

Editors' Introduction

This is the eighth 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.

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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Michael D. C. Drout
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NOTES ON SUBMISSIONS

Tolkien Studies seeks works of scholarly quality and depth. Substantial essays and shorter, "Notes and Documents" pieces are both welcome.

Submissions should be double-spaced throughout and use parenthetical citations in the (Author page) form. A Works Cited page should conform to the *Chicago Manual of Style*, 14th ed. All citations to Tolkien's works should follow the "Conventions and Abbreviations" of *Tolkien Studies*.

Self-addressed, stamped envelopes should accompany all correspondence unless the author wishes to communicate via email and does not wish the hard-copy manuscript to be returned, in which case this requirement is waived.

Electronic submissions are preferred. These should be sent to Verlyn Flieger (verlyn@mythus.com) as attachments. Microsoft Word is the preferred word-processing program.

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Acknowledgments

The Editors would like to thank Wheaton College, Norton, MA, Pro-vost Linda Eisenmann, and Wheaton Research Partners for their support. Special thanks to Rebecca Epstein for her work on the Bibliography. The efforts of editorial assistant Namiko Hitotsubashi contributed substantially to the success of the issue, as did Paula Smith-MacDonald, Vaughn Howland and Raquel D'Oyen. It has continued to be a pleasure to work with West Virginia University Press; thanks especially to Hilary Attfield for all her work in the production of the issue. Finally, we acknowledge a special debt of gratitude to our anonymous, outside reviewers who with their collegial service contribute so much to *Tolkien Studies*.

In Memoriam

Glen H. GoodKnight (1941-2010) was a lifelong Californian. He discovered the writings of J.R.R. Tolkien in high school, and while in college at California State University he began to promote the serious study of Tolkien, C.S. Lewis, and Charles Williams. He founded the Mythopoeic Society in 1967, and the first annual Mythopoeic Society Conference was held in 1970. GoodKnight edited the society's journal, *Mythlore*, from its first issue in January 1969 through issue 84 published in the summer of 1998. Though in poor health in recent years, GoodKnight maintained a website highlighting his extensive collection of "Narnia Editions and Translations" (<http://inklingsfocus.com>).

Journalist John Ezard (1939-2010) interviewed Tolkien for *The Oxford Mail* twice in 1966, for stories appearing in February and in August. Ezard was also a guest at the party celebrating Tolkien's Golden Wedding anniversary, held at Merton College in March of the same year. Ezard soon moved on to *The Guardian*, where he was employed for more than forty years, occasionally writing about Tolkien.

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.
- SG* *The Legend of Sigurd and Gudrun*. Ed. Christopher Tolkien. London: HarperCollins; Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2009
- 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.

“Legend and History Have Met and Fused”: The Interlocution of Anthropology, Historiography, and Incarnation in J.R.R. Tolkien’s “On Fairy-stories”

PHILIP IRVING MITCHELL

Spiritual alienation of its own greatest minds is the price that every civilization has to pay when it loses its religious foundations, and is contented with a purely material success.

—Christopher Dawson, *Progress and Religion*

In a 1939 draft of his “On Fairy-stories,” J.R.R. Tolkien, the fantasy writer and philologist, noted with interest the words, “ocean of supernatural energy” (*OFS* 182), a phrase from Catholic historian Christopher Dawson’s widely praised 1929 study *Progress and Religion*. In later drafts composed around 1943, Tolkien jotted down even more words and phrases with this same import, many as well from *Progress and Religion*: “Power/ Beauty/ Zauberfluidum/ Sanctus sanctus dominus deus saboath” and later still, “Zauberfluidum Brahman R.t.a. Wakan Orenda” (263). As conceptual sequences, these are quite striking. They include the ideas of magical potency; the ultimate reality of the universe; the order and equity of the universe; the divine power in every object, and the divine power diffused in nature, as well as the traditional Latin Sanctus. Dawson had mustered these as examples of a common intuition of the transcendent in all past and present cultures. It is strange and yet fitting that Tolkien in struggling with a language to describe the power of Faerie and fantasy would do so while pondering theories of history.¹ While history and historical theory are present in “On Fairy-stories,” they have typically not been judged as integral to the essay’s meaning, yet Tolkien’s important essay was in conversation not only with Dawson’s, but also with Owen Barfield and G.K. Chesterton’s historical theories.² The fantasist was addressing in a number of ways the desacralization implied by twentieth-century views of history, anthropology, and culture. Despite their important differences, Tolkien shared with his interlocutors an important pattern that relocated spiritual power at the center of culture; that questioned the impact of current understandings (and perhaps misunderstandings) of Darwinism on human meaning; that rejected the dehumanizing impact of scientification; and that placed the Christian doctrines of incarnation and eschatological hope at the center of the meaning of myth, religion, and history. By highlighting this pattern, I believe we can better see why he chose these writers to buttress his own

defense of fantasy, for despite their differences, each of them appealed to common patterns of theological resistance in the face of evolutionary doctrines.

Accommodating Evolution

It is important to keep in mind that Barfield, Chesterton, Tolkien, and even Dawson to some extent, were writing within a context that had not yet absorbed the 1920s-to-30s synthesis of neo-Darwinism with Gregor Mendel's work on population genetics. Between 1890 and 1920, the mechanism of natural selection itself had fallen on hard times, yet the belief in the directional transmutation of species, including that of humanity, was wide-spread. Most of these non-Darwinian views were "purpose-driven" models—neo-Lamarckianism, recapitulationism, theistic evolution, emergent evolution, orthogenesis, Henri Bergson's *élan vital*, Alfred North Whitehead's process philosophy. All of them denied a purely random state, some finding an emergent meaning without a divine intent, others seeing a divine plan in evolutionary history. Despite the new arising synthesis in the scientific mainstream, these earlier views continued into the 1930s in various popular forms, including forms received in the Christian churches. Because they seemed to offer evidence of meaning and value in the evolutionary process, many marriages of quasi-teleology with evolution were accepted and promoted by theists, especially within liberal Protestantism and modernist Roman Catholicism (Bowler *Evolution*, chapter 8-9; *Reconciling*, chapter 4).

More broadly speaking, evolutionary thinking in both pre- and post-Darwinian forms had had great influence on all those fields concerned with accounts of the supernatural: folklore studies, philology, anthropology, comparative religion, and comparative mythology, and as a result, the question of origins became paramount for each discipline. The chief questions were essentially the same across fields: why and under what conditions did elements of human culture evolve, and could current "primitive" cultures tell us anything about prehistoric ones?

One of the chief conclusions or, better said, assumptions, was that humanity's religious past was at its best childish nonsense. Reigning philologists such as Max Müller were distrustful of Charles Darwin, yet they shared his assumptions about primitivism, irrationality, and childishness. Müller, in assuming that early religious beliefs were the mistaken personification of natural forces such as the sun, had relegated much of mythology and religion to primitive delusions (Stocking *Victorian Anthropology*, 59-62). While he insisted on a barrier between the heights of human nature and the degradations of the "brutes," his thought was ripe for an evolutionary, developmental reading, for it already assumed a wide gap between an ignorant past and a superior present. Anthropologist

Edward Tylor would offer such a reading. For Tylor, most cultural folklore and myth were “survivals” from former, less evolved human beliefs. Such beliefs were like fossils of human misapprehensions, not a window into any true account of life—misplaced poetry, if you will.³ The early Andrew Lang, following Tylor, also rejected any “faculty of apprehending the Infinite.” Instead, “savage religion” was nothing more than fantastic attempts to explain natural causes (Stocking *After Tylor*, 55).⁴ This kind of explanation had the tendency, therefore, to treat contemporary viewpoints as more evolved, superior, and trustworthy, and of course, it gave pride of place to empirical modern science.⁵

James Frazer’s *The Golden Bough*, in turn, popularized a version of Tylor and Lang’s theories. He held that primitive magic represented the earliest stages of human interaction with the environment, followed by higher forms of religion, and finally by Western science. Frazer believed that by amassing accounts of comparative myth and religion, one could uncover chains of causation between totems and “the conception of the slain god”; that one could distinguish between homeopathic and sympathetic forms of magic; and that ultimately one could understand the general irrationality of the savage mind (Stocking 1995, 139-142). This deep distrust of the primitive psyche tended to extend to all religion. Indeed, for Frazer, early primitive magic as a proto-science was to be preferred to its more organized religious descendents. Others gave short-shrift to even this. Tylor and Herbert Spencer propounded a “ghost theory” of religion, positing that beliefs in specters, spirits, angels and demons arose out of early humanoid reactions to dreams, and from these arose mistaken beliefs in gods and eventually, the monotheist’s belief in God. It was perhaps only natural that Sigmund Freud in his 1915 *Totem and Taboo* would locate the origins of primitive religion in the primordial fear of incest, now suppressed as unconscious hunger and horror (Sharpe 198-201).

Understandably, what was at stake for many was the legitimacy of human religion itself. Chesterton held an evolutionary approach to mythology to be fundamentally mistaken in its reductionism: “The true origin of all the myths has been discovered much too often. . . . Everything is phallic; everything is totemistic; everything is seed-time and harvest; everything is ghosts and grave-offerings; everything is the golden bough of sacrifice; everything is the sun and moon; everything is everything” (2.235). What the anthropologists all overlooked, he felt, was something essentially irreducible about human nature and creativity, especially in its testimony to the transcendent, and in overlooking this irreducible factor, they sought to abstract themselves from a fundamentally human way of understanding the world. Tolkien, as well as Barfield and Dawson, shared Chesterton’s concern.

All four writers admitted some evolutionary basis for the physical

aspects of human beings, but each in turn insisted that the spiritual aspects of persons transcended their biological origins. The line in the sand had to be drawn at what made humans unique.⁶ Tolkien, for instance, in his essay's extended note G dismissed the "dogmatic guesses" of evolutionists. Their developmental models assume that a human being is "only an animal" and that what can be said of the physical body from an evolutionary perspective can be extended "to his whole being" (83). This move, according to Tolkien in one earlier manuscript was "nonsense, dangerous indecent nonsense" that "in the end destroyed human dignity" (283). Yet in this Tolkien was more concerned with the confusion of bodily evolution with higher human capacities than with physical developmentalism per se. Fantasy, he urged, did not distort this line, despite its accounts of satyrs and werewolves. He feared that evolutionists did.

Chesterton, too, accepted the possibility of intermediate forms in pre-human development, but he also insisted that something took place in the soul that cannot be explained by slow evolution—a sudden jump in consciousness (2.183). He was careful to differentiate evolution defined simply as the slow change of pre-humans into humans from that of evolution as a philosophy of history that denied ontological being and ethical absolutes (1.237-239).⁷ Perhaps not surprisingly, Barfield was likewise concerned with the internal, imaginative world of human reflection. As an anthroposophist influenced by Rudolf Steiner, Barfield was a believer in the evolution of consciousness, and as such, he reversed the typical search in material causes for the origin of the interior world. Material causes, instead, are the actual result of humanity's combined awareness. Essentially, Barfield argued that pre-history, being pre-human, was really pre-linguistic and pre-cognitive; thus, it was closed off to human understanding. Current theories about such periods were more shaped by a present collective consciousness than by any certain information about the past.⁸

Dawson, much more than Barfield, Chesterton, or Tolkien, owed a significant debt to evolutionary approaches, but this makes his overall agreement with the other three all the more significant. Dawson's first book, *The Age of the Gods* (1928), examined the archaeological and paleontological evidence for pre-historic humanity, as well as the rise of the first civilizations. While not entirely uncritically, he mostly accepted the limited evidence for pre-human life forms, though he spoke more assuredly to Neanderthal and Cro-Magnon fossils (8-13). He wrote appreciatively of Paleolithic art, including sculpture and cave paintings, but unlike Chesterton he was sure that they were conclusively religious in meaning.⁹ Indeed, this conviction was essential to the opposition he mounted to Tylor and Frazer's too restrictive definitions of primitive religion. He insisted, "Wherever and whenever man has a sense of dependence upon external

powers which are conceived as mysterious and higher than man’s own, there is religion.” Dawson went on to suggest that the human response to this sense is “awe and self-abasement . . . the root of worship and prayer” (22). Perhaps since Dawson recognized that anthropology was tied to Darwinian developmentalism, especially the notion that culture obeys the same material processes as the rest of nature, he looked to the American school of anthropology that was more skeptical of reducing human culture to simple developmental laws.¹⁰

Survivals and Progress

Admittedly, Tolkien’s defense of fairy tales may seem several steps removed from debates over evolution, but the treatment in his day of fairy tales as evolutionary survivals inevitably brought these concerns to the surface. As others have noted, the field of philology had had a fecund interest not only in word forms and their meanings, but also historical changes in those words and the worldviews of the peoples such changes implied. (Gilliver 46ff., 79-83; Shippey *Roots*, 139-156). Even as philology gave way to linguistics on the one hand and anthropology on the other, practitioners like Tolkien could still find great joy in how an ancient word’s suggestiveness unlocked whole aspects of a past culture. Yet, even here, the metaphoric serpent was already in the garden. One of Tolkien’s early teachers in philology, Joseph Wright, had used Archibald Henry Sayce’s *The Principles of Comparative Philology* as a textbook (Ryan 113). Sayce, a follower of Müller, had nonetheless absorbed evolutionary assumptions about the place of myth and religion and believed that anthropology could assist the study of language and of comparative mythology in uncovering the totemistic rituals of savage peoples who had existed first in a “hive-like community,” that is a psychic collective, before the rise of individuality (327-8). This collective origin, of course, tended to downgrade anything like individual creativity: “Indeed, without the religious instinct, mythology would have had no existence at all; it originated not in the imagination of the poet, but in the requirements of worship” (337).¹¹ The doctrine of progress, even without evolutionary assumptions, tended to look down on past cultures and their beliefs, but married to such assumptions, anything that smacked of cultural fossils was bound to be treated as inferior, as but a stepping stone to the superlative present.¹²

Understandably, then, Tolkien, Barfield, Chesterton, and Dawson also distrusted to some extent the classical liberal historiography of progress. Barfield was perhaps the most understated of the four. In his *History in English Words*, he observed that evolution and progress are both relatively modern notions, since historical consciousness in the modern sense is only a seventeenth to nineteenth-century development. A conceptual

world that assumes that history is progressing makes it difficult to enter sympathetically and imaginatively into a medieval mindset which could “speak only of *regeneration* and *amendment*” (167-168). This inability creates a number of ironies. Our supposed superiority makes us less knowledgeable of the past and also renders us more parochial, thus, less able to adapt. While Barfield accepted that changes had occurred in basic human consciousness and that these were inevitable, he nonetheless dismissed modernist claims of superiority. Archaism, he felt, as a poetic act of recovery and renewal was a “return to something older” and yet a kind of *ressourcement* (*Poetic Diction*, 163). It was not lower down the tree of evolutionary cognition.

Dawson also observed that while the cultural improvement of western civilization (e.g. its rejection of slavery) was real, this was a singular cultural development, not an outcome of universal evolutionary processes (*Progress and Religion*, 19). If anything, evolutionary thought, whether in its Darwinian, Larmarckian, or Spencerian forms, could and did lead to an inevitable loss of teleological ethics, and without an end purpose for human culture, Dawson charged, to the pessimism of a Thomas Huxley or to the “Promethean attitude” of a Bertrand Russell (*Progress*, 24-26). This could only be mitigated, he held, by a return to the religious roots of the West.

Chesterton and Tolkien were more strident in their rejection of the rhetoric of progress. Chesterton identified the relativism of historicism closely with both the language of progress and that of evolution. “Nobody has any business to use the word ‘progress’ unless he has a definite creed and a cast-iron code of morals,” he insisted, “Nobody can be progressive without being doctrinal” (1.53). Chesterton felt that even the moniker of “progress” belonged to the traditionalists, those with a solid belief in ethical absolutes and metaphysical reality—else there could be no standard by which to measure it. Thus, words such as “progress” and “evolution” were labels to conjure a feeling of ethical responsibility and triumphalism where none really existed. A passage in Tolkien’s poem “Mythopoeia” echoes Chesterton’s concerns:

I will not walk with your progressive apes,
erect and sapient. Before them gapes
the dark abyss to which their progress tends
if by God’s mercy progress ever ends,
and does not ceaselessly revolve the same
unfruitful course with changing of a name. (*TL*, lines 119-124)

For Tolkien, “progress” was actually just a deceptive metaphor for modernism’s crash course towards its own positivist destruction, and new and equally empty terms could be adopted if this one lost its rhetorical

magic. The assumption that the modern West was somehow superior to its past was one Tolkien did not easily countenance. So, instead of a cultural narrative of increasing success, the four warned darkly of degeneration and breakdown.

Primitivism

Tolkien rejected the claim that fairy tales are only for children because it assumed that such tales were survivals originated in the “child-like” primitive periods of the past. For those who rejected such a claim, an alternate image had to be offered. Tolkien, unlike Sayce, held that fairy tales were not the product of an unreflective collective prehistoric existence, but of their originators, who were conscious artists making conscious aesthetic choices. The assumption of primitivism itself was suspect in part because it was obviously invested with modern pride. As Peter Bowler points out, turn-of-the century anthropology’s equation of current indigenous cultures with pre-historic ones had the *de facto* effect of offering the “missing links” that evolutionary models needed to support a gradualist theory of development (236-237). The equation provided much of the “evidence” needed to theorize the development of human consciousness, morality, and culture. It was also the prop that held up much racist and imperialist denigration of the non-Western world. Barfield called the idea that primitive races are analogous to tribal peoples “a tiresome and stupid error,” even if comparisons could be made on occasion to some profit. What felt wrong-headed to Barfield was the primitivism of those like Müller: “He seems to have gone out of his way to seek for impossibly modern and abstract concepts to project into that luckless dustbin of pseudo-scientific fantasies—the mind of primitive man” (*Poetic Diction*, 74-75). Barfield would have nothing of the approach that language arises in developmental blocks rather than in something like metaphoric flame (80-81). For Barfield, the possibilities of language are present from the beginning in an original, almost Edenic unity of conscious meanings. One may speak of the youth of humanity but not primitiveness per se. Only with the presence of language can one speak of history and then it arrives if not in full flower, at least with greatness implicit.

Tolkien was more dismissive than Barfield of the doctrine of primitiveness. He taunted, “But do we really know much about these ‘naked ancestors,’ except that they were certainly not naked?” (54), an observation he borrowed from Chesterton’s *Everlasting Man*. For Chesterton, the assumption was laughable that pre-historic people wore no clothes because none could be found archeologically. Clothing and decoration, Chesterton held, served a priestly function for all cultures (2.176, 184). Tolkien shared with Chesterton a stress on the ubiquity of human

imagination, past and present. The belief that so-called primitive peoples are less civilized did not hold up under close examination of their philosophical and religious beliefs (*OFS* 44 n.2). For Tolkien the division between higher and lower mythology advanced by Lang and others was emblematic of this mistaken approach because it, too, devalued fundamental aspects of human creativity, rendering them the products of inevitable biological changes, rather than individual choices.

Rehumanizing the Study of Culture

This stress on individual creativity and its uniqueness was another counter-move that each of the four made. Dawson was more willing to employ the assumptions of anthropological primitivism, yet he too insisted that humans are creative, imaginative beings at every stage of human history. A culture's creative response to its geography is like that of an artist to his or her materials: "The conformity of a culture to its natural environment is no sign of barbarism. The more a culture advances, the more fully does it express itself in and through its material conditions, and the more intimate is the co-operation between man and nature" (*Progress*, 52). For Dawson, this adaptive capacity was evidence of human developmental and spiritual significance. At no period of human history were humans bereft of the creative and the spiritual, and neither could these be the product of social forces alone. Individual contributions and innovations played an important role in every fundamental change. By claiming so, Dawson rejected Tylor, Frazer, and Lang's views that spirituality grew out of mistaken ghostly apparitions or the collective ritual attempts to control natural forces (*Progress*, 63-74). Though Dawson was willing to hold the distinction between mythology and religion—a view that Chesterton also accepted, he nonetheless insisted that all human societies had intuitions of pure being, of the transcendent source and ground of existence.¹³ In one manuscript, Tolkien copied in full Dawson's response to Tylor's reduction of the intuition of the supernatural to ghostly superstition (*OFS* 182-183), for Tolkien, too, shared a trust in human intimations of spiritual realities. In "On Fairy-stories," this conviction arises most strongly in his defense of the creation of literary worlds. He insisted that "[f]antasy is a natural human activity," one that neither defies rational thought nor scientific verification (65). Instead, fantasy is a clue to our supernatural origins: "Fantasy remains a human right: we make in our measure and in derivative mode, because we are made and not only made, but made in the image and likeness of a Maker" (66).¹⁴

In like manner, for Barfield, language is the fundamental human activity, and abstraction, which is a late development in consciousness, can keep scholars of mythology and religion from appreciating the powerfully obvious. If one is to speak of the "infancy" of humanity, one

should realize that those beginnings are poetic, that mythology is the immediate reality of human beings, in other words, the natural expression of their being and consciousness (*Poetic Diction*, 41, 68-70, 81-92, 102). He found the whole project of comparative mythology to be misleading, for the similarities that it observed were reductive and tended to ignore the important differences that were windows into varying human worldviews (*History*, 86-88, 95). Tolkien, too, felt that the approaches of comparative folklore could not account for the eternal element of Faërie: “a door on Other Time,” that is the longing for that world beyond death (48).¹⁵ Attempts to systematize and abstract the mythological (or the religious) inevitably give an incomplete picture of reality because they distance the person from what is properly basic and fundamental.

In the last analysis for Chesterton, the term “religion” included everything (1.205). Chesterton, like Dawson, held that religious impulses precede rituals; they were not created by them (2.180). At the same time, rituals precede cognitive reflection (1.86-87, 117) because at one level we all believe “fairy tales,” that is we all give assent to dogmas in that our day-to-day actions are based on beliefs that we accept without any detailed examination (1.206-207). Reality at its most thick is experienced mythopoetically. Desire and danger, naturalness and wonder, are in our fairy tales: “The flower with which God crowns the one, and the flame with which Sam the lamplighter crowns the other, are equally of the gold of fairy-tales” (1.112). The religious impulse is a core epistemic faculty.¹⁶

The Unreality of the Technological West

Fundamentally, moreover, because it relegated its religious core to the evolutionary survival of a pre-historic past, each of the four writers judged the modern West as failing to live in and with the natural world and with the imaginative faculties that made this co-existence meaningful. In reaction to this failure, Tolkien and Chesterton both urged a return to epistemic humility. For Tolkien, the act of recovery offered by fairy-tales required that we first divest ourselves of possessiveness. Humility is necessary for clear-sightedness, for as long as we seek to control the world, we cannot, in gratitude, see it in its mythic depth: “We should look at green again, and be startled anew (but not blinded) by blue and yellow and red. We should meet the centaur and the dragon, and then perhaps suddenly behold, like ancient shepherds, sheep, and dogs, and horses—and wolves” (67). Chesterton insisted on the same: we must possess humility before the cosmos in order to possess wonder and happiness (1. 69, 72-73, 127-129).¹⁷ The world as it is given to us demands a kind of loyalty on our parts, especially to the uniqueness of the parts closest at hand (1.273-275). In turn, the freedom of fairyland is manifest in its

refusal of the materialist prison house. He observed that it was foolish to “tell us that our emancipation is a dream and our dungeon a necessity” and then to bid moderns to believe in a socio-political world of openness and freedom (2.375).

Indeed, each of the four felt that the modern world with its industrial ugliness and loss of local village and community had all the marks of a new barbarism, rather than the promised utopia of social evolutionary progress. Tolkien was particularly drawn to Dawson’s description in *Progress and Religion* of “the rawness and ugliness of modern European life” as “the sign of biological inferiority, of an insufficient or false relation to environment, which produces strain, wasted effort, revolt or failure” (Dawson *Progress*, 60; *OFS* 72), and he also quoted with approval in some editions of “On Fairy-stories” Dawson’s observation that the modern financial manager is less attractive than the heroes of Homer “because he is less incorporated with life; he is not inevitable, but accidental, almost parasitic” (Dawson *Progress*, 60; *OFS* 117). Tolkien, like Dawson, saw the loss of religion in Europe as a dangerous failure to live in reality. “Good is the result of supernatural religion . . . understanding of the awe and terrible sanctity of miracles.” Ironically, the rise of Christianity mitigated the demonic fears typified in an ancient tale like *Beowulf*, yet the cultural protection offered by religion, now being removed by secularization, placed the West again before the monsters. Current science “produced in alliance with sin nightmare horrors and perils of the night before which the giants and demons grow pale. And sick as we are of these horrors, we are still more sick because of the ugliness of our own work” (268-69). In their separation from the world of wood and craft, modern secular Europeans had created a far more demonic technology (282).¹⁸

The Incarnation

Tolkien and his interlocutors each urged the cultural necessity of acknowledging a spiritual power at the center of cultures and their myths, though each man was also interested in different manifestations of this: Chesterton, a Christian apologetic; Barfield, linguistic history; Dawson, civilizations’ growth and decline; Tolkien, fantasy and story. As his earlier manuscripts show, Tolkien studied closely in *Progress and Religion* those passages dealing with the universal belief in spiritual powers that exist behind the material forces of life and culture. (Dawson *Progress*, 70-71; *OFS* 182-183). When Tolkien spoke in one draft of fantasy as a “reservoir of power” (270) he had Dawson’s understanding of culture and religion in mind, more than Barfield’s notion of linguistic evolution. “Fairie,” as Tolkien defined it in Manuscript B, “is the occult power in nature behind the usable and tangible appearances of things which may tend or pretend to tap, but in which and by which fairies have their being” (264).

This concept of an inscrutable power in nature, which can be tapped by human creativity, does have echoes of Barfield’s notion of human joy at fresh poetic creation, of the particular poet’s making of new metaphor in language (130-131), but even more I believe that Tolkien shared with Dawson the belief that every culture has “some spiritual dynamic, which provides the energy necessary for that sustained social effort which is civilization” (Dawson *Progress*, 8). Tolkien seemed to have toyed with the idea that *Fäerie* could be equated with that power before settling on seeing it as one manifestation of its energy, and in light of anthropological histories like Frazer’s, the term “magic” was also bound to become problematic for Tolkien (264).

Chesterton argued that “every true artist does feel, consciously or unconsciously, that he is touching transcendental truths; that his images are shadows of things seen through a veil” (2.237). Hans Kippenberg has noted that the anthropological theory of *mana* was a response to the problem of historicism. By positing *mana* as the pre-historic seed of animism, theorists could offer a phenomenon analogous to Ernst Haeckel’s recapitulation theory of biogenesis. Despite the vast differences and the sheer number of mythic and religious systems then being catalogued by field workers, one could still look to a core, universal sense (Kippenberg 127-30). Theologian Rudolf Otto, for example, could easily absorb *mana* into his notion of the *mysterium tremendum* at the heart of all senses of the holy (Kippenberg 179-182). In Dawson’s estimation, writers like Otto tended too quickly to equate all religious experience with the sense of the transcendent; nonetheless, the basic sense that God is “the Ocean of all essence and existence,” Dawson was convinced, is one shared by primitive and modern religion alike, as is a hunger for the transcendent (*Christianity*, 25-26, 33, 40).

What Tolkien and his interlocutors shared was a theological and philosophical tradition that connected the incarnation of Jesus Christ to the purpose and final destination of history, and this tradition was bound to interact with the broad drift of evolutionary accommodations.¹⁹ This is not to say that the four agreed in all the details. Barfield’s vision of history, for instance, sought to bridge phylogenesis and ontogenesis, the development of the species with that of the individual organism. Recapitulation occurred in historical consciousness, he believed, rather than taking place in the embryonic development that Haeckel had popularized (*Poetic Diction*, 82-83). Barfield (following Steiner to some extent²⁰) seemed to regard the Incarnation as real and historical, not just symbolical and ideal, yet the chief power of the Christ-event, he felt was a change in human consciousness. This change should prepare human culture for a final eschatological absorption of the material and spiritual worlds.²¹

Barfield’s viewpoint, though heterodox, was not that far removed

from more mainstream Christianity. The Incarnation, it was commonly acknowledged, stabilizes the flux of history. It gives the variety of human cultures meaning by typologically placing them in an orientation to the supreme actor of history. Chesterton's *Everlasting Man* makes such an argument. The Incarnation is the fulfillment in history of all the mythic and religious desires of human history, and thus, Christianity reconciles philosophy and myth (2.378). All mythic and religious systems are forms of preparation for their fulfillment, and as such, they are not to be disposed; they are still essential to the drama. As Stanley Jaki points out, for Chesterton the singularity of the god-man also guaranteed a kind of stable uniqueness to humans (81). No human is sub-human. Of course, the claim that Christ is the fulfiller of all pagan myths is not unlike the modernist claims that Christianity was simply the most advanced (evolved) religion. Yet this concept is also very different in that it holds a different view of history and anthropology, as well as in how it defends and values the older pagan myths. In Chesterton's view, the ontological structure of history is story-like, having a beginning, progression, and ending, and as such it must have a story-teller who is also a truth-speaker: "The true story of the world must be told by somebody to somebody else." It must have both the heroic quality of good myth and the rational quality of good philosophy. "It was that abyss that nothing but an incarnation could cover; a divine embodiment of our dreams" (2.380). However, rather than denying the legitimacy of historical or indigenous systems of religion, they become parts of the story never to be discarded. Rather than stages to be evolved beyond, they are taken up into the ante-type of Christ. The older myths, however muddled, still possess artistic power and a partial intuition of truth, and thus, their pagan holiness is a measure of actual holiness.

Perhaps this is why Tolkien was willing to give some credence to a broadly evolutionary model, wondering, in an earlier draft of "On Fairy-stories" under the influence of Barfield, if fantasy, having ennobled the material world, "may actually be assisting in the evolution of Creation" (247). Evolution conceived this way has more in common with Pierre Teilhard de Chardin than with Thomas Huxley, for the direction of history is not simply chaotic or progressive, but preparatory, even nuptial. In the final draft Tolkien chose to downplay this language and changed "evolution of Creation" to read "in Fantasy he may actually assist in the effoliation and multiple enrichment of creation" (79); nonetheless, this still faithfully describes a teleological vision of fairy-tale, folklore, and myth as all finding some measure of meaningful fulfillment, and therefore abiding place, in the true myth of Christ.

Dawson, too, argued that the Christian incarnation brought something fundamentally new into history itself, joining the material processes

of history with the “transcendent and eternal objects of religious faith. . . . A new *kind* of life has inserted itself into the cosmic process at a particular point in time under definite historical circumstances” (*Progress*, 193). Contra Emile Durkheim, Dawson would not see religion as a kind of metaphoric projection out of social consciousness (*Progress*, 69); instead, its reverse has taken place. Social consciousness arises to contain the divine intuition. Dawson, furthermore, held that the Incarnation, in bringing together the “absolute and Finite, the Eternal and the temporal,” ultimately opened the possibility of human *theosis*, that is “the channel through which the whole material creation acquires consciousness and becomes spiritualized and united to God” (1960, 126-28). Tolkien concluded in a fashion similar to Dawson and Chesterton: “This story has entered History and the primary world, the desire and aspiration of sub-creation has been raised to the fulfillment of Creation” (78). The eternal lifts up temporal history, even as it pulls it forward.

For Tolkien, the teleological deficit of the current age denied any hope or healing that the Christian *eschaton* had to offer, so much so that he tied this doctrine to his notions of the surprising reversal of “eucatastrophe” and of “the long defeat” amidst the *saeculum*. Some have argued that Tolkien’s essay is a jumble of varied topics lacking a center (Carpenter 191; Shippey *Road*, 49); or that “On Fairy-stories” meditation on the Gospel as True Eucatastrophe is an example of Tolkien’s “Faerian free association” (Flieger and Anderson 14). But if Tolkien is engaged at some level with answering the secularizing impulses of evolutionary history and anthropology, then his choice of topics is at least partially shaped and mitigated by these concerns, even if he chooses to finally downplay them somewhat in the published version. His commonplaces become less random and more considered if we see that he was responding in the same general pattern as other Christian theists. It is not only entirely fitting, but also follows from the basic logic he shared with Barfield, Chesterton, and Dawson, that he should end “On Fairy-stories” with a discussion of the incarnation and history—“Legend and History have met and fused;” indeed, they must for the tales of human beings will be redeemed, though in a form “like and unlike the fallen” forms they possess at present (78-79). In one earlier version, Tolkien had ended his reflections observing that “[u]nreal ends may possess as much plain logical likelihood and . . . factual sequence of cause and effect as history” (296). Not only is there a rational story at the heart of history’s diverse course, there is a theological logic.

History, then, each concludes has a meaningful course, and cultures incarnate their religions, their centers of spiritual power, that is their myths that fund meaning for all. The Christian incarnation offers resistance to relativism, primitivism and positivism because it offers a vision

of history and of mythology that is typological rather than developmental. It recommends gratitude rather than superiority as a response to this knowledge, and it legitimizes the creativity of those past culture's beliefs. For Chesterton, the incarnation matches the ungainly reality of matter and imagination, while for Dawson, the doctrine of progress is actually fulfilled in the sacramental promise of the divine *theosis*. For Barfield, the trajectory of human consciousness reunites mythic speech with methodological prose in the poetic Word, and for Tolkien, the fairy-stories will be justified and redeemed. By doing so, the tales anticipate the end of time. Without rejecting biological evolution, Barfield, Dawson, Chesterton, and Tolkien refuse the Darwinian conclusions of the modern world. The promised outcome of history promises a measure of value and purpose in the present, a purpose both material and spiritual. For these four, the Zaubersfluidum, Brahma, Rta, Wakan, and Orenda has put on flesh and dwelt among us.

NOTES

- 1 Tolkien's treatment of feigned history has been discussed by critics in a number of ways. That he obligated himself to this approach to fiction has been noted in regards to 1) his self-professed early desire to write "a body of legend for England" (*Letters* 144; Garbowski); 2) his close attention within his feigned worlds to political history, geography, chronology, and cartography (Scull "Influence"; Sabo "Archaeology"); and 3) his incomplete attempts at a story of time travel in "The Lost Road" and in "The Notion Club Papers" (Flieger *A Question of Time*, chapters 4 and 6). Tom Shippey has spoken of Tolkien's reconstructive approach as a kind of philological "asterisk reality," in which Tolkien fills in the suggestive details of historical puzzles with his own myth and legend (*Road* 19-23). See also Kerry "Thoughts on J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* and History" and Morrison "'I Much Prefer History, True or Feigned': Tolkien and Literary History."
- 2 Most studies of Barfield's influence on Tolkien cite C.S. Lewis, who had passed along to Barfield that *Poetic Diction* had had a profound impact on Tolkien's thinking. Tolkien had remarked, "it is one of those things that when you've seen it there are all sorts of things you can never say again" (Carpenter 42). Flieger and Douglas Anderson have traced Barfield's impact on Tolkien in a number of ways. Flieger's *Splintered Light* highlights how Barfield's understanding of language as embodied myth shaped Tolkien's conception of the Silmarillion mythology, as well as aspects of "On Fairy-stories" (cf. chapters 4-5, 8).

Though Tolkien’s interaction with Dawson is mentioned in passing by others, J.S. Ryan is the only critic to connect the two in any detail (Birzer notes that they both attended St. Aloysius parish in the 30s and 40s and had a doctor and friends in common, x-xi). Ryan notes that Tolkien resonates with Dawson’s view of culture, his distrust of modern industrialism, and similar views of intuition and religious knowledge. He also sees them as sharing views with not only the neo-Thomists but also with Catholic modernist Friederich von Hügel, though I find this last connection not entirely convincing (144-147). Ryan offers no sustained examination of these influences.

George Sayer, in an interview with Michael Foster, recalled Tolkien’s interest in Chesterton’s poem “Lepanto,” others from *The Flying Inn*, and his books *Orthodoxy* and *The Everlasting Man* (47). Foster goes on to draw connections between “On Fairy-stories” and *Orthodoxy*’s chapter “Ethics of Elfland.” Several critics have noted that Tolkien’s most immediate source for Chesterton was Massie Ward’s edition of *The Coloured Lands* (Scull and Hammond 2: 158-159; Flieger and Anderson 109, 114-115). Alison Milbank’s recent study, *Chesterton and Tolkien as Theologians*, offers a sustained examination of the two authors and their theories and practice of fantasy. Milbank points out, among others things, that Chesterton’s vision is one of defamiliarizing this world in order to re-enchant it, while Tolkien moves beyond this to an entirely sub-created world, which is nonetheless in relationship to the real of this world (38-42).

- 3 For Tylor, such beliefs ultimately arose from the human organism’s interaction with the physical world, while Müller still held there to be an epistemic link between language itself and mythology (Stocking *Victorian Anthropology*, 306-7).
- 4 Flieger’s treatment of the folklore debate, with a strong emphasis on Müller’s solar mythology and Lang’s distaste for the violent and sexual nature of European folktales, is essential for understanding Tolkien’s own treatment of their positions. See Flieger “‘There would always be a fairy-tale’: J.R.R. Tolkien and the Folklore Controversy”, as well as Flieger *Interrupted Music* (chapter one).
- 5 Tylor’s impact on folklore studies was notable, providing a theoretic framework in which to catalogue and locate field studies. Now, various survivals could be placed along a continuum of development from early nature anthropomorphisms to more developed pseudo-histories (Dorson 193-201).
- 6 In this debate they were not alone. From the turn of the century until

- the 1940s, British scientists and philosophers took differing positions on the brain's relationship to the human mind or even the possibility of an immaterial soul (Bowler *Reconciling Science and Religion*, 178-187).
- 7 Stanley Jaki observes that Chesterton was more concerned with the way that gradualist developmentalism disturbed the ontological solidity of human nature, especially that of the soul (76-7). His ethical fear followed from a more basic essentialist fear.
 - 8 Barfield in later works, such as *Saving the Appearances* (1957) and *History, Guilt, and Habit* (1979) went on to more clearly define his own position towards evolution, stressing that physical evolution, as an unconscious process, was a necessary postulate to understanding biological development, but that the evolution of human consciousness must be understood as “detachment—emergence from identity with the inner workings of nature, through consciousness, to self-consciousness” (*A Barfield Reader*, 136). See also Hocks (31-33); Smitherman (50-52).
 - 9 Chesterton, of course, would go on famously to insist in *Everlasting Man* that anthropologists could not know what was in the mind of those who painted the cave paintings. Their motives could have been any number of things, including simple amusement (2.162-167).
 - 10 Likewise, Dawson lauded the work of sociologist Frederick Le Play as being closer to the spirit of Darwin than to the social theories of Herbert Spencer. Le Play posited the impact of various environmental conditions on human labor and culture, but he was not needlessly reductive. In his 1965 *The Formation of Christendom*, Dawson points out that an Augustinian view of history in which the City of God and the City of Man are at odds with each “does not necessarily involve an evolutionary theory of religious development,” for historical development is better explained by the tension of these two forces (25). Dawson admits the high probability of “manlike creatures” existing in the pre-Pleistocene period, even that they possessed some limited tool-making ability, but he insists that only once language becomes present, do true *homo sapiens* appear and with language comes rationality from which arises civilization, as well as the spiritual impulse to rise above and master the biological instincts and drives (41-44). This was a position that he had held as early as his 1920 essay “The Nature and Destiny of Man.” This essay can be found in both in Cuthbert, *God and the Supernatural* (chapter 3), as well as Christopher Dawson's *Enquiries into Religion and Culture*.
 - 11 How much Sayce adopted Tylor's view of survivals can be seen in the way he viewed religion as an impulse that explained why such

myths *would survive at all*: “Myths are the traditional relics of the way in which primitive man confounded his own subjective sense of power with the objects which animal needs had led him to consecrate as gods, as well as of the attempts made to explain them when the state of society and knowledge which had produced them was changed. They rested upon the religious instinct, and it was this that saved them from perishing” (334).

- 12 This basic attitude associated with Darwinism had an impact on Norse studies in general, both challenging and reinforcing the basic Victorian sense of superiority (Wawn 136-139). For example, Allen French’s 1905 novelization of George Dasent’s *Burnt Njal* for young readers reworked the Norse myth into a tale of evolutionary superiority and racial fitness (Wawn 164-6).
- 13 Dawson in his 1931 *Christianity and the New Age* rejected Tylor, Durkheim, and Frazer’s attempts at a singular principle. Primitive religion, he observes, is far less unified in its techniques and approaches than modern attempts to engage the sacred powers (30-32).
- 14 There is also something like Tolkien’s theory of sub-creation in Chesterton’s discussion of Robert Louis Stevenson. The personal reveals itself even in the time-tested pattern. “This general atmosphere, and pattern or structure of growth, governs all his creations however varied; and because he can in this sense create a world, he is in this sense a creator; the image of God” (18.53)
- 15 Tolkien was primarily interested in defending the legitimacy of appreciating folk-tales, specifically fairy tales, for their holistic qualities, rather than reducing them to historical data and, therefore, naturalistic process alone, even though as a philologist and Anglo-Saxonist he recognized the value of origination studies. Despite this concession, he charged the anthropological approaches of Lang and Müller with atomizing the tales’ mythic and narrative intents. He observed with bemusement that left to themselves, such approaches could come to strange, forced conclusions, such as grouping together Tertullian with Rapunzel or *The Battle of the Birds* with Medea and Jason (218-219). Chesterton in similar fashion held folklore studies cannot be a science; one must study human beings up close with a subjective sense of common humanity—the primitives are us, if you will, and this requires something more like immersion in their lifeworld (1.115ff.).
- 16 John D. Coates sets this stress of Chesterton’s within the disagreement between Müller’s distaste for embodied myth and Frazer’s ultimate “distrust of story” (147-151). Chesterton observed that

Catholics tended to give lip-service to evolution because, after all, they had high regard for science. Nonetheless, because “no science must be allowed to deny the dignity and liberty of the human soul,” the Christian worldview must always be regarded as superior to any ideology that ran parallel to its own (18.350).

- 17 Obviously, Tolkien was drawn to and yet also distinguished the power of faerie from Chesterton’s *Mooreffoc*. Chesterton’s use of defamiliarization of the day-to-day world in order to reawaken human respect and wonder at it. Barfield in his *Poetic Diction* draws attention to Chesterton’s *Mooreffoc* (174, 177). Also see Alison Milbank’s study of this (38-41).
- 18 Chesterton’s own complex attitude towards modern technology has much to do with his distributist philosophy. For example, he was more concerned with the human control of technology than with technology per se. For him, the main issue was how small machines served individual and small community purposes, rather than machines on a large capitalist scale controlling the options of workers (5.145-58). Barfield’s most sustained reflection on this issue occurs rather late in his life in his novella *Night Operation*, a reworking of Plato’s analogy of the cave as a dystopian future in which a post-terrorist society must return above ground to experience education and the light.
- 19 Nor were they alone in this interaction. C.S. Lewis manifests many of the same characteristics. In his *The Problem of Pain* he recasts the Christian doctrine of the fall of humanity in terms of evolutionary development and cultural tragedy. Primitive humanity, “Paradise man” existed for a time without temptation in a priestly condition only to lose it a psychologically damaged state (73-85). Likewise, in his essay, “Is Theology Poetry?” Lewis paints a broadly H.G. Wells-tinged picture of evolution as the counter-myth which the real myth of the Incarnation counters in history (79-84).
- 20 See, for example, Steiner’s “Human Evolution and the Christ Principle” (1908). Among other things, Steiner felt that the coming of Christ brought to human consciousness an essential of individualism and identity (170-172, 225-226).
- 21 His discussion of this in *Saving the Appearances* is particularly instructive. He felt that with the rise of evolutionary theories in the nineteenth-century, there should have been a parallel trust in the Incarnation as “the culminating point of the history of the earth—a turning-point of time to which all at first led down and from which all thereafter was to lead upward” (*History of English Words*, 168).

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Tolkien's Goldberry and *The Maid of the Moor*

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Tom Bombadil remains one of J.R.R. Tolkien's most mysterious characters. Clearly an example of the *genius loci*, he is master of his domain but not its owner, eldest among all living things before the river and the trees: "Tom remembers the first raindrop and the first acorn" (*FR*, I, vii, 142). But equally mysterious is Tom's consort Goldberry, the River-daughter. Hesser provides the prevailing view of Goldberry as an elemental figure of the woodlands as well as nurturing female companion of hearth and home. This paper proposes that Tolkien developed this character in some measure from a folkloric reading of the enigmatic late-medieval lyric *The Maid of the Moor*, which he knew thoroughly as a scholar of Middle English literature at Oxford.

Tom Bombadil has his origins in a colorfully dressed, wood-peg "Dutch" doll that belonged to young Michael Tolkien, was stuffed down the lavatory by John Tolkien, and was turned into the subject of the poem *The Adventures of Tom Bombadil* which their father published in the *Oxford Magazine* in 1934 (Scull and Hammond 2:23-25).¹ The character became fixed in Tolkien's imagination as he explained to his publisher Stanley Unwin in 1937 when discussing a sequel to *The Hobbit*: "Do you think Tom Bombadil, the spirit of the (vanishing) Oxford and Berkshire countryside, could be made into the hero of a story?" (Carpenter 165; see Hammond and Scull 127-28). A visit to his peaceful homestead by Frodo and the other three hobbits formed part of the earliest drafts of *The Lord of the Rings*: "Tom Bombadil is an 'aborigine'—he knew the land before men, before hobbits, before barrow-wights, yes before the necromancer—before the elves came to this quarter of the world" (*Shadow* 117; see also 115-16). In a letter from 1954, Tolkien clarified his thinking about this figure: "the spirit that desires knowledge of other things, their history and nature, *because they are 'other'* and wholly independent of the enquiring mind, a spirit coeval with the rational mind, and entirely unconcerned with 'doing' anything with the knowledge" (*Letters* 192).²

Tom's consort Goldberry also appeared in the original 1934 version of *The Adventures of Tom Bombadil*. She emerges from the river where Tom has been sitting and grabs him by his beard, much like a nixie or water-sprite pulling her victim into the water to drown:

There his beard dangled long down into the water:
Up came Goldberry, the River-woman's daughter,
Pulled Tom's hanging hair. In he went a-wallowing
Under the water-lilies, bubbling and a-swallowing. . .

“You bring it back again, there’s a pretty maiden!”
Said Tom Bombadil. “I do not care for wading!
Go down! Sleep again where the pools are shady
Far below willow-roots, little water-lady!” (*Tolkien Reader* 11).³

Already Goldberry the River-woman’s daughter possesses her essential features as an aquatic spirit associated with water-lilies and accustomed to sleeping among the shady pools, never displaying any of the warrior-maiden traits found in Tolkien’s other female characters. After being taken from the river and domesticated, she resembles more the royal hostess serving food and drink in *Beowulf*, and even Galadriel as a figure of domestic harmony with her consort Celeborn (Donovan 110; see also Startzman). In the earliest drafts of *The Return of the Shadow*, Tom explains his mission to the Old Forest “for some white water-lilies for Goldberry (my wife).” In these preliminary sketches Tolkien jotted down the basic connection between the woman and the flower: “Water-lily motive—last lilies of summer for Goldberry” and again “Description of Goldberry, with her hair as yellow as the flag-lilies” (*Shadow* 117).⁴

In the published version of *Fellowship of the Ring*, the first mention of Goldberry occurs in “The Old Forest” when Tom comes to the rescue of Merry and Pippin by singing his spell of enchantment:

*Down along under Hill, shining in the sunlight,
Waiting on the doorstep for the cold starlight,
There my pretty lady is, River-woman’s daughter,
Slender as a willow-wand, clearer than the water.
Old Tom Bombadil water-lilies bringing
Comes hopping home again. Can you hear him singing?
Hey! Come merry dol! derry dol! and merry-o,
Goldberry, Goldberry, merry yellow berry-o.* (*FR*, I, vi, 130)

Tom sets down his lilies before giving assistance and, after the rescue, he hurries his guests home with some urgency because Goldberry is waiting (*FR*, I, vi, 132). The river itself seems to extend a greeting as they approach and hear “another clear voice, as young and as ancient as Spring, like the song of a glad water flowing down into the night” with a song of welcome that ends: “*Reeds by the shady pool, lilies on the water; / Old Tom Bombadil and the River-daughter!*” (*FR*, I, vi, 133).

