorous sketch depicting a "rag," which shows why townsfolk in general might have been less than friendly towards students (incidentally, one of the rioting mob is a dragon; the author wonders if it would have got a grant). And so it continues, with detailed depictions of the places where Tolkien lived and worked, worshipped and drank—obviously the Eagle and Child, but also the Lamb and Flag, and the White Horse (unfortunately Blackham does not repeat here the suggestion he makes in his previous book, that the inn sign of the White Horse might have provided inspiration for the Prancing Pony), as well as places with C.S. Lewis associations, such as Addison's Walk. Blackham also makes excursions, for example to the Somme in 1916 (including a map) and less traumatically to the Rollwright Stones, the Uffington White Horse, and Wayland's Smithy. There are also photographs of Wolvercote Cemetery, including one of Humphrey Carpenter's grave. Tolkien Society and Mythopoeic Society members will also recognise the Silver Tree and the Golden Tree in the University Parks, planted by the Societies in 1992 and now looking very impressive. The book finishes with five pages of suggestions for places to visit.

Apart from the pictures, there is the written commentary, which regrettably is not always of the same high standard. There are a few minor errors, such as the fact that it was a bus, not a tram, that Tolkien highjacked, at least according to the Scull and Hammond *Chronology* (46); and Oxford's spires are traditionally "dreaming" not "gleaming" (from Matthew Arnold's "Thyrsis"). There are also some doubtful statements. Charles Williams death may well have been a loss to Tolkien, but not really a "great" one (that was Lewis). Finally, in the introduction, many

people will be mildly surprised to learn that *Star Wars* was inspired by Tolkien's work, and more than a few will disagree with the statement that Peter Jackson "probably used more computing power than a space agency to produce what Tolkien must have seen in his mind's eye" (9-10). And a mild regret: while venturing afield, the author might have visited one or two of the "Farmer Giles" places, such as Thame (with an *h*—that folly without warrant) and Worminghall.

Still, these are very minor blemishes on what is over all a delightful book. There are all sorts of unexpected details—for example, I have not mentioned the 1930s advertisement for a Morris-Cowley car that is probably the same make as the family's old faithful "Jo." The older photos also give a fitting sense of time as well as place. Certainly any Tolkienists visiting Oxford for the first time would be well advised to buy it, and more experienced Oxford hands will certainly want it for pure nostalgic enjoyment (and they might even learn something as well).

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Tolkien's Shorter Works: Proceedings of the 4th Seminar of the Deutsche Tolkien Gesellschaft & Walking Tree Publishers Decennial Conference, edited by Margaret Hiley and Frank Weinreich. Zurich and Jena: Walking Tree Publishers, 2008. [8], vi, 352 pp. $22.70 / £11.60 (trade paperback) ISBN 9783905703115. Cormarë Series no. 17.

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overshadowed by his longer, better-known works such as *The Hobbit*, *The Lord of the Rings*, and *The Silmarillion*. Their goal, therefore, is to call attention to these works and show that they are more substantial and significant than has been generally realized—their thesis, in brief, being "that 'short' these works may be but 'minor' they are not" (iv–v).

This is a fine plan, and the proceedings' contents range widely among the works in question. *Smith of Wootton Major* proves to be the most popular topic, being the focus of six essays; the other works considered here include *Farmer Giles of Ham* (four essays), "Leaf by Niggle" (three), "On Fairy-stories" (two, although others cite it), *The Adventures of Tom Bombadil* (with one essay devoted to the collection as a whole and four more to single poems within it), and single essays looking at *The Homecoming of Beorhtnoth*, *Roverandom*, "Ides Ælfscyne" (one of the *Songs for the Philologists*), "Bilbo's Last Song," and "Mythopoeia". [2] Wholly absent are *The Father Christmas Letters* (in either their original or revised and expanded form), *Mr. Bliss*, "The Lay of Aotrou and Itroun," or "Imram." The contributors' European perspective offers the chance for fresh views on mostly well-known material, and the collection's concept allows its contributors to range widely—I cannot recall, for example, seeing any critical work on *Roverandom* since it originally appeared a decade ago, while "Mythopoeia," "Ides Ælfscyne," and "Bilbo's Last Song" have suffered similar neglect. That said, it must be observed that, despite the claim in the introduction that "each contribution was carefully proof-read" (v), the volume is somewhat editorially lax. Most notably, my copy had the wrong back cover text, giving a blurb describing *The Silmarillion Thirty Years On*, another book Walking Tree released at about the same time;[3] native English speakers will also be struck by the occasional unidiomatic word choice.