The chapter “In the House of Tom Bombadil” begins with an emblematic portrait of Goldberry surrounded by water lilies as if in a pool:

Her long yellow hair rippled down her shoulders; her gown was green, green as young reeds, shot with silver like beads of dew; and her belt was gold, shaped like a chain of

flag-lilies set with the pale-blue eyes of forget-me-nots. About her feet in wide vessels of green and brown earthenware, white water-lilies were floating, so that she seemed to be enthroned in the midst of a pool. (*FR*, I, vii, 134)

Though milk forms part of their dairy menu, Goldberry serves the four hobbits chilled water with their meal: “The drink in their drinking-bowls seemed to be clear cold water” (*FR*, I, vii, 136). Even in this domestic setting, Goldberry retains her native elements of lilies and pools of the river: “her gown rustled softly like the wind in the flowering borders of a river” (*FR*, I, vii, 134). Over supper, Tom explains his errand to the Withywindle for gathering water-lilies in the same place where he had first found his wife: “*By that pool long ago I found the River-daughter, / Fair young Goldberry sitting in the rushes*” (*FR*, I, vii, 137). And when they awaken the next morning with rain outdoors, the hobbits hear Goldberry singing about her autumn cleaning with imagery affirming her identity as a river-spirit: “the song was a rain-song, as sweet as showers on dry hills, that told the tale of a river from the spring in the highlands to the Sea far below” (*FR*, I, vii, 140). Frodo’s last glimpse of Goldberry sees her as a dancing water-sprite: “A light like the glint of water on dewy grass flashed from under her feet as she danced” (*FR*, I, vii, 146).

What were the sources of inspiration for this figure? As a fantasy writer, Tolkien often started with an authentic medieval text with “deep roots” reaching far back into England’s remote prehistory. This quality had drawn him to *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*: “For it belongs to that literary kind which has deep roots in the past, deeper even than its author was aware” (*MC* 72). Fiction-writing meant casting his scholarly imagination beyond ancient texts like *Beowulf* to discover behind a literary character like Grendel a far more ancient, forgotten character such as Gollum. Like Proto-Indo-European vocabulary, these lost myths represented what Tom Shippey has termed the “asterisk-reality” Tolkien inherited from Grimm’s *Deutsche Mythologie* (“Revolution Reconsidered” 26). In a classic example of creating a character out of some cryptic reference to expose the suppressed myth, Tolkien seized upon the puzzling two lines from the Old English poem *Christ I* sometimes attributed to Cynewulf—*Eala Earendel, engla beorhtast, / Ofer middeneard monnum sended* (“Hail Earendel, brightest of angels, / Sent to mankind over Middle-earth”)—and created, or in his mind retrieved from oblivion, the heroic figure of Eärendil with the bright Silmaril sailing in his sky-ship over Middle-earth. This invented tale had formed the subject of his early mythological poem *The Voyage of Eärendil* written in September 1914, revised some five times over the years, and inserted as Bilbo’s song in *Fellowship of the Ring* (*FR*, II, i, 246-49).⁵

If my sense is correct, a source for Goldberry lies in another deep-rooted text, the mysterious lyric surviving haphazardly in a single fourteenth-century manuscript and given the modern title *The Maid of the Moor* (my translation at right):

Maiden in the mor lay,	A maiden in the marsh lay,
In the mor lay,	In the marsh lay,
Seuenyst fulle, seuenist fulle,	Seven nights full, seven nights full,
Maiden in the mor lay,	A maiden in the marsh lay,
In the mor lay,	In the marsh lay,
Seuenistes full ant a day.	Seven nights full and a day.
Welle was hir mete;	Well was her meal;
Wat was hire mete?	What was her meal?
þe primrole ant the –	The primrose and the –
þe primerole ant the –	The primrose and the –
Welle was hire mete;	Well was her meal;
Wat was hire mete?	What was her meal?
þe primerole ant the violet.	The primrose and the violet.
Welle was hire dryng;	Well was her drink;
Wat was hire dryng?	What was her drink?
þe chelde water of þe welle-spring.	The chilled water of the well-spring.
Welle was hire bour;	Well was her home;
Wat was hire bour?	What was her home?
þe red rose and te lilie flour.	The red rose and the lily-flower. ⁶

Critics often take a leap of faith when claiming that Tolkien *must* have known such-and-such literary work, but in this case we are certain that Tolkien did know this lyric very well. The poem was included in the 1921 volume *Fourteenth Century Verse & Prose* edited by Kenneth Sisam and used as an Oxford teaching text throughout the twentieth century. Sisam had already played an important role in Tolkien's life, serving as his first tutor when he switched from Classics to English in 1913. Having come to Oxford as a Rhodes Scholar in 1910, the young New Zealander made sure that his student had a firm command of the demanding syllabus, and it was under his supervision that Tolkien began pondering the Anglo-Saxon lines about Earendel. After the Great War, when Tolkien returned to Oxford as a lexicographer with the *Oxford English Dictionary*, Oxford University Press shrewdly recruited him to compile the all-important glossary for Sisam's student edition (Scull and Hammond 1:108).

Delayed partly by the question of normalizing spellings, partly by his ambitions for its size and elaborateness, and partly by domestic and professional distractions, Tolkien was tardy in delivering his glossary for the first edition of Sisam's anthology in 1921, so the word list was

printed separately as his first major scholarly publication: J.R.R. Tolkien, *A Middle English Vocabulary Designed for Use with Sisam's "Fourteenth Century Verse & Prose."* The glossary then appeared in the reprint of Sisam's edition later in 1922.⁷ Nonetheless his acceptance of this commission proved fateful, since the project forced him to study word by word the fourteenth-century masterpieces that he would later teach, edit, and translate: *Sir Orfeo*, *Pearl*, and particularly *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*.⁸ For our present purposes, Tolkien's work on *Fourteenth Century Verse & Prose* made him familiar on an intimate basis with the anonymous lyric which Sisam entitled *The Maid of the Moor*.

Though Sisam's edition included little commentary on this puzzling poem, one can easily imagine that Tolkien began feeling the challenge of its deep-rooted description of the Maiden much as he had with Earendel. "I felt a curious thrill," he would write about discovering the Anglo-Saxon poem, "as if something had stirred in me, half wakened from sleep. There was something very remote and strange and beautiful behind those words, if I could grasp it, far beyond ancient English" (Carpenter 72; *Letters* 385-87). Investigations by Grimm, Skeat and Chambers into ways the name Beowulf derived from "bee-wolf," both warrior and bear, had helped inspire Tolkien's skin-changing Beorn in *The Hobbit*—called by Shippey "the least invented character in the book" (*Road to Middle-Earth* 80)⁹—and a similar folkloric understanding of the Maiden of the Moor, I suspect, underlies his creation of Goldberry.

The shared features jump off the page. The Maiden lies in the marsh just as Goldberry lies among rushes beside a pool where Tom Bombadil found her.¹⁰ The Maiden drinks chilled water just as Goldberry serves her guests clear cold water. And the Maiden surrounds herself with lily-flowers, the final words of the poem "te lilie flour" explaining her natural dwelling-place, just as Goldberry loves the lilies of her native habitat so deeply that her husband devotes great effort to gathering them for her. The medieval lyric sounds like a dance-song—"men of Chaucer's century," said Sisam, "danced through *The Maid of the Moor*"¹¹—and therefore Goldberry dances constantly with her husband about the house: "they seemed to weave a single dance, neither hindering the other, in and out of the room, and round the table" (*FR*, I, vii, 143).

What would Tolkien have known about this poem from the published scholarship? First printed as a "minstrel-song" only in 1907 (Heuser), *The Maid of the Moor* did not attract much critical comment during the first half of the twentieth century.¹² Only later did some critics interpret the Maiden's lilies as an iconographic image identifying her as the Virgin Mary,¹³ but there was medieval testimony to the contrary. The Franciscan Richard de Ledrede, Bishop of Ossory in Ireland from 1317 to 1360, composed a Latin hymn to the Virgin Mary meant as a replacement,

sung to the same melody, so that cathedral priests and clerks would not have their mouths “polluted” by singing something so lewd, boisterous, and secular as “Mayde yn the moore lay.”¹⁴ Clearly the bishop did not see the Maiden as a figure of the Blessed Virgin. John Burrow has noted the challenge of saying anything definite about “poems without contexts” such as those in Oxford’s Rawlinson manuscript,¹⁵ and Tolkien’s aversion to allegorical readings would have inclined him to the simpler, more literal notion of some uncanny creature such as an Elf, Ent, or Wose. My point here is not to critique the various interpretations of the lyric, all of them later than the invention of Goldberry, but to suggest the one which Tolkien would have found most intriguing.

In a move away from Christianizing allegory, John Speirs described the child-like qualities of the poem and connected it with “well wakes” as continuations of pre-Christian worship connected with Midsummer festivals. Here the Maiden becomes the fairy spirit of the well-spring (Speirs 63). Interpreting a second medieval allusion in a sermon from the Worcester Cathedral Library, Siegfried Wenzel concludes that a fourteenth-century preacher “took the entire lyric to be about man’s primitive state,” based on descriptions of the Golden Age by Ovid and Boethius, and the Maiden herself “a figure of medieval folk-belief, perhaps some woodland or water sprite or *fée*”¹⁶—a figure, that is, much like Goldberry closely identified with these primal elements.

The most extensive folkloric interpretation of the Maiden comes in Peter Dronke’s *The Medieval Lyric* in a section on “Dance-Songs” (195-96):

What is a moor-maiden? She is a kind of water-sprite living in the moors; she appears in a number of German legends, especially from Franconia. It is appropriate that the English song should be a dance-song, as one of the commonest legends associates the moor-maiden with a dance. She tends to appear at village dances in the guise of a beautiful human girl, and to fascinate young men there, but she must always return to the moor at a fixed hour, or else she dies. Sometimes it is only for one hour in a week that she is allowed to leave the moor and mingle with human beings—this perhaps is also why in the song she waits in the moor ‘sevenistes fulle ant a day’. Like other water-sprites, a moor-maiden may be linked with a particular well-spring; in two German folk-songs such a well-maiden gives the children who come to the spring flowers ‘to make them sleep’ . . . In the English song, however, the well and the flowers evoke the moor-maiden’s more-than-earthly serenity and well-being: she has none of the cares and needs that mortals have.¹⁷

Dronke had received a traveling fellowship from New Zealand to study at Oxford in 1955 prior to Tolkien's retirement as Merton Professor of Language and Literature. His wife Ursula Brown Dronke had Tolkien as an examiner of her B.Litt. thesis, she later published her edition of *Borgils saga ok Hafliða* in a series overseen by Tolkien, and she contributed to the memorial volume *J.R.R. Tolkien, Scholar and Storyteller* (Scull and Hammond 1:346, 2:728). Peter Dronke's folkloric reading of *The Maid of the Moor* grew from this common medievalist culture, and his research into moor-maidens started with *Moorjungfern* in Bächtold-Stäubli's multi-volume dictionary of German superstitions available on the open shelves of Bodleian Library by the mid-1930s when Tolkien researched his lecture *On Fairy-Stories* and began drafting *The Lord of the Rings*.¹⁸ Dronke's point about the moor-maid needing to return to her native element, for example, obviously accounts for Goldberry's need to be surrounded by her native lilies transported by Tom from the Withywindle so that she seemed enthroned in the middle of a pool (*FR*, I, vii, 134).

Dronke's research drew mostly upon Continental sources because native lore preserved fewer instances of river-spirits as beautiful, seductive women like the nixies of Germanic legends. Celtic and other early European mythologies suggest that Goldberry's name preserved some recollection with the sacred mistletoe, called "gold-berried" and discussed extensively in Frazer's *The Golden Bough*, especially "Balder and the Mistletoe" (671-79), although Tolkien pursued instead her connection with the lilies as in *Maid of the Moor*. In the British folktales that do survive, typically a mortal woman is transformed into a water-spirit, as in the story of Sabrina recounted by Geoffrey of Monmouth and included by John Milton in *Comus* (841-42): "And underwent a quick immortal change / Made Goddess of the river" (Westwood and Simpson 294).¹⁹ Milton's Sabrina represents a notable intermediary between the Maiden of the Moor and Goldberry since she shares the same fair hair, love of singing and dancing, and affection for lilies:

Sabrina fair,
 Listen where thou art sitting
Under the glassy, cool, translucent wave,
 In twisted braids of lilies knitting (*Comus* 859-62)

More ancient and more deadly were the mermaids who lurked underwater to seize their victims. The term *mere-wif* for Grendel's mother in *Beowulf* (1519) suggests this sort of female monster, and if Goldberry was the River-woman's daughter, one wonders whether the mysterious River-woman herself might have belonged to the category of "mere-wife." Legends of freshwater mermaids or water-carlines remained widespread in nineteenth-century England, such as the water-hags Jenny Greenteeth in

Lancashire and Peg Powler in the River Tees, both mentioned by Chambers in 1921 (Chambers 307; Cardew 204). These water-hags served as bugbears to frighten children away from ponds and rivers:

Play not, my dear boys, near the pond in the meadow,
The mermaid is waiting to pull you beneath;
Climb not for bird's nest, the bough it may sliver,
And the mermaid will drag you to darkness and death.²⁰

One can only wonder whether the boy Tolkien was warned about these water-hags when he played along the River Cole and climbed the willow that overhung the mill pond at Sarehole (Scull and Hammond 1:4, 2:873-75). Adults were also warned not to try saving children from the clutches of these water-hags. Tolkien's predecessor at Leeds, significantly named Frederick Moorman, drowned while trying to save a child from the River Skifare in the Yorkshire Dales (Cardew 205).

Originally Tolkien imagined Goldberry as this sort of water-maiden intent upon pulling Tom Bombadil into her river just as Michael Tolkien's doll narrowly escaped being flushed down the toilet, and Michael himself, after stumbling over a willow root, almost drown in the Cherwell before being rescued by his father (Scull, "Tom Bombadil," 76; Scull and Hammond 1:137).²¹ But Tolkien had a gallant, almost chivalrous attitude toward females and betrayed this blind-spot when omitting Grendel's mother as the third monster in *Beowulf*,²² indeed populating Middle-earth with few female monsters besides Shelob—no female Orcs, Trolls, or Uruk-hai warriors—and consequently he transformed Goldberry from the potentially deadly foe in *The Adventures of Tom Bombadil* into a beautiful, pliant domestic companion in *Fellowship of the Ring*. She thus comes closer to E. Talbot Donaldson's non-allegorical reading of *Maid of the Moor* as an encounter with the primal forces of nature: "the Middle English lyric suggests the mystery by which these forces are, at times, transmuted into something more humane, even benevolent, by their guardianship of the innocent maiden" (37).

Goldberry shares two other salient features with Dronke's moor-maid, first her more-than-earthly serenity and gentle sense of well-being—"For nothing passes door and window here save moonlight and starlight and the wind off the hill-top" (*FR*, I, vii, 136)—and then her influence over the slumber of her child-like guests, particularly the dreams of the four hobbits. Pippin has a nightmare about Old Man Willow tapping at the window, Merry has a bad dream about being engulfed by water, Sam sleeps like a log, and Frodo has an extended dream-vision in which he sees Gandalf stranded on the top of a tower before being rescued by an eagle (*FR*, I, vii, 138-39).²³ But her powers end here. Unlike other water-sprites, Goldberry has lost her freedom to Tom Bombadil. The

earliest 1934 version from the *Oxford Magazine* told how he forced her back to his house for their wedding-night, and the next morning Goldberry was found docilely combing her yellow hair while Tom chopped willow-wood.²⁴

By way of conclusion, I should identify myself as a specialist on Chaucer, Langland and the *Gawain* Poet and little more than a novice among true Tolkien experts. But as a student of medieval literature and one-time member at Merton College, Oxford, arriving as a Rhodes Scholar the month after Professor Tolkien died in 1973, I wanted to contribute something to our understanding of the author's habitual practice of working through early English texts to trace their "deep roots" back to some hypothetical prehistory. Originally delivered as a lecture in 1939, his essay *On Fairy-Stories* launched an assault upon a century of British folklore studies 1813-1914, objecting to the ways folklorists dismantled stories into data usable for comparative studies or condescended to the primitiveness of these tales as savage survivals (Flieger; see Scull and Hammond 2:683-89). Investigating how *Maid of the Moor* along with stories of other Germanic water-sprites and British mermaids inspired the creation of Goldberry enhances, I hope, the sense of "arresting strangeness" which Tolkien worried these other folkloric approaches spoiled.²⁵

When studied during his work on the glossary for Sisam's anthology, *The Maid of the Moor* would have represented for Tolkien an early instance of the "soup" made from the "bones" of even earlier tales of moormaids, water-hags, and freshwater mermaids still recollected as local legends by those who lived near northern England's streams and rivers.²⁶ At the flashpoint between philology and fantasy, Tolkien created Goldberry as one of his *asterisk-characters* filling the blank space prior to the Middle Ages and recovering from anonymous literary survivals, themselves already ancient by the twentieth century, the suppressed myth of a figure like Eärendil the Mariner. I have stopped short of claiming that Tolkien worked with the same self-consciousness when conjuring Goldberry into being, although with his hostility to biographical readings, he would have preferred that we approach *The Lord of the Rings* as a latter-day example of works like *Gawain* possessing deep-roots, "deeper even than its author was aware" (MC 72). In a letter from 1972 Tolkien hoped that academic source-hunters would consider the particular use of these older materials as I have attempted with Goldberry, even materials "unconsciously remembered" by the author as perhaps the case with *The Maid of the Moor* (Letters 418).

NOTES

- 1 *Leaves from the Tree* ends with this trio of papers: Scull traces the evolution of Tom Bombadil; Noad surveys disparate interpretations; and

Reynolds explains what a Dutch doll was.

- 2 In the same year, Tolkien's Letter 144 (178-79) explained Tom Bombadil as an embodiment of "a natural pacifist view, which always arises in the mind when there is a war"—as a reminder that the author was composing and rewriting these early sections about Tom and Goldberry during some of the darkest days of World War II.
- 3 This version is substantially the same as the original 1934 text reprinted by Hammond and Scull (124-27).
- 4 In his *Letters* the author continued to associate her with the last lilies of summer: "Goldberry represents the actual seasonal changes in such lands" (272).
- 5 Shippey, *Road to Middle-Earth* ("Eärendil: A Lyric Core," 244-47) and Scull and Hammond (1:54, 1:57-58, 2:233-34, 2:1078-79).
- 6 Sisam 167 prints from Oxford's Bodleian MS Rawlinson D.913. Copied as abbreviated prose in the manuscript, the lyric requires editorial expansion as well as division into lines and stanzas; see Duncan. I translate *mor* as "marsh" according to Kurath and Kuhn, Part M.6, 667, where *mōr* is defined as "marshland, bog, fen, swamp."
- 7 Tolkien's "A Middle English Vocabulary," though unpaginated, occupies fully the final third of Sisam's *Fourteenth Century Verse & Prose*. See Scull and Hammond (1:108-19 and 2:586-89).
- 8 Carpenter (71-72, 111-12, 115 and 144) traces the author's complicated relationship with Sisam. See also Anderson (16-17) and Scull and Hammond (2:935-36).
- 9 Tolkien's "On Fairy-Stories" (1939) mentions "the turning of the bear-boy in the knight Beowulf," (*MC* 127) and "On Translating *Beowulf*" (1940) describes as archaic the poet's use of *beorn* for "warrior" and "bear" (*MC* 54). Orchard is more skeptical of Skeat (121) and Chambers (365-81). Tolkien knew Chambers' book well because he agreed to review it in 1922 for *TLS*, made several pages of notes, but never completed the assignment; see Scull and Hammond (1:119).
- 10 Middle English *mor* is better translated with the *Oxford English Dictionary*'s second definition of "marsh" instead of "tract of unenclosed waste ground." Chambers made a similar argument for *mōr* in *Beowulf* (304-11); see also Cardew (199).
- 11 Sisam makes this passing reference, speculating also the song was "scribbled with some others from a minstrel's stock" (xxxvii-xxxviii).
- 12 A different Rawlinson lyric "Icham of Irlaunde" did attract another

major twentieth-century author, William Butler Yeats, who expanded the verse as “I Am of Ireland” (1932) among his Crazy Jane poems of *The Winding Stair and Other Poems*.

- 13 “The maiden drank the cool water of God’s grace, and her bower consisted of the roses of martyrdom or charity and the lilies of purity with which late medieval and early Renaissance artists sometimes adorned pictures of the Blessed Virgin Mary” (Robertson 17-18); see also Harris.
- 14 “ne pollutantur cantilenis teatralibus, turpibus et secularibus” (Greene 1974, iv); see also Greene (1952, 504-06); the complete text of the Latin hymn can be used to reconstruct the original Middle English lyric.
- 15 Burrow proposes that the Rawlinson collection’s other texts do provide a context for reading the lyric as another *karole* or “song for dancing” mostly concerned with food, drink, and love (19).
- 16 Wenzel dates the sermon collection from around 1360 (73-74).
- 17 In private correspondence, Professor Dronke does not remember hearing Tolkien ever discuss *Maid of the Moor* and only recalls seeing much of Tolkien after he retired and Dronke himself was a Junior Research Fellow at Merton College.
- 18 “Moorjungfern heissen in einer Variante der Sage vom Tanze der Nixen mit Menschen die in einem Moor wohnenden Wasserfrauen” (Bächtold-Stäubli 6:566). *Moor* in German means unambiguously bog, fen, or swamp. Tolkien sometimes affected disdain for secondary scholarship, but did read widely in German as well as English, as evidenced by his “Philology” contributions to *Year’s Work in English Studies* during the 1920s; see Scull and Hammond (2:1133-34).
- 19 Scull and Hammond record that in February 1940 Tolkien attended a lecture by Charles Williams on Milton’s *Comus* (1:237).
- 20 This 1864 verse is quoted by Westwood and Simpson in “Freshwater Mermaids” (696-97).
- 21 Oxford’s Cherwell likely inspired the *Withywindle*; see Scull and Hammond (2:632).
- 22 Tolkien’s omission is addressed by Chance’s “The Structural Unity of *Beowulf*.”
- 23 Merry’s sensation of drowning—“He felt that he was lying in a soft slimy bog” (*FR*, I, vii 139)—comes close to echoing “Maiden in the mor lay” with the sense of *mor* as “bog.”

- 24 See Shippey on the capture and domestication of Goldberry (*Road to Middle-Earth*, 105-07); for the 1934 text, see Hammond and Scull (127).
- 25 “The nearer the so-called ‘nature-myth’, or allegory of the large processes of nature, is to its supposed archetype, the less interesting it is.” (MC 139, also 123).
- 26 “By ‘soup’ I mean the story as it is served up by its author or teller, and by ‘the bones’ its sources or material—even when (by rare luck) those can be with certainty discovered” (MC 120).

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Language in Tolkien's "Bagme Bloma"

LUCAS ANNEAR

Wulfila's fourth century translation from Greek of the New Testament is the most significant source of the East Germanic language Gothic. The antiquity of Gothic makes it a Germanic language that is inevitably archaic in many regards, and it has thus been immensely helpful in the understanding of Germanic and Indo-European linguistics. Tolkien, a specialist in the old Germanic languages—teaching courses such as Old English, Old Icelandic, the history of English, and of course, Gothic (*Letters* 12)—said remarkably little about this language aside from comments regarding its appeal to him. Considering the importance of Gothic to his studies and to the field in general, we are left wondering what opinions Tolkien held about the language and how it might have tied in to his writings. We also wonder where to find out what opinions he did have. It turns out that what he has left us with regarding Gothic is a few names, paragraphs, and stanzas of creative Gothic,¹ the most substantial of which is an alliterative verse poem entitled "Bagme Bloma." Though this is not much, we might say that Tolkien was continuing the East Germanic tradition of little attestation.

While he did not publish scholarship dealing exclusively with the Gothic language, his comments about the language and what he has done with it creatively can prove enlightening. The first purpose of this paper therefore is to look at the language of "Bagme Bloma" in order to consider the sorts of assumptions and proposals that Tolkien was making about Gothic. There are many aspects to the language that Tolkien could have taken stances on: morphology, phonology, syntax, etc. (Gothic syntax is particularly debatable since it nearly always corresponds to biblical Greek word order [Bennett 26]). Many of the apparent assumptions seem to point towards how Tolkien thought Gothic probably was, without radically contradicting what is attested. The second purpose of the paper is to form a clearer picture of how "Bagme Bloma" stands in relation to his other works, poems and prose. Although the Gothic corpus had a rich vocabulary, it was far from complete. This encouraged Tolkien to undertake the activity of reconstruction; recreating, by comparison with other Germanic languages, what some words in Gothic might have looked like had they been attested. Studying the words he chose to reconstruct and in what contexts he uses their cognates elsewhere shows that not only is there agreement in their usage, but that it can give us a clearer picture of the poem, "Bagme Bloma," itself. The third and final purpose is to place the entire discussion into the context of Tolkien's comments on relevant subjects, emphasizing the above-all importance of Language.

Tolkien uses reconstruction liberally, which is understandable, given the chosen language and that it is a poem from the collection of *Songs for the Philologists* (printed privately in the English Department at University College, London, in 1936; most of the original copies were destroyed in a fire²). One of the distinctive features of the collection is its code-switching (Latin to Danish; Swedish to Icelandic; Old English to Scots to a relatively uninflected variety of Gothic, for example), reminiscent of medieval Macaronic literature, which is known for blending languages at various levels: word, phrase, clause and sentence. One of the many reasons this code-switching is done is for comic effect, using vernacular words amidst a Latin text, applying Latin morphology to foreign words, or even “debas[ing]” the Latin itself, for example (Wenzel 3). Codeswitching is also used for this effect in *Songs for the Philologists*, a group of poems clearly meant to be as entertaining as they are informative. A glance over some of the other poems will show that “Bagme Bloma,” however, is an exception in some regards, namely tone, but certainly not regarding linguistic limitations. The translation provided is intended first and foremost to aid in understanding what is what in the original³:

Brunaim bairiþ Bairka bogum
laubans liubans liudandei,
gilwagroni, glitmunjandei,
bagme bloma, blauandei,
fagrafahsa, lipulinþi,
frauininondei fairguni.

The Birch bears on shining boughs
dear leaves sprouting out,
yellow-green, glittering,
the flower of the trees, blossoming,
fair-faxed, limb-lithe,
ruling the mountain.

Wopjand windos, wagjand lindos,
lutip limam laikandei;
slaihta, raihta, hweitarinda,
razda rodeip reirandei,
bandwa bairhta, runa goda,
þiuda meina þiupjandei.

Winds cry out, branches shake,
(but) it bends its limbs playing;
smooth, straight, and white-barked,
speech it speaks trembling,
a bright sign, a good mystery,
blessing my people.

Andanahti milhmam neipiþ,
liuhteip liuhmam lauhmuni;
laubos liubai fliugand lausai,
tulgus, triggwa, standandei
Bairka baza beidiþ blaika
frauininondei fairguni.

Dusk comes darkening with clouds,
lighteth with flames the lightning;
dear leaves fly loose,
firm, safe, standing
pale, the bare Birch bides
ruling the mountain.

There are 54 separate stems in the poem (if ‘andanahti’ is treated as only one stem) and 17 are reconstructions. As usual reconstructions are preceded by an asterisk(*) to show that they are hypothesized forms. These reconstructions are:

*brunaim (*bruns), *bairka (feminine o-stem), *bogum (*bogus, masc. u-stem), *gilwa, *groni, *blauandei (*blauan),

*fahs, *linþi, *lindos (*linda, fem. o-stem), *lutip (*lutan, class II strong verb), *limam (*lim, neut. a-stem), *rinda (fem. o-stem), *neipip (*neipan, class I strong verb), *liuhmam (*liuhma, masc. an-stem), *fliugand (*fliugan, II strong), *baza, and *blaika.

Tolkien also uses a few forms that he has corrected from their manuscript attestations such as: *lauhmuni* for *lauhmoni* (Luke 17:24, cited in Lehmann as *lauhmuni* as well, but Lehmann notes that MS has *lauhmoni* (Lehmann 288)), and *liuhþeiþ* "shines" as opposed to the attested *liuteiþ* (although there is attested *galuhteip*) in Mathew 5:15.⁴

At first it would seem that one of the boldest linguistic propositions in the poem is Tolkien's use of **fliugan(d)*, an issue that requires a little background information. Gothic is famous for its attestations of initial clusters of *þl*, which are found as *fl* in all other cognates. Such clusters occur in words related to our modern English words *flee*, *fly*, and *flood*. Very often this cluster is attested in Gothic as *þl*, while all other Germanic languages have *fl*. But if further considered, Tolkien's use of *fl* instead of *þl* may not be that bold. **fliugan* agrees with Lehmann's proposition that *fl* was realized as *þl* in the presence of *h*, thus *þliuhan* but *flautjan* (Lehmann 363). This proposition, however, leaves one form in the Gothic corpus unaccounted for, *flahta* (braid, plait) as noted by Salmons and Iverson (88). Regardless, **fliugan* was the logical reconstruction based on attestations (*þl* only occurs in the presence of *h* [x]).

Some reconstructed compound forms require a sort of two-tiered reconstruction: **lipulinþi*, **fagrafahsa* and **hweitarinda* ("limb-lithe", "fair-faxed" and "white-rinded" or "white-barked"). In this case Tolkien is using compounds (the latter two with nominal second elements) as an adjectival whole, similarly to English. Creating these compounds involves first reconstructing the nouns (**fahs* and **rinda*), and then declining them like an adjective. Before **fahs* or **rinda* can be declined as an adjective though, they must first have their gender "erased". The correct form is then fairly easy to derive by declining the adjective according to the gender of the noun that it agrees with, in this case feminine, and to stem class (inherent to the adjective). **fahs* and **rinda* are declined according to the "standard" strong adjective paradigm, and **linþi* to the paradigm similar to the noun *bandi*, "band, bond". So **fagrafahsa* is the nominative singular feminine strong form of **fagrafahs*, although **fahs*, "hair", is itself neuter gender.

One possible grammatically ambiguous reading is found in the second stanza "razda rodeip reirandei," "speech it speaks trembling." Either "[the Birch] trembles as it speaks the language," or "the language speaks trembling." In this case the feminine o-stem forms for nominative and

accusative singular are identical. *Razda*, meaning “language, speech” could therefore be either the subject or the object. However, the intuitive reading is that *razda* is the object of the implied feminine subject *bairka*, which all other adjectives in the third and fourth lines agree with. Later I will show other evidence that would suggest the Birch’s possession of language.

The syntax of splitting a Noun Phrase (NP) with a Verb Phrase (VP), at first bewildering to modern readers, happens with some regularity (especially in poetry) in Gothic as well as Old English and Old Norse. This splitting occurs in the very first line, which begins with a dative adjective, followed by verb, subject, and then the dative object that it modifies. So compare that sentence

- <i>Brunaim</i>	bairiþ	Bairka	<i>bogum</i>
“shining-dat.-pl.-masc.-str.	bears -3rd-sg-pres-indic	Birch	boughs-dat.-pl.-masc.-u-stem”

Literally “(on) shining bears the Birch (on) boughs”,

“on shining boughs the Birch bears...”, with

- <i>razdom</i>	rodjand	<i>nijaim</i>
“languages-dat.-pl.-fem.-o-stem	speak-3 rd -pl.-indic.	new-dat.-pl.-fem.-str.”

Literally: “(with) languages they shall speak new...”

“They shall speak with new languages...” from Mark 16:17⁵, and also

- <i>Iesu</i>	sokeiþ	<i>Nazoraiu</i>	þana	ushramidan...
“Jesus-acc.-sg.	seek-2 nd -pl.-pres.-indic.	Nazarene acc.-sg.	acc.-sg.-dem.	crucified-acc.-sg.-masc.-wk.”

Literally: “Jesus you seek Nazarene the crucified...”

“You seek Jesus (the) Nazarene the crucified (one)...” from Mark 16:6. The NP is split by the verb in all three situations, the difference in Tolkien’s, the first example, is that the adjective precedes the noun. The first line of the poem is also the only instance in the poem where a modifier precedes what it modifies. Adjectives in Gothic typically follow the noun that they modify. NP splitting, though, also occurs in Old Icelandic;

- <i>goðan</i>	eigum	vér	<i>konung</i>
“good-acc.-sg.-str.	have-1 st -pl.-pres.-indic.	1 st -pl.-pron.	King-acc.-sg.”

Literally: “good own we king.”

“We have a good king” (*Heimskringla* 464), where in this case it is also, as in “Bagma Bloma,” the adjective that is the first half of the split.

Tolkien would seemingly go against the claim by Krause and Slocum that Gothic is largely an object-verb (OV) language in unemphatic

statements (UTexas Gothic Online). There are five accusative objects in the poem, three of them follow the verb (verb-object, or VO), and two of them precede the verb (OV). In the three instances of VO, the object is the object of participles:

- *fraujinondei fairguni* (found twice as the final lines of the first and third stanzas)

and 3rd indic. sg. conjugation:

- *bairiþ* Bairka bogum / *laubans*

Possibly the most important fact here is that both of the OV occurrences are for the sake of rhyme: “þiuda meina þiuþjandei” (literally “people mine blessing”), rhymes with “razda rodeiþ reirandei” (“language/speech speaks trembling”) above. Although the repeating “fraujinondei fairguni” is not strictly for rhyme, it could have been for metrical uses. This leaves us with the one “model” clause, the first clause of the poem, in which VO word order is exhibited.

- bairiþ	Bairka ...	laubans	liubans...
“bears	[the] Birch-nom.-sg.	leaves-acc.-pl.-masc.-a stem	dear-acc.-pl.-masc.-str.”

The OV clauses in the second stanza show that the objects are assigned by both participles as well as present indicative forms of verbs. Thus the difference between participial and present indicative forms does not appear to have any affect on the OV/VO order. Subject-verb (SV) and verb-subject (VS) order are also exhibited an equal amount of times; four each, and both take objects. Also, both VS and SV formations have datives in them as well. Tolkien shows very balanced and cunningly mirrored syntax throughout the poem; especially in the first two lines of the third stanza:

-Andanahti milhmam neipiþ, (S Dat V)
liuhteip liuhmam lauhmuni (V Dat S)

Is he trying say that Gothic was a very syntactically tolerant language? Or was he as a poet merely pushing the bounds for what he thought was possible in the Gothic language? We see unusual syntax all the time in English poetry. In addition to balancing the syntax fairly well, there are simply too few clauses in the poem to draw solid conclusions about what Tolkien may have thought the standard Gothic word order may have been. It should be noted that Tolkien also uses much less Greek syntax than Wulfila tends to use.⁶

The variation in meter is thoroughly thought out, as is the heavy alliteration, despite the fact that it does not strictly follow the standard model within the Old Germanic languages. There are typically four stressed syllables in one line of Germanic alliterative poetry. Two of these

stressed syllables fall on the first half-line, and two on the second half-line (*Sigurd and Gudrun* 49-50). Each of these stressed syllables is called a lift and is labeled (1) through (4) in the examples below. In traditional Old Norse terminology the lifts of the first half-line are called *studdlar*, ‘pillars.’ The first lift of the second half-line, the *höfuðstafr* or ‘head-stave,’ is required to alliterate with at least one of the lifts in the first half-line and is what ties the two halves together. These alliterations are called *stafr*, ‘staves’ (Hollander xxiv-xxv). The fourth lift cannot, or does not typically, alliterate with its predecessor. Thus in OE for example:

- (1)Grette (2)Geata leod, (3)Gode (4)þancode
 (1) pillar (2) pillar (3) head-stave (4)non-alliterating lift

from line 625 of *Beowulf* (Alexander 42); but,

- (1)Baírka (2)baza (3)beidip (4)blaika

in “Bagme Bloma”; and even in his OE verse,

- (1)Lust is (2)lýtel, (3)garfop (4)lang (*Road* 354).

Some of the lines in “Bagme Bloma” have an odd, half-line alliteration

- (1)fagra (2)fahsa, (3)lípu (4)linþi

or scarcely any alliteration,

- (1)slaihta, (2)raihta, (3)hweita(4)rinda

Tolkien knows that he is “breaking” rules that he himself noted in his “Prefatory Remarks” to John R. Clark Hall’s translation of *Beowulf*; “In the second half the *first lift only* can alliterate; the second lift must *not* alliterate” (Tolkien’s emphases). He does comment earlier in the preface however, that “Old English verse is called “alliterative.” This is a misnomer in two ways. Alliteration, though important, is not fundamental. Verse built on the plan described above, if written “blank,” would retain similar metrical character” (Hall xxxv-xxxvi). He indeed has based “Bagme Bloma” on “the plan described above.” From the very first line to the last, the odd numbered lines follow a ‘falling-falling’ stress pattern, i.e.

- Brúnaim báiriþ Báirka bógum

and the following even lines follow a variation of a falling pattern, i.e.

- bágme blóma, bláuandei

Uneven feet are used in these lines, perhaps contrasting the sternness of the preceding line, and clashing stress patterns are almost entirely avoided. In addition to careful meter and alliteration, there is also

a rhyme scheme of 0A0A0A throughout the whole poem, and the odd lines occasionally contain internal rhyme. Despite not following the typical rules for alliterative poetry, Tolkien's poem nevertheless works because it follows closely and carefully the stress pattern that he himself described.

Now that the poem has been set up linguistically, we can turn to how it fits as a work by Tolkien. For example, many of the reconstructions in "Bagme Bloma" are reappearances of some of the 'usual suspects,' words that are perhaps not all that surprising to come across reading Tolkien. By looking at when and how Tolkien presented the Birch and how he used similar constructions, such as "limbe-lithe," to those in the poem in his other works, we can get a better picture of some of the smaller implications of this poem.

In *Smith of Wootton Major*, a birch tree (which, according to Shippey, represents philology) saves a character Smith (who represents Tolkien) from a fierce storm, though it loses all of its leaves (like the Birch in "Bagme Bloma"). Birch is also what 'B' stood for in Tolkien's abbreviations for 'A and B students' in the curriculum he designed for the Leeds English Department.⁷ The A was 'ác' and B was 'beorc' (and the corresponding Anglo-Saxon runes), oak and birch. Oak was literature (which Tolkien could "barely use ... without putting inverted commas round it to show he couldn't take it seriously") and Birch was philology (*Road* 273 – 289; *Roots and Branches* 358 – 359).

Additional support for the assigning of these symbols comes from another of the songs in the same collection as "Bagme Bloma", "Eadig Beo Ðu" (*Songs* 13; also found in *Road* 355). Here Tolkien speaks more directly:

herian Beorc and byrcen cynn,
lare' and lareow, leorningmann-
síc us sæl and hæl and wynn!
Ac sceal feallan on þæt fyr
lustes, leafes, lifes wan!
Beorc sceal agan langne tîr,
breme glæme glengan wang!

'Praise the Birch and birch's kin
lore, teacher, and student
may there be for us bliss, health and joy!
Oak shall fall on the fire
of lust, leaf and life gone!
Birch shall long have glory
[with] fame and gleam adorn the plain!

This is more explicit praise of the Birch, what the Birch stands for and what is associated with it. It is also important to notice that in both of the "Birch" poems Tolkien capitalizes Birch and Oak. In "Bagme Bloma" the only capitalized words are those that start each stanza, "Bairka" being the only exception. In "Eadig Beo Ðu," besides the first word of every sentence (which also always comes at the beginning of a new line), "Beorc" and "Ac" are the only capitalized words. However, since "Ac" comes at the beginning of a new sentence and it is not entirely clear whether Tolkien would have capitalized it, we are left having to assume

that he would have. Though capitalization is not in itself a guide to interpretation, it does give us a hint that Birch and Oak carry some special meaning.

Near the end of the *Songs for the Philologists* Tolkien comes full out in his Literature vs Language dichotomy, in his poem ‘Lit and Lang’ (*Songs* 27):

“‘I don’t like philology,’ / Poor Lit’ said. / / And now she’s dead. / Doctors cut up all the corpse / / but searched in vain; / They couldn’t find it anywhere, / ... / They couldn’t find the brain. / ... / Did Lang’ go into mourning-weeds? / I don’t think! / He quickly wiped a tear away / And had another drink.”

No translation is needed as the opinion becomes clearer and emerges from Gothic and abstract, into Old English, and through to blatancy in Modern English. Going full circle and back to the poem at hand, ‘Bairka’ has a much clearer (if at once obscure) meaning.

Though the Birch is the most most obvious point of departure for grasping the poem, the compound adjective **lipulinþi* (“limb-lithe,” “lissome-limbed” or “lithe-limbed”) is certainly not unknown, especially in Tolkien’s earlier works, and plays an important interpretive role. First, however, I feel that I should point out the elements of the word. The “lithe” element is *linþi*, not the falsely similar *lipu*. In many Germanic languages nasal consonants, like *n*, often disappeared before voiceless fricatives, like *s*, *þ*, and *f*. Thus in English the *n* disappeared leaving us with “lithe.” *Lipu* meant “member, limb, extension of a whole” and in the Gothic corpus the word is used when discussing body parts in direct reference and when speaking metaphorically.⁸ The compound “limb-lithe” has many resonances in Tolkien’s works. In line 23 of “The Lay of Leithian,” the very first description the maiden Leithian is of her having “lissom limbs” (*Lays* 155).⁹ Treebeard’s use of the construction “limb-lithe” in *The Two Towers* proves very complementary to the usage in “Bagme Bloma” and is important for interpreting the compound: “But some of my trees are limb-lithe, and many can talk to me.” Tolkien’s use of it here is used to contrast trees that are “limb-lithe” with trees that “just look like trees now ... and they speak only in whispers” (*TT*, III, iv, 71). This usage seems to imply more life-like qualities to the Birch as well as language. Indeed the birch in “Bagme Bloma” has the gift of language as well (line four of the second stanza). Strengthening the vital quality of the compound is Tolkien’s use of it in *Eadig Beo Þu*: “hafa lof ond lipþe lif,” “have love and gentle (lithe) life.”

There are also other reconstructions in “Bagme Bloma” that resonate across Tolkien’s works. **linda* appears in the title of one of his early

poems "Light as Leaf on Linden-Tree," and made it—in similar form to the title of the aforementioned poem—into *The Lord of the Rings* in a poem sung by Aragorn about Tinúviel (Luthien): "He heard there oft the flying sound / Of feet as light as linden leaves...." (*FR*, I, xi, 204). It is also found later as Legolas sings of Nimrodel: "And in the wind she went as light / As leaf of linden-tree" (*FR*, II, vi, 354). The more romantic feel of these lines fits well with the tree's heart-like leaf shape, and can be seen as two of the various leaves drawn in *The Tree of Amalion* (*Artist and Illustrator* 64). *lind* is also extremely common in Germanic poetry as a word for shield, in much the same way that *ash*, absent in this poem, is used to mean spear. Line 244 of "The Battle of Maldon" reads, "Leofsunu gemælde and his *linde* ahof..." (Mitchell 250, my emphasis). "Leofsunu spoke, and his *shield* raised." These two opposing uses, one romantic and one heroic, provide a complex picture of **linda*, though its use in "Bagme Bloma" does not quite place it in either category.

Perhaps a bit too frequent to be considered in depth, "barren" (**baza*) is also used to describe another white tree, namely the branches of the naked White Tree of Gondor (*RK*, V, i, 753). And finally **fahs* as an obsolete word for "hair" in Modern English is found in the name of the famous horse Shadowfax.

By comparing Tolkien's usage in his other works of cognates of the words found in "Bagme Bloma," we see that they very often agree and complement each other. It is no surprise that his fascination with trees and tree-imagery comes out in his writings, including this poem.

Whatever "Bagme Bloma" itself may say about his opinions of words, Gothic, and language in general, we should take note of what Tolkien actually *did* say. In his Valedictory Address, delivered June 5, 1959 to the University of Oxford, Tolkien commented that, "Philology was part of my job, and I enjoyed it. I have always found it amusing. But I have never had strong views about it. I do not think it necessary to salvation" (*MC* 224). This is a very odd and seemingly detached statement regarding something that occupied the man's entire life. Despite the fact that "amused" here should not be taken to give any implication of unimportance regarding his work, I think it is interesting to consider. Tolkien did not in fact publish a large amount of academic work, yet the time spent on what was published was certainly not wasted. However, personal amusement is I think what Tolkien did much of his best work for; his magnum opus *The Lord of the Rings* is a good example. But Tolkien was very thorough, especially regarding those things that were dear to him. In a separate essay, "A Secret Vice," which deals with artificial language construction and language form, perhaps the two things that amused him most, he says:

The very word-form itself, of course, even unassociated with notions, is capable of giving pleasure—a perception of beauty, which if of a minor sort is not more foolish and irrational than being sensitive to the line of a hill, light and shade, or colour.... There is purely artistic pleasure, keen and of a high order, in studying a Gothic dictionary from this point of view; and from it a *part*, one element, of the pleasure which might have been gained from the resplendent ‘lost Gothic’ poetry may still be recaptured (*MC* 207).

This discussion of the “‘lost Gothic’ poetry dates to sometime around 1931 (*MC* 3), and is certainly in line with his statement in “English and Welsh” where he says, “Gothic was the first to take me by storm, to move my heart. It was the first of the Old Germanic languages that I ever met. I have since mourned the loss of Gothic literature. I did not then” (*MC* 191). By “then,” Tolkien must have been referring to around 1910, when he got a hold of Wright’s *A Primer of the Gothic Language* (*Letters* 357). It was initially the vocabulary of this primer that filled him with delight and encouraged him to “invent Gothic words” (*MC* 192). It is fitting that Tolkien, rather than writing a dictionary or attempting reconstruction merely for the sake of reconstruction, should come up with a context for these invented Gothic words. Although this poem does not in itself closely analyze isolated words, as Tolkien does in some of his essays on Old and Middle English philology, the words speak for themselves. They probably existed, but from Tolkien’s view, that they actually existed in Gothic would just be icing on the cake in relation to their form and meaning, their phonetic fitness.

As Shippey labels “Bagme Bloma” one of the “Birch” poems, I must say that this poem really starts with the word *Bairka*. To Tolkien it is philology in all of its aspects. It is a piece written not only to be enjoyed because of the rare language in which it is written, but also for the poetic devices, word choices and content. As Tolkien argues at length in his Valedictory Address, language and literature should never be separated. He chides the Oxford English department for its title “The Honour School of English Language and Literature” and goes on to say; “This simple title, *School of English*, is sufficient. ‘For a thousand recorded years *English* as a noun has meant only one thing: the English Language’” (*MC* 231-232). That literature should be separated from that which it is created with, language, was unthinkable. In “Bagme Bloma” as well as “Eadig Beo Ðu!” Tolkien praises Language and criticizes the splintering of it into subfields (as was said above), especially in regards to the terminology, “language” and “literature” (“The Oxford English School” 778). As we can see, the points Tolkien makes in his Valedictory Address were not so

different from the points that he had made in his poetry some 30 years earlier.

NOTES

- 1 Tolkien makes use of Gothic elements to create intentionally archaic names for the ancestors of the Rohirrim: Vidugavia, Vidumavi, Vini-tharya. As far as clause level constructions, besides "Bagme Bloma," we know that he wrote a short text as an inscription in his copy of the Fifth Book of Thucydides (*Letters* 356-358). Arden Smith discusses Gothic outside of "Bagme Bloma" in his essay "Tolkienian Gothic" published in *The Lord of the Rings 1954-2004 Scholarship in Honor of Richard E. Blackwelder*.
- 2 *Songs for the Philologists* can be accessed at Marquette University in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, USA. This is a photocopy of the copy with Tolkien's handwritten notes. It is located at Marquette University Libraries, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, J.R.R. Tolkien Collection, Series 7, Box 1, Folder 5. Copies can also be found at the Bodleian Library in Oxford, England; University of Auckland, New Zealand; and also University of Newcastle and Monash University in Australia. Thanks to Richard West for pointing out these other locations.
- 3 Readers are also encouraged to see the translation provided in Tom Shippey's *The Road to Middle-earth* (Road 354-355).
- 4 Wulfila Project: <http://www.wulfila.be/gothic/browse/text/?book=1&chapter=5>. The Wulfila project is a useful tool for reading through and searching in the Gothic Corpus. Also, Wilhelm Streitberg's edition of the Gothic corpus. I cite according to chapter and verse for easy reference regardless of source.
- 5 Streitberg does not have Mark beyond chapter 16 verse 12, "afaruh þan þata....."
- 6 I have not gone into a discussion comparing the syntax of "Bagme Bloma," Wulfila's Bible, and the Greek model, though it could be done by those more familiar with Ancient Greek. That Tolkien's syntax is very non-Greek was pointed out to me by Joseph Salmons.
- 7 Though it should be pointed out that in his article in *The Oxford Magazine*, "The Oxford English School," the symbols are reversed; A is language and B is literature (778). Deciding on Ac and Beorc must have happened shortly afterwards.
- 8 See I Corinthians chapter 12. *Liþu* is cognate with the modern Dutch

word “lid” meaning “member.”

- 9 It is of course interesting to note that Tolkien’s wife’s grave is marked with the name Luthien, a later spelling of Leithian.

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“*Wingless fluttering*”: Some Personal Connections in Tolkien’s Formative Years

JOSÉ MANUEL FERRÁNDEZ BRU

It may be bold to say that the approaches to the work of J.R.R. Tolkien based chiefly on the biographical aspect have been infrequent. This statement does not mean that it is unusual to find a sketch of the author in the studies referred to him, nor that there are not any specifically biographical books. However, in the first case most authors usually depend on the same source, the authorized biography by Humphrey Carpenter published in 1977 which, despite being valuable, is by no means complete or free of errors. On the other hand, other works that could be described as biographical, often focus on very specific matters about the life of Tolkien, for example, his participation in World War I or his connection to the Inklings.¹ Going against this tide, the present essay concentrates mainly on biographical issues and personal relationships of Tolkien from his formative period. It seems unwise to minimize or ignore the importance of Tolkien’s circumstances in his childhood and youth because doing so would deny the important role played by certain events and people in the shaping of his personality and world view. In fact, the relevance of these years in the further development of the personality and the fictive world of Tolkien is highlighted within his family environment. Adam Tolkien (J.R.R. Tolkien’s grandson and son of Christopher Tolkien) explicitly emphasizes the importance of this period on the author:²

My great-grandfather died when my grandfather was four and his mother died when he was twelve. . . . He was marked by death in his early years and also by the disappearance of an era. His early childhood was spent during the nineteenth century, his adolescence in early twentieth century, before the World War I, which meant a complete break with the previous century, and he matured during the war. I think he identified the disappearance of this period with the disappearance of all the people he loved, so this *existential angst* is what inspired his world view, a pessimistic world view, despite his Catholic faith, but not defeatist. . . . I think when we read some of his writings we find someone struggling with a form of hopelessness, which today we would call *depression* and once was called *melancholia*. (Tolkien 35).

The changes in the social field in this epoch, with a great amount of cultural and epistemological transformation, certainly affected Tolkien

too, although to assess how they could influence him the words of Anna Vaniskaya are pertinent:

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, historians, sociologists, politicians, and writers of different religious and political persuasions were as polarized on the fundamental issues as ever before or after, but they thought about them in the same period specific terms: evolution vs. degeneration, individualism vs. collectivism, organic vs. mechanical, patriotism vs. cosmopolitanism, the common man vs. the elite, modern mass society vs. traditional localized community, and so on. Not all of these apply to Tolkien—no single person could have embraced all the existing cultural strands in their diversity—but it is possible to demonstrate just how much he shared in the received habits of thought. (Vaniskaya 6-7)³

However, despite all these cultural strands, if anything defines Tolkien during this period it is how he cemented his firm commitment with the religious (Catholic) phenomenon which became the strongest component of his ideological positioning. The strength of this thinking was undoubtedly inspired by his contact with various people during his childhood and youth, primarily his mother, but also with those with whom he shared his life (especially after her death). Of these Father Francis Morgan is the most significant.

Fr. Francis Xavier Morgan Osborne was a Catholic priest of the Birmingham Oratory born in Spain, although his ancestors were a mixture of Spaniards, English, Germans and Welsh,⁴ a result of the amalgam of nationalities that converged in the cosmopolitan region of Cadiz in Spain in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries due to the economic potential of the area (especially linked with the Sherry trade). The Tolkien family met him in 1902 when they moved near the Oratory and joined this parish (previously they had briefly lived in Moseley and King's Head after leaving Sarehole). In outline, the story of his relationship with Tolkien is known. Fr. Francis became Tolkien's guardian after the death of his mother in 1904 and played this role until Tolkien's coming of age, although the contact between both continued after that. In 1965 (thirty years after Morgan's death) Tolkien described him fondly:

He was an upper-class Welsh-Spaniard Tory, and seemed to some just a pottering old snob and gossip. He was—and he was not. I first learned charity and forgiveness from him; and in the light of it pierced even the 'liberal' darkness out of which I came. (*Letters* 354)

Also, toward the end of his life, taking stock of his experiences and memories, he stated:

I remember the death of Fr. Francis my ‘second father’ (at 77 in 1934)⁵ . . . In 1904 we (H[ilary] & I) had the sudden miraculous experience of Fr. Francis’ love and care and humour (*Letters* 416-417).

Fr. Francis’s importance has not been properly appreciated by some critics and biographers of Tolkien probably because of his initial opposition to the relationship with Edith Bratt that the future author began in 1908. But Fr. Francis’s forbidding Tolkien to continue this relationship until his coming of age should not be construed as an act of intolerant authority. It was just a way of watching over the interests of his ward according to the logic of those times and obviously not interpretable under current mores.⁶ It seems paradoxical therefore to analyze the personal and intellectual legacy of Fr. Francis on Tolkien simply by focusing on this fact, although it is interesting to note the animosity against Morgan in some comments without any biographical foundation. To cite a few examples, Carpenter says openly that “Francis Morgan was not a man of great intellect” (Carpenter 34), while Charles A. Coulombe ventures: “described as a Welsh-Spanish Tory, surely as ultramontane a combination as one could wish for” (Coulombe 56).

With regard to the lack of intellect which Carpenter attributes to him, the letters of Fr. Francis preserved in the Osborne Archive⁷ in Spain show, on the contrary, a remarkable insight. Undoubtedly, Morgan received a very good education, first at the Birmingham Oratory School, then briefly at the Catholic University in Kensington and finally at the University of Louvain in Belgium. His competence seems beyond question, since at his return to the Oratory as a novice he served as personal secretary to Cardinal Newman⁸ and even in 1880 he accompanied the Father Prefect of the Oratory School, Fr John Norris, to a private audience with Pope Leo XIII (Dessain et al. 228-229).

Additionally, an intellectual streak can be found in his ancestors and relatives. His father, also named Francis Morgan, settled in southern Spain as a commercial delegate of the wine trade family company from London,⁹ but it should be noted that two of his brothers (uncles of Fr. Francis) had a certain intellectual significance in Great Britain. The eldest, called Thomas, was for many years Honorary Treasurer of the British Archaeological Association. He wrote several articles on archaeology and the book *Romano-British Mosaic Pavements; A History of Their Discovery, and a Record and Interpretation of Their Designs* (1886). Another brother, Aaron Augustus, an Anglican clergyman, had two works of some impact: *The Mind of Shakespeare* (1860), and a translation of *Ecclesiastes* (1856). This

interest in culture was probably inherited from his grandfather, Aaron Morgan,¹⁰ the patriarch of the family, who wrote the admired *History and Antiquities of the Parish of St. Saviour's*, Southwark (1795) which described both the neighbourhood and this Anglican parochial church of London.¹¹

On his mother's side, which could be called the "Spanish branch," there is an even stronger intellectual background. The great-aunt of Fr. Francis was Cecilia Böhl de Faber (1796-1877) who used the *nom de plume* Fernan Caballero, probably the most important Spanish woman writer of the nineteenth century.¹² Indeed she was in close contact with Morgan's mother, Böhl de Faber's niece Maria Manuela Osborne, and by extension with him during his childhood. Interestingly, Cecilia Böhl de Faber published several collections of riddles (and also of proverbs and sayings) aimed primarily at children and youths, and some of them have an unusual similarity to the riddles of Tolkien in *The Hobbit*. In particular, a riddle she uses to describe the wind should be noted:

*Vuela sin alas,
silba sin boca,
azota sin manos,
y tú ni lo ves ni lo tocas.* (Caballero 180)

This can be translated into English as:

Wingless it flies,
mouthless whistles,
handless lashes,
and you neither see nor touch.

Tolkien used the following in *The Hobbit*:

Voiceless it cries,
wingless flutters,
toothless bites,
mouthless mutters.

Tolkien commented on the riddles from *The Hobbit*: "There is work to be done here on the sources and analogues" (*Letters* 32), and in fact Douglas A. Anderson was able to find the source of eight out of nine. Regarding the riddle about the wind, Anderson says:

I can find no single comparable analogue to this riddle. However, traditional wind riddles often contain variations of phrase on the elements of *flying without wings* and *speaking without a mouth*. (Anderson 121)

Even without an artificial nexus—because the resemblance between the riddles is surely a mere coincidence—there were undoubtedly among the large collection of books stacked in Fr. Francis’s room in the Birmingham Oratory the works of his ancestors and relatives which could imply at least a little influx of ideas on the young Tolkien, either through the teachings of his guardian or by his own direct contact with them. Spanish was another language which gave to Tolkien linguistic-aesthetic satisfaction:

my guardian was half Spanish, and in my early teens I used to pinch his books and try to learn it: the only Romance language that gives me the particular pleasure of which I am speaking. (*Letters* 213-214)

Certainly Fr. Francis’s legacy on Tolkien transcends any single fact, whether his attitude to a youthful romance or what he might contribute to his ward by his origins or his ancestors (which, as we saw above, led Tolkien to his taste for the Spanish language). Above all, his importance lies in his role in the human and religious formation of Tolkien, which is hardly matched by anyone else (besides his mother) during this period. Certainly it seems unlikely that Tolkien received from him an oppressive personal education or an ultramontane and uncompromising religious teaching. Rather, his amiable character and personality decidedly were a reference for Tolkien, whose adult personality does not show any kind of repression or trauma. Correspondingly, it is a mistake to underestimate the quality of his instruction in religion, which goes beyond the mere training in the Catholic rite. In this sense the Birmingham Oratory was the ideal place for a privileged religious teaching, considering “observance of religion was strict” (*Letters* 395) although with an open mind. However, its school was unable to compete (in the early twentieth century) with the educational level of elite schools like King Edward’s School.

I owe a great deal (and perhaps even the Church a little) to being treated, surprisingly for the time, in a more rational way. Fr Francis obtained permission for me to retain my scholarship at K[ing] E[dward’s] S[chool] and continue there, and so I had the advantage of a (then) first rate school and that of a ‘good Catholic home’—“in excelsis”: virtually a junior inmate of the Oratory house, which contained many learned fathers (largely “converts”). (*Letters* 395)

An ultramontane priest (as Fr. Francis has been repeatedly described) would be unable to promote this pragmatism imbued with a deeply ecumenical sense, since it implied Tolkien would interact with young people

of various faiths. On the other hand, this might also occur because Tolkien coincided with a very special period in the history of British Catholics whose culmination was the Papal mandate from 1908 declaring that England and Wales ceased to be missionary territory. This was a logical outcome after the lifting of several self-imposed prohibitions such as the impossibility of study at Oxford or Cambridge (which was maintained until 1895) and the trend toward normalization in the British civil laws.

In a broader context, these years coincided with the momentous pontificate of Pope Pius X (1903-1914). This period was important for the Catholic Church because, besides many other issues, it defined its position directly opposed to the growing secular spirit of the society of that period, which was defined by Pius X in his encyclical *Lamentabili and Pascendi dominici Gregis* (1907) as “theological modernism,” which stated that to follow or implement agnostic, immanentist or evolutionist reinterpretations of the Catholic doctrine was an attack on faith and, therefore, against the foundations of the Church.

Tolkien, reflecting about it some years later, stated that:

I suppose the greatest reform of our time was that carried out by St Pius X: surpassing anything, however needed, that the [Second Vatican] Council will achieve. (*Letters* 339)¹³

Some critics stress the similarity between the spirit of Pius X and the moral foundations that permeate the stories of Tolkien. Thus A. R. Bossert wrote:

An intellectually sophisticated and orthodox Catholic, Tolkien also exhibited awareness of early twentieth-century Church policies later in his life. *The Silmarillion*, *The Hobbit*, and *The Lord of the Rings* all parallel the anti-modernist rhetoric of *Pascendi dominici gregis* in their assertion of truth in ancient stories, suspicion of historical criticism with its glamour of intellectualism, and their condemnation of a tool that is too dangerous to be used. (Bossert 53)

The doctrine of Pius X had influenced Tolkien in various ways. In particular, there was a prominent figure within the Oratory, whose close relationship with the Vatican authorities of that period would enhance the impact of Pius X’s pastoral message among those linked to it. This was Fr. Denis Sheil¹⁴, the closest friend, correspondent and confidant of the influential Cardinal Merry del Val, Vatican secretary of state and right-hand man of Pius X.¹⁵ In the early twentieth century Sheil was one of the relatively young priests of the small community of the Birmingham Oratory. Tolkien, as a “junior inmate,” must have had close contact

with him and, in fact mentions him in an encoded postcard dated in 1904, during Tolkien’s mother’s last months of life.

A plausible translation of this fragment of the postcard could be:

My dear wise owl Father Francis
you are too bad
not to come, in
spite of *Father Denis* (*Life and Legend* 17)¹⁶

But Tolkien not only socialised with Fr. Denis in addition to Fr. Francis during the period he was linked to the Oratory, but over the years due to his own personal situation all the Fathers of the Community necessarily were closely known to him. As a result of this contact, he developed a cordial friendship extending over many years with other Fathers, as he had with Fr. Vincent Reade. Necessarily, he was unconnected with either the projects of the Community and, by extension, the Parish. It is certain that Tolkien participated in multiple parochial activities such as the Annual Parish Bazaar in aid of the Parish Schools and, definitely, in the acts of the Golden Jubilee of the Oratory School in 1909, coinciding with the 30th anniversary of the creation as a cardinal of its founder John Henry Newman and with the inauguration of the new church of the Oratory.

Tolkien’s connections also extend to those who studied at that time in the Oratory School especially because, despite being a student from another school, he shared with them at least the activities and observances of a religious nature. Thus, when Tolkien arrived in Oxford, although he obviously was an Old Edwardian (former student of the King Edward’s School) his link with the Birmingham Oratory, provided him with interesting social relationships, although probably lesser than other connections on the intellectual level. Certainly when a Catholic first arrived to Oxford he had the support of the Catholics who already studied there, and this support would be amplified if they came from the same school.

At the outset, Tolkien was taken under the wing of a couple of Catholics in the year above him, one of them probably Tony Shakespeare, a law student who had been born in Harborne outside Birmingham and had attended the Oratory School (Garth 17)

The Newman Society, which combined a religious role with social work, was one of the main meeting places for Catholics in Oxford. Although its records of that time are lost, very surely Tolkien was a member of this society, particularly since he came from the *home* of Cardinal Newman. On the other hand, Francis de Zulueta,¹⁷ Fr. Denis Sheil’s nephew and a former student of the Oratory School, had been, despite his youth at the time, president of the Newman Society for several years and probably Tolkien met him in advance in events connected with the Oratory or perhaps in a visit to his uncle. Years later de Zulueta became the god-

father of Priscilla, Tolkien's only daughter.

However, when Tolkien arrived at Oxford he was affected by the joyous and carefree atmosphere extended between students, which led him to neglect his religious practices and to reduce his effort in his studies, which appear to have been sacrificed to allow him to develop an active social life. Years later he justified himself by appealing to the pain caused by his rupture with Edith Bratt: "I fell back into folly and slackness and misspent a good deal of my first year at College" (*Letters* 53).

But in 1913 Tolkien's course in Oxford changed and several key events took place in the first months of the year coinciding with his coming of age. Mainly he resumed his relationship with Edith, and the motivation of their engagement led him to do his best to succeed academically, as he promised. His renewed willpower was reinforced when he switched to English, which also corresponded with his philological tastes. That summer, in what looks like a proof of his desire to spare no effort in order to carve out a future, Tolkien took a job as a tutor of two boys who traveled to Paris. It is likely that the genesis of was a contact made through an acquaintance in Oxford. Probably Tolkien met in Oxford, maybe in the Newman Society, Pablo Martínez del Río y Vinent, a young Mexican aristocrat (although half Spaniard) the same age as Tolkien and a member of one of the most important families of that country.¹⁸ In 1913 Pablo, who studied History at Oriol College,¹⁹ was the eldest member of the family Martínez Río who was studying at England, as his brother Jaime²⁰ had finished his law studies at Oxford and his young cousins were still at the Jesuit College of Stonyhurst in Lancashire. During his free time between spring 1913 and the outbreak of war in 1914, Pablo, with his brother and a cousin from his mother's side, climbed several Spanish peaks of the Pedriza on the southern slopes of the Guadarrama mountain range, near Madrid. This obviously prevented him from accompanying his cousins to their holiday on the continent, as happened in the trip to Paris in the summer of 1913. Thus, the delegate of the family in England, Mr. Killion, had to find someone to do this work, and Tolkien was chosen.²¹

Tolkien met all the requirements for the job, his Catholic background being very likely the most important. The other key issue was his knowledge of French and Spanish because, although Tolkien repeatedly expressed his displeasure at not being proficient in both languages, in all likelihood he had a good command of them (he began to learn French as a child with his mother and Spanish was a language he liked and closely linked to his tutor). Tolkien had to accompany to Paris the two young cousins of Pablo Martínez del Río who were studying at Stonyhurst. There they would meet with two aunts and with their youngest brother who came from Mexico, probably in order to start his studies at

Stonyhurst after the summer. The boys were Ventura, Jose Pablo and Eustaquio Martinez del Rio y Bermejillo²², children of Ventura Martinez del Rio y Pedemonte²³ who had died in 1906 being only thirty years old. Their aunts Angela and Julia,²⁴ sisters of their late father, lived in Paris.

The trip lasted for a month and a half and can be divided into three parts. First, Tolkien enjoyed Paris for a couple of weeks in the company of the boys and their aunts. Then, to his chagrin, they moved to Dinard in Brittany, a fashionable seaside resort that represented the epitome of the hedonism that characterized this period, where a fatal accident occurred when Angela Martinez del Rio was struck by a car. The trip ended with the funeral arrangements. Tolkien came back to Paris with the boys and finally they returned to England and remained a few days in Bournemouth before returning to school.²⁵

The visit to Paris closes the ring in this journey through several moments in the life of Tolkien. Although diverse, they add new data to his biography and reflect the broad range of elements that defined him as a person and as an author. It is clear that his literary creation is closely linked to traditions rather different from those that prevailed in Europe at the beginning of the twentieth century, but certainly the way Tolkien assimilated and expressed them reflects an essence absolutely contemporary, whose origins lie in the intellectual but especially in the human background which he acquired during his early years.

NOTES

I obtained invaluable data in interviews and letters exchanged with Priscilla Tolkien; Tomas Osborne Gamero Civico, relative of Fr. Francis Morgan and Osborne company CEO; Anthony Tinkel, Archivist of the Association of School and Oratory; and several members of the Martinez del Rio family. In addition, I acknowledge Sonia Morales for her assistance with English corrections and her valuable comments.

- 1 A special case is represented by a pair of recent works of encyclopedic character: *The J.R.R. Tolkien Companion and Guide* by Christina Scull and Wayne G. Hammond and *J.R.R. Tolkien Encyclopedia: scholarship and critical assessment* edited by Michael D.C. Drout, two very useful resources which provide new sources of data beyond the information available in the Carpenter biography.
- 2 Adam Tolkien (grandson of J.R.R. Tolkien) made this statement during a roundtable meeting with the title “The validity of Tolkien’s

work,” held in Elche, Spain, July 17, 2007. Reproduced in *Estel* 59, the Journal of the Spanish Tolkien Society.

- 3 Perhaps one of the most paradigmatic ideas of Tolkien fits in this context of polarized discussion, his rejection of some forms of industrial progress in a nostalgic atmosphere of rural recovery, or, in the words of Anna Vaninskaya, a “romantic critique of modern industrial society” (Vaninskaya 7). This notion, inspired by the increasing disappearance of traditional rural environment and the displacement of nature by industry and urbanisation that happened in Tolkien’s early years, would be clearly reflected in his later works, as in *The Hobbit* or *The Lord of the Rings* where the Shire became a recreation of a vanished rural world:

Thus, the Shire of Tolkien’s adult imagination must have been conceived partly in compensation for the destruction of the English countryside that occurred during his own lifetime. This would certainly account for some romantic elements; like many creations based on beloved memory, it is a re-creation of a best-loved boyhood home that no longer exists. (Dickerson 79)

- 4 His mother’s parents were an Englishman from Exeter and the daughter of a German and a Basque woman with Irish ancestry. His father belonged to a prominent Welsh family settled in London at least from the mid eighteenth century whose members have since mixed with English people.
- 5 Tolkien is mistaken, he actually died in 1935 at age 78.
- 6 At least the consequences of the love affair exerted a creative impact on Tolkien, because the identification he made between his own story with his quintessential lovers is well known: Beren and Luthien, a tale originated in the mind of a tormented young man, forced to overcome the separation from his lover in the purest romantic tradition. Continuing the parallelism, the role of Fr. Francis seems to correspond to Thingol, the possessive father of Luthien who commands Beren seemingly impossible tasks for her hand. However, as in the fiction, Tolkien (and Edith) had no resentment towards his guardian. In fact there is unquestionable evidence of respect and deep admiration to him in the Gnomish Lexicon (circa 1917). Tolkien added the entry “Faidron or Faithron = Francis” as a reference to his guardian. In the Gnomish Lexicon only proper names are capitalised and the sign = is used to match names in different languages. Furthermore *Faidron* and *Faithron* are clearly related to the entries that appear next to them: “fair: free, unconstrained,” “faidwen: freedom,” “faith: lib-

- erty” and “faithir: liberator, Saviour” (Parma Eldaramberon 11:33)
- 7 The Osbornes were his mother’s family. They owned a leading company of wine traders first called Duff-Gordon until they acquired full control of the firm and changed its name to Osborne, which is preserved until today. Today, more than 200 years after its establishment, Osborne is still a powerful company that operates worldwide.
 - 8 John Henry Newman (1801-1890) is one of the greatest intellectual figures of the nineteenth century. A member of the Church of England in his youth, he studied at Oxford and was ordained. He had a great spiritual influence in the Church of England (he was leader of the Oxford Movement) but he decided to join the Catholic Church in 1845. He founded the Oratory of St. Philip Neri in Birmingham (and the Oratory School) and toward the end of his life he was made Cardinal by Pope Leo XIII. He wrote many paradigmatic books and he is considered as one of the best Catholic thinkers and writers, although in his time he was seen by the ultramontanes as a dangerous liberal.
 - 9 The firm changed its name several times (Dixon, Brett & Morgan, Dixon & Morgan, Morgan & Saunders, Thomas Morgan & Co, Morgan Jun. & Ridge, Morgan Brothers). In any case it was a major trading house with its headquarters always in the area of the Tower of London. They produced the famous *Dixon Double Diamond* cited by Dickens.
 - 10 Therefore Fr. Francis’s great-grandfather.
 - 11 The parish church was granted the status of cathedral in 1905, when it became the Cathedral of Southwark. Inside the Cathedral there is a monument above the entrance to the Harvard Chapel consisting of a neat tablet with a bust dedicated to Aaron Morgan.
 - 12 Regarding his work, she is the main representative author of modern Spanish novel of customs: the *Costumbrism*. She attempts to claim the tradition, which leads her to try to regain popular folklore, and hence she continuously extols the countryside and strongly censures the city and the industrial progress. In other words, she supports the spirit represented by the peasants, humble but moral, and reacts negatively to the harmful effects of industry which is for her a big monster. Her main novel was *La Gaviota* (translated as *The Seagull*) but also interesting are *La familia de Alvareda*, *Lady Virginia*, *Clemencia* and several short stories as *Dialogos entre la juventud y la edad madura*, *La farisea* or *Un verano en Bornos*. She also collected folk-tales and native poetry. Her par-

ents (the grandparents of Fr. Francis Morgan) have also interesting biographies. Her father was Juan Nicolas Böhl de Faber, a German gentleman who settled in Spain and was well versed in the literature of the Spanish Golden Age (the *Siglo de Oro* in Spanish). In his boyhood in Germany he was educated by Joachim Heinrich Campe who drew upon him for the protagonist of his famous novel *Robinson der Jüngere*. Her mother was Francisca Javierra Ruiz de Larrea y Aheran (Fr. Francis Morgan inherited his name, “Francis Xavier,” from her) a lady considered a pioneer of romanticism in Spain. She wrote several books and translated Lord Byron’s works.

- 13 Carpenter interprets “the greatest reform of our time” as a possible reference to Pius X’s recommendation of daily communion and children’s communion. Yet Tolkien may also refer to all actions that the Pope urged against modernism and its possible danger in relation to philosophy, apologetics, exegesis, history, liturgy and discipline.
- 14 He was born in Dublin in 1865, the youngest son of General Sir Justin Sheil, British Minister to Persia. He went to study at the School of Oratory when he was ten, as did his older brothers. He returned to the Oratory in 1890 to begin his novitiate, after completing his studies and being ordained in Rome. He was precisely the last novice received by the Cardinal Newman who died shortly after his arrival. Subsequently Sheil joined the community of the Oratory and remained there until his death in 1962 (having become Superior between 1923 and 1932).
- 15 Fr. Denis Sheil and Cardinal Merry del Val were both born in 1865. They were distant relatives (a sister of Fr. Denis was aunt of the Cardinal). In their early years both were related to the Spanish Embassy in London and from 1885 they shared their studies in the Pontifical Scots College in Rome, where they struck up a deep friendship.
- 16 Fr. Francis was very involved with the Tolkien family and he went periodically to visit them at Rednal during the convalescence of Tolkien’s mother. This time he could not make his visit and instead Fr. Denis Shiel went to Rednal (the only Denis in the community of the Oratory). Tolkien’s postcard (written in code) relates to his disappointment with the rearrangement of plans.
- 17 Francis de Zulueta (1878-1958) had Spanish ancestors, but he was a naturalized British subject and fought for England in World War I. His father, Pedro de Zulueta, was son of the second Earl of Torre-Díaz, a Basque businessman who settled in London. His mother was Laura Sheil, sister of Fr. Denis Sheil. The only sister of his father

married the Spanish diplomatic Rafael Merry del Val and they had four children. One of them who chose the ecclesiastical career became the Cardinal Merry del Val. Francis de Zulueta was educated at Beaumont, the Oratory School, and New College in Oxford. Fellow of Merton College from 1902, he was one of the first Roman Catholic Fellows in Oxford since the Reformation. De Zulueta was an authority on Roman Law and he became Regius Professor of Civil Law at Oxford between 1919 and 1948. He was also president of the Newman Society in early twentieth century. His political ideas were controversial. For instance, he supported strongly the Nationalist side during the Civil War and, after the Spanish War, the Franco regime (although he helped several Jewish colleagues persecuted by the Nazi regime).

- 18 The Martinez del Rio family is a wealthy Mexican family. Its most prominent member from a historical standpoint, and the family patriarch, is the doctor Jose Pablo Martinez del Rio, closely linked with emperor Maximilian I. When Maximilian died the family’s properties were confiscated and Jose Pablo was exiled in Europe. During the presidency of Porfirio Diaz the family fortune emerged again but the Mexican Revolution affected them. A confiscated property became the official residence of the President of Mexico from 1934.
- 19 Pablo Martinez del Rio and Vincent (1892-1963) was born in Mexico City. His father was a prominent lawyer and businessman son of Jose Pablo Martinez del Rio and his mother was a Spanish aristocrat. He studied at Stonyhurst and from 1910 at Oriel College in Oxford. In 1914 he returned to Mexico but he came back to Europe to marry in 1922 the Spanish lady Maria Josefa Fernandez de Henestrosa, Marquise of Cilleruelo. He was Professor of Ancient, Medieval and Modern History at the Faculty of Arts at the Universidad Nacional de Mexico and he developed an extraordinary career as a scholar, researcher and archaeologist. His interests always dealt with the origins of man in America. He had five children and numerous grandchildren. One of them is Fr. Alvaro Corcuera Martinez del Rio, general director of the Religious Congregation of The Legion of Christ.
- 20 In 1921 Jaime married a respectable Mexican girl of good family too. Years later, to the astonishment of the Martinez del Rio family, she began a career as a Hollywood actress using the surname of her husband in her stage name. She became known worldwide as Dolores del Rio.
- 21 The details of the probable intervention of Pablo Martinez del Rio

will be known when his correspondence with Tolkien becomes public. These letters, along with a very extensive familiar archive of the Martínez del Río, were donated, not long ago, to the Centro de Estudios de Historia de México of Condumex, a private organization that promotes the recovery of the history of Mexico, which has begun the enormous challenge (surely a task of years) of cataloguing all these documents. Unfortunately Tolkien's letters are mixed with huge numbers of other documents.

- 22 Tolkien himself always confused the names of Mexican boys because of the different use of surnames in the Anglo-Saxon and Hispanic world. English-speaking countries, like many other cultures, use only one surname inherited from the father (and likewise women assume the husband's surname when they get married). In Hispanic culture, people have two surnames, firstly paternal surname and secondly mother's maiden name, although only the first surname is normally mentioned. There are cases where, given the importance of an ancestor, the inherited surname is the result of joining the two surnames of the father as one (for instance *Martínez del Río*), adding after the mother's surname. Furthermore, it is not uncommon to add the conjunction "y" (and) to concatenate and distinguish the paternal and maternal surnames (for instance *Martínez del Río y Vinent*).
- 23 The youngest son of Jose Pablo Martínez del Río, the patriarch of the family. See note 18.
- 24 It seems both were exiled there because of their links with the ousted regime of General Porfirio Díaz. Julia, the youngest, was twin of Ventura. Angela was 65 in 1913.
- 25 Those boys became men and returned to Mexico, where they developed ordinary lives dedicated to their business. It is curious how accurately Tolkien captured the personality of each one of them, since the descriptions of their family about their character coincide with those of Tolkien (especially with Jose Pablo who hardly spoke according to Tolkien and who is remembered by his family as a man who had a very reserved nature, "very British," or Eustaquio, whose joy struck Tolkien, who is equally remembered for his cheerfulness). Ventura and Eustaquio married respectively the sisters, M^a Dolores and Maria Lourdes de Icaza Lopez, although Ventura, after becoming a widower, married again Eugenia Romero Vargas. He had three children from his first marriage and four from the second. Eustaquio who died young, in 1936, only had two children and Jose Pablo, who married Maria de la Mora Velez, had no issue.

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Notes and Documents

Robert Quilter Gilson, T.C.B.S.: A Brief Life in Letters

JOHN GARTH

In *Tolkien and the Great War*, I dealt closely with the T.C.B.S., the circle of former schoolfriends who encouraged and critiqued Tolkien's early mythological writings from 1914. Among them, Robert Quilter Gilson played two crucial roles. In life, he was the social hub of the group. His death in the Battle of the Somme was a crisis that helped to catalyze and mature Tolkien's sense of creative purpose.

For the book it was clearly vital to discover more about the T.C.B.S. and its members. I managed to make contact with Julia Margretts, Rob's niece, and learned that her family still had a large body of his correspondence. Some of these letters are between him and a young woman, Estelle King—the love of his short life. But most are to his stepmother Marianne, whom Rob and his younger sister had renamed Donna. He wrote so often that his letters become almost a diary. They enriched my book both directly, by revealing new details about the T.C.B.S. and its members, and indirectly, by leading me vividly through the life of a typical junior British Army officer in the Great War. But they necessarily took second place to Rob's correspondence with the T.C.B.S.

Here I attempt to remedy that by letting Rob Gilson speak for himself at much greater length—although what follows is still just a small portion of the letters he left. I am indebted to Julia Margretts and family for much support and guidance over the years, and for permission to reproduce extracts from his papers.

Robert Quilter Gilson was born on 25 October 1893 in Harrow-on-the-Hill, north London, where his father, Robert Cary Gilson, taught Classics at the famous public school. The family moved to Canterbury House in Marston Green, then a small village outside Birmingham, in 1900 when Cary Gilson became headmaster of King Edward's School. In due course, the headmaster's son joined the ranks of his pupils, and there became friends with the young Tolkien, who was his elder by a year and three quarters. The Tea Club and Barrovian Society, which they founded in 1911 (and referred to by its initials), had about 10 members and continued to meet in Cambridge when Rob went to Trinity College to study Classics.

As the son of the charismatic and influential Cary Gilson, Rob moved easily above his own social stratum, taking holidays in the Scottish Highlands as a guest of the upper-class Moncrieffs, whom the Gilsons knew through their Birmingham friends, the American consul Wilson King and his Quaker family. Even in some of the earliest letters, from 1912, Rob obviously feels a bond with Wilson King's daughter Estelle:

We have had several opportunities of sitting out in the garden together when nothing particular is doing. . . . Estelle is certainly above the average interesting. It seems so very rare that any-one is really to be found ready to discuss a serious subject seriously. I begin to think that I must be painfully "heavy." Estelle declares she has no power of appreciating pictures and yet manages to sustain a long conversation on Signorelli, in which I am sure I did not do more than half the talking. I am trying to convert her to Ruskin. . . .

[13 August 1912]

He has John Ruskin's hugely influential *Modern Painters* and *The Stones of Venice* with him and is reading his Baedeker for a mooted holiday in Italy with Donna.

In October 1912 Rob is installed in Trinity College, stopping halfway through his unpacking to take coffee with Chris Wiseman. Others from King Edward's School at Cambridge include C.V.L. Lycett, not a part of the T.C.B.S., who many years later wrote to Tolkien: "As a boy you could not imagine how I looked up to you and admired and envied the wit of that select coterie of J.R.R.T., C.L. Wiseman, G.B. Smith, R.Q. Gilson, V. Trought and Payton. I hovered on the outskirts to gather up the gems."¹ Lycett lent Rob a bookshelf for his rooms in Trinity's neo-Gothic New Court, but clearly it did not earn him entry to the enchanted circle, since he is never mentioned in the letters again.

Rob writes about debates at the Cambridge Union, reveals that the Cambridge Review has commended one of his watercolours, and announces blithely: "I have joined the Cambridge Eugenics Society. Meetings are most interesting."² He regularly mentions tea, talk and tennis with Wiseman and their T.C.B.S. friends Wilfrid Hugh Payton, known as Whiffy; the younger Ralph Payton, known as the Baby; T.K. Barnsley, inevitably dubbed Tea-Cake, and Sidney Barrowclough. With Barrowclough and Ralph Payton he visits Ely Cathedral and they are taken up on the roof: "It is so easy to imagine it still, a little island crowned by that huge and lovely building, stranded amid a waste of fenland," he writes to Donna.³

Barrowclough seems a bad influence on Rob's pocket. The first reference to him, in 1912, sets the tone: "He begged me to go up to town with

him next week. A banking account of one's own immediately provides a complete new set of temptations."⁴ Rob heroically resists. But two years later he is writing about his "reckless extravagance" in going with Barrowclough to London to see *Pygmalion*, and of "another delicious lunch with him at the Rendezvous" there.⁵

June 1913 finds Rob at camp in Mytchett, Surrey, with the Cambridge University Officer Training Corps, describing "a long and exhausting day—four hours' drill in the morning, and seven hours' later without food and drink, and largely over dusty roads." But the following day has been pleasant and lazy: "I haven't read quite one book of *Paradise Lost* but it is splendidly suitable. Scopes, of whom I have seen quite a lot, has brought Dante's *Inferno*, so that you see our ideas of Camp coincide." (Frederick Scopes, another Old Edwardian, was also a friend of Tolkien's, and was studying history alongside G.B. Smith at Corpus Christi College, Oxford). Rob's account of the camp continues:

Tomorrow we start out for a 36 hours' campaign—repelling an invasion by Oxford, somewhere near Guildford. We begin with a 14-mile march, and shall bivouac in the open, attacking, or being attacked, at dawn on Tuesday. I expect they will give us a fairly lazy Wednesday after it—a trenching competition I know, and probably little else. And then on Thursday hurrah for home! . . . I was chosen yesterday to represent the company at shooting. . . so that I was hugely flattered. We did not unfortunately distinguish ourselves greatly. . . . Also I was called out to drill the Company yesterday, and rumour says that I am in danger of receiving a stripe—which I don't at all want.

[22 June 1913]

Considering actual war was only a year ahead, it is all deeply and tragically innocent.

Another holiday follows with the Wilson Kings. "There was one dance," Rob tells Donna. "Estelle declared that wild horses should not drag her there, and I was in no mind to try."⁶ Back at Cambridge, Greek and Latin seem once more far from his mind as he talks of furnishing and decorating his new accommodation, and of his envy of Tea-Cake's rooms.

In letters to his progressive, liberal stepmother, Rob dismisses David Lloyd George's land reform plans as "not democratic at all, but bureaucratic. . . . I have no doubt that much of the housing of agricultural labourers is a crying shame, but an army of officials has proved itself before the most heartless of all tyrants to appeal to."⁷ Tolkien would doubtless have agreed.

This gives a fair impression of Rob's political outlook: conservative and patrician, suspicious of bureaucrats and radicals alike. The impression is borne out by a piece of gossip about a holiday his friend David Pinsent has taken. "Have you heard the latest of David's friend, Vitgenstein (if that is the way to spell him)?" he asks Donna.

They seem to have had rather an unpleasant time in Norway. V. borders on insanity, so David says. He seems to be just the sort of genius that has always a tendency in that direction. He suddenly decided that he would like to live in Norway. . . . Now he has bought up a sort of hotel in a remote place in the north of Norway and has settled down there absolutely alone for 2 years or so, in the midst of people whose language he can't understand. He believes that he will be able to work better there, and David thinks that if he succeeds in working out his logical speculations, he will have done something really tremendous. It all sounds very odd.

[16 November 1913]

As Rob could not know, Ludwig Wittgenstein would later establish himself as one of the world's great philosophers.

In February 1914 Tolkien makes an appearance in the letters when Rob visits Oxford with Tea-Cake and Wiseman, as does another key T.C.B.S. member, Geoffrey Bache Smith:

We had such a splendid week-end: "Full marks", as Tea-Cake would say, for everything but weather. Sunday was windy and drizzly, but Oxford managed to look as beautiful as ever. It seems to me absurd to pretend that Cambridge is *so* beautiful. . . . I saw lots of Scopes and Tolkien and G.B. Smith, all of whom seem very contented with life, though G.B. Smith was seedy [ill] on Saturday. T.K. and I dined in Hall at Corpus on Sunday, and afterwards Scopes took me to a meeting at which G.B.S. read a paper on "The Faust Legend," and I joined in the subsequent discussion, much to my own enjoyment, if to no-one else's. . . .

[17 February 1914]

Rob enjoys the Romantics and Jane Austen, Robert Browning, Elizabeth Gaskell and Dickens, and what were still relatively modern works including Oscar Wilde's *Picture of Dorian Gray* and an abundance of George Meredith. But without his father's talent or application for Classics, he is floundering academically. In March 1914, close to the end of his second year at Cambridge, he writes to his stepmother:

Your talking of my taking the Trip⁸ in 3 years “in order to make sure of my getting a 1st” makes me smile rather bitterly. I don’t believe [Professor] Harrison thinks I have the remotest chance of getting a first if I took 20 years over it—and I am sure I don’t.

[8 March 1914]

He plans to abandon Classics in favour of architecture, and hopes to be installed in his own practice by the end of 1920.

At Easter 1914 Rob goes to stay with Chris Wiseman in London, where the Wiseman family had just moved, and gives a lively glimpse of their friendship, by now a keystone of the T.C.B.S.:

We spent three hilarious days missing trains, going to bed at appalling hours, and getting up near lunch time, and generally leading the erratic life to which his family seems quite accustomed. Mrs Wiseman has evidently abandoned the task you find so difficult, of collecting people to meals at regular hours. She is very casual and when Chris telephones (the family are constantly telephoning to one another) to say that he is coming home by a certain train, she confidently and correctly assumes that he will not appear until the next train but one arrives.

They go to see a new production of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* at the Savoy Theatre and are so impressed that they go again the next night—Rob says it is the second best play he has ever seen and “the Russian ballet gestures and the Post-Impressionism and the orientalism and the Elizabethan folk songs and dances” formed “a perfect harmony”.

But of course the real thing is the fairies. Quite to my surprise they did not cause me a moment’s doubt. . . . Their first appearance is wonderful. A slight rustle, and patches of shadowy gold are feathered over the stage and then there is a rush of gold from either side and before one has seen what is happening Titania and Oberon are standing face to face. All the movements of the fairies seemed to me as good as they could be, and I feel it was a real stroke of inspiration to make them golden from head to toe. . . . It had exactly the effect of making them look shadowy and incorporeal. The traditional spangly fairies of *Midsummer Night’s Dream* dodge behind horrid cardboard bushes when the mortals appear. But these stood absolutely still, and one never doubted for a moment that they were invisible. . . . When Titania was

left asleep on the bank—just a gold head with green on all sides—I felt that if ever I did meet a fairy she would look just like that. . . .

[26 April 1914]

Tolkien was probably almost a year away from devising the fairies of his mythology, and at first they had their fair share of the miniature prettiness that Rob, here, is already condemning.

In May 1914 Rob is parading with the student Officer Training Corps (or O.T.C.) three times a week before breakfast. “It is glorious to be shooting again, and I feel as if I should soon recover my form,” he writes.⁹ A few days later he is crushed by exams: “Philology and Syntax was hopeless, but I knew it would be. I don’t think I can possibly have got more than 5%.”¹⁰ He is delighted to put the exams behind him: “It is a heavenly feeling, and next year’s Trip[os] is such a pleasant one that I have started some work for it already—for pure enjoyment.”¹¹

That summer there are few letters, so there is no indication of Rob’s reaction to the rapidly unfolding international crisis from 28 June and Britain’s entry into the war on 4 August. But at the start of October a letter to Estelle King, who is in America, tells how the summer’s plans, including a trip to Italy, have been scuppered. “My one consolation is that next time perhaps you will be able to come. But when will that be?” he adds. Many of his friends have already enlisted in the military, and Rob has thought of joining one of the new Birmingham battalions (raised by Tea-Cake’s father Sir John Barnsley); but he does not want to desert Cambridge and thinks he might wait until he has completed his degree—“Sooner, if things go badly and there becomes a real shortage of officers.” The letter to Estelle conveys an immediate war-weariness:

I have so often meant to write to you in the last two months but somehow the war has made letter-writing very much harder. One goes through such constant ups and downs of feeling that it seems rather hopeless to try and say anything genuine to anyone whom one does not see every day. . . . I either bury myself in something and manage not to think of the war or I just resign myself to the horror of it all. And sometimes when someone rouses me from one state into the other, my patriotism deserts me altogether, and I am merely selfish and hate the whole business just because it has spoilt my own petty little comforts. . . . Now we have all come to feel and know that we can’t stand outside and look on at this war, just because there isn’t anything outside it. It is life or death for everyone and everything one cares for.

[4 October 1914]

When Rob writes home from the Wisemans' in London, the tone is frivolous:

We are of course very mad and hilarious. Last night we went to see Gerald du Maurier in *Outcast*—such a bad play. I don't know what we are going to do today and shall probably start to do it before we have decided.

But later the same day the sense of disaster and uncertainty makes itself felt:

I nearly started inquiries for a flat. Only I am more likely to need a tent first. Isn't it dreadful about Antwerp—and extraordinary? I certainly thought the Germans had their hands full already. London looks very strange and solemn at night.

[7 October 1914]

Antwerp was under bombardment and fell the next day. Rob writes on 13 October:

Daddy says I am a pessimist always! but I must say I am very glad we have practically got to an end of "impregnable forts" which fall in a few days. Somehow these awful guns inspire me with hopelessness and evidently the Germans are preparing for a very big effort now all round. As always one *can* only think war however much one tries not to.

A few days later he notes a marked change in the atmosphere at Cambridge, dashing his hope that it will remain immune to the shocks of the wider world:

It is no more a unique place of high spirits and light-heartedness, but just about as pleasant a place as any other in these different days. And one's friends are just as much one's friends, even though they too are not the same. . . . As for my rooms—how any one could be such an ass as to feel depressed in them I don't know. They are beyond my highest hopes. . . . The view! I wish you could have seen it this afternoon with the low sun casting long shadows on the bowling green and making John's a picture of contrasts in sun and shade and colour.¹² And the border along the beautiful old wall is a splendid sight with chrysanthemums and michaelmas daisies and scarlet salvias. . . .

[18 October 1914]

At the start of November G.B. Smith comes up from Oxford. "Tolkien was to come too, but hasn't, as was to be expected," writes Rob. "No one knows why he couldn't come, least of all G.B. Smith, who was with him on Friday night." The phrase "as was to be expected" is striking: clearly, Tolkien was known to be undependable, at least in the matter of meeting up with his old friends.

But Smith has actually come, and we are having a great week-end. It is most refreshing to hear his comments on Cambridge, and things in general. I wish you could see him some time, when he was not awed into his drawing-room manner. It is a real pleasure to sit and hear him talk when he is in good form. He is really a bit of a genius, and has a gift for rapping out preposterous paradoxes that always delight me with their neatness—and often with their absurdity.

And I always value his judgment though I often disagree with it, and am pleased to find that he is immensely enthusiastic about my rooms, and has never seen ones that he preferred—even in Oxford. I had a breakfast party this morning and they looked their best. A sunny morning with shadows across the Bowling Green and just enough mist to make the background of trees a perfect thing—blue and orange. The leaves are nearly all gone from the avenue, but many of the trees are still gorgeous in their colouring.

I am having quite a perfect week-end. . . . We strolled around Cambridge all this morning, and went to lunch with Chris Wiseman. . .

[1 November 1914]

Rob drills with the O.T.C. but is depressed after a lecture from a major:

The burden of his remarks is the enormous number of chances of making a mistake and how fatal the consequences must be, and after listening to him I always feel as if I should never have the courage to give an order. What a fearful responsibility it is to be entrusted with so many men's lives! But of course it does not do to think too much of that, and I suppose one learns to take it all in the day's work, and take the risks as a doctor does in a professional spirit.

[9 November 1914]

On 28 November, Rob wins a commission as a junior officer in the new battalion that was being raised locally: the 11th Suffolks, also known as the Cambridgeshires. After a week he writes:

I won't pretend I have enjoyed it, but it has been much better than I expected and has gone much more quickly. I don't like all the officers but they are a good lot on the whole, and quite human. Major Morton, my Company Commander, is a quite delightful man and does his very best to make things easy. . . . I got my uniform on Friday and am now properly a 2nd Lieutenant for all to see. I feel very proud to be wearing it and more glad than I can say to feel able to look anyone in the face with the certainty that I am doing my duty.

The unit's huts are not yet finished and for the moment Rob remains in his rooms at Trinity. T.K. Barnsley and Ralph Payton visit, but Rob reflects that it is "a little bitter to be reminded so often of the happy days" before the war. In fact these two were now ex-members of the T.C.B.S., though it is possible that neither they nor Rob yet knew it. In mid-November Tolkien and Wiseman had taken the executive decision that the T.C.B.S. must include only themselves, Rob Gilson, and G.B. Smith.¹³ In the same 6 December letter home, Rob writes:

G.B. Smith told me a few days ago that he was applying for a commission and rumour says that he has now got on in the Oxford and Bucks. I must write and cheer him for I am sure he feels much more a fish out of water than I do. I have just read his poem in the *Oxford Magazine*, "Ave Atque Vale" ("Hail and Farewell"), addressed to Oxford and I think it good. I hope to see him and also John Ronald Tolkien next weekend.

The four remaining members of the T.C.B.S. gather at Wiseman's family home in a meeting they dub "the Council of London." Though Rob writes nothing to his stepmother about the proceedings, we know that it is here that Tolkien realised he wanted to be a writer. At least Rob has left us a description of the house:

It is of one of the commonest suburban types—not brand new and pretty-pretty but frankly hideous outside with quite good rooms inside and a garden just big enough for a tennis court. Mrs Wiseman hasn't bad taste and the Drawing-Room is quite a pretty room. It is largely blocked up by a grand piano, but this is much less heavy-looking than usual—they had the legs specially designed—and is altogether the least offensive piano I have ever seen.