It is disappointing that a collection devoted to remedying the relative lack of attention that has been paid to Tolkien's minor works should itself in its introduction make no mention of the two major previous attempts to deal with these works: Paul Kocher's pioneering work (the sixty-page chapter "Seven Leaves") in *Master of Middle-earth* (1972) and the Tolkien Society's *Leaves from the Tree: J.R.R. Tolkien's Shorter Fiction* (1991), with contributions by Tom Shippey, Christina Scull, Charles Noad, and others. A number of the individual essays herein quote from Kocher, and several more draw on pieces in *Leaves from the Tree*; recognition of their significance in Hiley and Weinreich's introduction would have helped place this volume within the larger context of Tolkien criticism as a whole. The volume also unfortunately lacks any index, making cross-reference between the individual essays difficult.

As for the essays, Allan Turner's "'Tom Bombadil': Poetry and Accretion" looks at how Tolkien incorporated a disparate group of mostly

pre-existing poems into the world of *The Lord of the Rings*, primarily by the framing device of the preface to *The Adventures of Tom Bombadil*. Turner is excellent on the importance of "apparently unnecessary detail" in Tolkien's world-building (10), and for his observation that Tolkien's first published poem, "The Battle of the Eastern Field," can be said to set the pattern for his poetry as a whole (5). Turner also does a good job of tracing how a single poem changed over time to gradually become incorporated within the mythology (8–9)—although perversely he chooses a poem ("The Horns of Ylmir") *not* included in *The Adventures of Tom Bombadil*. But his failure to even address the issue of why Tolkien included and excluded the pieces he did from among those available, and his division of all sixteen poems into six more or less arbitrary categories,[4] greatly weaken his piece. Ultimately, his topic proves to be too large for a single essay, and he ranges over the ground rather than delving into the heart of his thesis; it is to be hoped he will return to the topic at some future point and deal with it in greater depth.

By contrast, Guglielmo Spirito's "Speaking With Animals: A Desire that Lies Near the Heart of Faërie" is really a homily rather than an essay, offering a sort of impassioned meditation on the connectedness of all living things rather than advancing a rational argument. Spirito links Tolkien's famous comment in "On Fairy-stories" about the desire for communication with all things to observations by naturalists and episodes from saints' lives as well as examples from Tolkien's own work (*Farmer Giles of Ham*'s Garm, the various creatures in "Bombadil Goes Boating").[5]

The other three essays devoted to *Bombadil* poems all look at "The Sea-bell," generally recognized as perhaps Tolkien's finest poem, each in connection with another work. Maria Raffaella Benvenuto's "*Smith of Wootton Major,* 'The Sea-Bell' and Lothlórien: Tolkien and the Perils of Faërie" explores what we might call the Thomas Rhymer theme in Tolkien's works, stressing the dangers inherent in any mortal's contact with the Otherworld and placing Tolkien's work into context with earlier treatments of the theme, both in folk ballads and more modern fare such as Keats's "La Belle Dame Sans Merci" and Coleridge's "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner." Anna E. Slack's far-ranging "A Star Above the Mast: Tolkien, Faërie and the Great Escape" investigates the roles played by belief in, and the right attitude towards, Faërie. She rather unusually blends Faith and Faërie, seeing a nun's withdrawal from the world (*Ancrene Wisse*) and a dreamer's reunion with his dead daughter (*Pearl*) as encounters with Faërie parallel to those of Smith and the narrator of "The Sea-bell"; she even equates Niggle's time spent painting with Smith's journeys into Faery. Margaret Hiley's "Journeys in the Dark" argues that both "The Sea-bell" and *Smith of Wootton Major* represent

failed quests, since both feature visitors to Faërie who ultimately return home without mastering that strange realm. Her claim that Smith, being mortal, cannot "gain knowledge" by his travels into Faërie seems oddly to miss the point; surely he "failed" only if one imposes the simple Quest structure upon the tale, which Tolkien himself did not. I must also note that at one point Hiley cites Todorov's *The Fantastic* but grossly misrepresents Todorov's position.