[26 April 1914]

Soon we meet another fellowship: the officers who are to share Rob's life

in the 11th Suffolks, and his servant Bradnam. Bradnam inadvertently uses as a duster a piece of fine linen Rob has brought from home; Rob promptly sends it to the battalion wash where, calamitously, its colour changes. But a bond soon grows, and Rob later describes a gloomy return to duty “cheered by one bright spot—a large posy of cottage flowers for my room. . . . My servant brought them from his home: a sign of affection which gives me great pleasure.”¹⁴

The first weeks at the new barracks at Cherry Hinton, just outside Cambridge, are unpleasant, featuring inoculations and relentless rain that leaves the blankets wringing wet in the huts which, as he tells Estelle, “would in civilian life be described as sheds.”¹⁵ Rob writes home: “I feel as if I should always now be haunted by the sound of rain pelting on a galvanised iron roof—and the sight of mud!”¹⁶ A few hours with the brilliant former T.C.B.S. member Wilfrid Payton makes Rob feel his education is slipping away. “I am afraid I am getting seriously stupid—rusted up as it were. I couldn’t think of the Greek for ‘I shall go’ this evening.”¹⁷

The war, once predicted to be over by its first Christmas, has now acquired an air of near-permanence:

We have had some beautiful mornings, warm and sunny, and I cannot help thinking sometimes of February in Cambridge two years ago, when I watched eagerly for every sign of spring, and knew that spring meant Italy. It has quite a new and terrible meaning this year. Perhaps we may still look forward to it in hope, but I have quite lost now any conviction that the war is likely to end within the next six months. If anyone with a gift of prophecy were to tell me that the war would last ten years, I shouldn’t feel the least surprise. And I don’t say this in a passing fit of depression. I can quite endure the thought of it and have given up building definite hopes for “when the war is over”.

[13 February 1915]

Although he believes Britain’s cause in the war to be just, Rob is soon sickened by anti-German “cant,” as he calls it, and gets “rebellious and violently pro-German” if he hears it from the pulpit. “There must be thousands of Germans who believe in the justice of their side without being in the least like anti-Christians, or savages or barbarians or Huns or worshippers of the Mailed Fist or anything of the kind,” he tells Estelle, even going so far as to say he admires the Kaiser, though he thinks he has been foolish.¹⁸ And Rob is having to suppress his old anti-militarism, which is secretly running “rampant.”¹⁹ Later on he complains that the official encouragement of anti-German feeling, with the explicit aim of

the war given as “to kill more Germans,” amounts to just the kind of “Prussian” militarism he thought had led to the war in the first place.²⁰

Major Morton discovers Rob can draw and gets him sketching trench-sections. Soon he is tasked with writing instructions for trench-digging.²¹ Military exercises seem surprisingly imaginative: Rob describes how the troops have to capture “a Witch-Doctor who was supposed to be performing incantations” in a church.²² Even drill can be pleasant:

The correct thing is to be bored, but I confess I enjoyed it. One has to do nothing but what is definite and prescribed, and it is easier to keep discipline than in any other form of our work—and it is really useful too and pulls the men together and smartens them up. . . . A whole battalion drilling is really rather impressive and satisfying, especially when it takes place in a huge open field on a hill-top, with a wide view across the fens, and the towers of Ely standing up above the long shining roof of the Cathedral as clear as if it was only a mile away.

[29 March 1915]

Rob admits to Estelle that the public perception of soldiers as heroes makes him feel “a fraud.” “Wrestling with my dear, stupid, agricultural platoon . . . attempting to teach the art of war to Cambridge rustics” can be dull or funny, he says, but it is never heroic. His four-year-old half-brother, Hugh, has just asked him: “Rob, are you *ever* going to the front?”²³

A few days later, in mid-April, Rob finally reveals his long-suppressed feelings for Estelle at the Moncrieffs’ in Chelsea. She is shocked and upset. Donna speaks on his behalf to Estelle and her parents, but Wilson King warns Rob he must wait until he has a good income. Rob’s next letter to Estelle says they should not meet. “It is one of the hardest decisions I have ever had to make,” he tells Donna.²⁴

Just before midsummer 1915 the Cambridgeshires move from Cambridge. Rob feels that their final night there does the battalion credit—the only drunkards are the sergeants, who represent the old, regular army rather than the new volunteer army raised for the war by Lord Kitchener. At the new training area, Lindrick Camp in the Yorkshire Dales, they are under canvas in “a large grass field . . . on the slope of a hill overlooking Ripon with a view away across the valley to the hills by Pickering. Fountains Abbey is about a mile and a half away.” Rob, who has been brought up with a love of wild open spaces, enjoys the surroundings far more than his men, who cheer on their marches whenever a house comes in to sight.

Why so many troops are being congregated here is something of a puzzle. It is said that 100,000 is to be the number eventually, and there are literally miles of huts being built or just completed. . . . Ripon is already packed with soldiers. The streets are nearly solid in the evenings and the saluting is far more trying than even in the worst days at Cambridge.

[22 June 1915]

A clear indication of Rob's lack of military-mindedness comes in a couple of references to his efforts to decorate the mess tent with wildflowers picked from the hills. The landscape brings out his descriptive muse. "We drove down Wharfe Dale in the most beautiful evening light imaginable. Vivid green grass and long shadows and purple heather hills in the background . . . I am writing this under a mountain-ash on a steep grass slope falling away at my feet down to the banks of the Skell."²⁵

But duties now consume every waking hour and Rob feels discipline suffer. Heading for a musketry course on the coast, he complains of "the military idea of punctuality": the men have to be up at 3a.m. and to the station at 7a.m., though the train is not due until 9:10.²⁶ At Whitburn in Sunderland, a bare beach punctuated by factories and sewers, Rob falls ill, blaming food poisoning or the sea air, though it sounds more like exhaustion.

He develops flu and is sent to a military hospital where he is neglected by remote doctors and patronised by the local do-gooder:

A ridiculous old lady proposes to take us for a motor-drive to-morrow. I daresay I shall enjoy it, but I am rubbed up the wrong way by such very self-satisfied and advertising charity. She talked to us about herself for about half an hour yesterday: about her beautiful car that has been absolutely reserved for wounded soldiers ever since the war started; and the hundreds of soldiers that she has taken for rides and given tea and presents to; and all the letters she has had from them. All this, with a few references to the thanks she has had for doing it from General this and that and Sir Rupert so and so, and what Lord Fiddledee said to her about it when last he came to stay with them. Pshaw!

[6 September 1915]

On the drive, which takes them through 40 miles of country lanes,

The good lady hardly paused for breath. . . . We had every anecdote she had told us before, over again in almost

identical words . . . I hope we appeared grateful. . . . She asked us if we would go again tomorrow. That must somehow be avoided.

[8 September 1915]

In the middle of his hospital stay, Rob writes his first letter to Tolkien in many months. "I confess that I have often felt that the T.C.B.S. seemed very remote. That way lies despair," he says. "At times like this when I am alive to it, it is so obvious that the T.C.B.S. is one of the deepest things in my life." Rob is furious with himself for failing to respond to the poetry that Tolkien has been writing, "Because I do feel that it is one of the best things the T.C.B.S. can possibly do at present. Some day I want to submit a book of designs in like manner."²⁷ Rob manages to arrange an impromptu gathering of the four near where Tolkien is now training with the Lancashire Fusiliers. This "Council of Lichfield" was the last time all four met together.

After a month in hospital Rob rejoins the Cambridgeshires, now in Wiltshire, as they set up camp at Sutton Veny, "on the slope of a hill looking across the Wylde Valley to the bare ridge of Salisbury Plain".²⁸ Here, far from battle, Rob's unit suffers its first loss.

The grenadier section had a horrid accident the other day. A man in the brigade, not one of our battalion, was killed stone dead by a fragment of iron in the explosion of a barbed wire entanglement. It is a dangerous game and there are bound to be accidents, but it is very sad that the first should be fatal.

[17 October 1915]

G.B. Smith is encamped within a few miles. Rob writes:

On Saturday I went to Salisbury with G.B. Smith and we had tea and shopped and dined together. On Sunday afternoon we met at Westbury, 5 miles in the other direction. It is such a pretty village, with quite a continental "*place*," and a good pub, where we had tea and supper. Best of all the place is almost without soldiers. The rain stopped just as we got there and the evening was beautiful. We walked up on to the top of the bastions of the Plain, and sat down with a wonderful view all around us—greys and dull blues and greens, with wet trees down in the valley all blurred and misty. I drew a little picture of a copse—a thin line of blue trees with a black group of buildings behind it, and the thin straight trunks making a lovely pattern against the sky in the darkening light. G.B. Smith wrote a poem about it some time

ago, the one thing I believe of his which is being printed in *Oxford Poetry 1915*, so I gave him the drawing. He read Herrick [the Cavalier poet] to me while I drew, and we got miles away from the war. It is so splendid to feel that we can go on meeting every week-end while we are both here. It is very possible that we shall both go out at the same time.

[5 October 1915]

Rob dines with the officers of Smith's battalion—literary Oxford men—and in a letter home describes plans for a further T.C.B.S. gathering:

It makes a real difference having G.B.S. in the neighbourhood. On Wednesday, my first day back here, I bicycled over to Codford and dined in his mess and met Captain Geary [*sic*] the fellow of Wadham²⁹ and H.A. Smith, the fellow of Magdalen. I liked them both. Captain Geary sat with us afterwards in G.B. Smith's room and we had long discussions of Rupert Brooke, and Yeats, and Keats and Milton and Tintoret and Perugino—cosmopolitan at least. He is thoroughly an Oxford man and a good deal of a don.

Yesterday G.B. Smith and I went together to Bath, chose and engaged lodgings for our Council next week, in the South Parade, and dined together. He had week-end leave which he seems to get every week, and stayed in Bath for the night. To-day he came to Warminster and had dinner and tea and supper in our mess. . . . He showed me the latest poems he has written. I agree with John Ronald that he seems to have gone off a bit since the war. I am afraid it has damped more inspiration than it has stimulated.

It has been a really pleasant week-end and we have immersed ourselves in an eighteenth century atmosphere—Bath does it of its own accord—and conducted most of our conversation in Johnsonian and Gibbonian periods. G.B. Smith composes excellent Gibbon. He is at present reading *Amelia* and revelling in it. I very quickly catch his enthusiasm for that extraordinary century.

The T.C.B.S. Council of Bath never happened, and instead Rob Gilson, Smith and Wiseman met in London, without the elusive Tolkien.³⁰

At the same time, Rob reveals that his feelings for Estelle King have not diminished:

Whether I should wait, as Mr. and Mrs. King wish, or whether I should write to Estelle and ask her again for her answer,

now that she has had time to think it over—is the hardest question, I believe, that I have ever had to decide, and I have been trying to decide it for the last six months.

He has learned that she wants to see him before he leaves, and his hopes of winning her love are fired up again—though he tries to put his emotions in perspective:

The war and all it means has brought our deepest feelings near the surface in a way that is bewildering and sometimes frightening. It is so hard to be sure when our feelings are as sane and true as ever they were . . . and when we are all in danger of being hysterical. I cannot help feeling that there *is* something hysterical in the hurry of many engagements and marriages nowadays, and I feel a kind of distrust of the sentimental aspect of anything like “last leave.”

[17 October 1915]

In November, Rob writes Estelle a friendly letter, reserving all passionate feeling for descriptions of Salisbury Plain. A few days later, on weekend leave, he calls on the Wilson Kings with his stepmother. In mid-November, Rob learns that Smith and former T.C.B.S. member Ralph Payton are about to leave England for active duty—putting Rob’s battalion among those next in line to go. Then, during another leave at the end of the month, Estelle suddenly reciprocates his feelings. Back at Sutton Veny he writes addressing her as “My own dearest Estelle.” He is eager to tell her about his circle:

Ronald Tolkien—of the T.C.B.S.—has just sent me a new poem of his own which I like immensely. I must let you see some of his poetry some day soon.

[2 December 1915]

This is “Kortirion among the Trees,” his magnificent nature poem,³¹ written a couple of weeks earlier in a cold clear spell which inspired Rob to write his own evocative description:

Lovely frosty weather, but it is sometimes hard to keep warm. We see such beautiful sunrises on our early morning parades nowadays, a red sun rising out of a blue mist-bank, with such wonderful soft shadows in the hollows of the downs. The nights are lovely also. To-night there is a brilliant moon with the ground granite-hard underfoot.

[17 November 1915]

On 12 December Rob's battalion is suddenly under orders to prepare for embarkation to Egypt. "Three weeks ago I believe this news would have made me utterly miserable," he tells Estelle; but now he is buoyed up by love. It is also a great relief not to have to face the trenches of northern France, where G.B. Smith has now been sent.

Rob and Estelle meet in Bath, where she is chaperoned by a female relative, but they manage to achieve some time alone the following weekend. Rob writes that Sunday night:

While I can still feel your dear kisses on my lips and forehead, I must tell you how thankful I am from the bottom of my heart that you and accident combined to break my resolution not to come and see you. . . . I still feel my arm around you and my head on your breast. . . . I feel tonight as if I understood everything that has been sung and written of Love.

[19 December 1915]

A few days later he appears to be apologising for writing so frankly, and begging her not to draw back from him; but the awkwardness is soon put behind them.

Just before Christmas the Cambridgeshires and affiliated battalions are inspected by the Divisional commander. Rob writes to Estelle:

It took place on a bare down on the very top of the plain, just beside the old Ditch which is an ancient road, a grassy track which runs for miles across the highest part of the plain near here, and just beside one of the prehistoric barrows. Fifteen thousand men marshalled in one array is a very impressive sight.

[22 December 1915]

At the platoon Christmas dinner, Major Morton "said some awfully nice things about [the Platoon] and some very nice things about me."

And then the platoon gave me a most frantic cheering. I feel that I know now what I have always hoped and never been sure of—that the men like me. . . . Afterwards the Major said, "I see you are fond of him, and so am I."

In the midst of writing the same letter, Rob is called outside and when he writes his postscript his mood has changed utterly. "In the last hour the world has turn to a dismal grey," he tells Estelle. They have been told to return all sun-helmets: so it is to France that they are heading, after all.

Back again to the nightmare of those wet cold trenches. It seems almost unbearable. I can't feel any comfort in the fact that they are nearer home. Indeed I almost think that that is the worst part of it. It is the speed with which a man can pass from the overcivilised flash and glitter of luxury in London to the utter barbarism of war, that seems to me to have shattered the noble hopes and ideals that the war gave us at first. The belief that men who went from home to fight were

“to turn, as swimmers into cleanness leaping
Glad from a world grown old and cold and weary,
Leave the sick hearts that honour could not move,
And half-men and their dirty songs and dreary”³²

—dear, if you knew, as I almost hope you don't, the vice and beastliness that fattens on men and officers in London on leave from the trenches, you would understand how this belief has been proved false. . . . And then the newspapers and the cinematograph and the flying visits to the trenches—they have made impossible the noble simplicity of ideas which should be the only good thing that war can bring us.

[26 December 1915]

The day of departure remains a mystery to Rob. He tells Estelle how he has written to all the T.C.B.S. with the news, also sending a copy of Tolkien's poem “Kortirion” to Wiseman and another to Smith. She, meanwhile, has decided to volunteer as a nurse in Holland, perhaps not only out of a sense of duty but also to make some distance between herself and the control of her disapproving parents. On New Year's Day 1916 Rob writes to her:

What a wonderful year! I expected nothing but wretchedness and I have found——! I wish I were a poet and then I might be able to express myself.

How I hope and pray that it may be a happy new year for both of us, and that at the end of it we shall have learnt better and better to understand all that this year's happiness means in our two lives.

The last weeks in England have brought a rush of requests from Rob to his stepmother: a brandy flask, tobacco and cigars, volumes of Herodotus, Homer and George Meredith; a Greek Testament, sketching equipment, cutlery, a jack-knife with tin-opener, toilet paper. But on the eve of departure Rob is forced to send much of it home due to strict limits on kit. He warns Donna of expenses to come and offers to help pay,

adding (with surely unintentional wit): “It may prove necessary to buy frequent supplies of underclothes.”³³ Once in France, Rob is soon asking her to supply torches and luminous watches for his sergeants, but also, for himself, the *Times Literary Supplement*.

On 8 January Rob’s battalion departs. From the train he writes to Estelle (coincidentally taking ship for Holland the same day):

I felt glad this morning that I had no-one to see me off. The pleasure of such occasions really isn’t worth the pain. . . .

I feel as if I were utterly unprepared, which after 14 months’ training is absurd—or ought to be. . . . Now in the train where we travel separate from the men, there is time to think a little and try to realize the situation. It has resulted as usual in my going to sleep.

I wish I could describe or draw for you the lovely sunrise we watched this morning from the train—like one of the Bellinis in the National Gallery, with Salisbury Plain standing up against the sky, bounded by a lovely velvety black line. . . . It is a long time since I have felt the sheer beauty of things so strongly. It really seems for the moment more like a holiday.

The battalion arrives in the flatlands of northern France a few miles from the Belgian border. Now he has to censor his own letters. He tells his stepmother:

Everything which I am allowed to tell you seems ridiculously hackneyed. It is all part of the theatrical atmosphere—the actual performance after endless rehearsals. . . .

A short crossing—and I wasn’t ill—a night at the base in huts and tents—a long railway journey and now our first billets a good many miles at the back of the front. The guns were just audible yesterday, and there is no other sign of war, except the British tommies everywhere and the gravity of the French people. That is very noticeable. There seems cheerfulness enough but none of the sparkle of gaiety. You could never wonder, as one does in England, whether they really understand that there is a war. Poor things, I don’t suppose they can forget it.

[10 January 1916]

Now there are courses on poison gas. The ground is waterlogged. He tells Estelle:

It is very strange to look out from these windows across miles of flat peaceful country and say to oneself that only a few miles out of sight there are strange and terrible things going on that all Europe is watching. It is so unlike everything that one has ever thought of as real. . . .

At night time the sky to the East is constantly lighted up by flashes. There are big and small ones, lasting for different lengths of time and appearing at all kinds of different points in the sky—some along the horizon and some high up in the air. . . . It is a weird and fascinating sight. . . .

The nearer we get to the war, the more cheerful our men become. How I hope it will last. I am still a good deal afraid of being frightened but less than I was. I shall be glad when I have got over the first hearing of the guns at close quarters.

[12 January 1916]

On 2 February, Rob has his first experience of the trenches. He writes home from a dugout:

As yet no shell has come over—and that of course is the terrifying ordeal. Otherwise it is a sort of combination of [the shooting ranges at] Bisley and a firework display. These are much improved trenches and quite elaborate. The amount of human labour expended on them seems incredible—and all for the purpose of getting out of the way of each other's devilish inventions for destroying human life. . . .

The weather is beastly beyond words. Any amount of snow and a resulting slush which no amount of drainage can keep pace with. In several places you cannot get round the trench without going through 6 inches of water on top of the floorboards. . . .

I have seen no Germans yet. Some of the officers here were out for several months before they set eyes on one of the enemy. In spite of the firing it needs an effort of the imagination to realize that the Germans are only quite a few yards away. We live our life and they live theirs, and we have set up between us the most absolute barrier that can be constructed between men.

After a week in the trenches Rob feels a huge weight lifted. "It has been one of those golden days that foretell spring—such fresh greens and promise of buds to come," he tells Estelle. On the way he wandered into the forest and picked oxlips for her, one of which he encloses. "They seem to give me so much hope and cheerfulness. There is so much of this

war that is old and stale and dreary already. My heart leaps when I see the freshness of world-old Spring.”³⁴ Rob promises: “Of course we’ll go to Italy together some day. Many times. . . . It is one of the most precious of all my dreams, and I love to know that you dream it too and can think of it as to-morrow.”³⁵

During the next bout of trench duty the weather is foul. “The cold is excruciating,” writes Rob. “I suppose I was foolish to start thinking of Spring so soon.”³⁶ A sergeant brings in an unexploded German bomb to show him, and Rob thinks it “quite a beautiful shape – like a Greek vase.”³⁷ But he bemoans “the commonplace pettiness” of his jobs, such as amending a weekly list of “articles deficient and defective”—a list which the quartermasters ignore repeatedly.³⁸

On 10 March 1916, Rob writes to Estelle from a new set of trenches with the news that Tolkien is about to marry:

He is an orphan and has always had something of a wanderer’s life. He became engaged on his 21st birthday two years ago, and I believe it was a life long romance. Perhaps the very best of all his poems describes the way in which they had grown up together.³⁹

He has a commission in the Lancashire Fusiliers and is still in England. He did not join the Army until later than the rest of us as he finished his schools at Oxford first. It was quite necessary for him, as it is his main hope of earning his living and I am glad to say he got his first—in English Literature.⁴⁰ He is quite a great authority on etymology—an enthusiast. He has always been desperately poor and I am delighted to hear that he is able to get married now. He has possibly inherited some money. I have not heard from him lately. We are very bad at writing to one another and the news reached me through G. B. Smith. It is a splendid thing for him to reach this anchorage.

I look forward to the day when you will meet the T.C.B.S. I feel sure you will like them all when you get to know them—though perhaps not straight away. I know that Donna took some little while to discover their virtues. As you know, they hold a very special position for me amongst my friendships.

Rob’s letter to Donna suggests frustration at Tolkien’s failure to tell him directly: “The imminence of the date is a complete surprise to me, as all his movements nearly always are.” By contrast, trench life has remarkably little that is unexpected.

I have never set out on anything new before for which I have

been so completely prepared. Perhaps I least pictured the number of rockets at night. They are going up from both sides the whole night long, and there are many kinds and sizes. The most effective are parachute lights which float for quite a long while in the air and light up all the ground—when the wind is right you can fire one into the air and watch it sailing slowly across to behind the German lines. Yet with all the lights, it is the easiest thing in the world for patrols in No Man's Land to escape detection. At first when one goes out it feels as if nothing could save one from being seen. But when a light goes up you lie down and stay still and the chances are 20 to one against your being discovered. No doubt the enemy find it just the same.

[9 March 1916]

(Later a fellow officer recalled Rob telling him how one wet night, crawling on his belly in the middle of No Man's Land, he was forced to suppress a guffaw at the contrast with his younger self—the cultured and fastidious undergraduate who had toured French churches with a sketch-book).⁴¹ Rob tells Estelle:

I feel that if I survive this war the only classification of weather that will ever matter to me will be into dry and muddy. I could almost cry sometimes at the universal mud and the utter impossibility of escaping from it or keeping it from one's possessions. I bring as few of them up to the trenches as possible. Some people talk of reading books here, but I don't understand how they can manage it. . . .

It is splendid to feel that on that wonderful day when we meet again we shall know each other so much better than before—however embarrassed we are silly enough to feel! In the normal course I might hope for leave sometime in May, but who knows if things will be normal. I would forego my leave willingly if it meant that this standstill was over at last and things were really beginning to move towards the end. I really am growing a little optimistic now.

[11 March 1916]

The battalion's first officer casualty appears in the official lists—shot through the head by a sniper. Fine spring weather brings increased casualties because it is ideal for artillery fire, he tells Donna:

The helpless feeling of being shelled in the trenches is rather horrid. One can only wait and hope that one won't land in

the trench, and happily it is only a very small proportion which do.

[15 March 1916]

By the end of March Rob is feeling the tedium and tension of manning the front line with no apparent end to the deadlock. The rain is merciless. Keeping morale up is increasingly difficult. He tells Estelle:

It is an awful thing if a whole lot of people give way to depression together. I have seen it in one of our companies . . . and I don't believe I could stand up against a general depression. But each man can be a tremendous support to his neighbour. . . .

[25 March 1916]

The dull flat landscape does not help, and he can hear huge bombardments at night from the direction of Ypres. But there are comforts.

G.B. Smith writes me such amusing letters—he has been attached for some time to the Army Service Corps on some special job well back from the line, and, he says he has had time to recover his perspective and see the humorous side of things. I can't imagine that he ever lost it. He makes me feel a dull dog and you, I know, accuse me of taking things too seriously. I wonder if I do. I always believe that I've got plenty of sense of humour—but everyone thinks he has, even those who lack it most. . . .

Every one else I know has read a dozen books at least. G.B. Smith has read a huge amount since he has been out here. But I never could keep pace with him. He read voraciously, and to my despair, when we were at school.

[7 April 1916]

Battalion life for Rob is not devoid of good companionship and talk. There is late-night conversation about the ethics of war with his closest friend in the battalion, Andrew Wright; and once the officers find a tea-shop with a piano and one of them turns out to be a fine player with a repertoire of folk songs. Rob continues to find interactions with the pragmatic Bradnam amusing, as he tells his stepmother:

My servant's aesthetic opinions about this country disagree with mine. . . . I was walking with him some time ago through the much shelled village . . . when he suddenly remarked, "This must have been a rare pretty place before the war. All the houses look so new."

[3 April 1916]

In April the battalion is pulled back from the flatlands to be trained for a tougher sector of the line. He writes to Estelle of the joy of battalion unity, of carrying all one's possessions, and of never staying in one place for more than a night:

No slight discomforts matter because you will leave them so soon; and the pleasant and comfortable things have a special value because they seem beyond one's rightful expectations. . . . One comes nearest to the gipsy glamour—the nomad tribe.

[8 April 1916]

They leave the front line and the flatlands behind and enter chalk downland much like Salisbury Plain, far from sight of the enemy. He tells his stepmother:

It was with glee that I transferred my Gas Helmet to my packed up luggage, and here I take quite a wicked delight in flashing my electric torch broadcast when I go outside at night. We can sit down to dinner in the evening and hear not the faintest echo of that hateful popopop-pop of machine guns.

[8 April 1916]

The men spend days and nights in trenches built especially for training, and even here the mud is relentless. Discipline wobbles.

There is much soreness everywhere over work on Saturday afternoon and Sunday, and I grumble at it myself as it seems unnecessary. But my platoon is exceptionally ill-tempered about it and unwilling—hard to deal with. They growl all day long. I suspect that I have done something to irritate them but don't know it. I know the ringleaders but can find out at present no tangible charge against them.

[16 April 1916]

Rob is tasked with mapping the labyrinthine training trenches, and disciplined for breaking regulations by revealing too much military information (probably his location, lightly encoded) in one of his letters to Estelle. But time off on Easter Sunday is idyllic:

The wood was lovely—carpeted with periwinkles and bluebells and spotted orchids, and cowslips and anemones. Lots of wild cherry, and every kind of bird. I saw the first swallow of this summer, and a hawk came sweeping down past us and nearly brushed our faces. Larks singing all the while,

and every now and then the cuckoo. . . . I lay on my back and gazed up at the deep blue sky and white filmy clouds and thought of you and England. I think we have all learned to live in the moment, and only go outside it in dream of happy days that were and that shall come again.

[23 April 1916]

In May the battalion goes by rail to the Somme region, part of a massive troop build-up for of the “Big Push” now planned. Rob marvels at Amiens cathedral, and how its builders “were almost madly obsessed with the idea of height and slenderness.” “I utterly forgot the war,” he tells his stepmother. On the same day he writes to Estelle:

It is lovely country—gentle hills and rich green valleys lined with poplars. There are many beautiful churches and we passed one lovely château on a hill surrounded by huge old red-brick walls enclosing apple orchards. . . . I fancy G.B. Smith is not far from here. I wish I could find him.

[8 May 1916]

The soldiers carry gas helmets at all times again, and the big guns are plainly audible. Many aeroplanes and observation balloons are overhead. At the same time, Rob seems to plunge into introspection:

I can't help feeling angered at our short-lived memories. It seems half a life-time since we were last in the trenches, and we now grumble at conditions which would have appeared luxury. I hope we shall not so soon forget this life if we survive it. It ought to cast a rosy glow over everything hereafter.

...

I know that many people . . . class together all who are at the front as equal objects of pity and admiration. At present we deserve none of it. Our time up till now has been little more than a picnic and our hardships hardly greater than any we experienced in England. . . . I do often feel a horrid fraud.

[11 May 1916]

On 16 May Rob and his fellow officers tour their new trenches.

Here one's view is bounded by two walls of earth or chalk. But real trenches feel, and are, much safer from shell-fire, and as most of these trenches are a full eight or ten feet deep

there is almost none of the old bother of keeping heads down. In the other part of the line we acquired a kind of trench stoop; not by any means always required, but one got into the habit. It was a sound precaution because of the snipers. Here practically no rifles are fired either by us or the Germans, which seems at first almost uncanny. . . . There is considerably more shelling, or more continuous, and trench mortars and rifle grenades are frequent.

We were a merry party and Wright refused to let any of us take the expedition seriously. He first conceived himself as going up “as the Bishop of London”; then pictured us as a party of War Correspondents, or travellers from Burberry’s setting out to get testimonials from “the man in the trenches.” . . .

His letter home describes night patrols, the detestable mud, the hordes of rats that whistle like humans, and the enemy’s latest weapon.

The Germans have devised a new devilment which we call a paint-can. There is nothing new in the principle; it is just a glorification of the jam-tin bomb, fired from a spring gun. It is an ordinary oil or paint drum, filled with nails, tints, brass-hooks, razor-blades—anything you like—and containing about 60 pounds of explosive. It makes a huge noise, but like all these things, unless it lands actually in the trench, little damage is done, and I should think 19 out of 20 or more, are wasted.

There are communication trenches of great length. One crosses over a hill, from the top of which . . . one has a wide view for miles of the trenches, our own and the enemy’s, and of the country behind the German line. It is an extraordinary sight. This place is some two thousand yards from the enemy so one can look with impunity, and a seat has been cut out in the side of the trench so that one can sit and survey the panorama. The same thing happens on a smaller scale in the front trenches. You turn a corner suddenly and see the German trenches spread out before you.

Even here, on the edge of No Man’s Land, Rob finds solace in natural beauty.

There is a wood [*Bécourt Wood*], not far from the front line, through and round which the trenches wind. It is a pleasant place with many big trees of many kinds, and a ruined

château with laburnums and pink may in blossom, and a chestnut avenue, and lawns all overgrown with buttercups. In the shelter of the wood one can walk about, or lie and read.

I rather like the earthy smell of the trenches and the festoons of mustard and stitchwort and buttercups and yellow nettles that hang down on either side. Near the wood, they are specially pleasant, and the trees seem to stand up to a giant size when you look at them from below the level of the ground. . . .

The wood smelt deliciously fresh in the early hours of this morning and I heard the nightingales. It seems so wonderful that shells and bullets shouldn't have banished them, when they are always so shy of everything human.

[17 May 1916]

From now on his battalion is in and out of these trenches, using the ruined Bécourt Château as its headquarters. He tells Estelle from a dug-out:

The real strain is the strain of waiting. Always waiting with the knowledge that waiting cannot end the war, and nothing stirring to take our minds away from petty worries. It makes us all grumpy and bad-tempered sometimes, and I know that I am often haunted by the same feeling that I always had in England, that the test is yet to come.

[20 May 1916]

On 6 June, Rob has no idea that Tolkien is en route across the English Channel, also heading for the Somme. However, he soon hears from Chris Wiseman, who was on the fringe of the naval Battle of Jutland "but escaped untouched."⁴² Rob berates himself for forgetting his half-brother Hugh's sixth birthday, adding:

I still hope to see him before long. . . . It's no use counting on it. There is always the chance of all leave, and even, so it is said, of all *letters*, being stopped. . . .

I am simply longing to get home for a day or two to get a little perspective. It is impossible out here and I feel rather adrift. I want to talk and talk.

[7 June 1916]

Hopes of being given leave at the same time as Estelle also evaporate as the great Somme offensive approaches. He falls foul of the censors again, and one of his letters to her is stopped.

I was amazed, for you can imagine how careful I have been ever since the previous incident and I had no idea that I could have offended. The worst of it is that my letters must now be censored by an officer in the regiment, which is unpleasant for everyone concerned. I am afraid I cannot help betraying my consciousness of this censorship and you will find a difference in my letters. . . . You have missed one of my few long letters of recent weeks and a too-vivid description of one place we were in.

[13 June 1916]

He confesses to a growing callousness about casualties:

It is inevitable. Either that, or one's nerves give way. I often think that it is Germany's greatest crime of all that she has blunted the sensitiveness of the whole civilized world. Just think of our right and proper horror at the Titanic disaster.—and now!

[20 June 1916]

On 25 June, a long letter to Estelle omits to mention the massive week-long barrage that had just been launched to obliterate the German defences. Rob writes only of peaceful scenes, which must have stood out vividly for him against the terrifying backdrop he could not describe. His feelings are sublimated.

It is Sunday and we have managed to observe it as such, which is so often impossible. The men love singing hymns. It is about the only form of music that our unmusical battalion really delights in.

I wish you could see a deserted garden that I passed the other day—all overgrown with long grass and weeds. It was a riot of bright colours. Larkspur and canterbury bells and cornflowers and poppies of every shade and kind growing in a tangled mass. One of the few really lovely things that the devastation of war produces. There are many grand and awe-inspiring sights. Guns firing at night are beautiful—if they were not so terrible. They have the grandeur of thunderstorms.

But how one clutches at the glimpses of peaceful scenes. It would be wonderful to be a hundred miles from the firing line once again. It was that restful feeling that I most looked forward to in the thought of leave. Alas! there seems no prospect of it now.

I have had letters from all of the T.C.B.S. lately, which have much cheered me. There are so many things, apart from mere news, which one longs to discuss. How I crave for a talk with you.

On 27 June he writes to Donna of the weather, and a company bath in the river, and adds, “No time for more—ever yr loving R.Q.”

There are no more letters. On the night of 30 June the Cambridgeshires moved into position. On 1 July, the artillery barrage stopped and a massive mine was exploded under the German trenches opposite, hurling chalk and earth high into the sky. At 7.30am Rob led his men over the top. The German guns, which had not been destroyed after all, opened up. In No Man’s Land, Bradnam was hit, then Major Morton. Rob took charge of the company, briefly.

He was killed by a shellburst.⁴³ The Gilsons learned of his death a week later. Estelle, who was just then returning from Holland, must have found the news waiting for her at home. Smith and Tolkien, who were each less than six miles from him on the fatal day, did not hear for two weeks.

Some years later, Estelle found her way to the Somme, and wrote to Donna from the ruined town of Albert:

The little cemetery—I am glad to say Bécourt is a very small one—is a little field in the folds of a green hill by the road side. Just rows of little wooden crosses. They are going to put up marble stones, for which I am sorry but I expect it is best. There will then be 18 inches for flowers and the grave will be covered with grass. I am asking to have a rose tree put because I think it may last and there is a young Englishman here who has said he will see to it. I think it will not make it conspicuous. . . . It is just what I like. So quiet in a little less desolate part of this poor torn country.⁴⁴

NOTES

- 1 *Letters* (429).
- 2 17 November 1912.
- 3 9 November 1912.
- 4 29 August 1912.
- 5 26 April 1914.

- 6 18 August 1913.
- 7 26 October 1913.
- 8 The Tripos, as Cambridge undergraduate courses are known.
- 9 30 April 1914.
- 10 22 May 1914.
- 11 31 May 1914.
- 12 St. John's College, next to Trinity.
- 13 See *Tolkien and the Great War* (54-6).
- 14 15 June 1915.
- 15 31 January 1915.
- 16 13 February 1915.
- 17 14 February 1915.
- 18 31 January 1915.
- 19 9 April 1915.
- 20 10 July 1915.
- 21 Gilson's trench-digging drill was incorporated in W.A. Brockington, *Elements of Military Education*, in 1916.
- 22 4 March 1915.
- 23 9 April 1915.
- 24 10 June 1915.
- 25 27 July 1915.
- 26 10 August 1915.
- 27 R.Q. Gilson to J.R.R. Tolkien, 13 September 1915, quoted in *Tolkien and the Great War* (100-1).
- 28 1 October 1915.
- 29 Henry Theodore Wade-Gery, commanding officer of the 19th Lancashire Fusiliers, Smith's battalion, was an Oxford classicist. *Oxford Poetry 1915*, which included Tolkien's "Goblin Feet," also carried poems by Wade-Gery such as "To Master Robert Herrick: Upon His Death." On the Somme in August 1916 he gave Tolkien a volume of

William Morris's *Earthly Paradise* (*Tolkien and the Great War* 185).

- 30 See *Tolkien and the Great War* (104-6).
- 31 *Lost Tales I* 32-6.
- 32 Rupert Brooke, "Peace."
- 33 7 January 1916.
- 34 Brown and fragile, the flower was still pressed between the pages of this 9 February 1916 letter when I read it.
- 35 19 February 1916.
- 36 26/27 February 1916.
- 37 12 February 1916.
- 38 18 February 1916.
- 39 This may refer to "You and Me and the Cottage of Lost Play" (*Lost Tales I* 28-30), with its dream-imagery of Tolkien and Edith Bratt playing together "in old nursery days" (in reality they did not meet until 1908, when they were 16 and 19 years old respectively). Another possibility is "As Two Fair Trees" (*Biography* 74).
- 40 Tolkien achieved first-class honours in "Schools," as Oxford's final undergraduate examinations are known.
- 41 Lt P.V. Emrys-Evans to R.C. Gilson, written after Rob's death.
- 42 Letter home, 16 June 1916.
- 43 According to most reports; see *Tolkien and the Great War* (155-6, 340).
- 44 25 May [1923 at the latest].

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The Hen that Laid the Eggs: Tolkien and the Officers Training Corps

JANET BRENNAN CROFT

J.R.R. Tolkien, like many young men of his class and education, participated in a program designed by the British government to provide likely candidates with preliminary training that would enable them to be moved quickly and efficiently into officer positions in the military when and if the country went to war. This program was known as the Officers Training Corps, and while at King Edward's School Tolkien was involved with the OTC, and possibly with the preceding, more loosely organized Cadet Corps program. Because of this program, Tolkien and many of his fellow junior officers in the Great War were already familiar with the procedures of drill and camp and with basic tactics of war games in all kinds of weather. The atmosphere of the training camps of World War I would not have taken them entirely by surprise, but would have been somewhat reminiscent of the great summer encampments of OTC units from around the country—though now with a far more serious purpose.¹ The OTC continued training cadets during the war; in the rather chilling words of one of the historians of the program, it was the “hen that was prepared to go on laying eggs until Germany should call for a change of diet” (Haig-Brown 73).

While this is of great interest as an element in Tolkien's biography, such long-term familiarity, beginning in his school days, with military life under canvas also lends an easy verisimilitude to his depictions of life on the open road and in military encampments in *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*, and may hint at some background assumptions we can make about the importance of military preparedness and the consequences of lack of preparedness among the free peoples of Middle-earth. The basic supposition, rarely questioned at the time in England—that young men in the public schools, supposedly the best and the brightest of their generation, with great expectations waiting to be unlocked by dint of their education and connections, should at the same time be preparing to lead other young men, to serve and perhaps die for their country if called on—supports an underlying cultural model valuing preparedness, assuming that preparedness is never wasted, and emphasizing that watchfulness and preparedness are the responsibility of good government and its citizens.² As it was in Tolkien's England, so it is in Middle-earth. As Nan C. Scott explains, in Arda's history we see a constantly repeating pattern of “wars and cycles of Watchful Peace, failures of vigilance, and once again wars,” and “to survive in Middle-earth, ceaseless vigilance and some means of defense are necessary” (24).

Cadet training

Many British public schools had long had individual Cadet Corps which provided students with some early training in drill, shooting, and sometimes riding. Volunteer units had been in existence at the universities since the time of the British Civil War (Ryan 174) and had grown rapidly in “the frantic post-Crimean War period” (Teagarden 91). All these units were independently organized and “largely reflected the personality and energy of their commanding officers”—so clearly there was a great deal of variation in the quality of training (91). But in 1908, in an effort to remedy the serious problems of officer shortages that plagued the British in the South African War, a proposal was made by Sir Edward Ward, a member of Lord Richard Burdon Haldane’s Army Council,³ to reform this loose system and organize all the volunteer and cadet corps into a centrally administered, standardized program that could provide a steady supply of young men who could be quickly moved through formal military training channels when the need arose. Participants could train for two levels of certificates which would enable them to enter the armed forces at a certain rank with minimal additional training, or translate into a certain number of points on the admission test to one of the military academies (Teagarden 92, Worthington 92). This detail had the distinct advantage of relocating a large portion of the potential officer’s training to his leisure time at school or university, both decreasing interference with his civilian career and reducing the need for duplicate training later (Teagarden 93, Worthington 91). The OTC had two divisions: the Senior Division, associated with the Universities and the Inns of Court, and the Junior Division, formed at the public schools (Haig-Brown 18-21). King Edward’s School had had a Cadet Corps for a brief time in the 1860s, but after it dissolved they did not form one again until 1907—just in time to be caught up in the 1908 Haldane Reforms and become an official OTC unit (Hutton 149, Trott 89-90, Garth, *Great War* 22-23).⁴ Some 30,000 officers passed through the OTC programs during the course of the Great War alone (Ryan 175).

Tolkien’s training

Why did Tolkien join the OTC? In 1908, Tolkien was 16 years old and had been attending King Edward’s School in Birmingham since 1900, with a short break in 1902-1903, and he was living in the lodging-house where he met Edith Bratt. There might have been a financial incentive—while the school received a sum of money from the Army for providing instructors and physical resources, each individual cadet was also paid for purchasing and maintaining his kit and attending summer camp, with bonuses for qualifications achieved (Haig-Brown 21,

Teagarden 94, Ryan 175). It might have been the romantic inspiration of popular stories of schoolboys gone on to brilliant military or intelligence careers, like Rudyard Kipling's 1897 *Stalky and Co.*⁵ Perhaps his attendance at an inspection and address by Field Marshall Earl Roberts at KES in April 1907 was an inspiration, if he had not already joined the Cadet Corps by that time (Scull & Hammond I:12). It could simply be that Tolkien was an inveterate joiner, and several of his rugby teammates and other friends were already members (Garth, *Great War* 23). Many public schools did have a distinctly militaristic culture; on the eve of the Great War, several years later, some 79% of the public schools had OTC units, and membership at those schools approached 100% (Otley 330). It seems unlikely, though, that Tolkien ever seriously considered a military career; he planned on an academic post after the war and was concerned to delay his enlistment until he had finished his degree (Garth, *Great War* 43-44; Carpenter 72).

Whatever the reason Tolkien signed up, he would have joined his fellow cadets for a few hours several days a week during the school year to exercise, march in drill, hear lectures, practice shooting and care of their weapons, learn semaphore and Morse code, play in the band, read and draw maps, stand parade for inspection, and sometimes even practice night maneuvers—much like the training Tolkien later underwent during the war (Haig-Brown 21, Mais 12, Ryan 93-94). Several times a year there might also be joint training and exercises with another junior division school,⁶ or the opportunity to provide a guard of honor for a royal visitor to their school or town (Scull & Hammond I:15).

From some contemporary accounts it sounds like most boys who joined before the war broke out looked on the usual round of drill and practice sessions during the year as rather boring and only to be endured for the sake of the splendor and excitement of the annual two weeks of summer encampment, when contingents from schools all over the country met (e.g. Mais 8-9).⁷ There was a holiday air at these encampments—it was like a contemporary Boy Scout Jamboree. The participants travelled up by train, lived in spartan tents, went on long marches, trained with real soldiers, got a chance to examine the latest military equipment, fought happily in mock battles, held nightly sing-alongs, ate in mess-tents, and so on (Mais 9-10). As one historian puts it, “the best officers are those who have been through all things experienced under canvas by the men whom they will someday command.” OTC training was designed to teach the participant, by direct experience of these conditions himself, “that his first and foremost duty is the care for the well-being of his men” (Haig-Brown 41, 88-89).

Tolkien attended the OTC encampments in 1909 (Salisbury Plain) and 1910 (Aldershot). In 1909, in an excess of high spirits, he managed

to cut his hand quite badly on a pen-knife stuck in a tent-pole (Scull & Hammond I:15). The 1910 camp was memorable for a visit to a depot of military airplanes and airships (19-20), and for an excess of punning among the attending members of the King Edwards School Debating Club (20).

World War I was declared during the 1914 summer camp, which was attended by some 10,000 boys (Haig-Brown 12). One day camp was as normal, though rumors were flying; the next, the regular officers and men, the horses and cooks and equipment had all decamped (71-72). Though Tolkien did not attend this particular camp, one might detect a sort of kinship between the feelings of these young men and Merry Brandybuck's feelings of loneliness and bewilderment at the camp of the Rohirrim at Dunharrow, where the "great concourse of men," the "ordered rows of tents and booths, and lines of picketed horses, and great store of arms, and piled spears bristling like thickets of new-planted trees" (*RI*, V, iii, 776) contributed to the confusion and sense of loss of a young cadet, who is suddenly caught up in real war, and subject, willy-nilly, to the unquestionable decisions of kings.

The high point of the OTC for Tolkien may have been being chosen for the contingent of eight cadets from King Edward's School that attended the 1911 coronation and royal progress of George V, an event he always remembered with pride (*Letters* 391)—much as Ioreth and her fellow citizens of Gondor burst with pride at the pomp and splendor of Aragorn's coronation. The cadets joined troops lining the coronation parade route and the royal procession passed directly in front of them on its return from Westminster Abbey on June 22. On the next day the cadets lined the route for the departure of the Royal Progress from Buckingham Palace. Then in July the full cadet contingent travelled to Windsor Great Park for a review of the entire OTC by the new king—some 18,000 young men and boys and nearly 500 horses (Scull & Hammond I:25-26, Garth, *Great War* 23, Teagarden 96).

Tolkien apparently found the King Edward's School OTC congenial enough in those pre-war days that he joined King Edward's Horse a few months later, shortly after starting his first year at Oxford in November 1911 (Scull & Hammond I:29, Croft 149, Garth, "Tolkien, Exeter College" 37). The KEH was a fairly new army regiment for colonial volunteers (such as Tolkien, who was born in the Orange Free State), with an emphasis on cavalry training. At the time of Tolkien's membership it was considered a part of the Imperial Yeomanry, a name bearing echoes of the Assize of Arms of 1252, which required yeomen—small landowners and others at a certain level of income—to train with and maintain various weapons. But Tolkien resigned after little more than a year in February 1913, at about the time he was determining to devote himself anew

to his studies for Edith's sake. Shortly after this time, the KEH was made a Special Reserve unit, meaning it could be mobilized and called up, as indeed it was mobilized for the defense of London, and some squadrons were eventually sent overseas ("King Edward's Horse").

Even this limited amount of senior-level training stood Tolkien in good stead when he eventually began formal officer training with the Oxford OTC in 1914 and joined the Lancashire Fusiliers in 1915. Because of his experiences with the King Edward's School Officers Training Corps and King Edward's Horse, Tolkien had already had several years of intermittent exposure to para-military life, and was to some extent familiar with what might be required of him and how well he might expect to meet his obligations.⁸

Civilian defense training in Middle-earth

We see very little in the way of formal group training programs for civilians (as opposed to members of standing armies) as a part of general preparedness in Middle-earth, aside from one (perhaps not too surprising) example. It might reasonably be inferred that something of the sort takes place in Rohan, and quite probably Gondor as well; Éowyn speaks of being a "shieldmaiden" as if it is an official title, and boasts she can "ride and wield blade" as well as any man (*RK*, V, ii, 58), and young Bergil son of Beregon, one of the lads who stayed in Gondor, at the age of ten already claims to have had some instruction in basic wrestling skills (*RK*, V, i, 42).

But the clearest example of cadet corps-type military preparedness occurs in the Shire itself, Tolkien's stand-in for pre-war Edwardian England. Given the peaceful nature of the Shire, it may seem odd that the Hobbits would ever have had formal military preparation programs, yet the Prologue to *The Lord of the Rings* makes a point of mentioning that the Hobbits were "doughty at bay, and at need could still handle arms [and] shot well with the bow" (15). The Thain of the Took was "captain of the Shire-muster and the Hobbitry-in-arms," though these institutions had fallen into disuse (19) and the hobbits had not sent troops to aid the King since the Battle of Fornost in T.A. 1975 (14). One might safely postulate that the Shire-muster and Hobbitry-in-arms, when active, could be thought of as roughly equivalent to the medieval English yeoman's obligation to own, maintain, and train with a longbow and other weapons depending upon income; and young men rotating through the Shirrifs and Bounders would likely have gotten at least some minimal training in handling weapons and civilian defense as part of their duties. If the Shire-muster and Hobbitry-in-arms originally referred to different concepts, they had become pretty much the same thing by the time of the events of *The Lord of the Rings*; but one might speculate that the

Shire-muster called all citizens competent to bear arms together, while the Hobbitry-in-arms might once have been more like a reserve force, capable of sending a troop to the aid of the King in time of need.

Whatever the history of civilian preparedness in the Shire, by Bilbo and Frodo's time the defense of the Shire had been taken over by the Rangers, the Dúnedain of the North. The well-intentioned protection of the Rangers, unknown though it was to the hobbits, had encouraged a sense of safety within their borders and a subsequent relaxation of vigilance and civil defense skills. Because of this sense of shelter and protection, as Nan C. Scott points out, Frodo, Sam, Merry, and Pippin "are so overwhelmingly innocent that they actually set out for Rivendell unarmed" and are "surprised and uncomfortable" when Tom Bombadil, even though he is perhaps the arch-pacifist of Middle-earth, arms them with daggers from the Barrow-wight's hoard (23).

Out of the many examples of the dangers of lapsed vigilance in Middle-earth—Sauron rebuilding Barad-dûr in secrecy or forging the Rings before the Elves are aware of what he is doing, for example, or on the other side, Saruman's lack of attention to his neighbors the Ents—one of the most clear-cut critiques of the dangers of a lack of military preparedness in Middle-earth can be found in *The Hobbit*, in Smaug's two attacks on the Lonely Mountain and Lake-town. Some two hundred years previously, the King Under the Mountain and the town of Dale had been utterly routed by Smaug's completely unexpected assault, the few survivors scattered and the mountain and town abandoned to the dragon (*H*, I,56). In spite of this unambiguous lesson and the daily reminder of the "rotting piles of a greater town" presumably destroyed at the same time (X, 246), the guards of Lake-town "were not keeping very careful watch, for it was so long since there had been any real need" and were "drinking and laughing by a fire in their hut" when Bilbo and Thorin walked in and surprised them (X, 248). The inhabitants of Lake-town suffer from what Karen Cerulo has termed "optimistic bias" (qtd. in Ehrenreich 10), a dangerous tendency to simply expect the best possible outcome at all times, shown by how they interpret the light on the distant Mountain as the King returning to forging gold (*H*, XIV, 302). But Bard, well known for "foreboding gloomy things [...] from floods to poisoned fish" (XIV, 303), has a more realistic outlook and sees it for what it is: the dragon's fire. Without his clear-headedness in ordering the bridges cut, the water buckets filled, and the townsmen armed (XIV, 304), the disaster would have been far worse; as it was, a lack of belief in the dragon till too late meant they had no back-up plan, no well-rehearsed skills and tactics, no tested escape route, and no safe store of supplies outside of the town itself.

Like so much in *The Lord of the Rings*, the issues of civil defense preparedness and “failed watchfulness” (Scott 24) come to a head in “The Scouring of the Shire,” that deceptively anti-climactic but all-important chapter. Saruman’s lack of strategic imagination is not quite the fatal flaw it is for Sauron (Lloyd 5)—though he has, up till now, generally attacked the strongest and best prepared positions of his enemy (like the Hornburg), he has also gone after less-fortified targets. But after his release from imprisonment in Orthanc, with the chance to do “some mischief [...] in a small mean way” (*RK*, VI, vi, 263), he deliberately strikes at the weakest and least-watched place in the West while its protectors are busy elsewhere. The Shire, weakened by lack of training and leadership, is easy prey for Sharkey and his gang. It is certainly a reminder that Éowyn was right: “It takes but one foe to breed a war, not two [...] And those who have not swords can still die upon them” (*RK*, VI, v, 236).

But even if the formal training of the Hobbity-in-arms had suffered neglect and they lacked a command system that could have quickly identified and neutralized the threat posed by the incoming ruffians, the ability of the hobbits to act together so quickly and cooperatively when Merry and Pippin fill the command vacuum during the Scouring of the Shire implies that there was quite likely still an underlying, not-entirely-forgotten recognition that the skills and discipline developed for the hunt and “quiet games of the aiming and throwing sort” (*H*, viii, 210) might at times be useful for civil defense—as they indeed turned out to be. Evil does exist in the world and it is necessary to defend against it; as Merry says, you can’t save your corner of the world just by being “shocked and sad” (*RK*, VI, viii, 285). Better to be vigilant and prepared.

NOTES

- 1 The Officer Training Corps is still in existence at the university level, and is somewhat less closely affiliated with the military than the United States’s similar Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) programs, as a majority of members do not currently go into military service and they cannot be mobilized for active duty (“Officers’ Training Corps”). At present, its mission is “To develop the leadership potential of selected university students through enjoyable and challenging training in order to communicate the values, ethos and career opportunities of the British Army” (“University Officer Training Corps”). The UOTC has admitted women since 1948 (Ryan 176). Also note that *Officers* has been punctuated in a variety of ways over the years; the organization now avoids that problem by using the word *Officer* instead.

- 2 Indeed, the genre of sensationalist “invasion literature” preaching civilian and military preparedness at this time was so popular that P.G. Wodehouse satirized it in his comic novel *The Swoop! A Tale of the Great Invasion* in 1909; England is invaded by nine different enemies and eventually saved by a Boy Scout.
- 3 Haldane was Secretary of State for War from 1905 to 1912.
- 4 In the Great War, 1412 Old Edwardians served and 254 were killed (Trott 89). William Joseph Slim, among other titles Field-Marshal during WWII, was a classmate of Tolkien’s at King Edward’s School and went through the same KES OTC program, also entering WWI as a second lieutenant—and was coincidentally also the son of a fervently Catholic mother (Shippey 4; Lewin 4, 8).
- 5 We can be fairly certain Tolkien read at least *Kim* before 1913 (Scull & Hammond II:816), and it is quite likely he was familiar with much of Kipling’s work. Even if he didn’t read *Stalky*, it was clearly part of the Edwardian leaf-mould that Jared Lobdell considers a precursor of “Tolkienian fantasy.”
- 6 See Mais (16-31) for detailed (if fictionalized) accounts of several war game exercises against other schools, and Scull & Hammond (I:14-15, 24) for specific exercises in which Tolkien participated.
- 7 Many Cadet Corps had been meeting at a Public Schools Camp each summer since 1889; the Junior Division of the OTC continued this tradition (Haig-Brown 1). Ironically, the cadets at the 1889 camp were inspected by the visiting Kaiser Wilhelm II (11).
- 8 Indeed, Tolkien continued this commitment to civilian preparedness in World War II, first undergoing cryptological training (though he was never called upon to use it), then serving as an air warden (Croft 155-8).

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Book Reviews

Quenya Phonology: Comparative Tables, Outline of Phonetic Development, Outline of Phonology, by J.R.R. Tolkien, edited by Christopher Gilson. Mountain View, CA: Parma Elderlamberon, 2010. 108 pp. \$35 (oversize paperback) [no ISBN]. *Parma Eldalamberon XIX*.

Tolkien first set out the phonology or sound laws governing his eldest Elvish language in 1915, in “The Sounds of Quenya” (*Parma Eldalamberon XII* 3-28); and during a second phase of work on the subject in Leeds in the early 1920s he produced another “Quenya Phonology” (*Parma Eldalamberon XIV* 60-70). The current *Parma Eldalamberon* covers two further phases of work on the topic: from 1937, a set of “Comparative Tables” and an “Outline of Phonetic Development”; and from about 1951, a revision and expansion of the latter, titled “Outline of Phonology.” In glorious technicality, these show Tolkien’s ideas on the sound laws of Quenya just before and just after the composition of *The Lord of the Rings*: at the point when he set aside his work on the Elder Days and at the point when he resumed it. There is a hint that in 1937, just as he hoped that the “Silmarillion” might be published in the wake of *The Hobbit*, Tolkien imagined that his Quenya phonology might also see the light of day as part of a full historical grammar of the Elvish tongues. Although that did not happen, he seems—despite his tendency to niggle with his creation—to have remained largely satisfied by the 1951 phonology for the rest of his life.

The “Comparative Tables” are dense charts showing the outcomes, in a dozen languages, of each of the range of permissible sounds or sound-combinations in Primitive Quendian, the original Elvish language derived (at this stage in Tolkien’s conceptions) from Valarin. The charts are accompanied by a cursory survey of some general trends in the individual languages, with a few comments on tengwar orthography and some broadbrush pointers towards chronology (“probably in the first century of the Sun”). Amid all the complexities and corrections that are to be expected in an edition of Tolkien’s unpublished writings on Eldarin, there is one note here that illuminates his creative processes briefly and brightly. This “torn half-slip of paper” compares each tongue of Beleriand (as imagined in c. 1937) with a real-world language. Most Tolkien readers with the remotest interest in Elvish know that Sindarin is inspired by Welsh and Quenya by Finnish. Here (22) we find Sindarin’s predecessor Noldorin compared to Welsh, but also Telerin compared to Latin, Danian to Germanic, Ossiriandic to Old English, and East Danian to Old Norse. The three languages imagined for the Avari are likened to Irish, Lithuanian and (curiously) Finnish again. Taliska, the Mannish

language derived here from Elvish in Beleriand, is likened to Gothic—a source of creative inspiration for Tolkien since his schooldays, when he “reconstructed” words that might have existed in this East Germanic language but have not survived in the recorded corpus. It will be interesting to see how Taliska, of which more material remains to be published, reifies Tolkien’s love of Gothic. In the current publication, however, the evidence is typically tantalizing: Armed with the “Comparative Tables” and some examples of Primitive Quendian, you could generate plausible words in Taliska or any of the other tabulated languages. Tolkien perhaps used these tables to generate some of the vocabulary of the minor languages in the contemporary *Etymologies* (*Lost Road* 341-400, *Vinyar Tengwar* nos. 45 and 46), which conform to the fully revised sound-change charts.

Tolkien, as the ever-efficient C.S. Lewis observed, worked “like a coral insect” (Lewis 1579): painstakingly constructing vast complexes of information to form the foundation and background of his legendarium. It appears that he envisaged giving each of these many languages the depth of treatment that he tried to give Quenya: one set of pages is marked, “To be revised when the individual langs. are done.” In practice he could not “do” even Quenya fully to his satisfaction, and continued to work away at it for his entire life.

Yet Tolkien could also make swift and large-scale alterations, and while working on the “Comparative Tables,” he reassigned entire languages to different peoples. With remarkable acuity, Christopher Gilson notes that one string of reassignments may have arisen from a desire to make the invented languages conform to the styles of real ones (7). Tolkien had intended the language of Doriath to sound something like Old English and that of Ossiriand to sound similar to Old Norse. But OE and ON both descend from Proto-Germanic, and he realised his scheme would likewise require the languages of Doriath and Ossiriand to share a closer kinship with each other than his account of the Elder Days would allow. Not wishing to waste the effort he had put into devising all the sound-changes for these two languages, he took the OE-style tongue off the Elves of Doriath and handed it lock, stock and barrel to those of Ossiriand; and the ON-style tongue was transferred, in turn, to the Danian Elves east of Eredlindon. At a stroke of the pen, the problem vanished: as the contemporary “Lhammas” tells us, Ossiriand had been people by Danians (*Lost Road* 175), providing just the degree of kinship needed for Tolkien’s scheme. Concomitantly, the Gothic-style speech of the East Danians was given to Men as Taliskan; and to fill the vacuum left in Doriath, Tolkien simply cooked up an additional language. Thus the correspondences outlined above were achieved. All this hocus pocus came long before his most drastic act of language-juggling, when he resumed

his work on “The Silmarillion” in 1950-1 and decided the Welsh-style language he had been crafting since 1916, hitherto “Noldorin,” should be the native language of Doriath (renamed “Sindarin”), and the Noldor’s only by adoption.

That change of Noldorin to Sindarin is reflected in some of the differences between the two texts that dominate this issue of *Parma Eldalambéron*, the “Outline of Phonetic Development” begun in 1937 (OP 1) and the “Outline of Phonology” (OP 2), its 1951 successor. Tolkien’s titles are rather misleading, for where the “Comparative Tables” give only a long-distance overview, these so-called Outlines provide a close-up account of “all of the possible sounds and sound-combinations that occur in Quenya,” as Gilson puts it (10). The Outlines are complementary to the equally hefty “Tengwesta Qenderinwa” (*Parma Eldalambéron XVIII*), which deals with morphology—the rules of word building—and which also exists in 1937 and 1951 versions. Together, OP 1 and the contemporary “Tengwesta” replace the much briefer Leeds “Qenya Phonology” (which also covered morphology), and show Tolkien in 1937 massively enlarging his conception of Quenya. An enigmatic phrase explaining the conventions used “in this book” (34, footnote 28) may suggest that at this stage he even envisaged publication, extraordinary though that seems for material so technical. Of course, that did not happen, and even the 1951 version was never finished. However, these later conceptions remained relatively stable: Tolkien continued to make revisions even into his final years, but let much of OP 2 stand without alteration.

Tolkien opens both Outlines with a statement of scope and “editorial” treatment, in which as usual the fiction is maintained that these writings are based on real documents (just as *The Lord of the Rings* purports to derive from “The Red Book of Westmarch”). The main analysis covers consonants and then vowels, and these two sections take as their starting point the relevant sounds that existed in the “original Quenderin” that all Elves spoke before their Tower of Babel event, the Great March. In the Outlines the sound-changes undergone by consonants are described exhaustively for all scenarios: when the consonant stood alone (other than at the end of a word), when it appeared as part of a consonant cluster at the start of a word, or when medially, and when it stood at the end of a word. (The creation of consonant clusters is a frequent result of many of the processes of syllabic accentuation and suffixion described in the “Tengwesta,” as well as occurring when words are compounded together.) Within each scenario, the consonants are classified according to standard phonetic practice in ways which will be familiar to anyone who has examined the tengwar chart in *The Lord of the Rings* Appendix E: stops, continuants; voiceless, voiced; aspirated, nasal, oral, spirant. After many pages of this, Tolkien usefully provides a ready-reference summary

(50-2). The section in OP 1 on vowels covers what happened to short vowels, long vowels and diphthongs, paying particular attention to the effect of Quenya's changing patterns of accent or stress (necessarily recapitulating some of the "Tengwesta"). It also deals with what happened when two vowels were separated only by a semi-vowel (*y* or *w*). Tolkien planned a section on vowels in final syllables, but left only a smattering of notes on the topic. Unfortunately this lack is not made up in OP 2, where the vowels section is not so much unfinished as barely begun.

In addition to Quenya, OP 1 traces some of the developments of Lindarin, Telerin and Noldorin, the languages of the Elves who went to Valinor: far less attention is given to the tongues of Beleriand and beyond. OP 2 covers the revised versions of the same languages, although Lindarin was by now called Vanyarin while Noldorin had been reassigned as Sindarin. The Outline distinguishes between two "dialects" of Quenya: the classical version spoken in the noontide of Valinor and later surviving only as "book-language" or *Parmaquesta*; and the *Tarquesta* or "high speech," a later spoken form. In OP 1 *Tarquesta* is "in effect simply *Quenya* used after its obsolescence as a native language, as a high speech of ceremonial and song, and as a language of intercourse among the *Kalaquendi* in later days after their various tongues had diverged" (29). In OP 2, composed when Tolkien had made major changes in the history of the Elves and their languages, *Tarquesta* is the spoken form of Quenya taught in Beleriand among the Noldor after they had adopted Sindarin, the language of the Grey-elves of Doriath, as their day-to-day speech. In either version of the story, *Parmaquesta* and *Tarquesta* can be compared—in their interrelations, in their relative ages and in their disparate functions—to Latin in its classical and medieval forms. There is also "Ancient Quenya," which has its counterpart in Ancient Latin. This comparison of *functions* is a quite different matter from the *phonological* comparison of *Telerin* to Latin in the "Comparative Tables." Although aesthetically Quenya embodies Tolkien's love of the sound of Finnish, it performs in Middle-earth the role that Latin played in Europe for two millennia—though largely divested of the mantle of empire. Considering this, and Quenya's interplay with (Welsh-inspired) Noldorin/Sindarin, "elf-latin" stands as a thoroughly fitting epithet for the language. (In another parallel with the real world, the ceremonial *Tarquesta* closely follows the spelling of the old "book language," but, according to OP 2, its pronunciation is affected by the Noldorin contacts with other speech-groups in Beleriand; such a divergence between written and spoken form is a feature of English, particularly after the "Great Vowel Shift" in the late Middle Ages, and of many other actual languages.)

Tolkien attributes the epithet "elf-latin" to Ælfwine, the Anglo-Saxon Elf-friend who serves as the legendarium's Marco Polo and Alan Lomax

combined. The “Outline” details how Ælfwine transcribed Elvish using Latin orthography with some Old English spellings (see *Shaping* for his “translations” into OE); and how this has been adapted in turn for modern eyes. Tolkien uses the opportunity to justify his own past vacillation between such spellings as *Qenya* and *Quenya*, explaining (76) that *qu* is used on the Latin model but Ælfwine also used roman *q* because it happens to look much like the tengwar sign for the same sound. This fiction of transmission through the mortal Ælfwine, part of Tolkien’s grand framing-device for the legendarium, plays a curiously double-edged role in respect to the material about Elvish languages. Real philologists, who reconstruct dead languages such as Proto-Indo-European by comparing their living descendants, may be brilliant, but they pale beside the Elven loremasters (such as Ælfwine’s tutor Rúmil). Undying and equipped with superhuman memory, the Elves have preserved an actual oral record of the language spoken on the Great March from Cuiviénen—so that “knowledge of ‘Common Eldarin’ . . . is often seen to be more precise and detailed than the deductions of comparison could be” (68). The Elves’ total potential knowledge, of course, has its real-life analogue in Tolkien’s potential simply to invent everything that could be known about Elvish (if he had time). However, no storyteller was more acutely aware than Tolkien of the value of a misty distance; and as a philologist who delighted in puzzles he would doubtless have found a complete, perfect account of Elvish fundamentally unsatisfying. Enter Ælfwine—not only the conduit through which the lore has reached us, but also the stopcock or valve which helps keep that lore within credible limits: “Older stages of *Quenya* . . . were, and no doubt still are, known to the loremasters of the Elves, but of these we know only such incidental notes and statements of the grammarian Rúmil as Ælfwine reports” (29). In addition, phrases such as “but some hold that . . .” (45) indicate that the Elven loremasters were (and no doubt still are) a fractious bunch, so no final consensus is to be expected of them.

Nor can finality be expected of Tolkien. OP 1 is an extensively reworked manuscript, with drafts, replacements and riders galore. OP 2 is a beautiful piece of calligraphy; the opening page is reproduced on the cover; but it carries later annotations a-plenty, even in that most uncalledigraphic medium, ballpoint pen. There now must be enormous scope, in the material published on *Q(u)enya* since *Parma Eldalamberon XII*, for the competent linguist and sedulous textual scholar to trace the development of Tolkien’s ideas about the language, both as a whole and by focusing on a single feature of (for instance) phonology, up to the period when Tolkien was finishing *The Lord of the Rings* and sometimes beyond.

As one would expect from a writer who derived story from language-invention, the historical account of *Quenya* which opens the “Outline” is

already ripe with social and dramatic implications. The passing years did nothing to diminish Tolkien's capacity for nurturing the seeds of story in the seemingly stony ground of linguistics. Take for example the dry "fact" that original Quenya *th* [p̥, the voiceless sound in English *thin*) became *s*, an idea that went all the way back to 1915 (*Parma Eldalambéron XII*, 19). OP 1 tells that the Noldor, however, kept *th* and so were called the Lispers. Further detail appears in OP 2, in which Sindarin was now part of Tolkien's changed conceptions:

later many among the Exiles restored the sound [p], after their adoption of Sindarin as their diurnal speech, a language which favoured the sound [p]. Some retained it in imitation of the Vanyar . . . (71)

But late in life, when Tolkien seems to have found it necessary to knock holes in many of his longest-standing conceptions, he felt that the change of original *th* to *s* needed a special explanation. This led to "The Shibboleth of Fëanor" (*Peoples*, 331ff.) the c. 1968 account of how the two pronunciations, conservative *th* and innovative *s*, become symbols of bitter division between Fëanor and the sons of Indis.

Each of the two Outlines is presented in its final form, taking in all alterations; the footnotes provide all earlier readings, including entire rejected passages. It should be noted that this is the reverse of the treatment of the 1937 "Tengwesta Qenderinwa" in the previous issue, where the main text was given as first written, with alterations in the footnotes. The main text of OP 1 contains much from 1937, but also much from a great deal later. There is, for example, an extraordinary reference to *Rothinzil* (49), which first appeared as an Adunaic name for Eärendil's ship in the 1946 story "The Drowning of Anadûne" (*Sauron* 360); although in OP 1 there is no indication that it is meant to be anything other than Quenya.

Much of OP 2 dovetails satisfyingly with the detailed work Tolkien did in the years immediately after he completed the narrative proper of *The Lord of the Rings*. The discussion of Eldarin sounds includes much about tengwar usage that elaborates on Appendix D, a text from the same era. Particular developments are charted against the detailed chronological framework of the closely contemporary "Annals of Aman," in *Morgoth's Ring*. It is surprising amid all this to encounter the England-pun *Ingolondë*, "country of the Noldor" (77), the name for Beleriand which in *The History of Middle-earth* is last recorded in the c. 1937 "Quenta Silmarillion." And on the other hand, OP 2 contains many alterations from later than 1951. As Gilson points out, revisions to particular sound-change laws meant neither the Quenya word *tengwa* "sign" nor Sindarin *haudh* "mound" should exist as products of the roots from which Tolkien had originally formed them; yet both words had been published in *The*

Lord of the Rings so Tolkien, for once the pragmatist, simply invented new roots for them.

Gilson uses the footnotes not only for earlier readings of the Outline, but also to provide cross-references, particularly to *Parma Eldalamberon XVIII* and to illustrative examples in the “Etymologies.” For utility, there could be no better arrangement. However, the effect on the eye, and on the mind already battling with the innate complexity of Tolkien’s subject, can be bewildering. Tolkien organized this material under numbered subheads, which might usefully have been incorporated in the page headers as a navigational aid. This aside, however, Gilson’s editorial apparatus is as impressive as ever, and also includes a very full and wide-ranging introduction describing the texts, explaining their purpose and interrelations, and providing numerous insights. All of this would be commendable at the best of times, but it is all the more so in the circumstances: during the final stages of editing, Chris Gilson’s father passed away (the issue is dedicated to him).

Previous descriptions of Eldarin phonology including the “Comparative Tables” had been desiccated and terse affairs, charting sound changes with what often resemble algebraic formulae. But in the “Outline of Phonetic Development” and the “Outline of Phonology,” Tolkien meticulously examines a whole laboratory of collisions and explains their results in depth. Common tendencies are highlighted in the way the Elves came to favour or disdain certain sounds; many curious details of pronunciation are revealed for the various forms of Tarquesta as spoken by the different branches of Elfinesse and even the Númenóreans. As a piece of technical writing, each Outline is (incompleteness aside) as informative as the most demanding linguist could wish. But each is also an artistic endeavour, unprecedented in conception and likely to remain unique in scope: the detailed portrayal of a fictional people, through their language and its many changes in time, as they diversify into distinct peoples. Taken together with the “Etymologies” and the “Tengwesta,” in other words, the Outlines describe the roots, growth and branchings of a tree. If in 1937 Tolkien was indeed cherishing hopes of publishing this material as part of a compendious “historical grammar” of Eldarin—the wellspring of his mythology—perhaps the central conceit of “Leaf by Niggle” reflects his anxieties in 1943 not only over “The Silmarillion” and the “Hobbit” sequel, but also over the fate of his laboriously and passionately crafted languages.

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Hither Shore: Interdisciplinary Journal of Modern Fantasy Literature, Jahrbuch der Deutschen Tolkien Gesellschaft e.V., edited by Thomas Fornet-Ponse (editor-in-chief), Marcel Büllés, Thomas Honegger, Rainer Nagel, Alexandra Velten, and Frank Weinreich. Düsseldorf: Verlag "Scriptorium Oxoniae," 2008-2009. <<http://www.scriptorium-oxoniae.de>>

Volume four, 2007 (2008): "Tolkiens Kleinere Werke" [Tolkien's Lesser Works]. 259pp. €22.90 (trade paperback) ISBN 9783981061222. Interdisziplinäres Seminar der DTG 4-6 May 2007, Jena.

Volume five, 2008 (2009): "Der Hobbit" [*The Hobbit*]. 282pp. €23.90 (trade paperback) ISBN 9783981061239. Interdisziplinäres Seminar der DTG 25-27 April 2008, Jena.

Hither Shore is the annual bilingual journal of the *Deutsche Tolkien Gesellschaft* (the German Tolkien Society), with articles in English as well as in German. The English articles are summarized in German, and the German articles in English. The English titles shown in square brackets for the German articles are those used in the English summaries, and not the reviewer's translation of the German title. The first three volumes were reviewed in *Tolkien Studies* 5 (2008). *Hither Shore* has a particularly strong tradition of addressing philosophical topics, and the two issues reviewed here below are no exception.

The theme of volume 4 (2007) is "Tolkien's Lesser Works." Vincent Ferré's "The Rout of the King: Tolkien's Readings on Arthurian Kingship" offers a cogent political analysis of the Arthurian in Tolkien's works. Ferré sees Arthur as "an embodiment of a vision of Middle-Ages that Tolkien rejects," offering "a counter model for a kingship based on merit, with noble characters like Aragorn, or comic ones like Giles" (20). "Speaking with Animals: A Desire that Lies at the Heart of Faerie" by Guglielmo Spirito presents a theological examination of the human need to belong, discussing the interdependency of distance and closeness in relationships, illustrating the discourse with examples from *The Adventures of Tom Bombadil* and *Farmer Giles of Ham*.

In "Die Metaphysik der Zweitschöpfung: Zur Ontologie von *Mythopoeia*" [On the Ontology of *Mythopoeia*], Frank Weinreich gives a cogent metaphysical approach to the examination of the ontology of Tolkien's poem "Mythopoeia" that points to Platonism as one of its roots. The

German will be a challenge even to native German speakers who are not classically trained philosophers. Very much worth the effort, however, if this is your specialty.

“Tolkiens Sub-creation—Die Kleinen Werke als Fairy-stories?” [Tolkien’s Sub-creation—His Shorter Works as Fairy-stories?] by Thomas Fornet-Ponse is an interesting theological analysis of Tolkien’s lesser works that attempts to define their theological import. Again, the German is advanced, and written for those whose academic specialty is philosophy. Highly recommended for those in this field. Next comes Martin Sternberg’s “*Smith of Wootton Major* als religiöser Text” [*Smith of Wootton Major* as a Religious Text], an insightful examination of *Smith of Wootton Major* as a religious text, based on Verlyn Flieger’s expanded edition of the story and the additional texts surrounding it. The German is less challenging than in the preceding two articles, but will still only be accessible to advanced language learners.

“*Farmer Giles of Ham*: Eine Prototypische Drachengeschichte in Humorvoller Tradition” [Farmer Giles of Ham: A Prototypical Dragon-story in Humorous Tradition] by Friedhelm Schneidewind begins with a discussion of the history and mythology of dragons in Western culture, then proceeds to an interesting overview of dragons in Tolkien’s works. The remainder of the paper is devoted to the dragon in *Farmer Giles of Ham*, considering Tolkien’s humor, and the impact of this story on modern dragon fiction. Continuing on with a similar subject is “Das Drachenmotiv bei Tolkien als poetologisches Konzept zur Genese des Episch-Historischen” [The Dragon-motif in Tolkien’s Works as Poetological Concept for Generating an Epic Historic Quality] by Patrick A. Brückner, who argues convincingly that Tolkien’s dragons help to create a reality that transcends the fantastic, providing Tolkien’s work with an epic historic quality. The German in both of these articles is within the grasp of basic language learners. Brückner’s article is recommended for literary theorists.

In “Tom Bombadil: The Sins of his Youth,” Allan Turner’s discussion (similarly aimed at literary theorists) helps to place Tom Bombadil into the philosophical framework of *The Lord of the Rings*, through an examination of the literary effect of re-contextualization. Fabian Geier’s “Leaf by Tolkien?” is written in German, but given an English title. Geier examines Tolkien’s aversion to allegory on the basis of “Leaf by Niggle,” placing Tolkien’s apparent use of allegory into the greater context of his works, and literary trends in general. Heidi Krüger’s “*Blatt von Tüftler*: Eine Literaturkritische Untersuchung” [*Leaf by Niggle*: A Textual Criticism] examines the usual approaches to the analysis of “Leaf by Niggle,” then takes a step back to examine the story in a new light, using textual criticism as the lens for her analysis. And Margaret Hiley,

in “Journeys in the Dark,” examines the quest motif in Tolkien’s lesser works, focusing on *Smith of Wootton Major* and “The Sea-Bell,” which she classes as “failed” quests for Faërie.

In “A Star Above the Mast: Tolkien, Faërie and the Great Escape,” Anna Slack discusses Tolkien’s lesser works as an attempt to demonstrate the inherent value of Faërie to mankind, and to reconcile this with the Great Escape from death into another world. Thomas Fornet-Ponse, in “*The Children of Húrin*—Its Use for Tolkien Scholarship,” points out the need to take the feigned authorship of *The Children of Húrin* into account when using it for Tolkien scholarship, because the point of view of its mannish author may provide insights into Tolkien’s skills in dealing with the fictional frames of authorship for this and his other works.

The book reviews section of *Hither Shore* displays the breadth of the German Tolkien Society’s international field of view, reviewing books of British and American scholarship as well as German and French ones. To discuss only one review, that of *Tolkien Studies* 4 (2007), Rainer Nagel is disappointed in Carl F. Hostetter’s survey of “Tolkienian Linguistics.” He considers the title of the article a “misnomer” because it reflects the “American paradigm” of Tolkien language studies, by focusing only on Tolkien’s invented languages, ignoring the study of Tolkien’s use of first-world languages. Nagel’s view of Dimitra Fimi’s article on Tolkien’s Celtic influences is very positive. Nagel observes that the comparisons in Miryam Ljbrán-Moreno’s article on Greek and Latin motifs in the portrayal of Éowyn are fairly obvious, but remarks that they leave unanswered the question of whether these influences might have entered Tolkien’s work via Middle-English literature—in particular, via Chaucer. Nagel finds Verlyn Fliieger’s discussion of Tolkien’s views on reincarnation inconclusive. Nagel comments favorably on Michael D. C. Drout’s treatment of Tolkien’s academic work, ending with a reference to an article by Tim William Machan that challenges Tolkien’s assessment of the language of “The Reeve’s Tale,” contending that the language was a political statement rather than a literary one. Nagel welcomes the reprint of Tolkien’s article on the name Nodens, and comments favorably in passing on the articles by Janet Brennan Croft, Thomas Honegger, Marjorie Burns, Yvette Kisor and Kristine Larsen. Larsen’s study, he remarks, will certainly find its way into his next university course on word formation.

The theme of volume 5 (2008) is *The Hobbit*, and this volume contains an unusually large number of articles in English. Fanfan Chen, in “The Eucharistic Poetics in *The Hobbit*,” sidesteps the usual treatment of *The Hobbit* “as a pre-sequel to the great ring trilogy,” and examines it from the point of view of its place in the context of “On Fairy-stories.” She discovers that it “represents the imaginary of the element earth permeating the Middle-earth mythology” (9). Chen explains that “eucharistic

poetics” is a “phenomenological reading” that brings about a “communion among the author, the text, [and] the reader” (9). It is a concept borrowed from the French philosopher Jean-Luc Marion (11). Chen’s philosophical discourse on the perception of Tolkien’s text by the reader is hampered somewhat by the fact that the author is not a native speaker of English. The German summary was easier to understand. Nevertheless, an interesting approach to *The Hobbit* for those who have a solid grounding in religious philosophy.

In “Changing Perspectives: Secret Doors and Narrative Thresholds in *The Hobbit*,” Judith Klinger explores the changes in the narrative voice of *The Hobbit*, expounding on the narrator’s role in the tale. She concludes that the development of the story is a “unique narrative approach,” crossing a variety of thresholds that take it from one mode of imagination to another—magical, legendary, or mythical (45). An interesting technical analysis that draws on Tolkien’s “On Fairy-stories,” recommended for students of narrative theory.

Guglielmo Spirito’s “Wolves, Ravens and Eagles: A Mythic Presence in *The Hobbit*” provides an overview of the mythic significance of wolves, ravens and eagles, not only in *The Hobbit*, but also in a native Canadian Totem Pole, *King Lear*, Teutonic myth, Saint Francis, Odin’s two ravens, and the *Old Testament*, to name but a few. Folklorists should take note of this article. “Dreams and Dream Visions in J.R.R. Tolkien’s *The Hobbit*” by Doreen Triebel places Tolkien’s use of dreams in both *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* in its literary context by a comparison with the dream trope in literature, with the medieval dream theories, and with Tolkien’s own recurrent dream of being inundated à la Atlantis.

In “*The Hobbit* and Desire,” Allan Turner presents a cogent analysis of Desire (possessiveness vs. yearning) as it appears in *The Hobbit*, placing this feature of the human (Hobbitish and Dwarvish) condition in its literary context. What is particularly interesting in Turner’s analysis is its consideration of how “desire” is used in “On Fairy-stories,” where it is often found. His exploration of the concept of *sehnsucht* (desire or longing) among the German Romantic poets would be more than suitable for a Comparative Literature seminar. Blanca Grzegorzcyk’s “On Moral Imagination in J.R.R. Tolkien’s *The Hobbit*” is a well-crafted discussion of the role of fantasy in contemporary moral debate, based on the potential of *The Hobbit* “to assist readers in establishing a value system for fulfilling human life.” This discussion begins with the Aristotelian theory of virtue, and argues that *The Hobbit* is a “type of literature which is especially nourishing for moral imagination” (93).

“Vom Umgang mit Reichtum im *Hobbit*” [Dwarves Do Not Live by Gold Alone: Dealing with Wealth in *The Hobbit*] by Thomas Forner-Ponse is a clearly written philosophical discussion of the impact of

riches on the worldview of various characters in *The Hobbit*. The title of the English summary of the article, with its Biblical allusion, captures the sense of the discussion much better than the German title. Fornet-Ponse's search through *The Hobbit* for the criteria for "the good life" is accessible to language learners with a college minor in German, and is highly recommended for those with a philosophical frame of mind. In "The Arkenstone as Symbol of Kingship and Seat of Royal Luck in *The Hobbit*," Martin G.E. Sternberg explores the significance of the Arkenstone through the various versions of *The Hobbit* with the help of John D. Rateliff's *History of The Hobbit*. His is an excellent excursion through the history of rare royal stones. His failure to touch on the *maenark* (Arkstone) of the Druids is an excellent prompt to me to pull my notes together on that topic. Sternberg's conclusion is worthy of special note. He hopes that "interpreting *The Hobbit* by applying the criteria of its sources or parallels in real history can unlock a lot of complexity from" the tale (132).

Heidi Steimel's great sense of humor is demonstrated in her opening to "The Dwarven Philharmonic Orchestra": "In a hole in the ground there was a concert. Not a loud, noisy rock concert . . ." It's worth reading for that alone, but it gets better. She analyzes the role of music in Middle-earth, a place that was created by music. "No wonder," she says, "that Tolkien's writing has inspired many of his readers to embark upon musical adventures of their own" (141). In "Singen, oder nicht singen: Lieder und Gedichte in J.R.R. Tolkien's *Der Hobbit*" [To Sing or Not to Sing: Songs and Poems in J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Hobbit*], Julian T.M. Eilmann presents an interesting discussion (in very accessible German) of the function of songs and poems in *The Hobbit*, demonstrating a continuity with those in *The Lord of the Rings*.

Christian Weichmann's "Augen als Schutz und Bedrohung im *Hobbit*" [Seeing and (Not) Being Seen] presents a similarly accessible and interesting discussion of the import and function of light and dark in *The Hobbit*, examining the pros and cons of restricted visibility as a key element in the story. His discussion of the luminescence of various characters' eyes explores a topic few have considered before. Anna Slack explores the qualities that make one a hero in "Seeing Fire and Sword, or Refining Hobbits," and comes to the conclusion that "ordinary lives are just as capable of being the springboards for unexpected heroism or ordained eucatastrophe, as a Hobbit's." This philosophy of the value of the individual was part of the reason that *The Lord of the Rings* was banned in the Soviet Union. It is a worthwhile point to explore in Tolkien's oeuvre.

In "The Comic-Book Adaptation of *The Hobbit*," Dirk Vanderbeke examines the interplay of text and image in his interesting assessment of the comic-book adaptation of *The Hobbit* by Charles Dixon, lettered

by Sean Deming, and illustrated by David Wenzel. It is compared to other comic-book adaptations, such as *Moby Dick* and *City of Glass*. Vanderbeke's conclusion is that in this adaptation of *The Hobbit* there is "an inordinate deference" to the text, and an "unwillingness to . . . trust in the ability" of the images to carry the message (191). Despite his claim not to be an art critic (192), he does have a considered (unfavorable) opinion on the art by David Wenzel. What I missed most here was a comparison to the Rankin/Bass cartoon of *The Hobbit* (1977). This article is accompanied by color illustrations, a considerable technical feat for a physical book these days. *Hither Shore* is to be congratulated for obtaining the permissions to reprint the images, and arranging for color pages in what is otherwise a black and white book.

Heidi Krüger, in "Eine Neubewertung der theoretischen Konzeption von 'Faërie' und 'fairy-story' auf Basis der 2008 erschienenen erweiterten Ausgabe *Tolkien On Fairy-stories*" [Reassessment of the Theoretical Concept of "Faërie" and "fairy-story" based on the Expanded Edition of *Tolkien On Fairy-stories*, published in 2008], concludes that the new volume *Tolkien On Fairy-stories* challenges the old precepts about Tolkien's vision, and is the beginning of a new discourse on the topic. "We need to," she says, "re-evaluate whether Tolkien's own works meet his demands—and, even, whether he wanted them to." An interesting challenge.

The review section of *Hither Shore* is always of interest because it displays the breadth of the German Tolkien Society's international view. Again limiting discussion only to one review, Thomas Honegger notes that *Tolkien Studies* 5 (2008) offers another "rich and varied selection of excellent articles and keeps up the laudable work of making accessible hard-to-get Tolkienian texts and of 'cartographing' the current research." Honegger remarks that Brian Rosebury's opening essay "takes an informed and detailed look at the concept of 'revenge'" coming "(rather unsurprisingly) to the conclusion that the treatment of revenge in the professor's work is 'complex and subtle.'" Carl Phelpstead's and Corey Olsen's papers on the function of poetics and on the Elvish song of the Entwives respectively are "complementary" says Honegger. Phelpstead explores Tolkien's use of verse, and Olsen's examination of the song "may be seen as an in-depth and applied illustration of Phelpstead's 'theoretical prolegomena.'" Olsen's work, he notes, has a wider significance than just poetics. It is "an important contribution to the current debate on Tolkien's ecocriticism." Honegger remarks that the James G. Davis article, contrasting the portrayal of Saruman in the books and in the movies, is another ecological piece. Honegger feels that Davis's discussion "could have profited from the inclusion of the historical perspective," and a consideration of the influence of the Romantic Movement and the medieval tradition on Tolkien's complex conception of nature.

Lynn Forest-Hill's paper on Boromir is a "fine paper," with a "lucid and convincing argument." He would, however, have liked to have seen her add a discussion of Roland to her analysis. This would have complicated matters, he remarks, "but it would also have taken into account one obvious analogue and helped to work out Boromir's development even better." Jason Fisher is praised for unearthing "a nice piece of 'Tolkienian depth' by paralleling the fate of the three silmarils" with the three Elven Rings. Honegger concludes by praising *Tolkien Studies'* efforts to reprint the Professor's works, and suggests that "it may be worth thinking about adding a brief comment on the status of the republished essays within current academic discourse."

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Music in Middle-earth, ed. Heidi Steimel and Friedhelm Schneidewind. Zollikofen, Switzerland: Walking Tree, 2010. 318 pp. Price \$24.50 (trade paperback) ISBN 9783905703146. Cormarë Series No. 20. [This book was simultaneously released in German as *Musik in Mittelerde*, under the "Stein und Baum Edition" imprint of the Villa Fledermaus Publishers.]

Then the voices of the Ainur, like unto harps and lutes, and pipes and trumpets, and viols and organs, and like unto countless choirs singing with words, began to fashion the theme of Ilúvatar to a great music; and a sound arose of endless interchanging melodies woven in harmony that passed beyond hearing into the depths and into the heights, and the places of the dwelling of Ilúvatar were filled to overflowing, and the music and the echo of the music went out into the Void, and it was not void ("Ainulindalë" § 15).

Heidi Steimel and Friedhelm Schneidewind, along with their collaborators, have produced a very good book on a topic that, from a scholarly perspective, is crucial to the study of Tolkien's literary project and overall mythology. Readers interested in the central and serious subject of music in Tolkien will want to add this volume to their shelves. It covers the vast terrain of music, song, and instruments carefully and judiciously and fills an important space in the scholarly discussions of Tolkien's fiction.

Steimel and Schneidewind offer us a wide-ranging treatment of the foundational concept of Tolkien's entire universe, which begins with the creation myth cited above. The core idea is that before substance there is sound, or something *like unto* sound as we conceive of it, something that is heard and, at the same time, beyond hearing, something that has

essence but precedes form and, simultaneously, causes form to be. Ilúvatar and the Ainur, including Melkor, inhabit the insubstantial Void before creation and, from there, create Arda (the world Tolkien's Elves, Men, Hobbits and others will inhabit) from a vision that is expressed as sound and by virtue of powers that are ineffable, except synaesthetically and by analogy with music. The universe that is accessible through the senses—Valinor, Tol Erreseä, Númenor, Middle-earth, and the sundering sea—becomes that which “is not void” and subsequently contains within it traces of this original divine expression. Beauty and horror, hope and despair, good and evil, harmony and dissonance, purity and corruption all emanate from Ilúvatar and the Ainur's initial musical themes: in the beginning, love, freedom, and wisdom are intertwined with, and set off against, Melkor's malice and his desire for power. These conflicting principles enter the world at the moment of its conception. They make Arda not just a physical home for the Firstborn Elves and for Men, the Followers, but also a locus for conflicts that will endure across all ages and which have their origins outside of the created world itself. The “Ainulindalë,” then, does more than express how Arda came to be; it imbues it with potential and sets it on a historical path. In the silent (to us) music of the Ainur, therefore, we discern that Arda has an ontology and an eschatology. In this place, life is made and given impulses, nature is given intellect, and time is driven forward by the forces of history and destiny. The inexpressible void gives shape to a world whose motif is conflict and whose end is fundamentally uncertain.

This topic can be difficult to handle. In fact, it can at times become disorienting because the parallels with the creation story of the primary world, as Tolkien, English and Catholic, would have known it, are both illuminating and elusive. In “On Fairy-stories” Tolkien draws this analogy deliberately when discussing authorship. Sub-creation is not the same as Creation, but it does require a Maker and a World. It employs a kind of literary stand-in for divine expression that is like and unlike God's creative utterances which, in the book of Genesis, caused the world and everything in it to be. From the standpoint of the author, providing the secondary world with a creation story that can be understood analogically is crucial to Tolkien's attempt to fulfill at least two fundamental desires of fantasy: to explore the depths of time and space and to establish, in his sub-creation, an inner consistency of reality. In some ways, then, we can say that the entire fabric of life in Arda is laid out in the “Ainulindalë” as if it were a primary world created by the Ainur and as if Tolkien, the author, were absent. Tolkien accomplishes this by using one of the ready tools of fantasy, perhaps best illustrated by the conceit of the Red Book of Westmarch: he purports to be a witness to the world that he himself is creating. To give the fantasy depth and structural integrity,

Tolkien draws on his extensive knowledge and unique imagination, and he applies his considerable intellect and artistic talent in deliberate, sustained and complex ways. Thus, he creates for the reader a seemingly fully formed fictional universe—a secondary world with its own primary reality, if you will, and—even more critically—he acts as if that universe were always already there, preceded only by the Void. To confuse the secondary world with the primary world, Tolkien has said (again in “On Fairy-stories”), is akin to madness; he does not ask us to go that far. Nonetheless, the power of fantasy in his work does rely on a kind of disorientation of the senses, a confusion of reference points in time and space, and a change of perspective that operate on the reader like a form of enchantment. The more we seek to understand, the more we realize that there are things that we simply cannot know. This makes the fantasy of the creation myth in Tolkien all the more compelling and significant.

The first part of Steimel and Schneidewind’s volume dedicates three chapters to the question of creation and music. Kristine Larsen’s “Behold Your Music!”: The Themes of Ilúvatar, the Song of Aslan, and the Real Music of the Spheres,” connects music to the universe in a way that is more than symbolic, indeed philosophical and scientific, and makes illuminating links to C.S. Lewis and the creation myth in Narnia, as expressed in Aslan’s song in *The Magician’s Nephew*. Starting with Plato and Aristotle, she moves to Boethius and past him to Kepler and beyond to explore the ways in which the planets and stars have been associated with music, harmony, and a kind of cosmic perfection. Outside of Western culture, she references the Mayan *Popol Vuh* and Hopi traditions about bringing life into the world. Along with that, it is inevitable to relate Genesis to the “Ainulindalë.” In a scientific vein, Larsen contributes an interesting overview of different models of the creation of the universe (e.g. the Big Bang and the Big Crunch) and discusses their place with respect to Tolkien and other thinkers and religious leaders of his time, such as Fred Hoyle (who did not favor the Big Bang) and Pope Pius XII. She aptly points out the intertwining threads of theology and science in Tolkien and Lewis and invites us to consider how each deals with the potential for the end of the world within their fictional universes.

Following this discussion, Reuven Naveh’s “Tonality, Atonality and the Ainulindalë” takes on the formidable task of attempting to reply to the question: what kind of music did the Ainur produce? This leads him in interesting and thought-provoking directions. Based on the form and divisions of the music, one could venture that there is a correspondence with eighteenth- and nineteenth-century music, specifically with the Sonata form, especially in terms of exposition, development, and recapitulation (which, is, as Naveh points out, absent from the Ainur). Naveh also draws parallels between the music of the Ainur and the prelude to

Wagner's *Das Rheingold*, especially as it associates purity with consonance. In the dissonance of Melkor, he sees connections to Schoenberg; this discussion also touches on dissonance in Haydn and Mozart. The atonality of Schoenberg can be seen as an expression of the victory of evil, which is a tempting synaesthetic interpretation. In the twentieth century, Schenker's theories of hierarchies, transitions, and interruptions in tonal music may shed light on the themes of the Ainur and Tolkien's literary project as well. Naveh sees three functions for music in Tolkien: it may help to organize the literary material; it may be the focal point for something symbolic; or it may simply be music that we are tempted to imagine hearing.

Jonathan McIntosh, in "'Ainulindalë': Tolkien, St. Thomas, and the Metaphysics of the Music," contends that prior readings have missed or misunderstood the metaphysical meaning of the Ainur's music. Relating Tolkien's project to St. Thomas Aquinas, McIntosh argues that the creation themes of the *Silmarillion* connect intrinsically to Tolkien's "eucatastrophic" metaphysics and therefore are not indicative of an inevitable decay from a Platonic ideal and do not foreshadow a far-off, but eventual, decline or tragedy. He contends that other scholars, perhaps this one included, have an inflated view of the role and power of music in Tolkien's mythology. It is not clear that the strength of his metaphysical argument requires that kind of assessment; the two perspectives are not entirely incompatible, in this reader's view. Indeed, the contention that the musical pattern of the Ainur follows "a progressive, eschatological movement from glory to greater glory"—which is a very insightful observation—seems completely consonant with the view that music is vitally important and powerful in Tolkien. This reader enjoyed McIntosh's discussion of the music of the Ainur not as a fall but as a fulfillment and believes that there is fertile ground here for further and perhaps more nuanced discussion of the topic.