Of the four essays centered mainly on *Farmer Giles of Ham*, Marek Oziewicz's "Setting Things Right in *Farmer Giles of Ham* and *The Lord of the Rings*: Tolkien's Concept of Justice" scores points for originality: I never expected to see any interpretation of *Farmer Giles* in terms of the Munich Crisis (41). Oziewicz uses Giles's career and the Scouring of the Shire as demonstrations for what he sees as a specific code of ideal justice that he believes underlies all mythopoeic fantasy. In the case of *Farmer Giles*, he argues that the hero's assumption of responsibility entitles him to the royal titles he later claims, while the king's evasions of responsibility void his right to rulership. By contrast, in the Scouring of the Shire, he sees this justice taking the form of "appropriate corrective action" and "deep respect for life." Unfortunately, Oziewicz never satisfactorily defines this "compensational justice," offering only negative examples and assertion, nor he does he persuasively link the two halves of his discussion.

Vincent Ferré's "The Rout of the King: Tolkien's Readings on Arthurian Kingship—*Farmer Giles of Ham* and *The Homecoming of Beorhtnoth*" thinks Tolkien sharply critiques Arthur in oblique ways and finds Arthurian parallels everywhere in Tolkien's work, even in the name of Aragorn's father (Arathorn > Ar*a*thor*n* > Arthor).[6] Ferré's linkage of Beorhtnoth, Beowulf, and Arthur in a kind of triumvirate of failed leaders is intriguing, if harsh, but I suspect I'm not the only reader who will be bemused by his offering up Túrin, of all people, as an example of a "responsible leader" who "accepts his responsibilities" and "will not act rashly" (69). Friedhelm Schneidewind's "*Farmer Giles of Ham*: the Prototype of a Humorous Dragon Story" provides an interesting overview of dragon legends and dragon-lore. His treatment of both the humorous and prototypical elements of his thesis is only cursory, and his essay would have benefited from familiarity with Jonathan Evans's and Christina Scull's work on this topic, but I do not think anyone interested in dragon-lore can read his piece without learning something new[7]—which is, after all, one of the major points of scholarship. Patrick Brückner's "'. . . Until the Dragon Comes': Tolkien's Dragon-Motif as Poetological Concept" combines a subtle thesis with a rather muddled presentation, complete with charts and a Venn diagram. Brückner places great emphasis on the "Edge of the Wild" line on the Wilderland Map in *The Hobbit*, first presenting this as a literal demarcation between the realistic world

of Bilbo (and the reader) and the fantastic epic world epitomized by The Dragon, then reversing himself to argue that Tolkien's relatively realistic treatment of Smaug undercuts that division and imports a "historical" element into what might otherwise be a fairy-tale. Perhaps his best point is to acknowledge the influence of Beowulf's dragon upon Smaug while insisting that here Tolkien greatly improved upon his source (114).

With Thomas Fornet-Ponse's "Theology and Fairy-Stories: A Theological Reading of Tolkien's Shorter Works?" the emphasis shifts to "On Fairy-stories." Fornet-Ponse explicates Tolkien's theory, as expressed in "Mythopoeia," "On Fairy-stories," and elsewhere, that human creativity is the consequence of humanity itself being a creation. He then briefly applies Tolkien's prescriptions in "On Fairy-stories" to his own practice in *Roverandom*, "Leaf by Niggle," *Farmer Giles of Ham*, and *Smith of Wootton Major*, and seems to doubt whether any of the four fully qualifies as a fairy-story as Tolkien described it.

The next block of essays deal primarily with "Leaf by Niggle." Of these, Bertrand Alliot's "The 'Meaning' of *Leaf by Niggle*" de-emphasizes an autobiographical interpretation and instead focuses on the underlying "laws" of Niggle's home country which the hapless artist finds so difficult to obey, with an aside near the end to look at the quality of distant landscapes Niggle seeks to capture. Alliot's is the most intriguing piece in the whole collection, but I think few will agree with his conclusions that Tolkien's message is that Parish is right and Niggle wrong; that it is morally wrong to build a painting shed on a patch where one *should* grow potatoes; that Tolkien emerged from World War I convinced that fantasy and poetry were unimportant and "never took his creative work seriously" again (177–178). In biographical fact the first thing Tolkien did when he was strong enough to hold a pencil again after leaving the trenches was to embark full-throttle upon the massive work of creating his legendarium. Essentially Alliot is one with those who in Tolkien's "Allegory of the Tower" criticize the Beowulf-poet for "not [restoring] the old house," and ignore Tolkien's final line: *But from the top of that tower the man had been able to look out upon the Sea*.