The second part of Steimel and Schneidewind's volume moves directly into music as we encounter it in Arda, that is, after the original moment of creation. These three chapters try to understand the development and definition of music in Tolkien's secondary world in the absence of substantial primary evidence. Steven Linden's aptly titled "A Speculative History of the Music of Arda" rightly points out that there are large gaps in our knowledge and that it is tempting to fill them in. His contribution happily discusses the music of the Elves, of Men, of Dwarves, and of Hobbits. The connections he draws, although admittedly speculative, help us see the potential links to medieval music and, from there, to understand how monophony and polyphony, as well as harmony and counterpoint, might have found expression among the various peoples of Middle-earth. Following on that, Heidi Steimel's chapter

“Bring Out the Instruments! Instrumental Music in Middle-earth” is a delightful overview of the various musicians and instruments of Tolkien’s universe which reminds us of music’s power to “weave a spell, win a battle and create a world” (91). She, too, discusses the music of the various peoples and adds Ents and Orcs to the list. This reader was pleased to see the discussion of the Dwarves’ music in “An Unexpected Party” (chapter 1 of the *Hobbit*). Among all the discussion of divine or divinely-inspired music, this domestic moment simply cannot be overlooked. It is one of Tolkien’s most elaborate and detailed musical scenes and its place, as an expression of day-to-day conviviality, needs to be reconciled alongside the lofty place of divine song. If the music of Ainur brings the world into being, it is the music of the dwarves at Bag End that sets Bilbo off on his adventure and thus initiates Tolkien’s entire literary career. The concluding chapter of this section, Norbert Maier’s “The Harp in Middle-earth” follows Steimel’s nicely and allows us to see, literally and in more detail, Thorin’s dwarvish harp as akin to the Irish harp of the 14th century. It contains speculative illustrations of that harp, the royal harp of Númenor, and the Elvish Harp, and it helps us to imagine better the instruments that may have made the “infinitely beautiful” music of Middle-earth.

What influences, literary, musical, and otherwise, from our primary world were brought to bear on the music of Tolkien’s secondary world is the overall subject of the following section. Gregory Martin’s “Music, Myth, and Literary Depth in the ‘Land ohne Musik’” investigates music as an unexplored dimension of Middle-earth and analyses the connections between music and language. He sees parallels between Tolkien’s project, creating a mythology for England, and the work of Vaughan Williams, who sought a musical voice that was properly English. The “Englishness” of being English is grounded in the language; so too are the cultures, identities, and music of Middle-earth connected to its languages, as Martin points out with specific reference to Sindarin and Quenya (which, themselves, have affinities with Welsh and Finnish). Bradford Lee Eden discusses the relationship of Tolkien’s work to Victorian fiction, with an overview of texts by Tennyson, Swinburne, and Morris. His discussion of medievalism, the medieval revival, and musical symbolism has the potential for further development, and it seems accurate to say that these aspects of Victorianism likely had a notable influence on Tolkien’s style. This reader was at times disappointed by Eden’s use of lengthy citations followed by too brief analysis. (More disappointing still was the discovery that this essay is also reproduced verbatim in Eden’s book *Middle-earth Minstrel: Essays on Music in Tolkien*, which also appeared in 2010).

Julian Eilmann’s essay, “Sleeps a Song in Things Abounding: J.R.R. Tolkien and the German Romantic Tradition” is a particularly strong

contribution. It opens up a new direction in scholarship by exploring the connections between song in Tolkien and the German Romantic tradition. In doing so, it allows us to see more clearly that Tolkien's songs are integral and not accidental to his narrative and that, without them, his art would be significantly diminished. We see, too, a kind of Romantic nature in Bilbo and Frodo as it is expressed in their longing for adventure and in their capacity and affinity for expressing profound and superficial moments in rhyme and song, specifically in walking and travel songs. With this, we understand more deeply the concept of the road for the hobbits and the larger purposes of the journey for Tolkien. At the close of this section of the volume, we are invited, by Murray Smith, to examine the connection between the songs of servicemen in World Wars I and II and Tolkien's own songs and poems. Smith's exposition is promising, giving the reader some new and provocative material to consider and making some brief and interesting observations, but he does not complete the link convincingly enough. This topic deserves further elaboration and attention.

Steimel and Schneidewind close their volume with four essays on interpretations that have been made of Tolkien's music in our contemporary world. These include the music of Black Metal rock bands, the music of the BBC *Lord of the Rings* radio play, the music of Peter Jackson's films, and the music of a variety of other groups such as the Danish Tolkien Ensemble. Michael Cunningham's chapter, "An Impenetrable Darkness: An Examination of the Influence of J.R.R. Tolkien on Black Metal Music," alerts us to what may, for many, be an astonishing fact: some interpreters of Tolkien fixate on and admire the Enemy. "Black Metal is an extreme sub-genre of Heavy Metal, one that is defined by aggressive musicality, misanthropic aesthetics and, notably by being Norway's largest musical export" (215). It is, as Cunningham states, music from the mouth of Sauron. Its practitioners are alienated, have contempt for Christianity, long for a past culture, and wish to inhabit an alternative world. They are captivated by images of evil, enjoy satanic imagery and theatre, and employ a dark aesthetic; some of these things can also be connected to role-playing games. In other words, these musicians act as if Sauron were the hero, and not the villain, of Middle-earth, and turn what is terrible into a demonic icon. This critic is grateful to learn of this music's existence, if only so that I may avoid encountering it.

Far more refreshing is Paul Smith's "Microphones in Middle-earth: Music in the BBC Radio Play" which gives us an insider's view on a production that is widely familiar and admired. Smith's discussion of how the radio play used music to propel the drama forward—from that initial, captivating theme, with its "slithering chromatic string figure resolv[ing] into a theme based on two three-note phrases, answered by a motif of a

falling fifth, backed by a chugging bass evoking treading feet” (245)—is fascinating and it helps us to grasp the contrasting use of music in the Jackson films, where it is often part of the scenic backdrop. An idea of Englishness, again connected to Vaughan Williams, was essential to composing the music for the radio play. Elves tended to produce music that was reminiscent of the Renaissance and High Baroque periods; hobbits sang in the mode of folksong. Dwarves were excluded entirely from the play. Mira Sommer’s “Elven Music in Our Times” shows that the Jackson films were heavily focused on giving musical expression to the Elves. This is an incisive observation; such a focus for the music gives the soundtrack continuity and consistency. All these things benefit the story as film and, along with the beauty and clarity of voices like Enya’s, ease and enhance the viewer’s reception of it. But, they do not, therefore, capture the complexity and varieties of music in Middle-earth. In fact, by translating some of Tolkien’s songs back into Sindarin and Quenya, the films, in this critic’s mind, may have gone too far in pursuit of some imagined “authenticity” or authorial intent and may, as a result, have unintentionally leveled some of the contours of his imagined world.

What these contours were or might have been is an issue at the heart of Fabian Geier’s “Making Texts Audible: A Workshop Report on Setting Tolkien to Music.” Indeed with only words available—Tolkien was not a musician and did not include composed music in his texts—how does one create sound? How does one go from a personalized and particular literary impression to make music that has previously gone unheard? Geier’s discussion of attributing styles, sound, color, and motif to the peoples of Middle-earth is insightful, worth reading, and noteworthy for the humility with which the author approaches the subject. At one point, Geier expresses the worry that such work may not be considered scholarly; this reviewer believes that this should not be a concern, especially not in a thoughtful essay about a central issue in Tolkien’s creation. Scholarship, however seriously and objectively conceived, sometimes fails to find the answers it seeks, as the appended chapter on Friedhelm Schneidewind’s aborted attempt to deduce the vocal ranges of the people of Middle-earth clearly shows. But failure can be useful, and it is beneficial to know a dead-end before one even starts down the path. This volume has many benefits and no obvious dead-ends; it sets before us a direction for scholarship to follow productively into the future.

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Middle-earth Minstrel: Essays on Music in Tolkien, edited by Bradford Lee Eden. Jefferson, NC and London: McFarland and Co., 2010. vii, 207 pp. \$35.00 (trade paperback) ISBN 9780786448142

Middle-earth Minstrel is an inconsistent book. It contains promising moments of analysis which sit somewhat uncomfortably beside other, less compelling, discussions. The book seems not always quite sure of itself; not sure, that is, if it wishes to be scholarly or something else. The result is a volume of essays of relatively uneven quality that would benefit from a clearer focus and a more explicitly articulated organizing principle so that its contents and arguments might better build momentum. The book is not, however, without its high points. In fact, it should be emphasized that a good number of the essays in this volume offer satisfying and insightful meditations on music in Tolkien, especially those by Keith W. Jensen, Amy M. Amendt-Raduege, Amy H. Sturgis, and David Bratman, all of which appear in the second half of the book.

As readers of *The Silmarillion* know, Tolkien's universe is born of a song, or something like unto a song, composed by the Ainur, including Melkor. Through Melkor's theme, the song, and thus creation itself, contains immanent and transcendent discord. Arda, the world, the culmination of Ilúvatar's vision, therefore is a place of perpetual conflict whose origins lie in, and even precede, its conception. This conflict is not simply symbolic or spiritual. It is part of the fabric of Arda itself; struggle and the violent confrontation of opposing forces literally shape its physical surface. "Yet it is told among the Eldar that the Valar endeavoured ever, in despite of Melkor, to rule the Earth and to prepare it for the coming of the Firstborn; and they built lands and Melkor destroyed them; valleys they delved and Melkor raised them up; mountains they carved and Melkor threw them down; seas they hollowed and Melkor spilled them; and naught might have peace or come to lasting growth, for as surely as the Valar began a labour so would Melkor undo it or corrupt it" ("Ainulindalë" S 22). Given this, it is altogether appropriate to ask, as Keith W. Jensen does in his essay "Dissonance in the Divine Theme: The Issue of Free Will in Tolkien's *Silmarillion*": "Why does Ilúvatar allow evil to enter the world?" (102) One answer is that things would be dull otherwise: "Choice is necessary. We could have a perfect world, but it would be boring," as Jensen says (111). Better, we might suggest: "there cannot be any 'story' without a fall," as Tolkien himself said in his 1951 letter to Milton Waldman (Letters 147; reprinted at the head of the 1999 second edition of *The Silmarillion*). There are parallels between music and fiction, here. Dissonance makes the music, as the fall makes the story. Hope, however, is what makes the story work against a backdrop of "sorrow, pain, and anguish" (110). Jensen cites Beren and Lúthien in this connection; one

might also comfortably cite Frodo, Sam, and any number of characters and instances in *The Lord of the Rings*. A key feature of Tolkien's fantasy is its responsiveness to the notion that one must never give in to despair. Unresolved dissonance in music, therefore, contains within it a source of eventual harmony, just as the ultimate resolution of Tolkien's fantasy, and fairy-stories generally, is the opposite of tragedy, or eucatastrophe.

Perhaps the best essay in this volume, Amy M. Amendt-Raduege's contribution, "'Worthy of a Song': Memory, Mortality, and Music," investigates the "symbolic immortality achieved in song" (115) throughout Tolkien's universe. Connecting her analysis to observations on *Beowulf* and other Anglo-Saxon works, Amendt-Raduege demonstrates convincingly how the "songs of Middle-earth hold *its* story together" and thus communicate a larger and deeper historical backdrop over and against which the stories may unfold (118). She attributes three purposes to songs in this context—commemoration, consolation and communion—and argues that "their subjects cross all barriers of culture, race, and even time itself" (118). She rightly points out that Sam helps make and strengthen the connection between song and memory. This reader also found Amendt-Raduege's characterization of Sauron as a kind of threat to memory—"utter abnegation, not just of freedom or civilization but of even the memory of freedom and civilization" (121)—to be a particularly notable insight, one that could provide groundwork for future scholarship.

These two strong essays about music in Tolkien are followed by two good essays about music inspired by Tolkien. Amy H. Sturgis' "'Tolkien is the Wind and the Way': The Educational Value of Tolkien-Inspired World Music" initiates us into a "journey involving art, interpretation, and popular culture" (127). Her piece provides an overview of adaptations (e.g. instrumental compositions, the BBC radio drama, the soundtrack to the Peter Jackson films, and records by the Tolkien Ensemble, among others) and suggests that these can be useful for students as they encounter and interpret the texts themselves. Newly composed songs—what Sturgis calls "sub-sub-creations"—also figure in her summary. The pedagogical purpose of exposing students to this kind of music is to advance their work with the fiction itself, which is an admirable goal. This critic liked the creativity in her approach and does not doubt Sturgis's conclusion: "Using songs to introduce discussions about Tolkien's themes, characters, worlds, and storylines challenges students to think in imaginative and critical ways and bring new analytical tools to their reading of the texts" (138). The second half of David Bratman's "Liquid Tolkien: Music, Tolkien, Middle-earth, and More Music" continues the catalog with a focus mainly on "classical orchestral music" and "classical and folks settings of Tolkien's poetry" (153). These include

a number of composers, such as Carey Blyton, Donald Swann (whose “The Road Goes Ever On,” Bratman observes, “invariably turns up in anyone’s collection of Tolkien songs” page 157), Howard Shore (for the Jackson films), Stephen Oliver (the BBC radio play), Finnish composer Aulis Sallinen, and Dutch composer Johan de Meij, among others. The first half of Bratman’s contribution reminds us that “Tolkien always expected, or at least hoped, that music would be written inspired by his writings” (145) and gives us some sense of the Englishness of the sound that the author might have associated with his text. Along with that, Bratman briefly surveys Tolkien’s musical tastes, noting that he was fond of Wagner’s predecessor, Carl Maria von Weber, but not particularly fond of Wagner himself. The inspiration for Bratman’s title—liquid Tolkien—comes from a remark that Ellen Kushner is said to have made about Finnish composer Jean Sibelius: “It’s liquid Tolkien!” (148). The connections that Bratman draws between Sibelius’s treatments of the *Kalevala* and Tolkien’s fiction are illuminating and full of potential.

Other essays in this volume relate somewhat more obliquely to music but deserve mention because they possess inherent scholarly interest. Deanna Elmar Evans makes useful observations on *Sir Orfeo* and points of inspiration for Tolkien’s unfinished “Lay of Lúthien.” Peter Wilkin provides a promising discussion of longing and the poetic impulse. John R. Holmes’s “‘Inside a Song’: Tolkien’s Phonaesthetics” reminds us of this key concept and builds productively off Peter Kreeft’s remark that poetry “is music made speakable” (27). This reader found Holmes’s comments on Tolkien’s “phonaesthetic pleasure” (31, quoting *Letters* 176), and his taste and talent for the sound of language, to be insightful and important to our understanding of his work as an intellectual and a writer of fiction. Jason Fisher’s examination of alliterative verse in Rohan and Mercia shows good command of the material and helpfully reveals some of the “Old English undercurrents” in Rohan and its environs. The editor, Bradford Lee Eden, also includes an essay that makes relevant observations on the influence of medievalism, Victorianism, and musical symbols on Tolkien’s style. This essay can also be found in Steimel and Schneidewind’s *Music in Middle-earth*.

Steimel and Schneidewind’s compilation of essays is reviewed above. That work, along with this one, indicates a very positive development in scholarship: considerable attention is being paid to music in Tolkien. The topic itself is of immense importance, and the extent and significance of music and song in Tolkien’s fiction is elaborate and complex. It calls for serious and sustained attention. There is ample room for more than one book on music in Tolkien in any given year, perhaps for years to come, without fear of overlap, necessarily. Parts of *Middle-earth Minstrel* fill that space nicely; other parts, though less clearly connected to music, have

value as reflections on Tolkien's language, poetry and overall project and thus merit reading for broader reasons and on their own terms.

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The Power of Tolkien's Prose: Middle-Earth's Magical Style, by Steve Walker. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009. viii, 213 pp. Price \$80.00 (hardcover) ISBN 9780230619920.

W. H. Auden famously complained in his 1956 review of the concluding volume of *The Lord of the Rings* that "I rarely remember a book about which I have had such violent arguments" (Auden 5). Reviewers and critics have been poles apart in their estimation of this book from its initial publication to the present day, when it has topped a number of polls selecting the best books of the twentieth century while simultaneously being denigrated by other readers (in the minority, it is true, so the judgment of the Muses begins to seem pretty obvious). In his "Introduction," Professor Walker (Department of English, Brigham Young University) summarizes the cacophony of opinions ranging from "trash" to "work of genius" that has characterized the critical reception for the last half-century, providing numerous quotations juxtaposed to highlight the remarkably divergent views, along with a good deal of wry humor that makes the five pages of summary a jolly read.

How, then, is one to write an apologia? It is Walker's thesis in this study that Tolkien's oeuvre inspires passionate love simply because he really does write very well and very carefully, but elicits widely varying responses because his writing is highly suggestive, not only allowing but asking the reader's imagination to assist in the creation. Walker observes "how strikingly invitational this prose is, how it stakes so much of its success on reader response" (8), and again that it "stimulates among its readers not just vivid, but individual responses" (9). Tolkien's technique "is essentially one of suggestion" (10) for "despite all the detail he puts in, Tolkien leaves more out" (93). Tolkien called this "applicability," allowing the individual to fill in the picture of the tree or hill (et cetera) out of his or her own experience.

Also Tolkien's style appears deceptively simple: "it is clear prose" (139) that, upon close examination, "searches semantic territory, disclosing implicit meaning at the levels of allusion and irony and pun and emblem and nuance of diction and syntax" (115).

This study, while relatively short, explores these points at some length.

Chapter 1 on “Ordinary Everyday Magic” treats the essential realism of Tolkien’s most fantastic elements, along with his ability to show the numinous in familiar things. “Blade and Leaf Listening” (chapter 2) is largely about how very much alive is all of Middle-earth and everything in it, even the plant life not only sentient but perceptive (41), the very topography animate (43), and how this is achieved through careful word choice. “The Road Goes Ever On and On” (chapter 3) expands on the theme that “the journey is the essence of Tolkien narrative” (74), and “Always On and On” (chapter 4) the “underlying theme of onwardness” (73), growth, and change. “The Potency of the Words” (chapter 5) discusses Tolkien being “first and foremost a philologist. . . . He loves language, cherishes words with an ardor that looks beyond surface appearance to inmost potential” (115). “Just a Bit of Nonsense” (chapter 6) delves into how playful Tolkien could be, and how creative.

And every chapter does more, for Walker’s style is discursive, and the road on which he takes us winds in and out and round about, and no chapter is solely on the subject of its title. Also similar points come up in different sections. It is plain that this book grew out of lectures and wide-ranging class discussions (e.g., from his students comes an amusing list of “Top Ten Justifications for Not Being Married from *The Lord of the Rings*” 11). By ranging widely, however, we gain a fuller picture. The treatment of the hobbit characters, for example, begins with a discussion of how they are characterized by their simplicity (19-21), progresses to how the ones we mostly see (Bilbo, Frodo, Sam, Merry, Pippin) all grow dramatically (100-101), and culminates with a thoughtful depiction of how variable is the hobbit dialect, with “such distinct idiolects as the lucid manner of a Frodo, the colloquial heartiness of Sam, and the involuted gurglings of Gollum” (144).

For those who miss how deeply Tolkien thought about the individual personalities of his fictional characters, Walker’s treatment of his prose style will be enlightening. “In Middle-earth, the style is the creature. Language in its every aspect reveals character” (144). There are insightful reflections on the character of peoples such as the dwarves with their “accumulation of contradictions” (22) or individuals such as Saruman whose “corruption is not a case of bad to worse, but of good to abominable” (102). One of my own favorite minor characters, the old grey mare in *Farmer Giles of Ham*, “in a role whose narrative necessity requires nothing more than a ridable back” but was developed much further by the author in her few appearances, has her delightfully sensible and practical nature very well described (18). (I regret that Tolkien, very uncharacteristically, never assigned a name to the mare, not in any of the recensions of the story that are housed in the Archives of Marquette University Library. One version does, however, whimsically call her “the real hero” of

the tale). Indeed, overall, as Walker observes: “character motivation may be the central concern of the narrative—the plot of *The Lord of the Rings* is all about motivations, its thematic essence a demonstration of ways in which generous actions tend to be productive, whereas selfish actions prove self-thwarting” (16).

Walker has read both widely and deeply in Tolkien’s fiction, essays, and published letters, and uses all of these. This study takes most of its examples from *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*, but other fictions are not entirely neglected. In his discussion of a technique he calls *emblem*, meaning “an echo of a psychological state or narrative event that accentuates the original” (134), for example, he finds that “one of the more layered instances of emblem takes place among the simple folk of Wootton Major, whose overeating comes emblematically to incorporate overconsumption and then materialism generally and eventually the spiritual grossness that is failure to perceive the faërie in life” (135). There are many other worthwhile discussions of Tolkien’s love of resuscitating dead metaphor, and his use of religion, coincidence, luck, prefiguring, and much else.

But perhaps this is enough of an overview of this study’s contents and argument, and it is time for the reviewer’s traditional picking of a few nits.

I should first mention the two-edged sword that Walker uses the 1994 edition of *The Lord of the Rings* for the good reasons that is a “widely available compact edition” (178) where passages can be conveniently cited by page number. I advise you to keep this edition to hand when reading this study, as I did, so as to find readily the references that illustrate what is being discussed, for other editions have different pagination.

Since he has taught the book for many years, his references are usually very apropos, of course. He does once, on page 131, ascribe a quotation to Sam when the speaker is Frodo. This is irrelevant to what is being argued (though that happens to be about the importance of names, including not being able to put a name to something), but one does like to know.

He does raise my hackles a bit by referring to *The Lord of the Rings* as a “trilogy” a number of times, perhaps just for rhetorical variation, but he must know better. Tolkien rejected the term for its inaccuracy and most critics have realized that is the case, so one does not often see this mistake any longer though it was common a few decades ago. Brian Rosebury, another scholar who has also written at some length about Tolkien’s style and whom Walker cites often, gives a succinct summation of the facts of the matter: “not a ‘trilogy’ but a unified work of some 600,000 words presented in three separately titled volumes” (Rosebury 11).

Walker reveals that: “A fierce realist myself, I had to be dragged

kicking and screaming to any kind of fantasy, let alone fantasy as frankly archaic as Tolkien's" (93). Nevertheless he came to realize: "that archaism is much parodied and much critiqued, but it may be one of the glories of Tolkien's style, mainly because of his restraint in its use" (85). He is generally very perceptive in illustrating this, but I take exception to his observation that "there are words in Tolkien's fiction that would stagger an Anglo-Saxon" (153). The examples he gives (*éored* which means a troop of horsemen, plus six more) are all words or at least compounds of words that are in the corpus of Old English, and so would be perfectly familiar to an actual Angle or Saxon. Most of them do need translation for speakers of modern English (fortunately there now exist several reference books on Tolkien in which one can look them up, such as Hammond and Scull's *Reader's Companion*). But others on his list do survive into modern English albeit as archaisms (*ell* was still a measurement taught as late as the 1950s when *The Lord of the Rings* was first published, while *were-gild* is very commonly used in contemporary fantasy novels). As for *eyot*, Rosebury discusses Tolkien's use of this word in a number of passages, showing that saying "small island in a river" or even just "island" would not do instead. (Rosebury 72-73). In another place Walker glosses *attercop* by citing the Danish word for spider, *edderkopp* (151). Now *attercop* (or some variant spelling) is simply the ordinary Old English word for spider, so it is not necessary to look for cognates in modern Germanic languages, though it is interesting that they exist. (It is one of Tolkien's jokes that his giant Mirkwood spiders consider what was an ordinary word to be pejorative; the literal meaning is "poison-head").

There is an ingenious observation that "if commas are breathing points, Tolkien's is breathless prose. The missing comma brakes [sic] convey throughout the narrative an impression of headlong rapidity" (87). However, the ordinary British usage of commas is just far more sparing than the American, so this effect may merely be cultural. Now "comma brakes" above may be a play on the meanings of "breaks" and "brakes" (Walker can be quite playful stylistically, as on page 153 when he puns about the "past-urizing drift of Tolkien's diction" in his discussion of its archaism). Or it may simply be a misprint for the more usual term "comma breaks" in composition. However, I am pleased to say that overall this book was very well proof-read, for, alas, that is not always true in these days when, while computerized checking of spelling is indeed useful, there is yet too much reliance on it. There are some occasions when an accent mark was omitted from a name (e.g, Orome and Theoden instead of Oromë and Théoden on page 10). And Isildur appears as "Isuldur" on page. 145. I regret to say that in citing Ursula K. Le Guin's formal name the middle initial and the space in the surname are consistently left out.

Walker has a wide knowledge of Tolkien scholarship. (In the interests of disclosure I note that his sole reference to me is that my 1970 bibliography is “a helpful guide to early Tolkien criticism,” a gracious observation on page 192 for which I thank him). Almost every page of this book is replete with quotations from other critics. There are a few cases, though, where his disagreements are really misunderstandings. When on page 117 he references “the widely held—and thoroughly mistaken—view” that Tolkien’s “source was most clearly the Bible” by quoting from an essay by Poul Anderson (which actually refers to many possible sources, just as Walker does), the exact citation turns out rather to opine that Tolkien gives the elves of Norse mythology an admixture of Biblical seraphim (P. Anderson 31). In a discussion of irony permeating the tales of Middle-earth, Walker quotes from an essay by Douglas A. Anderson as an example of a denial that Tolkien wrote in an ironic tone (119). Turning to the original article one finds that Anderson does indeed discuss Tolkien’s use of irony, and that the denial in the passage quoted is rather that Tolkien did not employ one particular variety of irony (the cynical) to which the modernist and postmodernist schools are partial (D. Anderson 139). I suspect Walker would agree with these observations by both Andersons.

I also have a question. In general Walker is perceptive in discussing Tolkien’s allusions in *The Lord of the Rings* to other parts of his legendarium, which, as Walker avers in company with many critics, give a sense of historical depth to Middle-earth and of widespread mythic communion among its peoples. But he says, “I could discover in the entire work only four such references” (179). One that he quotes and discusses is the epic simile comparing Théoden to Oromë (10, and further on 67). He also footnotes the passage mentioning Queen Berúthiel (179, note 20, though he only gives the page, not her name). What are the other two he is thinking of? I suspect he means the pair of references to Túrin, one listing him as an Elf-friend and the other calling him a mighty swordsman, since, like the first two mentioned, there is no further explanation in the text (including the appendices) though there is more information in writings published later. At least I think that is Walker’s rationale for this comment, for he certainly knows there are many more than four such allusions (e.g., he does note the frequent references to the story of Beren and Lúthien, or I could mention other examples, such as the horn of Scatha given to Merry that we only hear more about in an appendix).

There have not been very many extended discussions of Tolkien’s writing style. Naturally most book-length critiques touch on this at least in passing (in particular, Brian Rosebury includes close reading of some passages), and Walker cites and builds on both Rosebury’s book and the few essays that have this as their focus, notably by Michael Drout, Ursula

K. Le Guin, Paul Edmund Thomas, and Allan Turner. The only such essay he overlooks that occurs to me is by Dwayne Thorpe on “Tolkien’s Elvish Craft,” and perhaps one has to have heard it delivered at the Tolkien Centenary Conference, as I did, fully to appreciate its own powerful craftsmanship. I should add that neither does Walker reference an excellent essay by John D. Rateliff on Tolkien’s craftsmanship, but that was published in the same year as his study and so was probably not available to him.

The Power of Tolkien’s Prose therefore helps to fill a gap in Tolkien scholarship. It is essentially a survey of the varieties of Tolkien’s prose, an overview touching on a wide range of stylistic components, occasionally delving deep into particular sections. It is a good start. Now I hope to see more close reading of Tolkien’s oeuvre.

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The Saga of King Heidrek the Wise, ed. Christopher Tolkien. London: HarperCollins. 2010. xxxviii, 1,2-82[dual facing pages, paginated the same],[1],83-100pp. £40.00 (hardcover) ISBN 9780007416967.

The volume reviewed here is HarperCollins's print-on-demand fiftieth-anniversary reissue of the edition of *The Saga of King Heidrek the Wise*, produced by Christopher Tolkien in 1960 for Thomas Nelson & Sons' series of facing-page text-and-translation works in Old Norse. The reissue is very welcome both to those interested in the works of Tolkien sr. and to those who would like to know more about literature in Old Norse—copies of the first edition are still selling for upwards of \$360. But the re-appearance does provoke a few melancholy thoughts about the "long defeat" of philology, the Tolkiens' favorite discipline, in the intervening half-century. The Nelson series, which produced editions of *The Saga of the Volsungs*, *The Saga of the Jomsvikings*, and *The Saga of Gunnlaug Serpent-Tongue*, was supposed, like the parallel series of student texts produced by the Viking Society, to stimulate and enable Old Norse studies in British and American universities. Fifty years later, it has long been defunct, and though the Viking Society has made all its publications and many others (including the one reviewed here) available online—see www.vsnrweb-publications.org.uk—Old Norse/Icelandic studies are now confined to a small number of university locations, mostly with just one faculty

enthusiast still teaching. Yet popular interest in Vikings and their literature has never been greater. The discrepancy may well be caused by the modern academics' habit of writing only for each other. If more of them had cultivated Christopher Tolkien's style, at once clear and rigorous, at once scholarly and imaginative, even dashing, the subject would have had more support from students, deans and faculty committees.

The 1960 volume was Christopher's fourth work dealing with the same text (I refer to him by first name to save continuous disambiguation from his father). An edition of it formed the basis of his Oxford B. Litt. thesis: the old Oxford B. Litt. was, in spite of its name, a two-year post-graduate degree. Presumably as a result of the thesis, he was invited by Gabriel Turville-Petre, the Oxford Professor of Ancient Icelandic Literature and Antiquities (a position no longer extant), to write the "Introduction" to Turville-Petre's 1956 edition of the saga for the Viking Society. Turville-Petre added notes and a glossary to his edition, so that it could be used as a student text, and titled it *Hervarar Saga ok Heiðreks*, that is, "The Saga of Hervör and Heiðrek." At about the same time Christopher published a long article in *Saga-Book of the Viking Society* 14 (1953-7): 141-163, on "The Battle of the Goths and Huns." This considered only one part of the saga, the poem incorporated into its later chapters and titled in English "The Battle of the Goths and Huns," and in Norse, *Hlödskviða*, or "The Lay of Hlöd." It also considered only one question, though an extremely fascinating one: if "elements of [the poem] do indeed descend from [remote antiquity], do they derive from any actual event under the sun, recorded in any book that may still be read today?" (141). Many scholars had previously considered the question, and Christopher gives a scrupulous, if in the end rather damning account of them, before coming to a negative but by no means discouraging conclusion. Finally, in 1960, we have the work reviewed here, with a long "Introduction," facing-page text-and-translation, and several "Appendices" containing related texts, including verses found in *Örvar-Odds saga*, "The Saga of Arrow-Odd," or in manuscripts of *Heiðreks saga* different from the one chosen as base-text for Christopher's edition.

What makes "The Saga of King Heiðrek" so fascinating? It is one of the *fornaldarsögur*, "the sagas of old times," of which the most famous is "The Saga of the Volsungs," which was a major inspiration for J.R.R. Tolkien's *Legend of Sigurd and Gudrún*—if only, as stated in the long review of the latter work in *Tolkien Studies* 7 (2010): 292-4, by ricochet, as the muddled rehandling of a complex story which cried out to be made coherent and credible. "The Saga of King Heiðrek" is like "The Saga of the Volsungs" in being a composite work "sewn together to form a single narrative, not always with skill" (Christopher, 1956: xi); and the sagas are similar as well in that both are largely based on poems which

the saga-authors knew, but which survived only partially into modern times. A major difference is that the “Volsung” author decided mostly to paraphrase his source-poems into prose, while the “Heidrek” author “chose a different method: he inserted the old verses into the framework of his prose narrative. It was a happy choice . . .” (1960: viii). “The Battle of the Goths and Huns” is “perhaps the oldest of all the heroic lays preserved in the North,” while “The Waking of Angantýr” was praised by W.P. Ker as “the [second] most wonderful of all the Northern poems,” and “The Riddles of Gestumblindi” are simply unique (*loc. cit.*). To this one should add a fourth poem included in the saga, “Hjalmar’s Death-Song,” which was also taken in the past as a classic case of the Viking ethos—there is an excellent rendering of it by the French Romantic poet Leconte de Lisle.

Nevertheless the saga itself shows clear signs of patching and pasting, not always successful. Christopher’s “Introduction” points out many of these, though it is probably a good idea to read the “Introduction” *after* the saga, so as to follow his suggestions as to what may have caused them. But (as with “The Saga of the Volsungs”) the bodging does not necessarily make the saga less interesting. It gives a hint of the legend’s history, and the way it grew over time: in a word, it creates the sense of *depth* which Tolkien sr. valued so highly. Tolkien sr. famously asked, “what is this flavour, this atmosphere, this virtue that such *rooted* works have, and which compensates for the inevitable flaws and imperfect adjustments that must appear” (*MC* 72), and part of the answer must be just that sense of age, of existence independent of the single final product.

Age is indeed a major part of the importance of “The Saga of King Heidrek,” but it needs a brief summary to make this clear. As Christopher says, if anything holds the saga together, it is the theme of the sword with a curse on it, the sword Tyrfing, made under compulsion (in one manuscript) by the dwarves Durin and Dvalin. This comes into the hands of Angantýr (the first of three Angantýrs in the saga), one of twelve berserker brothers. The twelve are challenged and fought on the island of Samsey by the hero Hjalmar and his comrade Arrow-Odd. All fourteen are killed apart from Odd; and at this point we have “Hjalmar’s Death-Song.” Tyrfing is buried with its owner, but Angantýr’s daughter Hervör, a warrior-maiden, determines to recover it from his barrow, which she does, undeterred by warnings, eldritch fires, and her father’s voice from the grave: her conversation with him forms the poem, “The Waking of Angantýr,” one of the first Old Norse poems to be rendered into English—by Thomas Percy, in his *Five Pieces of Runic Poetry* (1763)—and responsible for many of the gruesome associations which have clung to Old Norse ever since. She passes Tyrfing on to her fratricidal son Heidrek, who becomes a king of the Goths, and sires one son, also called

Angantýr, on a Gothic princess, another son called Hlöd on a captured Hunnish princess, and a “shield-maid” daughter, also called Hervör, by yet a third wife.

Heidrek engages in a riddle-contest with Odin, disguised as Gestumblindi, but after Heidrek has solved all “The Riddles of Gestumblindi,” the disguised Odin asks a question which only he can answer, and which of course is not a fair riddle—what did Odin whisper in the ear of Balder on his funeral pyre? Enraged at this breach of the rules, Heidrek strikes out at Odin, and is cursed as a result. The curse is fulfilled when Heidrek’s slaves kill him and steal Tyrting. Heidrek’s son Angantýr takes revenge for his father and recovers the sword, but is then faced by his half-brother Hlöd, who demands his share of the inheritance. When he refuses, Hlöd is backed by his father Humli, the king of the Huns, and after a first engagement in which Hervör the shield-maid is killed, an apocalyptic battle takes place, told for the most part in the verse of “The Battle of the Goths and Huns,” and ending in defeat for the Huns and death for Hlöd, mourned by his brother. The saga tails off with some unconvincing connections to later legends.

None of the above can give a full sense of the power, and the fascination, of the poetry in the saga, but perhaps one example may hint at the former. “The Battle of the Goths and Huns” is in one way a mirror-image of one of the most famous and probably most ancient Old Norse poems, “The Lay of Hamthir,” which is certainly based on a historical event of the late fourth century. A vital scene in this occurs when two brothers, the children of Sigurd’s widow Gudrún and her third husband Jónak, go to avenge the death of their half-sister Svanhild, and are greeted by their half-brother Erp, the son of Jonak and another woman—no blood relation to Svanhild at all, and so with no obligation to avenge her. Nevertheless he offers to help, is rejected, and after a barbed conversation, is killed. The word he was looking for, and which his half-brothers would not say (till too late) was *bróðir*, “brother.” In “The Saga of Heidrek” that is almost the first word Angantýr says to his half-brother Hlöd. But almost the first word said by Hlöd is “half.” He wants half of everything. Angantýr offers a third, still with extreme politeness and respect, and one might feel there is a chance here of a successful negotiation. But then Angantýr’s foster-father, Gizur Grýtingalídi, says fatal words; and in Norse sagas it is notorious that “the words of fate will be spoken by someone.” What he says is (with Christopher’s translation facing):

Þetta er þiggjanda	A bountiful offer
þýjar barni	for a bondmaid’s child —
barni þýjar	child of a bondmaid,
þótt sé borinn konungi	though born to a king.

To this he adds the word *hornung*, “bastard,” and negotiations cease forthwith. The chiasmus is just the same as that in the four lines from a Sigurd poem praised by Tolkien sr. for their “supreme vigour and economical force,” (see *SG* 233). They even carry an extra sting through their use of the subjunctive form *sé*, hard to render briefly in English—“born to a king *though he may have been*.” Both *Hamðismál* and *Hlöðskviða*, to give it its alternate title, are tragedies of *sundrmæðri*, “children of different mothers,” but they exploit different possibilities in similar situations.

Meanwhile there is the fascination of age, and of philology. Much of this hinges, as often with philology, on the evidence of a single word. When he catches up with the slaves who have killed his father, Angantýr sees that one of them has caught a fish and is about to clean it with Tyrfing; the slave says jokingly, and in verse: “The pike has paid / by the pools of Grafá / for Heidrek’s slaying / *undir Harvaða-fjöllum*, under Harvad-fells” (1960: 44-45). The latter place-name is not known elsewhere in Norse and probably meant nothing to the authors of poem or saga, or the copyists of the saga. But, to quote Christopher, “the view is not challenged, I think, that *Harvaða-* is the same name in origin as ‘Carpathians,’” adding in a footnote, “The stem *karpat-* was regularly transformed into *arfab-* by the operation of the Germanic Consonant Shift (Grimm’s Law).” Since the change to *Harvaða-* took place over centuries by regular phonetic processes of which the ancient world consciously knew nothing, the name can only be “a relic of extremely ancient tradition . . . going back to poetry sung in the halls of Germanic peoples in central or south-eastern Europe” (1960: xxiii)—a point of great importance to Tolkien sr., and one with which he surely agreed, see *Tolkien Studies* 7 (2010): 309 ff. With that one solid foundation, one can note also the place-name *Danparstaðir*, which “seems certainly to contain the Gothic name of the Russian river Dnieper” (loc. cit.), as also *Dúnheiðr* (the Danube?). Two Roman names for the Goths, *Greutungi* and *Teruungi*, possibly meaning the “steppe-Goths” east of the Dnieper and the “wood-Goths” to the west, show up in the nickname of Gizur Grýtingalídi, and in the name of the sword Tyrfing, though the author of “The Battle of the Goths and Huns” seems to use it as a name for Angantýr’s Gothic kingdom. The names open a window into the lost world of the Gothic kings of the steppe before the fall of the Roman Empire—a world of continuing fascination for Tolkien sr., as one can see from *The Legend of Sigurd and Gudrun*.

Can we relate the story and the poem to “any actual event under the sun,” as Christopher asked in his *Saga-Book* article? Many attempts have been made to do just that, with Heidrek turning up as the Visigoth Athanaric or the Gepid Ardaric, while Hlöd has been identified with men called Odotheus, Alatheus, Chlodio, Litorius. Christopher

remarked in the end, “I do not think that it should need to be said, that to pick about in old histories, looking for names that begin with the same letter or contain one or two of the same consonants as those in one’s text, will attain nothing” (155)—because, to labor the point, unlike *Harvada-*, they are not backed by *regular phonetic change*. Alas, fifty years later, it *does* need to be said: the views of N.C. Lukman are still taken much too seriously by *Beowulf* scholarship in particular, perhaps because he said what is now convenient to believe, that Germanic legend comes from learned and Classical sources. But if you use Lukman’s principles—as Christopher demonstrated in a *reductio ad absurdum*—you can “prove” that Angantýr is “a legendary transformation of Constantine the Great” (155), while Hlöd must be his brother-in-law, the Eastern Emperor Licinius. “Heiðrekr is of course Diocletian; it may even be possible to work in the Council of Nicea” (156).

Germanic legend in fact held on to information far more tenaciously than is any longer generally realised. Christopher notes strong corroboration of the Heiðrek story in the Old English poem *Widsith*, with five names like those of the saga in close connection, including Heathoric and Wyrnhere, the latter an exact phonetic cognate of Hervör II’s foster-father Ormar. The OE poem sets its wars of Goths and Huns *ymb Wistlawudu*, “round the wood of the Vistula,” and the headwaters of the Vistula rise indeed in the Carpathian mountains. Even “The Saga of the Volsungs” shares some accurate ethnic information with another OE poem, *Waldere*, as Christopher pointed out much more recently (in *SG* 228). In brief, though *Heiðreks saga* contains “legend, not ‘history’ as we understand it . . . the matter of legend has roots” (1960: xxv). In this case the roots of “The Battle of the Goths and Huns” cannot be identified with any particular battle known to Classical historians, but stem nevertheless from the “vast obscure upheavals” which took place out on the steppe-lands following the fourth-century arrival of the Huns (1953-7: 161), of which no Classical record has ever been preserved.

Echoes of the works of Tolkien sr. must have been obvious already: both father and son certainly knew the work, and perhaps discussed it. There are the dwarves Durin and Dvalin; the riddle-contest, ended by a question which is not a riddle; Hervör I over-reacts to provocation in the hall of King Gudmund rather like Túrin and Thingol; Tyrfing, which brings victory to every man who wields it, can nevertheless be captured by cutting off the hand of the wielder; Mirkwood appears, as do “the Undying Lands.” Yet I think the main fascination in the saga for J.R.R. Tolkien, and perhaps for Christopher as well, was not what it tells us, but what it hints at: the “Lost Tales” of the Goths, that enormously successful and powerful race (surely) of Riders, whose language and parts of whose history survive, but whose literature—to use an inexact term

for what must have been oral epic poetry—has vanished, but for faint memories and precious linguistic traces.

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Book Notes

It is worth calling attention to the fact that Bradford Lee Eden's *Middle-earth Minstrel*, reviewed above, is also available in some Ebook formats—the first Ebook that I have encountered of Tolkien criticism. The publicity information provided by the publisher notes the Ebook with an ISBN 9780786456604. However, this ISBN produces no results at Amazon or Barnes and Noble, but it does at Google. For the Kindle edition, one must search Amazon by title or author. There is apparently no Nook edition. An Ebook version can be purchased via Google. It seems that for the present, lacking any kind of standard, Ebooks will be difficult to report on bibliographically.

Issue no. 14 of *Parma Eldalamberon*, containing “Early Quenya” and “The Valmaric Script” by J.R.R. Tolkien, has been reprinted. For ordering information on it and other issues of *Parma Eldalamberon*, see <http://www.lamberon.com/parma14.html>.

A revised and expanded second edition of *Beowulf and the Critics*, edited by Michael D.C. Drout, is to be published in summer 2011 by the Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies.

Finally, I have pulled one review from the Book Reviews section proper and given it separate standing as a review/essay. Most collections of criticism contain around a dozen or so essays, while the massive two volumes of *The Ring Goes Ever On: Proceedings of the Tolkien 2005 Conference* contain about one hundred essays. In order to cover the contents in a thorough way, it was immediately apparent that an unusually lengthy review would be in order. Deidre Dawson's exemplary consideration follows next.

Douglas A. Anderson

Review-Essay

The Ring Goes Ever On

DEIDRE A. DAWSON

The Ring Goes Ever On: Proceedings of the Tolkien 2005 Conference: 50 Years of "The Lord of the Rings," two volumes, ed. Sarah Wells. Coventry, England: The Tolkien Society, 2008. Volume One: viii, 421 pages (trade paperback) ISBN 9780905520254; Volume Two, vi, 414 pages (trade paperback) ISBN 9780905520261. Two volume set: ISBN 9780905520247. Prices vary with shipping; order via <http://www.tolkiensociety.org/2005/proceedings>.

The conference commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the publication of *The Lord of the Rings* was held between the 11th and 15th of August 2005 at Aston University, Birmingham, England. The proceedings fill up 834 pages in two voluminous tomes containing nearly one hundred essays in all. It is admirable that the Tolkien Society seeks to be as inclusive as possible, and to provide a forum in which participants from a variety of backgrounds—professional scholars, academics, graduate students, translators, presidents of fan clubs and national Tolkien societies, creative writers, and others—may gather together to share their perspectives on Tolkien's work. Regrettably, a small number of papers delivered at the 2005 conference were submitted to the editor of the proceedings, yet not published, and the authors were never notified of this decision before the proceedings went to press. It is hoped that an addendum to the proceedings will be forthcoming.

Sarah Wells states in her Editor's Note that her editorial philosophy was to go lightly on issues such as standardizing language, so as to provide as accurate a record as possible of the contents of the conference. This is a justifiable aim, and it does give the reader a good idea of the diversity of backgrounds and critical approaches of the conference participants. But while respect for the linguistic idiosyncrasies of individual authors provides a pleasing variety of prose, going lightly on basic formatting and style leads to undesirable results, such as inconsistency in listing references. There does not seem to have been any basic style sheet or guidelines for notes and bibliographies. Some essays are lacking bibliographies and footnotes altogether, in spite of the fact that the authors refer to works other than Tolkien's, and this detracts from the overall scholarly quality of the volume. Another rather serious flaw is the apparent lack of any proofreading of the manuscript, which would have spared some of the authors the embarrassment of committing to print lexical errors such as

“deflagrates” instead of “deflects,” and “loose” instead of “lose.” Most essays are free of misspellings and typographical errors, but a few have some that are so glaring that even the most cursory copy-editing would have caught them: “ahnd” instead of “and,” “post-moder” instead of “post-modern,” and “oman” instead of “Roman” are aberrations that appear on one single page (I: 148).

A set of eyes real eyes, not virtual ones is necessary; in one essay, the author’s automatic spell-check led to humorous results, replacing the names “Boromir” with “Boomer” and “Isildur” with “Insider” (“Frodo’s Temptation, Frodo’s Failure” by Douglas Charles Rapiere). One essay in Volume II, “Hobbits, Tolkien, and God” by Jill Designe, is printed twice within the same section (II: 23-31; and II: 99-107). Finally, there should have been more consistency in the format of the biographical sketches of the authors and the abstracts included at the beginning of each essay. While it is useful in a volume of this size and scope to have brief summaries of the essays, some abstracts are repetitive and longer than necessary. One essay was printed with neither abstract nor biographical sketch, which prompted this reviewer to turn to “Google” in the hopes of finding some information about the author, Kate Karageorgi (spelled Karageorgi in the proceedings), who turns out to be the president of the Greek Tolkien Society, a fact which certainly would have warranted a mention. The quality of the essays is mixed; a few of them tell us virtually nothing new about Tolkien or his work, but many contain unique perspectives and insights, and some are outstanding. The presence of so many conference participants from different linguistic backgrounds and literary traditions certainly contributed to the diversity of views and critical approaches represented here.

The essays are organized into eleven thematic sections, seven to be found in Volume I and four in Volume II: 1) Tolkien’s Life; 2) Tolkien’s Literary Achievement; 3) Tolkien in Other Lands; 4) Other Voices; 5) The Telling of Tales: Myth and Storytelling; 6) Tolkien’s People; 7) Tolkien’s Legacy; 8) Theology and the Nature of Good and Evil; 9) Tolkien’s Sources; 10) Middle-earth at the Movies; and 11) Tolkien’s World. The way the essays have been grouped is not particularly helpful. It would have made sense to have a section entitled “Teaching Tolkien,” since at least six essays either deal exclusively with specific courses on Tolkien or describe approaches that would be useful in a classroom setting. Several authors discuss genre-related issues, such as the definition of fantasy, or whether Tolkien’s work is best described as modern or post-modern, and that could have constituted another section. In this review I have respected the titles and the order of the sections as listed above; however at times I have changed the order of essays within a particular section in order to group related essays together, or to make a smoother transition

from one essay to another when possible.

Section One opens with an essay by Nancy Martsch on “The Ace Copyright Affair” in which she sheds light on this notorious incident in the publishing history of *The Lord of the Rings*. Martsch’s analysis gives a new twist to the Ace affair, pointing out that even Houghton Mifflin, the American distributor of hardback editions of *The Lord of the Rings*, was out of compliance with American copyright law, through importing and distributing more copies of *The Lord of the Rings* than were legally stipulated. Martsch also notes that the science-fiction publisher Ace had requested permission several times to print *The Lord of the Rings* but had been turned down, probably largely out of prejudice against paperbacks, which were considered lowbrow and also a threat to the printing industry. The scandal and controversy unleashed by the release of 150,000 copies of the Ace paperback edition is well-known; what Martsch stresses is the fact that these “pirated” editions drew the American public’s attention to *The Lord of the Rings* in a way that the hardback editions had not, thus guaranteeing the future commercial success of subsequent, authorized paperback editions in the American market.

In the next essay, “‘As under a green sea’: Visions of War in the Dead Marshes,” John Garth draws parallels between the horrid scenes of devastated landscapes and rotting corpses that Tolkien and his comrades actually witnessed in the Somme, and details of “The Passage of the Dead Marshes,” as he did in his important study of Tolkien’s experience in WWI, *Tolkien and the Great War* (2003). But here Garth further examines Tolkien’s correspondence with his son Christopher during the writing of Book Four of *The Lord of the Rings* in 1944, and comes across another event that he argues had just as great effect on “The Passage of the Dead Marshes,” namely, Tolkien’s visit on April 1, 1944 to the city of Birmingham for a reunion of Old Boys from King Edward’s School. Not only had a portion of the city been freshly bombed—Garth notes that this bomb damage was probably the first that Tolkien had seen since the Somme—but Tolkien discovered to his horror that his former school had been razed to make way for a hideous modern shopping complex. In a letter to Christopher just two days later, Tolkien explained that he could not stand this sight, or “the ghosts that rose from the pavements.” Garth constructs the rest of his essay around this phrase, arguing that the “ghosts” were more than just a metaphorical reference to old memories, but rather were a quite tangible and painful representation of loss—of Tolkien’s former school chums, who had perished in the Great War—but also of a piece of history (the old school) that had been sacrificed on the altar of modernity. Garth argues quite convincingly that Tolkien’s visit to the site of King Edward’s school stirred up vivid visions of the past, and thus provided the impetus for him to resume work on *The Lord of*

the Rings after over a year of writer's block. Garth also draws fascinating parallels between actual descriptions of hallucinations experienced by soldiers suffering from trench fever, and the nightmarish visions that come to Frodo in his half-waking state as he keeps watch beyond the Dead Marshes on the desert of Daglorad.

Franco Manni and Simone Bonechi also explore the impact of both world wars on Tolkien's work in "The Complexity of Tolkien's Attitude Towards the Second World War." Manni and Bonechi's main thesis is that, contrary to Tolkien's objections to *The Lord of the Rings* being read as an allegory of WWII and its aftermath, Tolkien was not only profoundly influenced by the war, but "participating in WWII for him meant writing LotR [sic]." The authors support their thesis by drawing upon the opinion of critics such as Tom Shippey and Brian Rosebury who have stressed the status of Tolkien as a twentieth-century author whose work engaged vigorously with the moral and political issues of his day, and the interpretation of *The Lord of the Rings* by non-academics such as actor Ian McKellen, who like Tolkien lived through the war, and whose question "And although he doesn't think of it as an allegory, how could he not be affected?"¹ strikes at the very heart of the debate. Tolkien's wartime correspondence with his son Christopher, who was serving as a pilot in the Royal Air Force, is also carefully analyzed. Manni and Bonechi explain Tolkien's denial of any influence of WWII on his work as a combination of psychological forces—WWI had so traumatized him that he was subconsciously unable to acknowledge the impact of subsequent historical events on his work—and a resistance to contemporary literary criticism, which validated the critic's interpretation at the expense of the author's intent. Manni and Bonechi are to be applauded for arguing against "interpretative reductionism," as they call it, which can lead readers and critics to interpret works in a one-dimensional manner. They barely avoid falling into same trap, however, by summarizing their thesis with a ratio: "*The Silmarillion:LotR=WWI:WWII*," which actually does not do justice to the care with which they examine Tolkien's complex and sometimes conflicting statements about WWII.

While we're on the subject of "interpretative reductionism," it seems appropriate to skip ahead to the last essay in Section One, Charles A. Coulombe's essay "Romantic Conservatives: The Inklings in Their Political Context." The essay begins with a comparison of the political views of Tolkien, Lewis and Williams as reflected in their literary work and their letters. Coulombe tends to gloss over political differences among the writers, and argues that the fundamental world view of the three writers was the same. This runs counter to how the Inklings themselves felt about their political views (Lewis was a self-avowed democrat) and how they reacted to political events of their day as seen in the passage from Tolkien's

letter to Christopher in which he expresses disappointment and even a bit of disgust at Lewis's support of the Spanish Republicans against Franco (*Letters* 94-96). Coulombe also reduces the religious beliefs of the three men to the simplest of principles: they were "believing Christians," who felt a "love of the common man and hatred of any who would enslave him" and respected "the innate dignity of the individual" (one doesn't have to be Christian to believe in human dignity, by the way), yet believed in "class distinctions and hierarchy," all of which makes Tolkien, Lewis and Williams sound like benign feudal overlords.

Of course in reality while the three writers did indeed consider themselves to be devout Christians, they certainly did not agree on all theological matters, especially those doctrines which distinguish Catholics from Protestants. Williams for example, was an unwavering Anglican with a penchant towards mysticism who belonged to a secret society of Rosicrucians at one point. The fact that some of the members of the Inklings held beliefs that were at odds with prevailing political and social trends of their time is no great revelation, and has been thoroughly discussed elsewhere. Coulombe also notes that "It has often been remarked that Tolkien, Lewis and Williams . . . were late manifestations of English Romanticism," and sets out to bring a fresh perspective on what we know about the Inklings by exploring their roots in the political aspects of the Romantic movement, Romantic Conservatism. The rest of the essay has little to do with the Inklings at all, but is rather a short history of or even an apology for conservative political thought, from reactions to the French Revolution to the present-day opposition to the European Union. While one can certainly justify comparing Tolkien with Sir Walter Scott, in that both authors through their fiction sought to recover elements of British historical, cultural and linguistic traditions which were endangered or had already disappeared, it is hard to see what the Inklings would have in common with the Alliance Royale, a political party founded in 2001 which seeks to restore the French monarchy, or what *Christendom Awake* (1999) by the British theologian Fr. Aidan Nichols, a polemical work which argues for the revival and renewal of Catholic traditions and their reintegration into modern politics and civil society, has in common with Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*. This is not to say that Tolkien may not have approved of and even shared many of the ideas expressed in Nichols's book had he lived to read it, but that is beside the point. The point is that Tolkien's purpose for writing was not to find a vehicle for expressing his political and religious beliefs, which seems, on the contrary, to have been Mr. Coulombe's purpose for delivering this paper.

The three remaining essays in Section One also deal with various aspects of Tolkien's relationship with Lewis and Williams. Sharin Schroeder's essay "Invented, Borrowed, and Mixed Myths in the 'kinds of

books we want to read” takes its title from the famous comment made by Lewis to Tolkien: “if they won’t write the kinds of books we want to read, we shall have to write them ourselves.” Schroeder notes that contrary to what this statement superficially suggests, both authors took more than a passing interest in the literature of their contemporaries, as evidenced by their friendships, correspondences, and debates with W. H. Auden, T. S. Eliot, Iris Murdoch, George Orwell, Dorothy Sayers and other writers. Schroeder also tries to get at the root of the painful paradox of Lewis’s unwavering admiration of Tolkien’s work, in contrast with Tolkien’s avowed distaste for much of Lewis’s literary creations. If the two had such similar literary tastes, as Lewis’s comment suggests, how could there be such a disparity of appreciation for each other’s work? Schroeder points out that in fact the two authors’ literary tastes were quite different, but Lewis’s sense of loyalty and friendship with Tolkien led him to gloss over their disagreements. When it came to “the Pot of Soup, the Cauldron of Story” Tolkien on the other hand had very precise ideas about which ingredients made for the best recipes, and in Schroeder’s analysis, if he did not approve of *The Chronicles of Narnia*, it was perhaps because “Lewis is not using the ingredients in the soup pot as Tolkien would wish.”

Tolkien’s relationship with Charles Williams is the focus of Eric Rauscher’s paper “We Had Nothing to Say to One Another—J.R.R. Tolkien and Charles Williams, Another Look.” Having encountered in several scholarly papers and essays the assertion that Tolkien did not particularly like his fellow Inklings Williams, Rauscher set out to discover the origin of this misperception, which he traces to Humphrey Carpenter’s 1977 biography of Tolkien and his 1978 book on the Inklings. In both of these works Carpenter used a quote from a letter written by Tolkien in 1965, a good twenty years after Williams’ death, in which Tolkien stated that he and Williams “liked one another and enjoyed talking (mostly in jest)” but “had nothing to say to one another at deeper (or higher) levels.” Carpenter even made the phrase “We Had Nothing to Say to One Another” the title of the chapter dealing with the relationship between Tolkien and Williams in *The Inklings*. Rauscher combs through several decades of the correspondences of Williams, Tolkien and C.S. Lewis, and discovers that in fact Tolkien had given the manuscript of *The Lord of the Rings* to Williams to read, and was flattered and encouraged by Williams’ positive assessment of his work. A letter written to Williams’ widow on the day Tolkien learned of his death also reveals a sincere friendship between the two men. The comment quoted by Carpenter and repeated by other critics was made after Lewis and Williams had died, and Tolkien’s perspective on his relationship with both men had been altered by time. Rauscher’s essay is cautionary in that it underscores the importance

of interpreting excerpts from letters and other primary sources in their proper context.

Richard Sturch's essay "On Tolkien, and Williams, and Tolkien on Williams" presents a close reading of Tolkien's verses on Williams, which were written circa 1943 and printed in Carpenter's *The Inklings*. Examining Tolkien's verses about Williams's *The Figure of Beatrice*, Sturch notes that both writers shared a fundamental pessimism, but that "Tolkien concentrates more on evil done in the world, Williams more on evil done in and to the individual soul." Perhaps this is why Tolkien wrote of Williams "he seems best to understand, of all the three, Inferno's dark involved geography." Sturch also has some interesting remarks on the theme of repentance, noting that in Tolkien's work, repentance "is nearly always unsuccessful": Saruman and Denethor refuse it, Gollum only comes close to it, Boromir repents, but is then killed, whereas Williams had a more "hopeful" view of repentance, writing in his play *Judgment at Chelmsford* "Most men, when at last they see their desire, fall to repentance; all have that chance." Tolkien found it difficult not to express his dislike of the heavy symbolism of Williams's Arthurian poetry, in particular his allegorization of the map of Europe. What Sturch finds most intriguing is Tolkien's strong reaction against Williams's use of Byzantium "as an image of ordered glory and beauty"; Tolkien saw the "order and hierarchy" praised by Williams as "a symbol . . . 'of Rule that strangles and of Laws that kill, of Man that says his Pride is Heaven's will'." Saruman would have felt quite at ease in this sort of Byzantium. In the end, though, as Sturch notes, "criticism yields to friendship," and Tolkien ended his verses with kind words recalling the pleasant hours spent in Williams's company: "Your laugh in my heart echoes, when with you I quaff, The pint that goes down quicker than a half . . ."

Tolkien's Literary Achievement is the theme of Section Two, which opens with "Containment and Progression in J.R.R. Tolkien's World" by Marjorie Burns. Burns sees reflections of both a Celtic emphasis on circularity in "cycles, repetitions, and returns" and a more linear, Norse focus on "achieving clear-cut goals" in Tolkien's cosmology, landscapes, and in the trajectories of his characters. Notwithstanding Tolkien's avowed distaste of things Celtic as expressed in his correspondence (*Letters* 26) his mythology borrows both "from England's Celtic past and from its Teutonic one." Burns notes that circularity is most obvious in the dwelling of the Hobbits "in Bilbo's door, in the tunnels of his burrow, and in his rotundity" but is also present in a more subtle manner in Lothlórien, where "cycles, circles and centrality . . . appear again and again, not only in the landscape and setting but also in matters of Elven time and Elven history." Tolkien's design of habitats dominated by roundness—burrows and holes for Hobbits, "flets" encircling the trunks of the Mallorn trees

for the Elves of Lothlórien— is not gratuitous, of course, and reflects these two peoples' close relationship with the Earth and the natural world. In Tolkien's Elves, Burns sees a direct influence of Celtic mythology, "a mythology where gods and goddesses are closely associated with the natural terrain and with specific sites within the natural terrain." Language is crucial to the understanding of any culture, and Burns's examination of the lexicons of Quenya, Sindarin and Khuzdul reveals that the languages of the Elves contain a large proportion of vocabulary related to nature, while Tolkien significantly presents only two full sentences in Khuzdul, the language of the Teutonic-inspired Dwarves, both of which relate to battle. In Burns's analysis, the languages of men, "a race more temperamentally mixed than that of the Dwarves," reflect both Celtic inwardness and Teutonic assertiveness; among the proper names of the Rohirrim one finds names of weapons such as "bold-one" or "spear-wolf," but also "people-counsel" and "music-friend." In a similar manner, Boromir's speech reflects his impatience and his goal-driven nature, whereas Faramir uses speech as a means of enhancing his understanding of a situation. Burns's careful analysis of language and place in *The Lord of the Rings* combined with a her solid grasp of Celtic and Nordic mythology folklore, are apparent in this paper, and entice readers who haven't already done so to consult her larger study of the subject, *Perilous Realms: Celtic and Norse in Tolkien's Middle-earth* (2005).

Andrea Ulrich's essay "Approaching Reality in *The Lord of the Rings*" seeks to pull down the barrier between "realism" and "fantasy" that has been erected by many critics, even those favorable to fantasy as a legitimate literary genre. Ulrich cites Paul Kocher, for example, as a critic who went to great pains in "Middle-earth: An Imaginary World?"² to find direct correlations between the landscapes, ecosystems and chronology of Middle-earth and the historical Earth, an undertaking which in some ways reinforces the assertion that realism is superior to fantasy. Ulrich notes that "A unicorn in the garden shed is not easier to accept than a unicorn on the moon . . . Realism cannot hold it [fantasy] together, because the very presence of the fantastic moves the narrative out of the realm in which materialistic fidelity induces belief." Ulrich uses Kathryn Hume's theories of fantasy as a starting point for her own theory, but only a starting point, for in Ulrich's view, Hume "retains the fantasy/realism dichotomy, by still considering fantasy escapist." Rather than see fantasy and realism as literary binary oppositions, Ulrich uses her own expression, "fantastic realism," to describe *The Lord of the Rings*. Ulrich sees parallels between Goethe's theory of reality in art as presented in his work *Truth and Probability in Works of Art* (1798) which the author of *Faust* wrote in defense of opera. Goethe argued that "an internal completeness in a work of art creates its own reality," which approximates Tolkien's

concept of the “inner consistency of reality” as developed in his essay “On Fairy-stories.” Lessons can also be drawn from a study of traditional realism, which Ulrich defines as “the depiction through literature of the true conditions of reality, as exemplified in the high realist novels of the nineteenth century.”

Ulrich sees Tolkien as in some ways drawing upon the realist tradition, particularly in his attention to detail in descriptions of landscape and habitat, in the “organic presence of history in the text,” and the importance of his invented languages and place names, which contribute to a sense of historical depth and inner consistency in Middle-earth. Aside from the unicorn, Elves, Dwarves, and other imaginary beings, what then distinguishes fantasy writing from realism, if both can attain similar levels of verisimilitude? For Ulrich the concept of *eucatastrophe*, the term Tolkien coined in “On Fairy-stories” to refer to the unexpected joyful turn of events, is perhaps the characteristic that most sets fantasy apart from realism. Whereas realism, with its focus on the mundane details of daily existence or the tyranny of historical events over individual destiny leads necessarily to a conclusion which, at best, is hopeful, and at worst, is tragic, fantasy allows for “the joy of the happy ending,” although this may be accompanied by irreparable hurt and loss, such as Frodo’s inability to heal and the Elves’ departure from Middle-earth. “Yet somehow, fantasy effectively creates a world, realistic in its own way, that legitimizes the joy that is part of human experience,” writes Ulrich in the conclusion of this very thought-provoking essay.

In his essay “Tolkien as a Benchmark of Comparative Literature: Middle-earth in Our World,” Giovanni Agnoloni also challenges (or rather, appears to challenge) the generic distinction between fantasy and realism in literature by suggesting that “fantasy literature is, rather than a genre, an approach to reality that involves not only authors who have described non-existent worlds, but also writers and poets who have pictured the real world.” In a statement that is reminiscent of Oscar Wilde’s famous declaration in the preface to *The Portrait of Dorian Gray*, “There is no such thing as a moral or an immoral book. Books are well written or badly written,” Agnoloni states that “The real difference . . . is not that between *fantasy* and *non-fantasy* works, but only between good and bad literature.” But how is one to distinguish between “good” and “bad” literature? This is precisely the sort of value-laden judgment of art that Wilde eschewed. Agnoloni uses as his main criterion “the richness of the human soul expressed by artistic means (i.e., by means of beauty and harmony).” The notion of harmony can be helpful in literary analysis, in that one can extend this criterion to a well-constructed plot, or consistency of action and character, but to posit “beauty” as a criterion for assessing the literary value of any work opens the door to extremely subjec-

tive judgments about what is beautiful or not beautiful. The critic's own personal literary preferences then prevail, leading Agnoloni to declare, "to me, there are many more points in common between Tolkien and 'authors of the real' world than between him and fantasy writers that have taken much of their inspiration from him . . . but have not created anything *artistic*."

And thus Agnoloni falls into the trap which he purports to avoid, that of making artificial distinctions between what he calls "fantasy literature" and "realistic fiction," by placing authors squarely into two categories, "authors of the real world" and "fantasy writers," and by pronouncing authors in the latter category incapable of artistic creation. Later in his essay, Agnoloni contradicts himself again, concluding that "the boundary between these two 'realms' [realistic and fantastic] proves to be pointless." Agnoloni attempts his own definition of fantasy, which includes "the author's ability to reproduce life, in a way that does not strictly correspond to reality" and "the approach to life of any (realistic or fantasy) writer who is able to catch nature's secret energy." With such vague and varied criteria, it is not surprising that, in the space of twelve pages, Agnoloni compares passages from the *The Lord of the Rings* with excerpts from Virgil's *Eclogues*, Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*, Homer's *Illiad*, Dante's *Inferno*, Hesse's *Narcissus and Goldmund* and Gabriel Garcia Marquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, which leaves one with the impression of having attending a long-winded and confusing lecture in a World Literature class. Agnoloni would have done better to focus on Tolkien's early background in the Classics and how his reading of authors like Homer and Virgil, authors who, like Tolkien, created a mythology for their respective homelands, informed his own unique blend of "realism" and "fantasy."

Robin Anne Reid and Judy Ann Ford present the fruits of the NEH (National Endowment for the Humanities) seminar which they organized and conducted in the summer of 2004 on the topic of "From Beowulf to Post-Modernism: Interdisciplinary Team-teaching of J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*." The seminar, attended by thirty secondary school teachers, was led by Tolkien scholars and designed to provide teachers with ideas for integrating *The Lord of the Rings* into courses on subjects ranging from Math and Geography to Literature, History and Social Studies. Rather than attempt an overview of all the themes discussed during the five-week seminar, Reid and Ford focus their presentation on the theme of war, and in so doing, provide readers with excellent ideas about how to help young students understand the thematic and stylistic complexity of *The Lord of the Rings*. A careful reading of how war is experienced and narrated by the Hobbits as opposed to the noble and heroic characters of Legolas, Aragorn, and Gimli, for example, can serve as a

gateway to discussing experiences of soldiers during WWI, and warfare as it is depicted in medieval epics or Crusader narratives. As Reid and Ford aptly note, the Victorian and Edwardian eras are as foreign to most students as are the Middle Ages and so using *The Lord of the Rings* as an introduction to the historical study of war can yield satisfactory results, by encouraging students to reflect upon how each participant in a conflict will narrate a different account of it.

This leads to the other major point discussed by Reid and Ford, namely, *The Lord of the Rings* as a text which rejects the claims to objectivity of the modernist, “realist” novel. Here Reid and Ford add another element to the discussion of realism as touched upon in the two previous essays, noting that realism “is complicit with middle-class values and ideology which can exclude many types of situations and beliefs that do exist in the so-called ‘real world’.” Reid and Ford argue that *The Lord of the Rings* is fundamentally a postmodern narrative, in that events are presented through a multiplicity of viewpoints, cultural perspectives, languages, and interlaced narratives which taken as a whole, do not represent any one claim to truth or objectivity. The insistence of the correlation between language and culture—that is, languages as reflecting the environment, cultural values, and lived experiences of the peoples who speak them—is well illustrated by the way that Aragorn or Merry, for example, speak of their experiences in war. Such observations may seem obvious to Tolkien scholars, but to students who have had less exposure to critical analysis of both fictional and non-fictional texts, studying *The Lord of the Rings* from such an angle may open their eyes and ears to the nuances of narrative. Finally, because no discussion of Tolkien in a classroom setting can occur without students evoking Peter Jackson’s films, in order to avoid the inevitable simplistic comparisons between text and reel, Reid and Ford suggest adapting the “materialist” paradigm of critic Karen Kline, who argues that the adapted novel is one of several source elements which must be considered when analyzing a film, including the historical backdrop (in this case, the war in Iraq) against which a filmmaker is working. Like Kline in her analysis of films, Reid and Ford describe their approach to *The Lord of the Rings* as “one in which the analysis considers the novel as framed by a series of contexts, rather than one in which the novel is seen as an isolated work of art, complete and self-contained.”

In “J.R.R. Tolkien: Our Post-modern Contemporary” Ralph C. Wood also considers Tolkien to be a postmodern author, but for different reasons. Wood rejects French philosopher Jean-François Lyotard’s claims that “to be post-modern is to be incredulous about metanarrative” because “there are no credible metanarratives.” It becomes rapidly apparent that the reason Wood rejects Lyotard’s definition is that Wood

believes that there *is* one credible metanarrative, the Christian one. Wood prefers to define postmodernism as “a rejection of a chief modernist assumption: the notion that, from some allegedly neutral stance, we can deliberately distance ourselves from any particular past or received tradition that we now see as naïve.” This very narrow and ideologically-based concept of post-modernism leads Wood to digress into an indictment of the Enlightenment philosophers and the framers of the American constitution for having “deliberately secularized” public discourse “in order to save the state from the threat posed by churches.” (Well, yes, those rascals Thomas Jefferson and James Madison thought that it would be desirable, as they founded the modern world’s first republic, to avoid wars of religion through separation of church and state, but what does this have to do with Tolkien, anyway?)

When Wood stays on target and does not veer off into political ideology, he makes some very astute observations about elements of *The Lord of the Rings* that are unmistakably post-modern, for example, the cultural pluralism represented by the diverse peoples, cultures and languages of Middle-earth and the rejection of linguistic abstractions, “those forms of speech and social order that rely on unhistorical abstractions, on unnarrated concepts, on words unrooted in either time or space” (as illustrated by Sauron’s language) and the valorization of self-governing, self-sufficient local communities (such as the Shire) over colonizing forces (such as Sauron’s armies) that seek to dominate them. But Wood is also quick to point out that while Tolkien was a cultural pluralist, he was far from being a cultural relativist who viewed all cultures as equal; “thus does Tolkien retrieve from various ancient Northern cultures those virtues that serve his Christian project just as he largely ignores their many vices . . .”

By *project*, Wood means that in fact Tolkien deliberately and somewhat craftily (unlike the less subtle C.S. Lewis) was able to “retell the Gospel story in an indirect and mythological and anticipatory way, setting his metanarrative right alongside the many others—whether . . . capitalist or socialist, liberal or conservative.” Wood thus asserts that Tolkien’s primary reason for writing *The Lord of the Rings* was to create a post-modern Christian metanarrative (an oxymoron if ever there was one) “in the confidence that its inherent persuasiveness will convince the reader to hear and heed its truth.” Such a statement implies intentional proselytizing on Tolkien’s part, which, notwithstanding the author’s firm Christian beliefs and his own statement that *The Lord of the Rings* was a “fundamentally religious and Catholic work” (*Letters* 172) is highly debatable. It is one thing to claim that *The Lord of the Rings* reflects many Christian values, beliefs and rituals (Wood offers a convincing reading of the last scene between Aragorn and Boromir, as the latter lays dying, as an enactment of the sacrament of penance); it is quite another to claim that Tolkien’s epic was

part of a grand scheme to convert his readers.

In her essay "The Great Questions," the question Ella van Wyck poses is whether or not *The Lord of the Rings* is a literary masterpiece. Like novelist and critic Salman Rushdie, van Wyck believes that great literature asks great questions: "then literature is inquiry; great literature, by asking extraordinary questions, opens new doors in our minds." (Rushdie). Some of the questions that Tolkien grapples with are the nature of the hero and the nature of good and evil. Van Wyck points out, as have many other critics, that Tolkien explores the concept of the hero, recasting the classical model of a physically imposing, divinely endowed hero in the hobbit Frodo, a character who is both humble in origin and romantic in aspiration. In regard to symbolic representations of good and evil, Van Wyck draws our attention to the dualism that pervades the characters and the natural elements of *The Lord of the Rings*, through which Tolkien illustrates that there are few things which are entirely good or entirely evil. Gollum is the most obvious example, but the forces of Nature as well contain malevolent, benevolent and ambivalent elements, exemplified by Old Man Willow, the Old Forest, the Forest of Lothlórien, and the Ents. Caves also represent a dual force, and Van Wyck's discussion of Gandalf's fall into Moria, Sam's fight with Shelob in her lair, and Aragorn's passage through the Paths of the Dead as symbolic dramatizations of death and rebirth is well developed.

Van Wyck's claim that Tolkien used the different races of Middle-earth to symbolize "different aspects of human qualities" is less convincing, because she focuses primarily on the Hobbits, and to lesser extent, the Dwarves. Her discussion of the other "races" and the qualities and flaws that they supposedly embody is limited to specific characters such as Gollum, Théoden and Denethor. If Tolkien had intended each people or race to symbolize specific human qualities and foibles, then there would be more uniformity among the members of each people. Instead, Tolkien created a great diversity of characters within each people, so that, for example, among the Hobbits one finds both the covetousness of Lobelia Sackville-Baggins and the selflessness of Sam Gamgee. It is perhaps van Wyck's inability to discern nuances among Tolkien's characters that leads her to make some strong criticisms of *The Lord of the Rings* which are largely unfounded. Among the weaknesses which she identifies are the "wooden" dialogue of Tolkien's human characters, "certain aspects of characterization," and literary prose style. As an example of stilted dialogue, van Wyck quotes from the discussion between Aragorn and Éowyn in which he tells her that she must remain behind in Théoden's camp while he rides through the Paths of the Dead. The scene is all the more poignant in that Éowyn has fallen in love with Aragorn, and Aragorn knows it. In spite of the deep emotions each character feels,

according to van Wyck, the dialogue “sounds detached and uninteresting.” Van Wyck compares this passage with a scene between Beatrice and Benedick in *Much Ado About Nothing*, and finds much of the dialogue between Aragorn and Éowyn “unnecessary and irrelevant,” without “any hint of emotion from Aragorn.” But what sort of emotion could Aragorn and Éowyn reveal to one other in this instance, without the scene turning melodramatic? The understatement in Éowyn and Aragorn’s dialogue seems perfectly consistent with their rank, their personalities (neither Aragorn nor Éowyn are known for their emotional outbursts) and the situation they find themselves in at the time. Dialogue from a novel is not entirely analogous to dialogue in a play, for the obvious reason that the latter is meant to be performed, not read. Another flaw that Van Wyck finds with *The Lord of the Rings* is “sudden change without realistic motivation” in certain characters. She cites Merry’s transformation from “a hobbit in his tweens in the beginning of the book, to a warrior at the end of the book.” If a reader were to jump from the chapter “A Long-Awaited Party” to “The Scouring of The Shire,” without reading anything in between, the dramatic change in Merry would indeed seem highly implausible, but after months of constant exposure to danger, and the endurance of physical hardship and torment at the hands of the Orcs, is it surprising that Merry would choose to fight, rather than be a passive victim of the greater forces around him?

Finally, van Wyck takes aim at Tolkien’s prose style, claiming that he “distances the reader from direct experience” through the use of too many passive constructions. She cites the scene in which Aragorn comes upon Boromir leaning against a tree in a glade, his body riddled with arrows, and criticizes Tolkien for the overuse of the passive construction “he was” and for presenting the scene through Aragorn’s eyes. But this was exactly what Tolkien intended. Had the slaying of Boromir been narrated with active verbs, the emphasis would have been on the Orcs, and not on Aragorn’s discovery of the mortally wounded Boromir. Rather than “Aragorn saw that he was pierced with many black feathered arrows” we would have “The Orcs had pierced Boromir’s body with many black feathered arrows” and the scene would have been about Boromir’s battle with the Orcs, rather than about his last words with Aragorn, and his confession that he attempted to take the Ring from Frodo. As a linguist, Tolkien was highly sensitive to subtleties of tone and style in both dialogue and descriptions, and this is not the least of the reasons that *The Lord of the Rings* can be classified as a literary masterpiece.

Patrick Curry makes a compelling case for the symbolism of iron as a powerful metaphor of modernity in “Iron Crown, Iron Cage: Tolkien and Weber on Modernity and Enchantment.” As far back as Hesiod, one of the earliest Greek writers (8th century BCE), iron was associated with

a loss of a Golden Age of harmony among gods, mortals, and the natural world, and the passage into, according to Curry, “an unpleasant and brutish age in which we are obviously still living.” Tolkien, like Hesiod, separated the stages of the world into ages: The First Age in which Ilúvatar and the Valar help bring Arda into being can be said to correspond to Hesiod’s Golden Age; the Second Age, to the Silver Age; and so on. The events recounted in *The Lord of the Rings* take place towards the end of the Third Age, an age of warriors, like Hesiod’s Bronze Age, but the destruction of the environment by Saruman’s machines and Sauron’s armies, the mechanization of pastoral life as seen in “The Scouring of the Shire,” and the departure from Middle-earth of the Elves, herald the advent of the Iron Age of modernity, a time, according to the social philosopher Max Weber (1864-1920) characterized by rationalization and intellectualization and, above all, “disenchantment [entzauberung] of the world” (Weber 155, 139). Curry notes that while it is unlikely that Tolkien had read Weber, there are striking parallels between the two authors’ preoccupation with the pitfalls of modernity, including industrialization, alteration of the environment, materialism, and Weber’s concept of *entzauberung*.

In Weber’s analysis of the rise of capitalism, he describes how the Puritan work ethic, intended to endow secular life with virtue, was transformed into a drive for acquisition of material goods, becoming a prison, or “iron cage,” for humanity. For Curry it is no coincidence that Morgoth’s crown, which holds the stolen Silmarils, is made of iron, for like other characters in Tolkien’s work, Morgoth becomes obsessed by the objects of his desire. Nor is it a coincidence that only through the dance of Lúthien Tinúviel, does Morgoth ever lose his crown, for Lúthien “counterposes the iron ‘Magic’ of modernity with enchantment.” This scene, in Curry’s analysis, harks back to the pairing of the fierce warrior god Ares/Mars, also associated with iron, with the pre-Olympian goddess of love and beauty, Aphrodite/Venus, “whose power to enchant was respected and feared by even the most powerful of the other gods.” Weber’s and Tolkien’s belief in the need for enchantment to counterbalance the oppressive “iron” of modernity that weighs us down was thus informed not only by their observations and experience in a rapidly changing world, but also by their profound understanding of the power of myth.

The human need for enchantment was of course a major theme of Tolkien’s essay “On Fairy-stories.” In “Life as a Shared Story: Narrative Freedom in *The Lord of the Rings*” Tanya Gloccheskie discusses Tolkien’s notion of enchantment as “shared enrichment,” a “shared version of creativity that is liberating and life-enhancing.” The Hobbits and the Elves both partake in creative activities that are shared with others, such as songs, stories, and poems. For the Hobbits who accompany Frodo,

storytelling takes on a particularly life-enhancing, almost life-saving quality, as it enables them to ward off fear and despair, and to situate their perilous journey in the context of a broader, collective narrative. Sam's recitation of the Troll song and the ballad of Gil-galad at moments in the narrative which are fraught with danger not only relieves tension, but also reminds the other hobbits that their ordeals have been preceded by others. As Głowczeskie puts it, "the sense of a broader narrative is a continual source of inspiration to the hobbits, who find comfort in being part of a larger story because their actions may turn out to end happily for others, even if not for themselves." Sam and Frodo's reflections on the part they are playing in the story that is unfolding emphasize the process of narrative as a series of choices to be made, rather than a predetermined plot that must be followed. By using the shared story as a metaphor for life, Tolkien emphasizes both freedom of choice and the interweaving of individual destinies into a transcendent reality. Acts of subcreation, when shared with others, and not carried out in secret for one's personal gain or indulgence, heighten the joy of creative impulse. "When Tolkien's characters hear their own story told by others, they experience the emotion that accompanies the 'consolation of the happy ending' the eucatastrophe in a 'fairy-story.'" For Głowczeskie Tolkien's theory of subcreation is unique in that it develops an ethic of creativity "based on ethical relationships which enhance the experience of meaningfulness in life, and of the ultimate truth of art."

One of the most complex and fascinating aspects of Tolkien's narrative structure is his juxtaposition of episodes filled with action, dialogue and suspense, and passages which, from a strictly narratological standpoint, do nothing—at least on the surface—to advance the plot. In "Unlocking Supplementary Events in the Dreams, Visions and Prophecies of J.R.R. Tolkien's Work" Catherine Hefferan-Hayes explains this narrative duality as an intricate interlacing of "constituent events," which "modify a story" and "supplementary events," which "modify discourse." Dreams can be categorized as supplementary events, in that they occur during moments of stasis in the narrative (such as when the Hobbits are resting in the house of Tom Bombadil) and yet they are crucial to adding depth to both the narrative and the characters. Hefferan-Hayes cites Frodo's dreams as particularly significant in that they not only foreshadow events to come, but also contribute to the readers' empathy with Frodo, although strictly speaking, these dreams only supplement the narrative, rather than advance it. Visions, on the other hand, can be either supplementary or constituent events. In the narrative they often "occur as a turning point," by reinforcing a character's resolve, as in the case of the vision Sam has when he peers into Galadriel's mirror, or even by prompting a character to take a particular course of action, as when Sauron sends his armies

out from Mordor after Aragorn reveals himself in a vision through the medium of a palantír. Prophecies are also integral to the narrative of *The Lord of the Rings*. Hefferan-Hayes sees the opening passages of *The Silmarillion*: “the Ainur know much of what was, and is, and is to come, and few things are unseen by them” (S 17-18) as “Tolkien’s foundation for his latter Middle-earth prophecies,” in that they set a “prophetic tone” for the entire legendarium, thereby making Gandalf’s later prophecies seem credible. This assumes of course that readers will have read *The Silmarillion* before *The Lord of the Rings*, whereas the reverse is often the case. But Gandalf’s prophecies can stand alone within the narrative of *The Lord of the Rings* as both supplementary events that “enlighten and engage the reader” and as constituent events that alter the course of the narrative; thus Gandalf’s remonstrance to Frodo (when Frodo states that he wishes that Bilbo had killed Gollum) that Gollum “has some part to play yet,” serves both to add a new dimension to Frodo’s character (he is capable of violent, vengeful thoughts) and to alter the course of the narrative many chapters later, when Frodo asks Faramir to spare Gollum’s life. Catherine Hefferan-Hayes’s essay is insightful and focused, but would have been enhanced by some knowledge of medieval narratives, in which dreams, visions and prophecies occupy a significant place.

Magne Bergland examines another aspect of Tolkien’s style, the prevalence of vocabulary dealing with nature. Like episodes containing accounts of dreams and visions, on the surface, descriptions of nature generally do not advance the plot (although the chapter “Treebeard,” rich in such descriptions, leads to the Ents’ assault on Isengard), and yet the rich taxonomy of Middle-earth provided by Tolkien is essential to creating a plausible secondary world, and is one of the features most appreciated by readers. In his essay, “Descriptions of Nature in *The Lord of the Rings*: Outline of a method for analysis,” Bergland looks at descriptions of nature through a method using quantitative analysis of a selection of nouns designated as “nature-words” throughout *The Lord of the Rings*. He presents his data in three graphs, one depicting the number of nature-words per 1000 words in all sixty-two chapters of *The Lord of the Rings*, a second showing the average number of nature-words per 1000 in books I-VI, and a third which groups the number of nature-words per 1000 words into categories of Water, Air, Woods and Ground/Mountains. The amount of effort that Bergland put into this meticulous analysis almost makes one regret that his findings, for the most part, only confirm the intuitive impressions of readers, namely, that books I and II contain the greatest number of nature words, or that the chapters “Treebeard” and “Lothlórien” and “The Old Forest” have the largest proportion of words from the category “woods.” In spite of the appearance of stating the obvious, Bergland’s study does lead to some intriguing

discoveries, such as the fact that fir trees are mentioned more often than other types of trees, that swans are encountered more often than gulls during the Fellowship's epic journey, and that, in spite of the ominous threat of the shadows of Mordor, the sun appears more often on the horizon than any other natural element of the air and sky.

In "Tolkien, the Author and the Critic: *Beowulf*, *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, "The Homecoming of Beorhtnoth," and *The Lord of the Rings*," Vincent Ferré explores the relationship between Tolkien's literary criticism and his fictional works, and presents some interesting insights into Tolkien's creative process as a writer. Tolkien thought of himself more as a philologist than a critic, and deplored the growing trend in universities (which later became the norm) to separate the study of language from the study of literature. Tolkien was also wary of the tendency to dissect creative works for purposes other than their appreciation as works of literature. When Tolkien did write critical studies of works in Anglo-Saxon or Middle English, he sought to draw attention to their intrinsic literary qualities, and not to their value as historical or cultural artifacts. Significantly, as Ferré suggests, "what seems important to him in these texts corresponds to important elements in his fiction." Ferré sees the relationship between Tolkien the critic and Tolkien the writer as an organic one, and notes that this is corroborated by Tolkien himself, in his letters; just as Tolkien stated of his creative work that "the invention of languages is the foundation" (*Letters* 219). Ferré asserts that "writing non-fiction is the 'foundation' for writing fiction."

In *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, for example, the protagonist Gawain, who is the exemplar of knightly virtues, nonetheless fails to keep his promise to the lord who shows him hospitality when he does not inform him of a gift from the Lord's wife of a girdle conferring invulnerability. In his essay on *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, Tolkien exonerates Gawain as acting from purely honorable and reasonable motives: the desire to protect his own life from the deadly blow of the Green Knight. Ferré sees striking parallels between Gawain and Boromir; both are paragons of noble knightly qualities, but the honorable desire to protect Gondor against Sauron leads Boromir to break his promise to help Frodo accomplish his mission, and he attempts to take the Ring. Ferré's take on "The Homecoming of Beorhtnoth," the dramatic dialogue Tolkien wrote as a supplement or "sequel" to the Old English poem *The Battle of Malden*, which recounts a defeat of Anglo-Saxon armies at the hands of Viking invaders, is also astute. Tolkien's reading of the Anglo-Saxon poem and his continuation of the story hinged on his philological interpretation of one word, *ofermod*, which previous translators had rendered as "overbold," but which Tolkien translated as "overmastering pride." This idiosyncratic translation reflected Tolkien's own concept of the flawed noble

hero, which is embodied in characters such as Denethor and Boromir, but also in Saruman and Sauron, whose fall into evil is also the result of “overmastering pride.” As the debate continues about which genre to ascribe to *The Lord of the Rings* (is it realism or fantasy, epic or romance, modernist or post-modernist?) Ferré asks: “might we say that *The Lord of the Rings*, and maybe all Tolkien’s works, are ‘fictional philology?’”

Whereas several papers in this volume argue for a postmodernist reading of *The Lord of the Rings*, in “Tolkien: A Man of his Time,” Anna Vaninskaya situates Tolkien’s work solidly within the political, philosophical, and literary preoccupations characteristic of the late nineteenth century and first half of the twentieth century. This is not to say that Tolkien was necessarily a Modernist, for as Vaninskaya points out, Modernism was only one of several literary currents of the day, and was far from being the most prevalent one. Adventure romances by authors like Rider Haggard, Rudyard Kipling and G. K. Chesterton, for example, were extremely popular, and were well known to Tolkien, as were the medieval romances of William Morris. To the extent that Tolkien can be categorized at all, Vaninskaya sees him as a “neo-romantic” whose works “formed part of the romantic critique of modern industrial society,” and whose anti-cosmopolitanism was very much in sync with the “Little Englander” movement, which attracted political conservatives as well as political radicals. Tolkien’s descriptions of the Hobbits and the Shire, for example, are grounded upon a “myth of rural England” that was widespread in first decades of the twentieth century, especially among the Little Englanders. George Orwell, J. B. Priestly, and G. K. Chesterton all expressed their love for England and their mistrust of large state systems and imperialism.

In the same vein as Tom Shippey, who cites Orwell and Tolkien as being “authors of the [20th] century” in their use of fantasy to denounce the horrors of totalitarianism, Vaninskaya draws parallels between the speech of the Orcs and the “speech of government or party functionaries, minor officials in a murderous bureaucracy.” Vaninskaya laments the lack of a critical work on Tolkien situating him in the context of “contemporary anthropology, historiography, and comparative mythology, with which it was so inextricably linked.” Happily, since the 2005 conference, Dimitra Fimi published an excellent study *Tolkien, Race and Cultural History: From Fairies to Hobbits*, which deals with many of these issues. Still lacking, in Vaninskaya’s view, is a critical, comparative study of authors in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century fantasy tradition along the lines of Douglas A. Anderson’s anthology *Tales Before Tolkien: The Roots of Modern Fantasy*. The importance of such studies, as Vaninskaya aptly notes, is not to argue in favor or against specific influences on Tolkien, but rather, to “assemble a picture of a period to see where Tolkien fits

into it.” As the title of her essay suggests, Tolkien was very much a “man of his time.”

Section Three: Tolkien in Other Lands contains an interesting variety of papers dealing with various aspects of the reception and translation of Tolkien’s works. Two of the five essays in Section Three deal exclusively with translation. Helios De Rosario-Martinez takes a close look at the Catalan and Spanish translations—both published in Barcelona, incidentally—to compare how each attempts to make its respective readers “feel at home in Middle-earth,” while at the same time remaining true to Tolkien’s suggestions as laid out in his “Guide to the Names in *The Lord of the Rings*.” De Rosario-Martinez finds that reconciling these two principles is nearly impossible, “because of the distance between the English and Spanish/Catalan cultural context.” The Catalan translation overall makes more linguistic adaptations than those recommended by Tolkien, for example, giving inhabitants of Gondor and the Shire actual distinct dialects of Catalan, and phonologically adapting all proper nouns in Quenya, Sindarin, and Khuzdul to Catalan spelling, so that readers would not mispronounce them. By contrast, the Spanish translation leaves most names from Tolkien’s invented languages alone, as Tolkien suggests in his guide. He suggests that rather than attempt to translate or even transcribe phonologically the proper names of Rohan, most of which are adaptations into Modern English of Old English words, translators working in Romance languages should put them back into the Old English form. In this manner they would avoid some glaring mistranslations that occurred in the Spanish text, such as translating Merry’s title in Rohan, Holdwine, (“faithful friend”), into *Escanciador*, (“wine-waiter”) owing to a misunderstanding of the Old English *wine* (“friend”).

Finding an appropriate translation for proper nouns in languages which are quite remote from English and the Germanic languages is indeed challenging. Roberto Arduini and Raffaella Benvenuto have a look at “Place Names in the Italian Translation of *The Lord of the Rings*,” one of the translations of his work which Tolkien found the most satisfactory. The difficulty of translating place names is highlighted by the variety of categories established by Arduini and Benvenuto for evaluating the quality of each choice: “Really Good Translations,” “Basically correct translations with room for improvement,” “‘Nice-sounding’ but grammatically wrong translations,” “Questionable choices,” “Meaningless translations,” “Nearly impossible translations,” and “Outright errors.” Just to take one example, the translation of Hornburg into the Italian *Trombatorrione* may evoke for the Italian reader 1) a trumpet, not a horn; b) not to elect a candidate; c) to have sexual intercourse. Notwithstanding Tolkien’s praise for the Italian translation of *The Lord of the Rings* (perhaps his command of colloquial Italian was not sufficient for him to grasp all

the nuances of *Trombatorrione*), the translator would have done better to choose the literal translation suggested by Arduini and Benvenuto, *Rocca del Corno*.

In countries in which there was government censorship, such as in Brazil and Poland, translators of *The Lord of the Rings* faced more than just linguistic challenges. In his paper, "Tolkien's Legacy in Brazil" Thomaz Brasil begins by noting that the first Brazilian edition was published between 1974 and 1979, under a military dictatorship. Brasil describes this edition as "more an adaptation than a proper translation"; judging by his description, it was more an aberration than an adaptation: "the books lost paragraphs, whole passages vanished, characters and places had their names changed, and even the books' names were changed." In spite of this, the books were a great success, and Brasil attributes this to Tolkien's powerful storytelling: "all this only proves that when you have a good story, with a strong message, even if it is adapted, censored, slashed and put together, that meaning is passed forward." An accurate translation did not appear until the 1990s, after a democratic government had been established. Brasil gives a brief overview of the many Tolkien societies in Brazil, of which the most noteworthy is The White Council, which not only promotes the study of Tolkien's works, but also encourages the preservation of Brazilian folklore and mythology.

Anna Dabkkowska tells "The Polish Story of *The Lord of the Rings*." The first translation into Polish published between 1961-63 was the third translation of *The Lord of the Rings*, and the first in a non-Germanic language. While it was much closer to the original than the first Brazilian edition, the translator made some significant changes, such as replacing some place-names with Polish equivalents (with mixed results), and avoiding the use of any terms which could be construed as anti-communist, such as "the Armies of the West." With concerns over state censorship being so evident in the translation, Dabkkowska asks how it is *The Lord of the Rings* was able to be translated at all; in spite of a complete lack of any publisher's or state archives to guide her, Dabkkowska posits the plausible explanation that the translation of *The Lord of the Rings* squeaked past the censors because it occurred during the "Thaw," "a period in which communist control of thought was somewhat less rigorous." Tolkien's aversion to allegory was another factor; the genre of *The Lord of the Rings* resembled "the grand epic force" of novels by Tolstoy and Sholokhov with which government officials were familiar, much more than it resembled the overt anti-totalitarianism of works like *Animal Farm*. Another fact which may seem paradoxical is that the Solidarity movement did not make the publication of a new edition of *The Lord of the Rings* any easier; on the contrary, Dabkkowska notes, when censorship was loosened some-

what, the main priority was to publish previously banned Polish writers such as Czeslaw Milosz and Witold Gombrowicz. Not surprisingly, the publication of works by and about Tolkien flourished in the 1990s, after the collapse of the Soviet system.

The 1990s also saw the publication of the first Russian translation of *The Lord of the Rings*, which was almost immediately followed by the publication of works which purportedly continued but which in fact often altered and challenged “structures of meaning and values of the world of Middle-earth.” In “Russian Followers of J.R.R. Tolkien,” Natalya Prilutskaya focuses on Nikolai Perumov’s trilogy *Ring of Darkness*, noting that for Perumov, as for Tolkien, Middle-earth is modeled after this world. Thus Perumov “russianizes” the Western kingdoms of Arnor and Gondor, extends the boundaries of Middle-earth to the East, and populates it with peoples such as the *dorvags*, who resemble “the Russian Slavonic tribes.” Perumov’s version of Middle-earth is morally much more ambivalent. In Tolkien’s universe, while individual characters may waiver between Good and Evil, the war against Sauron is undisputedly a war against Evil. In *Ring of Darkness*, according to Prilutskaya, “everything is relative . . . The borders between Good and Evil are vague . . . any means are good to reach a good goal.” The main theme of *Ring of Darkness* is a revolt of mortals against the Valar and the Elves in order to wrest from them the privileges of immortality and knowledge, and Prilutskaya likens this to the revolt of the Númenorians in *The Silmarillion*. Contrary to Tolkien’s Judeo-Christian perspective, which views pride as a sin and the unfettered quest for knowledge (as opposed to wisdom) dangerous, Perumov wrote *Ring of Darkness* from within a political and ideological culture hostile towards religion and in which the pursuit of knowledge was presented as only leading to good things (Prilutskaya reminds us of the title of a prominent Soviet-era scientific journal entitled *Knowledge is Power*). In this context, it is not surprising that *The Lord of the Rings* was subject to a different range of interpretations in Russia, which had been demonized by the “West” during the Cold War. Prilutskaya concludes her paper by noting that a study of Russian sequels to *The Lord of the Rings* over the last fifteen years would provide a fascinating insight into shifts in Russian values since the end of the Soviet regime; since Prilutskaya was writing her dissertation on the reception of Tolkien’s works in Russia at the time of the 2005 conference, we can hope to hear more from her about the fascinating topic on the future.