Heidi Steimel's "The Autobiographical Tolkien" takes a much more standard approach in her juxtaposition of "Leaf by Niggle" and *Smith of Wootton Major* but does it exceptionally well—in fact, I would say this is the finest autobiographical interpretation of both tales that I have seen, and the volume's single best piece. She also deserves praise for stressing that this is not the only possible approach but rather her own exercise of "applicability," and for her conclusion that both tales would still be worth reading simply as stories, without any autobiographical context. Fabian Geier's thoughtful "Leaf by Tolkien?[:] Allegory and Biography in Tolkien's Literary Theory and Practice" also centers on "applicability,"

though Geier's is a more theoretical piece that looks at the various forms of allegory and their role—as well as that of source materials (mainly biographical but also literary)—in Tolkien's work. Geier offers many insights as well as the occasional provocative statement, such as his belief that subcreation can be detached from its explicitly Christian roots because it is "essentially more (neo)platonic than genuinely Christian" (225) or his claim that "Leaf by Niggle" is "incoherent" as a stand-alone story when deprived of its allegorical content (228).

Like so many other essays here, Martin Simonson's "Redefining the Romantic Hero: A Reading of *Smith of Wootton Major* in the Light of Ludwig Tieck's *Der Runenberg*" compares *Smith of Wootton Major* with another work; what sets his apart is that he contrasts *Smith* with an non-Tolkienian work, a German literary fairy tale from 1804. Simonson admits that there's no evidence Tolkien ever read Tieck's story, and unfortunately his essay fails to establish that either casts any significant light on the other; "The Sea-bell" might have made a better pairing with Tieck's tale. Martin Sternberg's "*Smith of Wootton Major* Considered as a Religious Text" also looks outside for explication of a Tolkien text, but rather more successfully; he discusses ways in which Smith's experiences of Faery parallel those of mystics within the Christian tradition, such as the author of *The Cloud of Unknowing*, and does a fine job of bringing the two together. Other than an apparent determination to use the phrase "ruth and delight" as many times as possible, Sternberg's only shortcoming is that he does not distinguish between Tolkien's afterthoughts in the essay he wrote about *Smith* and what was in his mind when he wrote the story itself (a tendency he shares with other contributors to this collection). Finally, Frank Weinreich's "Metaphysics of Myth: The Platonic Ontology of 'Mythopoeia'" gives us a line-by-line reading and interpretation of the poem, comparing Tolkien's undertaking to works by Keats, Lucretius, Pope, and especially Plato. It's good to see this major piece get some long overdue attention, though those unfamiliar with terms like "ontology" and "*zoon logon echon*" may find Weinreich's explication heavy going at times. His conclusion that Tolkien's thought is "pure Platonism" (344) makes him sound oddly like old Professor Diggory in Narnia, especially when he dismisses the idea of competing influences from Tolkien's Christianity or the writings of Owen Barfield (whom Weinreich, bizarrely, describes as a Gnostic) with the claim that both "developed Christian theology" and Gnosticism are themselves based on Plato.

Completists of course will no doubt want to acquire this collection, along with the sixteen volumes in the Cormarë line that preceded it and all those which will follow. While many of these essays do not tell you much more than you could learn by reading and musing over Tolkien's work yourself, this should not discourage those interested in the full range

of Tolkien's work from seeking out this collection. And the best of the pieces here—Turner, Schneidewind, Alliot, Steimel, and Sternberg—represent a real contribution to Tolkien studies.

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Notes

1 Ironically, not all of their contributors seem to agree with them—cf. Anna Slack's comment in her essay about "the minor works on which I have chosen to focus" (266); the term is also used by Ferré (61), Fornet-Ponse (153), Steimel (193), Benvenuto (251), and Hiley (291).

2 Many of these essays juxtapose two or more of these works; hence the numbers given here add up to more than sixteen, the total number of essays in the collection.

3 I have since seen another copy with the correct back cover text, so collectors should note that this book exists in at least two states.

4 Turner's categories are (i) Mysterious ("The Sea-bell"), (ii) Philological—serious ("The Hoard"), (iii) Philological—playful ("Oliphaunt" and "Fastitocalon", the two Man-in-the-Moon poems, and "The Stone Troll"), (iv) Metrical experiments ("Errantry"), (v) Parody and Satire ("Perry-the-Winkle"), and (vi) Miscellaneous. This last category, which Turner describes as "doodles of Tolkien's idle moments," seems to include the book's seven remaining poems, but explicitly includes "Princess Mee" and "Shadow Bride," the latter of which one might think would be more persuasively described as belonging to his first category, Mysterious.

5 Spirito's piece is enlivened with gnomic utterances—"it is the distance that makes the fire kind" (18), "Every form of life participates in the light soul and also in the darkness of suffering" (19), "cows . . . are not burdened by ultimate questions" (25)—as well as the occasional insight ("The legends of saints will endure since they serve this deep need that we have: *to believe that what we long for is possible*" [32]).

6 At one point Ferré claims Augustus Bonifacius in *Farmer Giles of Ham* is an Arthurian figure for two reasons: (1) he is the *exact opposite* of some famous portrayals of Arthur and (2) he is *just like* other lesser-known portrayals of Arthur—which is trying to have it both ways at once.

7 For example, who knew there were eighty-three distinct dragon saints recognized by the Church? (81–82).

Truths Breathed Through Silver: The Inklings' Moral and Mythopoeic Legacy, ed. Jonathan B. Himes, with Joe R. Christopher and Salwa Khoddam. Newcastle, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2008. xviii, 160 pp. £29.99 / $59.99 (hardcover). ISBN 9781847184443.

    This collection was garnered from a decade of annual conferences (I have never attended any of them—alas) beginning at Oklahoma City University in 1998, which gave rise to and were subsequently sponsored by the C. S. Lewis and Inklings Society (incorporated in 2004). The choice of name makes plain on which particular Inkling the Society has its focus, and indeed four of these ten essays are devoted to some aspect of Lewis's work while another three consider Lewis prominently in conjunction with other writers. Readers of *Tolkien Studies* may be most interested that J.R.R. Tolkien is one of the other writers in two of these cases, an ancillary figure in other essays (notably one discussing Lewis and language), and the primary subject of two chapters. Charles Williams is the only other regular member of the Inklings considered here, along with proto-Inklings (if one may so call them) George MacDonald and G. K. Chesterton.

    This is descriptive merely: those interested in other members of the remarkable Inklings group (e.g, Owen Barfield or Nevill Coghill or Lord David Cecil, et al.) are alerted to look elsewhere. It must have been difficult enough to distill papers from ten conferences into a volume of ten essays without also trying to represent more than a few of the Oxford Inklings.

    Half of the papers are from keynote speakers at the C. S. Lewis and Inklings Society conferences, and the volume opens with the keynote from the first conference in 1998. Joe R. Christopher identifies "C. S. Lewis's Three Paths to God" as (in essence) via reason, ethics, and the transcendent, with careful distinctions of what these meant to Lewis, and that their conjunction led him to a theistic view of the universe but not specifically to the Christian religion. Interestingly, he focuses on a work that has not been overmuch discussed in Lewis criticism, although it was this author's first published book of Christian apologetics and of prose fiction: *The Pilgrim's Regress: An Allegorical Apology for Christianity, Reason and Romanticism* (1933; the third edition of 1943 has some very needed explanatory notes). Professor Christopher mines this early Bunyanesque book for concerns that Lewis developed throughout his career, so he also touches on many later works, and shows that Lewis has remained a relevant thinker because his ideas have been found valuable by many people throughout many social changes over many years. He also indicates why Lewis does not persuade those who are committed to natural philosophy only: they tend to be pragmatists. While, for example, they agree that

beings capable of reasoning with some clarity have in fact appeared in a universe they consider non-rational, they no more worry that technically this is logically inconsistent than they used to be concerned when for years it was thought to be mathematically impossible for a bumblebee to fly (the math has since been done to show that it is).

A small point is that he posits a new (and, to my mind, more plausible) theory as to why Lewis largely abandoned his closely reasoned but popular apologetics after the 1940s. The prevailing idea has been that Lewis was discouraged by having his logic challenged by G.E.M. Anscombe from within his own philosophical camp of Christian intellectuals, but this does not seem likely for such a skilled debater who was wont to describe himself as "hungry for rational opposition,"[1] and who was able to reply to his challenger quite well on her own highly sophisticated ground. Christopher suggests that he felt he had shot his bolt (or, rather, his three bolts, having much explored the "three paths") and was ready to turn to other modes like the fairy tale in any case; a further point being that Lewis wanted to address the general public and it is difficult to do that while also speaking to every nuance to satisfy a specialist.[2]

This keynote address does indeed set the tone for most of the papers: thoughtful reflections by a (usually but not necessarily) Christian scholar on universal moral concerns encapsulated in mythic literature. The title of the collection indicates this, coming from Tolkien's rejoinder to the then-atheist Lewis's objection that the world's mythologies are lies even though beautiful: Tolkien replied that myths show people trying to apprehend truth through the imagination rather than ratiocination and that both avenues should be used.

Of the two essays devoted to Tolkien, Jason Fisher's is in this mode. "Tolkien's Fortunate Fall and The Third Theme of Ilúvatar" examines the topos of the *felix culpa* (God bringing a greater good out of an evil deed) from Melkor to Gollum, noting that the author's mythology is not completely consistent with his Catholic orthodoxy (he was not originally trying to do that and his models, after all, were mostly pagan) but is imbued with his deep-rooted Christianity. Tolkien's religious beliefs have less overt relevance to "A Brief History of Libraries in Middle-earth" by David Oberhelman other than that it is good to organize collections of knowledge. Such repositories anywhere on Arda tend to suffer a fate as dire as Tolkien's real-world model of the great library of Alexandria, as witness the destructions of Gondolin and Númenor. Oberhelman traces the importance of what we would call libraries (he can find only one instance where Tolkien uses this term) in the legendarium, culminating in the books written by the Hobbits which become the fictional source of our knowledge of this feigned history.

Theologian Kerry Dearborn's "The Sacrament of the Stranger in

C. S. Lewis, J.R.R. Tolkien, and George MacDonald" examines how the virtue of hospitality (which subsumes courtesy, mercy, empathy, trust) supports moral and spiritual growth in characters such as Ransom, Frodo, Gimli, and Curdie. She draws particularly on the Celtic tradition of Christianity (and on the experience of her own family as strangers in Peru) but might have added that hospitality was a paramount virtue to most ancient peoples, notably the writers of the Old Testament. The other chapter on Tolkien among a number of authors, Thomas Howard's "Lewis, Tolkien, and Williams as Spiritual Mentors," is wisely left in its original form as an after-dinner speech: revising it into a more formal essay would weaken its charm and immediacy. Howard knows these authors well (and he adds in George MacDonald), recollecting characters and scenes in a meandering fashion, each of them (for one example, Sam's awe in Lothlórien) having taught him something about being a good person.

Tom Shippey contributes a thoughtful examination of Lewis as a philologist, with particular attention to *The Screwtape Letters* and *Studies in Words,* and his agreement with his contemporaries George Orwell and Tolkien that corruptions in language (used not only for deception but for self-deception) underlie much of what was evil in the twentieth century. Normally good people can be induced to do very bad things if they are befuddled into thinking it is for a good cause.

The other essays continue the main theme of morality and mythopoeia. Rolland Hein's "Doors Out and Doors In: The Genius of Myth" demonstrates the mythic apprehension of truth. Mathematician David L. Neuhouser notes how his field of study figures as an intellectual and spiritual discipline in the life and work of George MacDonald. Co-editor Salwa Khoddam has a lengthy examination of the images of the ruined city and the Edenic garden in *The Magician's Nephew* while editor-in-chief Jonathan Himes takes a careful look at deviant sexuality in the unfinished *Dark Tower* (he playfully calls his chapter "The Allegory of Lust").

The introduction by Professor Himes gives useful background on the provenance of the essays and a good overview of each. The editors should feel gratified that every chapter in this little book is well-written, scholarly, and worthwhile for students of mythopoeic literature.

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Notes

1   C. S. Lewis and E.M.W. Tillyard, *The Personal Heresy: A Controversy* (Oxford University Press, 1965 [first published in 1939]), chapter III, 49.

2   Lewis makes this point himself in his "Rejoinder" to another fellow
     Christian, W. Norman Pittenger, *Christian Century* 75 (November 26,
     1958): 1359-61.

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Mathijs co-edited *Watching "The Lord of the Rings": Tolkien's World Audiences*, published in trade paperback in late 2007 by Peter Lang. Price $32.95 ISBN 9780820463964. Adam Lam and Nataliya Oryshchuk co-edited *How We Became Middle-earth: A Collection of Essays on "The Lord of the Rings*," a trade paperback also issued in late 2007, from Walking Tree Publishers. Price $28.00 ISBN 9783905703078.

DOUGLAS A. ANDERSON