In “J.R.R. Tolkien and Alexander Grin: Two Literary ‘Cults’ in the USSR and Post-Soviet Russia,” the first essay of Section Four: Other Voices, Nataliya Oryshchuk takes a comparative look at the works of Tolkien and the Russian neo-Romantic writer Alexander Grin (1880-1932). Fairy-tales had been banned in the 1920s because of their

emphasis on supernatural and religious themes; the rehabilitation of Russian folk-tales in the 1930s occurred in the context of Socialist Realism. Alexander Grin's works were condemned as escapist fantasy and banned in the 1940s, then released from their "ideological prison" in the 1950s, in the hopes of reviving the weary post-Stalin public with an "injection of romanticism." Oryshchuk explains that in spite of the "official" interpretation of Grin's work, which read into it class struggle and collectivist thinking, readers flocked to his works because of their elements of fantasy, particularly themes of escaping to another world. This resulted in the Soviet censors reclassifying Grin as an author of children's literature in the 1960s. In an interesting parallel, the first Russian translation of Tolkien was one chapter of *The Hobbit*, published in 1969, thus also placing Tolkien in the category of an author of children's books. When the first Russian translation of *The Lord of the Rings* became available in 1990-91, many readers embraced it with the same enthusiasm that Grin's works had generated in the 1950s; then, everyone longed to live in "Grinlandia"; in the post-Soviet era, readers seized the opportunity to cast aside nationalism and to "proclaim themselves a citizen of Middle-earth."

Another essay comparing Tolkien's work with other fantasy writers is David Emerson's "Tolkien and Moorcock: Achieving Literary Depth through Vertical and Horizontal Explorations of Time." Emerson's study is interesting in part because it focuses on an author who not only explicitly stated his dislike for Tolkien's work, but whose aesthetic is nearly opposite. Tolkien created an impression of historical depth through what Emerson calls a vertical concept of time; many characters in *The Lord of the Rings* can trace their own history back to key events of *The Silmarillion*, which provides Middle-earth with a deep chronological past. Moorcock's universe, the Multiverse, as its name suggests, contains a multitude of parallel worlds which coexist in time. The "Eternal Champion," a hero "destined to be incarnated in world after world" is crucial to the construction of horizontal depth in Moorcock's stories, as he moves from world to world to fight new battles. Characters in Moorcock's books relate to each other not chronologically in time, but rather spatially, across universes. Seeking to avoid a dualistic plot pitting Good against Evil, in which suspense is mitigated by the reader's knowledge that Good is bound to prevail, Moorcock instead has the incarnations of the Eternal Champion take part in an eternal struggle between Law and Chaos in which they must frequently change sides in order to maintain Cosmic Balance. Emerson is not entirely convincing in his arguments that Moorcock can create literary depth solely through the construction of parallel worlds in horizontal time, for his presentation of the characters of Moorcock's Multiverse reveals that many trace their ancestry vertically back in

time. Still, Emerson's exploration of the concept of horizontal time sheds light on another aspect of the many layers of Tolkien's legendarium: Emerson is in agreement with Tom Shippey that the publication of *The History of Middle-earth*, by providing variants of the stories related in *The Silmarillion*, broadened Tolkien's world horizontally, thus adding to the already rich layers of literary depth.

Colin Duriez offers another approach to our understanding of Tolkien, the appearance of Tolkien as a character in his own fiction and that of other writers. Duriez says little about "Leaf by Niggle," referring readers to Tom Shippey's in-depth analysis of that work in *J.R.R. Tolkien: Author of the Century* (2002) but devotes several paragraphs to "The Lost Road," the story involving time-travel that Tolkien began as part of his pact with C.S. Lewis to write "the kinds of books we want to read." Although unfinished, "The Lost Road" provides insights into Tolkien's personality and perhaps even his psyche. The story is about a professor and his son Alboin who live alone by the sea, possibly in Cornwall. The son has visions and dreams of another world, which come to him primarily in linguistic form; he is "haunted by names that emerge in deep dreams" such as "Númenor"; Alboin's son Audoin later has similar visions, but "more visual than linguistic" and the two characters eventually travel back in time to Númenor. For Duriez, the father-son figure is "soft-focus portrait of a father and son not unlike Tolkien and his son Christopher." Another writing of Tolkien's which contains some autobiographical elements is "The Notion Club Papers," which has been interpreted as containing some references to the Inklings; if this is true, than at least one Inkling returned the favor: the character of Cambridge philologist Elwin Ransom in C. S. Lewis's *Out of the Silent Planet* and *Perelandra* is based on Tolkien. Duriez interprets the depiction of Professor Ransom as a character who "brings stories back from space" as an allusion to Tolkien's "imaginative presentation of Christ to Lewis." Tolkien also appears as a professor in novels by J.I.M. Stewart and Melanie Jechse. One of the more unlikely fictional representations of Tolkien and the Inklings occurs in a graphic novel by Micah Harris, *Heaven's War* (2003), in which Tolkien, Lewis and Williams must battle supernatural forces in a global war. These fictitious portrayals of Tolkien do not really add anything to our perception of him; the autobiographical writings on the other hand are worthy of more study.

In "The Hunt for the One Tolkien," Wolfgang Penetsdorfer searches for an answer to the question "What is the essence of Tolkien's fictional creation?" Penetsdorfer begins with a survey of definitions and classifications of fantasy (high fantasy, low fantasy, dark fantasy, epic fantasy, science fantasy, etc.) but he spares the reader a systematic examination of Tolkien's work in light of these, and takes a more organic approach by

first looking at how Tolkien's writing holds up to his own theories on fantasy as exposed in the essay "On Fairy-stories." Penetsdorfer concludes that *The Hobbit* only partially meets Tolkien's criteria (owing to the asides to the reader, among other things), "Leaf by Niggle" not at all (not only because it is an allegory, but it because the reader has the impression "that Tolkien is telling us something about himself") whereas *Farmer Giles of Ham* passes the test. Next, Penetsdorfer surveys what some other fantasy writers and critics such as Ursula LeGuin, Raymond Feist, Edmund Wilson, Dieter Petzold have to say about Tolkien. Of most interest here is Penetsdorfer's discussion of Petzold, whose essays on children's literature and fantasy literature have appeared in *Children's Literature Association Quarterly* and *MFS: Modern Fiction Studies* but whose work *J.R.R. Tolkien: Fantasy Literature als Wunscherfullung und Weltdeutung* (1980), the first book-length study of Tolkien's work in German, has to my knowledge never been translated into English. The last section of Penetsdorfer's paper is an overview of some works of fantasy writers that have been influenced by Tolkien, namely, George Martin's *A Song of Ice and Fire*, Ursula Le Guin's *Earthsea*, Tad Williams' *Memory, Sorrow and Thorn* and David Eddings's *Belgariad* saga. In the end, Penetsdorfer is unable to say that his "hunt for the one Tolkien" has been successful, but then, this is perhaps his point. If the essence of Tolkien's fictional creation were so easy to identify, then we would not be writing about it.

The question of Tolkien's influence on other writers is also addressed by Charles Butler in "After The Inklings." Here the works of three writers who were undergraduates at Oxford when Lewis and Tolkien were teaching there are studied: Alan Garner, Susan Cooper and Diana Wynne Jones. All three of these individuals later wrote children's fantasy fiction, and yet they moved in completely different circles and in fact never knew each other. The question Butler raises is whether or not Tolkien and Lewis had either a direct influence "whereby images, ideas, styles and conventions may have been borrowed (consciously or unconsciously)," or an indirect influence, in that they helped pave the way for a younger generation of writers by creating a market for fantasy literature. Butler deliberately compares some plot motifs from Garner's *The Moon of Gomerath* (1963) and Cooper's *Green Boy* (2002) with their very close equivalents in Tolkien and C.S. Lewis, only to dispel any suggestions of direct influence or worse, plagiarism, by noting that all four writers could have taken inspiration from *The Song of Roland*, Aesop's *Fables* or, in the case of being trapped and eaten by giant spiders, "a nightmare as old as the human race." Butler also makes the important point that it becomes increasingly difficult to attribute influence to a writer like Tolkien whose "imagery is now so widely diffused that it is quite easy to conceive of a writer being deeply influenced by *The Lord of the Rings* without having read it." But this

is not to say that Tolkien and Lewis's works did not profoundly influence the genre. Through their examples, the link between fantasy writing and medievalism was tightened, thereby creating a conundrum for authors: how to deal with what Butler describes as the "tension" between the "trappings" of a medieval secondary world (where political leadership is legitimated by blood lines, and heroes all ride noble steeds) and the modern-day settings often preferred by writers such as Garner, Cooper and Jones. Butler sees Diana Wynne Jones as an interesting case study. While openly acknowledging the "enormous influence" of Tolkien on her work, she successfully created a secondary world, Dalemark, which differs quite markedly from Middle-earth in that it actually possesses "a technological and industrial history" that is presented in a positive light, and an heir to the kingdom who is chosen for his personal merits. Butler cites Susan Cooper, who also acknowledged Tolkien's influence, as "one of the very first critics to recognize the importance of Tolkien's fantasy," as early as 1955. Like Jones, Cooper found a creative way to assimilate elements of medievalism into a twentieth-century setting: in *The Dark is Rising*, her Dark Rider "flits between sitting astride a black steed, and acting as the dapper jewel dealer Mr. Mithlin." Is Cooper's character Merriman based directly on Gandalf? Possibly, but then as Butler notes, both Gandalf and Merriman are heirs to Merlin and Jung's Wise Old Man. Of the three authors discussed here, Alan Garner protested most vociferously against having succumbed to any Tolkienian influence, to the point of making rather mean-spirited remarks about Tolkien as a writer, and yet his work *Weirdstone* has been the most often compared with *The Lord of the Rings*. Butler attributes this to a couple of factors: timing—*Weirdstone* came out in 1960—and Garner's and Tolkien's strikingly similar literary goals: to revive an authentic English, especially Mercian, literary tradition unsullied by Romance literature from continental Europe. It was perhaps because Tolkien realized these goals, or at least came closer to them before Garner that led to the latter's resentment. Whatever the case may be, Butler reminds critics that they must be wary of making claims about any author's influence on other without carefully examining the question from all possible angles.

Section Five: The Telling of Tales: Myth and Storytelling opens with Ian Russell Lowell's essay "Across No Man's Land," which focuses on the Hittite language and the *Hittite Ritual of Hantitaššu from the Troublesome Years* (1996), edited by Turkish scholar Ahmet Ünal. German archaeologist and linguist Hugo Winkler discovered a Hittite library in 1906, but was unable to read all of the cuneiform tablets; a little over a decade later Bedřich Hrozný deciphered cuneiform Hittite and made the then controversial claim that that Hittite was in fact the earliest example of an Indo-European language. While Tolkien may not have studied the

Hittite language and culture, it would have been surprising for him to remain unaware of these discoveries, given his own interest in Indo-European languages. What Lowell finds most striking is that Tolkien and Hrozný were both delving into worlds of ancient mythology, religion and languages while quite literally hunkering down in the trenches of WWI; Tolkien began his first work on his languages and mythology of Middle-earth during his service in France, and Hrozný worked on deciphering the cuneiform tablets, while fighting on opposite sides. Aside from their vocations as philologists, Tolkien and Hrozný had little in common. Lowell is not entirely convincing in his assertion that another thing that links “the world of the Hittites with the world of Tolkien is the richness of the texts on magic, mythology and spirituality.” Most of the passages from the rituals that are cited in this essay have to do with prayers and sacrifices to the gods so that the Hittites may be spared from plagues, famine, or invasions by enemy forces; this seems rather far removed from the spiritual world of *The Lord of the Rings*. Although Lowell’s essay does not really contain any new insights into Tolkien, it does inform the reader of some fascinating linguistic discoveries that were contemporaneous with the genesis of Tolkien’s logocentric universe.

Tolkien’s appreciation of the close link between language and myth was fostered by his study of the Classics, in particular Greek, as Kate Karegeorgi recalls in her essay, “Tolkien and Universality.” Taking Tolkien’s statement in a letter to Father Robert Murray “I was brought up on the Classics, and first discovered the sensation of literary pleasure in Homer” (*Letters* 172) as her point of departure, Karegeorgi sets out to demonstrate that the foundation of Tolkien’s mythology and his concept of the hero owe just as much—if not more—to Greek literature and mythology as they do to Nordic mythology and Anglo-Saxon literature. Karegeorgi sees in one of Tolkien’s first pieces of mythological writing, “The Fall of Gondolin,” which he probably began writing in 1917, echoes of Homeric literature: “The Fall of Gondolin’ was an accurate retelling of the Trojan myth in an Anglo-Saxon mode.” Tolkien’s reputation as a renowned scholar of Anglo-Saxon literature and as a critic of *Beowulf* or *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* sometimes overshadows his debt to the ancient Greeks, but anyone who has taught *The Silmarillion* to undergraduates must have noted that students are quick to draw parallels between the Valar and the Greek pantheon. This is partly because the typical student tends to be more familiar with Greek mythology than with Nordic or Celtic mythology, but also because the parallels are obvious; Ulmo reminds us of Poseidon, Aulë of Hephaistos, Yavanna of Demeter and so on; the Valar have the attributes of the Greek gods, but most of them lack the less attractive human failings of their Greek counterparts, such as Zeus’s lasciviousness and Hera’s cruelty and jealousy. This being

said, anthropocentrism is a key element of the Greek mythology, as it is of Tolkien's universe. While *The Silmarillion* may have more in common with Hesiod's *Theogony* or the *Eddas* in that it deals primarily with immortal beings, in Karegeorgi's view the mortal character of Túrin (notwithstanding the influence of the *Kalevala*) owes much to Greek tragedy, in particular, Oedipus. Although Karegeorgi does not mention Beren, his tale supports her claims of significant Greek influence in that it echoes the story of Jason: both heroes are sent on supposedly impossible quests by kings who hope in this manner to eliminate them, and in both cases, the heroes ultimately obtain the precious objects, but at great costs to themselves and others. Mortal heroes are of course at the center of *The Lord of the Rings*. Karegeorgi provides an interesting discussion of how Aragorn and Frodo can be analyzed in light of Lord Raglan's "Heroic Pattern" and Joseph Campbell's Jungian-inspired "Heroic Journey." It is regrettable that no footnotes or bibliographical references are provided, so that readers could know which specific works discuss these concepts. The lack of a bibliography is also frustrating because Karegeorgi states that her essay is "an effort to see the influences of Greek mythology on Tolkien through the eyes of modern Greeks," and yet she makes no reference to other Greek scholars working on Tolkien.

From reading Tolkien's letters, one gets a sense that myths—his own, those of ancient peoples, or even the mythic patterns of the Christian Gospels—were fundamental to his understanding of the world. His craving for a "mythology for England" is reflected in the need of the characters of *The Lord of the Rings* to relate their own experience to a mythological past that gives them a sense of purpose and connectedness to something greater than themselves. In "'Tell them Stories': The Consciousness of Myth in Tolkien and Pullman" Kristina Sepe draws on the theories of Mircea Eliade and Celtic scholar Jean Markale to explore how the enactment and reenactment of myth are essential to the motivation of Frodo Baggins. Sepe sees parallels between the perilous journeys of Beren, Eärendil, and Frodo and argues that the familiarity of Frodo and other members of the Fellowship with these ancient stories was essential to the accomplishment of their own mission. Sam, in particular, never tires of recalling the travails and exploits of heroes from the ancient history of Middle-earth, and evokes them to encourage his master. In Sepe's view, a full appreciation of how integral an "awareness of the mythic past of Middle-earth" is to the plot of *The Lord of the Rings* cannot be reached unless one compares it to a work such as Philip Pullman's *His Dark Materials* in which "such consciousness is almost completely absent." This is intentional, as Pullman's story is a deliberate deconstruction of the foundational Judeo-Christian Adam and Eve myth. Contrary to the characters of *The Lord of the Rings*, Pullman's pro-

tagonists have no knowledge of the roles that they are manipulated into playing: “Lyra, as Pullman’s unwitting Eve, has no tale in which to find guidance and encouragement.” Pullman openly expressed his disdain for the works of Tolkien and Lewis, but Sepe adeptly illustrates that Pullman’s anti-Christian “philosophical agenda is even more thinly veiled in *His Dark Materials* than Lewis’s Christianity is in *Narnia*.” Tolkien was not without his religious and political opinions, and *The Lord of the Rings* is not devoid of moral and philosophical themes, but as Sepe rightly points out “the primary intent of its author was never to moralize, nor indeed to proselytize, but rather to create—and to create well.”

Allan Turner looks at Tolkien’s storytelling not from the perspective of mythic structure, but rather from a narratological standpoint. In “Putting the Paratext in Context,” Turner argues that the Appendices are an integral part of the structure of *The Lord of the Rings* and deserve more critical attention. They form part of a paratext which includes the Foreword and Prologue, and which takes up a good one-tenth of the single-volume edition. The decisions of translators and editors have been detrimental to the appendices being studied as literary texts in their own right, or even as an essential part of *The Lord of the Rings*. Turner points out that a number of early translations either excluded some of the appendices or left them out entirely (Appendix A, “The Tale of Aragorn and Arwen,” is the exception that proves the rule). In Germany the Appendices are printed and marketed in a volume separate from the three-volume novel, with the result that many readers never even see them. Turner’s observations underscore the enormous effect that editorial decisions, which are often driven by economic considerations, can have on the reception of a work by both the general readership and the scholarly community. In his analysis Turner demonstrates that the narrative voice of the Appendices does not differ significantly from the narrative voice of the main narrative or story-line; for example, embedded narratives containing dialogues or the recounting of individual episodes from other eras are used in both the main narrative and the appendices in order to show a difference of narrative perspective. Turner draws upon contemporary theories of narratology to illustrate this; it is worth noting that as a medievalist who was reluctant to embrace twentieth-century literary theory, Tolkien was nonetheless able to work with several narrative voices quite effortlessly, as this sort of interlacement was also a feature of much medieval literature. The Appendices, then, are not just there to provide additional information to the reader; they add both historical depth and narrative complexity to the work as a whole. Turner also provides a chart, adapted from a recent book on narratology, to illustrate the intricacies of the narrative structure of *The Lord of the Rings*, and this could prove very useful to scholars who teach Tolkien.

Rosana Rios picks up where her compatriot Thomaz Brasil left off in Section Three by focusing on the activities of one of the Brazilian Tolkien societies in “Storytelling in the White Council.” After making some general observations about the importance of storytelling in the formation of cultures and in Tolkien’s tales, Rios turns to the storytelling tradition of Brazil. Brazilian culture was formed by the fusion of the traditions of three peoples: stories of the Native Nations, each one with its own myths and language, blended with those of African slaves; the domestic slaves then transmitted this lore to children of their Portuguese masters. The medieval roots of European folklore were in turn transmitted to the native peoples and Africans who worked in the households of the Portuguese; eventually, these traditions merged to form stories that were unique to Brazil. Rios laments the loss of much of this rich tradition in recent decades owing to the influence of the radio, television and cinema; it is surprising that she does not mention the devastating effect that the destruction of the Amazonian rain forest has had on indigenous peoples and their languages, lore and lifestyles, which are disappearing at an alarming rate. In an effort to help preserve storytelling traditions, the White Council formed a storytelling group named The House of Vairë, devoted not only to the study of Tolkien’s stories and the literature that inspired them, but also to the study and retelling of myths and legends from around the world. The House of Vairë has in recent years broadened its mission, and now uses storytelling in outreach programs in hospitals, schools and orphanages, to promote literacy among disadvantaged groups and to expose children to the richness of Tolkien’s work, classical literature and also their own native myths and legends, “always as a tribute to the Professor.” Tolkien no doubt would have appreciated this sort of homage very much. In keeping with the White Council’s emphasis on the art of storytelling, Rios ends her essays with the retelling of three native Brazilian stories.

Section Six: Tolkien’s People concentrates on interpretations of the characters of *The Lord of the Rings*. Beatriz Domínguez Ruiz leads the way with a discussion of “The Concept of Masculinity in Tolkien’s *The Lord of the Rings*,” in which she argues that Tolkien’s construction of gender is much more nuanced than some of his critics have claimed, in that he “introduced new patterns of masculinity.” She begins with a brief discussion of the difference between sex and gender, reminding the reader that gender, as a social construct, varies throughout history and between cultures; thus the concept of masculinity is not exactly the same, for example, in Gondor as it is in Rohan. For Ruiz, Rohan resembles European cultures in the 5th-6th centuries in that it is very warlike, and the homosocial bonding of the men is focused on a code of behavior not unlike that of the *comitatus* of Anglo-Saxon society, in which a man’s worth is judged by

his unwavering willingness to go to war to protect king and kin. Faramir, on the other hand, represents a different type of masculinity in that “he is not essentially violent and aggressive . . . he does not see war as the only alternative.” Ruiz compares Gondor to the more sophisticated society of the late Middle Ages. As the rightful king of Gondor, Aragorn resembles a hero such as Arthur or William Wallace in that he fights to protect others or to right wrongs, not to prove his personal prowess. Gandalf embodies several masculine archetypes. He has many traits of the Jungian archetype of Wise Old Man, but in addition to being a counselor he is also a warrior when needed (his battle with the Balrog is an example of extraordinary courage and self-sacrifice) and he is also a fatherly figure to the hobbits. Ruiz’s analysis of the issue of gender in the character of Éowyn is perceptive. In the warrior society of Rohan the only masculine role Éowyn has seen is that of warrior, and furthermore, this is the role that Rohan society holds most in esteem. It is not surprising, then, that in her desire to help her people, she rejects the passive, domestic roles assigned to women, which are not validated by her society, subdues all of her feminine traits, and takes up arms. Ruiz makes the astute observation that in Gondor, where brave warriors like Aragorn and Faramir can also be scholars and healers, Éowyn is more at ease with her femininity and decides to become a healer. A weak point of the essays is Ruiz’s discussion of Hobbits, whom she hardly sees as masculine figures at all: “In a way they are boyish heroes who do not seek adventures or battle consciously . . . the concept of masculinity they represent is endowed with children’s attitudes so in a way they accept their quest blindly, not as the epic hero who knows what he has to face.” Ruiz does not entirely do justice to the Hobbits, for Merry, Pippin and Sam decide to follow Frodo out of friendship and concern for him, not “blindly” and their characters evolve tremendously during the course of the narrative. Can one really make the claim that Sam does not know what he is up against when he takes the ring off of Frodo, whom he believes dead, and decides to travel to Mount Doom alone?

Three essays deal specifically with Frodo. In “Frodo’s Temptation, Frodo’s Failure” Douglas Charles Rapier sets out to refute the claim that Frodo ultimately fails in his quest to destroy the Ring. Rapier notes that among the many letters written to Tolkien in the first years after the publication of *The Lord of the Rings*, only two people had questioned the success of Frodo’s mission. Tolkien responded in great detail to one of these letters (*Letters* 325-27), exonerating Frodo of any moral failure, but the debate was reopened by Peter Jackson’s films. Rapier takes up the cause of Frodo, meticulously reviewing the history of the One Ring and its effect on all beings who come into contact with it. For characters like Isildur, Boromir and Gollum, the Ring led to the committing of heinous

crimes (treachery, murder) and ultimately to their own deaths. Bilbo and Sam both were tempted, if only for a moment, to keep the Ring, but they ultimately relinquished it. Gandalf, Elrond, Galadriel and Tom Bombadil also resisted its power. These characters each have special qualities as either immortal beings or beings with a divine mission; with the exception of Bombadil, each possessed one of the three Elven Rings of Power, and this may have given them the strength to resist. Aragorn's resistance to the Ring is in Rapier's view "the natural, logical result of his character and his upbringing," and also an illustration of the power of storytelling: "young Aragorn most assuredly learned the history of Middle-earth and the long friendship between the Elves and the Edain . . . he would have heard eye-witness accounts of the Army of the last Alliance, the Battle of Dagorlad . . . he would have heard first-hand of Isildur's refusal to cast the One Ring into the fires of Mount Doom." Because Frodo had not been mentally or physically prepared to confront the power of the Ring, Rapier finds it impressive that he resisted its power as long as he did. As a Hobbit, he is a character with whom modern readers can identify more readily than they can with mortals of noble lineage or immortal beings with supernatural powers: "As a hero more attuned to a modern age, he had bested the most egregious temptation of all—to despair, to do nothing in the face of evil."

Judith Klinger, like Rapier above, begins her essay by quoting the words that Frodo speaks at the edge of the Cracks of Doom: "I have come . . . but I do not choose now to do what I came to do. I will not do this deed." Klinger stresses the importance of the negation in Frodo's statement, "I do not choose . . . to do," concurring with Tom Shippey that indeed "Frodo does not choose; the choice is made for him" (*Author* 140). In "The Fallacies of Power: Frodo's Resistance to the Ring," Klinger does not ask whether or not Frodo failed in his mission to destroy the Ring, but rather how he was able to succeed, where others would have failed: "Why, when all the wise and powerful beings in Middle-earth could not risk to undertake the Quest, was Frodo so successful?" Galadriel and Gandalf, it is true, resist the Ring, as both Klinger and Rapier note, but Klinger reminds us that they do not so much resist the power of the Ring, as refuse to be placed in a position where they would be tempted by it. Characters who are already powerful in other ways would be overcome by the Ring far more quickly than Frodo because the temptation to use it—albeit with good intentions—would be far greater. Klinger explores the "specific qualities and achievements" that enable Frodo to bear the ring so long without succumbing to its sway. One quality is his ability to learn about himself. Frodo's understanding that the will of the Ring is separate from his own will (but ultimately more powerful) allows him to place his trust in others and to follow his better instincts,

for example, by showing pity toward Gollum. It is in fact Frodo's consideration for others and his willingness to be guided and assisted by those who would help him that enables him to resist being driven by the Ring. Ironically, it is Gollum, who had been spared by Frodo and Sam (at Frodo's bidding) who accomplishes the task that Frodo had set out to do: "Only a third party can tip the balance, as Gollum eventually does—yet this most fortunate conclusion is made possible by Frodo's and Sam's pity for him." Klinger joins critics Rose Zimbaro and Jane Chance (whose works, along with those of other scholars, she cites in her very thorough notes and bibliography) in noting that in *The Lord of the Rings*, the power of love prevails over the love of power: "At the very end, through a complex sequence of interactions based on love, trust and pity, the principle of two prevails against the One."

Constance C.J. Wagner sees a "Hobbit Trinity" composed of Frodo, Sam, and Gollum at work in the struggle against the Ring. In "The War Within: Frodo as Sacrificial Hero," Wagner notes that both Sauron and Frodo create "external souls," a practice which she states can be found in numerous myths and stories of "tricksters and demons," although she does not give any examples. A brief discussion of the motif of the external soul would have been most interesting, particularly in light of its use in recent works of fantasy literature such as the Harry Potter series. In Wagner's analysis, Sauron embodies his external soul in the Ring, whereas Frodo's internal struggle is externalized in the tension between Sam and Gollum. Each member of this trinity in turn embodies certain qualities: Sam represents action, but above all, hope; Gollum is an "agent of destruction"; Frodo is "the vessel of will, the guiding spirit, the ultimate sacrifice." Wagner's main thesis is that Frodo does not just *perform* sacrifices to save Middle-earth, he *is* the sacrifice, following the timeless tradition of archetypes of the "Sacrificial Hero" the "Chosen One," the "Chosen Sacrifice" the "one who is Called." Many mythical, religious and historical characters (Joan of Arc springs to mind with the words "the one who is Called") could be said to fit into these archetypal categories; does this mean that Frodo has something in common with all of them? Wagner states in her opening sentence that "sacrifice, truly and freely offered by one Chosen, sets us free." There is an inherent contradiction in being "chosen" as sacrificial victim and "freely" offering oneself as sacrifice, which is resolved when the sacrificial victim is given the opportunity to refuse this role, but decides to accept it; the archetypal example of this in Antiquity is Iphigenia; in Christianity, of course, it is Christ. But it is unclear in which examples of these archetypes Wagner sees the most parallels with Frodo. At times she seems to be vaguely referring to Christian theology, as when she uses "Trinity" as a proper noun, but then of course there are other examples of divine trinities of gods, as

in Hindu theology. What is lacking in Wagner's essay (and what Rapier and Klinger address) is a discussion of the qualities and character traits that are specific to Frodo and which make him the right person to be the Ringbearer. If he is the "Chosen One," then why was he chosen? If he is "the one who is Called," by whom was he called? Wagner's frequent use of the passive voice to describe Frodo takes any sense of free will or agency away from him as hero. Her interpretation of the character of Frodo seems to have been influenced by the depiction of Frodo in Peter Jackson's film trilogy; in fact Wagner quotes from the screenplay of the film almost as often as she does from Tolkien's text. The reader of the essay is left wondering if Wagner's notion of the sacrificial hero derives from Greek mythology, cultural anthropology, comparative theology, twenty-first-century cinema, or a mish-mash of all of these.

In common parlance, one speaks of people who seem to be uniquely suited to their occupation in life as having a vocation, or a "calling." Paradoxically, pursuing one's calling does not necessarily lead to happiness or fulfillment; on the contrary, as David Weber points out, paraphrasing Nietzsche, "happiness defined by calling or commitment is unattainable and leads only to resentment." If happiness is the chief human aspiration, and yet the pursuit of one's calling is at odds with the pursuit of happiness, what path should one take? In "Transfigured Sadness: Characterizations of Sadness in *The Lord of the Rings*," Weber examines the characters of Denethor, Arwen and Frodo and their respective attitudes towards their callings in order to shed light on this moral conundrum. Drawing upon both classical and modern Christian theology, but especially on the writings of the existentialist philosopher Søren Kierkegaard, Weber defines sadness as "the deadly thought that our vocations have diminished rather than fulfilled our true selves." Denethor interprets the death of Boromir as a sign that he has failed in his vocation as steward of Gondor, and he allows his sadness and resentment to give way to suicidal and homicidal despair. Because he equates fulfillment of his calling with fulfillment of his desire, which was to see Boromir become king of Gondor, Denethor refuses to envision Aragorn's return as king of Gondor as fulfillment of his vocation as steward. Frodo's sadness, on the other hand, derives from his knowledge "that he is called to a heroic task for which he is unsuited." For Weber, "Frodo's call is a *surd* . . . His vocation lies in the narrow gap between the surd and the absurd. A surd is without reason but this is not to say it is unreasonable or irrational."

At this point in Weber's essay, readers are likely to turn to a good dictionary (unless they are mathematicians or speech pathologists) where they will find that *surd* refers to a) "an irrational radical"; b) "a surd speech sound"; or c) "an unknown or irrational quality," the latter definition being in direct contradiction with Weber's own. The discussion of Frodo's

understanding and acceptance of his calling becomes mired in Weber's attempt at philosophical word-play with the terms *surd* and *absurd*, which is unhelpful, if not to say annoying. Arwen's sadness derives, in Weber's view, from *not* following her apparent vocation, which is to follow Elrond and the other Elves across the sea and to continue her immortal existence. Arwen's prospect of happiness in a mortal union with Aragorn is mitigated by her sadness at her separation from her father and her realization that she has forever foresworn any reunion with him, yet she avoids despair because she embraces sadness rather than trying to negate it. In Weber's view, the despair of a character like Denethor derives from a fundamental misunderstanding of the nature of creation and time. Creation carries with it an inherent sadness, because all created things must come to an end. Like the progression of notes in a musical score, the passing of time is characterized by moments of joy, or "festive time," and the silent pauses between the notes and festivities, which are filled with longing for what is past and uncertainty and impatience about what will come next.

To better illustrate his point, Weber compares the suffering borne by Frodo in *The Lord of the Rings* to Abraham's preparation for the sacrifice of his son Isaac, as analyzed by Kierkegaard: "Like *Fear and Trembling*, *The Lord of the Rings* imaginatively holds us in the middle with hope that our sadness will, in the end, be transfigured." Weber's essay is dense with philosophical and theological references, which he does not always explain. When he refers to Gimli as a "the Scottish Presbyterian Dwarf" or describes Frodo's ordeal as akin to "suffering after the Transfiguration but before the Resurrection," Weber assumes that his readers share his own religious background and have engaged in formal theological study. Oddly, in his discussion of transfigured sadness, Weber does not once refer to Tolkien's concept of *eucaastrophe* as developed in his essay "On Fairy-stories," a text which would be more familiar to his audience.

The title of Nicole Topham's essay: "The Time that is Given To Us: Hope, Sacrifice and Courage in *The Lord of the Rings*" seems to be stating the obvious. It is not particularly original to point out that Sam Gamgee never loses hope, that Frodo makes great sacrifices, and that both of them are courageous. Their journey is extraordinary, but it is not unique. Topham situates the trials, suffering, and ultimate triumph of Frodo and Sam in the greater context of the many struggles against evil and the abuse of power that have occurred in the long history of Middle-earth. Before undertaking his quest, Frodo has heard of the remarkable courage and sacrifices of Beren and Lúthien, and of Eärendil and Elwing. When Galadriel gives Frodo her phial, containing light from the Silmaril strapped to Eärendil's brow—Eärendil who had been placed in the sky as a star of hope for the inhabitants of Middle-earth—Frodo

becomes a torch-bearer of hope. Topham stresses the power of stories to shape the course of individual responses to evil. Just as Frodo and Sam are encouraged by the example of those who fought bravely before them, so twenty-first century readers of *The Lord of the Rings* may take inspiration from them. This is because, Topham writes, “the story is the same, because the struggle is constant. The war of the Ring seems very real to all who read it because a similar war is being fought in our own world every day.” Topham’s essay makes reference to the bombing of the World Trade Center in 2001, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the bombings in Madrid and London, and the terrorist attacks of suicide bombers. She ends her essay with a quote by Peggy Noonan, former speechwriter of Ronald Reagan, who famously referred to the USSR and its satellites as the “Empire of Evil.” Are all of these part of one larger struggle, as Topham’s comment suggests? Tolkien himself admitted that while *The Lord of the Rings* was not an allegory of WWII or any other specific historical event, it could be applicable to some situations. But can we stretch this as far as to say that it can apply to all conflicts that have occurred during the last fifty years? How would the people of Rohan, Gondor, The Shire, or Lothlórien align themselves in such conflicts? Topham’s finer points about the narrative continuity of the themes of hope, sacrifice and courage throughout Tolkien’s work are obscured by such analogies.

Lynette R. Porter stays more on topic in her paper on “Courage and the Ability to Adapt,” in which she explores “how courage can be revealed in small ways.” Through the characters of Pippin, Merry, Sam, Legolas and Gimli, the virtues of hope, faith, love and forgiveness are revealed as essential components of courage. Aside from Sam, Pippin can be seen as the most hopeful character in *The Lord of the Rings*. While his curiosity and mischievousness exasperate Gandalf and earn him the epithet of “fool,” Pippin’s buoyancy and resilience are signs of inner strength and courage. If Pippin’s courage is manifest in his perpetual hopeful attitude, the courage of Merry, who is a natural organizer, planner, and studier of maps, comes across in his willingness to place faith in others in situations that are beyond his control, to follow others without a map, as it were. Sam embodies the courage to love; his devotion to Frodo does not end when they have returned to the Shire and Sam has received a hero’s welcome; Sam continues to care for the physically and psychologically damaged Frodo until he leaves Middle-earth for the Grey Havens. Finally, Legolas and Gimli are courageous in their efforts to overcome the racial prejudice and the resentment from old quarrels that they have inherited from their respective cultures, and they also show courage in their willingness to tread new territory by exploring each others’ worlds. The trait that all of these characters have in common, notwithstanding their many differences, is their ability to adapt their thinking, their actions and even

their inbred cultural assumptions to new situations and encounters; this, in Porter's view, is the true test of one's courage, for it involves an on-going process of self-understanding and a willingness to understand others.

The Frodo-Sam relationship is examined in Anna Smol's article "Male Friendship in *The Lord of the Rings*." Smol provides a perspective on male friendships in medieval literature, Victorian and Edwardian literature written for boys, and documents from WWI. Her enquiry was prompted by discussions about the exact nature of Sam and Frodo's relationship that sprang up as a result of Peter Jackson's films, and by the proliferation of slash (fan fiction that deliberately eroticizes friendships between male characters) involving the two Hobbits. Suspicions that there was more between the middle-class gentleman hobbit Frodo and his simple (but not simple-minded) gardener are not new. Smol shares C.S. Lewis's annoyance at twentieth-century readers' misunderstanding of the physical gestures that were manifestations of friendship, loyalty, and deep social bonds in medieval society, and she quotes from his 1960 essay "Friendship": "Kisses, tears and embraces are not in themselves evidence of homosexuality. . . . it is not the demonstrative gestures of friendship among our ancestors but the absence of such gestures in our society that calls for some special explanation." Smol likens Frodo resting his head in Sam's lap to King Cadwallo napping with his head on his nephew's lap in Geoffrey of Monmouth's *History of the Kings of Britain*; medieval scholars have noted that this was protective gesture, and the same can be said for Sam, who wishes to protect Frodo while he sleeps in Cirith Ungol. Men of Tolkien's generation read literature for boys which made heavy use of chivalric ideals such as vassals' devotion to their liege lords. The relationship between the batmen and the officers that they served in WWI was not very different. Smol reminds us that from Roland weeping over the slain Olivier to soldiers dancing with each other in the trenches, men during wartime have turned to each other for protection, support, and solace, and on occasion, physical affection, but these things were not always manifestations of homosexuality or homoeroticism. In Smol's view, the relationship between Frodo and Sam "reveals to us the nature of male friendship in the past, speaks to us about the limitations of male intimacy in the present, and challenges us to imagine the possibilities for male friendship in the future."

Only two of the essays in this section deal with female characters. In "Tolkien's Love-Triangle": Aragorn's Relationships with Éowyn and Arwen" by Romuald Ian Lakowski, the author discusses the narratological consequences of Tolkien's decision to wed Arwen to Aragorn instead of Éowyn. Lakowski carefully examines the published text of *The Lord of the Rings* and the drafts in *The History of Middle-earth* (volumes 6-9) and finds some intriguing twists and turns in Aragorn's relationship with

Éowyn. The first meeting with Aragorn and Éowyn (*War* 69, 72) makes it clear that the two were mutually attracted to each other, whereas the description of their meeting in Book III of *The Two Towers* gives a very different impression. A plot outline of Book III goes so far as to state that Aragorn weds Éowyn. (*Treason* 488). Tolkien then changed his mind, and noted in his outline that Éowyn should be “a stern Amazon woman” and that Aragorn would be “too old and Lordly and grim.” Tolkien then considered the possibility that Éowyn should die defending Théoden, and that Aragorn “never wedded after her death.” Lakowski points out that in these early drafts, Aragorn’s love for Éowyn goes unrequited, which is of course the reverse of what eventually happens in the published novel. Tolkien in fact considered having Éowyn die throughout the drafts of Book V, after which he found the solution of wedding her to Faramir. A wedding between Aragorn and Arwen, rather than Éowyn, had advantages in that it would “restore the kingdoms of Gondor and Arnor and reunite the separate lines of Elros and Elrond.”

But readers who saw Peter Jackson’s films before reading *The Lord of the Rings* are no doubt surprised to note that Arwen is mentioned hardly at all in the main body of the text. As Lakowski notes regretfully, many readers “miss the importance of this Appendix.” What were Tolkien’s reasons for not developing the Aragorn/Arwen relationship more fully, once he had decided in favor of it? One hypothesis put forward by Lakowski is that the manuscript of *The Lord of the Rings* was too advanced for Tolkien to adequately develop the history of the couple without having to rewrite major portions of earlier books. He further notes that the story was “primarily an epic adventure story, with little room for any love interest.” Placing the story of Aragorn and Arwen in the appendices was thus a way to provide background for readers without distracting them from Frodo’s quest and the actions of other members of the Fellowship. Lakowski chooses not to analyze the tale recounted in Appendix A here, since it constitutes paratextual material and as such is not part of the main narrative (see Turner’s essay mentioned above.) In addition to his concerns about narrative cohesion, Lakowski suggests that Tolkien may have had thematic reasons for relegating the full story of love between Arwen and Aragorn to the appendices: “the rather grim ending . . . breathes more of the spirit of *The Silmarillion* than of” *The Lord of the Rings* itself. Since the writings which were assembled by Christopher Tolkien and published in 1977 as *The Silmarillion* were not yet known to the public, it seems unlikely that Tolkien would have taken this into consideration.

In fact there is more thematic and narrative continuity between *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Silmarillion* that meets the eye of the casual reader. In “Galadriel and her Lovers,” Beth Russell notes that although

Galadriel did not appear as a character until around 1941, as Tolkien was drafting the chapters dealing with Lórien, she became increasingly important to Tolkien as a key figure in the stories preceding the events recounted in *The Lord of the Rings*, many of which appeared later in not only *The Silmarillion* but also *Unfinished Tales* and *The History of Middle-earth*. In terms of his development of Galadriel, Tolkien in effect worked backwards in time, adding more depth to her character and weaving her biography into the complex fabric of his legendarium. Russell makes a convincing argument that “Galadriel’s life and her bonds with the males who loved her frame *The Silmarillion* and *The Lord of the Rings*.” These bonds were, metaphorically speaking, spun with Galadriel’s stunning silver-golden hair. When Fëanor, Galadriel’s half-uncle, coveted her hair and demanded a lock, “at that crucial point in its history the fate of Arda hung literally by a hair; Galadriel’s hair” as Russell poetically puts it. Unable to coerce or coax Galadriel into giving him a lock of hair, Fëanor decides to make the Silmarils to trap the light of the trees Telperion and Laurelin: “His possessiveness for the gems he created was rooted in his original desire to possess the beauty of another person.” Later, Fëanor’s desire to recover the Silmarils from Morgoth led him to revolt against the Valar; although Galadriel followed Fëanor into Middle-earth, ambitious to rule her own kingdom, she later took up arms against him to protect her own people during the kinslaying at Alqualondë.

Russell’s analysis of these events brings out the paradoxical nature of Galadriel’s role in the history of Arda; her beauty, strength of character and ambition often have unintended negative consequences for her people. Galadriel’s fortitude and ability to resist the advances of the powerful and skillful Fëanor enable her to escape what would have been an incestuous and adulterous affair, but lead to disastrous results for the Noldor and their relationships with the Valar. Galadriel’s relationship with Celebrimbor, a grandson of Fëanor’s who inherited his craving for power and his gift for making objects of dangerous beauty, is also complex and at times ambiguous. Galadriel ultimately marries Celeborn, but accepts from Celebrimbor, his rival for her love, powerful gifts of his craftsmanship: the green stone Elessar, which possesses the power of healing, and one of the Three Elven Rings, Nenyá. Galadriel’s acceptance of Nenyá is, after her role in the Fëanorian revolt, “a second near fall stemming from a desire to make an independent paradise in Middle-earth.” Galadriel’s marriage to Celeborn is characterized by an equal sharing of power, with Galadriel making political and tactical decisions, and Celeborn directing military operations against Sauron. Russell draws attention to Galadriel’s stern rebuke of Celeborn when he blames Gimli and the dwarves for having indirectly caused Gandalf’s death as evidence of “the independence of judgment and action that

characterized their marriage.” Galadriel’s gift of three strands of hair to Gimli, whose courtly love for her is devoid of possessiveness or lust for power, “brings Galadriel’s story back to its beginnings.” In stark contrast to Fëanor, whose obsession with Galadriel’s hair ultimately led to great strife and suffering among the Noldor, Gimli vows to cherish Galadriel’s precious gift as a sign of friendship between peoples. Russell has succeeded in constructing a rich and detailed portrait of Galadriel through bringing together the various episodes of her biography which are found in several different texts of Tolkien. Galadriel emerges as perhaps one of the strongest and most complex female heroines to be found in literature of the twentieth century. The fact that Galadriel often expresses her unique abilities and powers through her relationships with male characters only serves to fortify her innate strength of mind and will.

In “The Fantasy Genre and its Characteristics” Miriam Glasser, like some other contributors to this volume, takes on the challenge of attempting a definition, or description of the fantasy genre. She begins by noting that fantasy has often not been taken seriously by critics who consider it “as a light fiction for people who can’t cope with reality and prefer to read stories about dragons, wizards and other supernatural contents,” even as they extol science fiction or fantastic literature for their “visionary qualities.” Even the *Columbia Dictionary of Modern Literature and Cultural Criticism*, which Glasser considers “more neutral,” reveals an anti-fantasy bias, in its characterization of fantasy as “a literary work whose action takes place in an extravagantly imaginary world, partakes of the supernatural, or generally flouts expectations about what can and cannot happen.” Glasser takes this definition as a starting point for her discussion, and agrees that the degree of realism is the “main characteristic to distinguish fantasy, fantastic literature, and science fiction from each other” with fantasy containing the least realism. Glasser does not explain why science fiction is more realistic than fantasy, nor does she draw a distinction between “fantastic literature” and fantasy. Plausibility, more than realism, is an essential component of fantasy; Glasser agrees with Ursula K. LeGuin that fantasy must “be strictly coherent to its own terms,” whereas realistic fiction can in fact take more liberties with “our perception of reality.”³ The theme of travel is also essential to fantasy, and Glasser notes that this is a feature also found in many myths and fairy tales. Typically, the characters embark on some sort of journey or mission, but the same can be said, metaphorically, of readers of fantasy, who can be likened to travelers who temporarily leave their own reality to explore the world of the novel, with the author as guide: “the author presents himself as a traveller who knows this foreign landscape—and the reader, too, is made traveller and gets maps by the author to find their way.” Glasser points out that since *The Lord of the Rings*, maps have

become an almost standard feature of fantasy novels, as has the multi-volume epic.

The use of magic is also cited by Glasser as a distinguishing characteristic of fantasy, although she acknowledges that this is limited to a small number of characters in *The Lord of the Rings*. Here it would have been helpful to cite Galadriel's comments about magic to Sam and Frodo in Lothlórien, and Tolkien's own finely drawn distinction between "magic" and "enchantment" in "On Fairy-stories." One could argue in fact that what sets *The Lord of the Rings* apart from many fantasies that have followed it is precisely the effect of "enchantment" on the reader. Glasser cites other aspects of fantasy that she considers to be distinguishing characteristics, such as an exciting plot (movement is again an important theme), a variety of races or peoples apart from men, and certain mythic patterns such as an orphan or otherwise vulnerable individual becoming stronger throughout the story and ultimately emerging as the hero or heir to a kingdom. Tolkien was of course more aware than most authors of the power of myth (to borrow Joseph Campbell's title), and Aragorn bears more than a passing resemblance to Arthur, but in characters like Sam or Frodo, Tolkien was developing a different theme, and one that he perhaps witnessed firsthand during his service in WWI: "the ennoblement of the ignoble" (*Letters* 220). It is this unusual combination of the familiar and the fantastic which for many readers makes *The Lord of the Rings* a work *sui generis*. Glasser situates *The Lord of the Rings* in the genre of "high fantasy or heroic fantasy," which she defines as "stories about heroes in imaginary lands" and "subjects that are characteristic for fantasy, as magic and strange creatures," but this characterization cannot account for the attraction of the books for thousands of readers who have never picked up another work of fantasy, and never intend to. Perhaps *The Lord of the Rings*'s resistance to easy classification is one of the reasons for its appeal.

I will conclude my review of the essays in Section Six with Melody Green's close reading of "The Riddle of Strider: A Cognitive Linguistic Reading" because although the author does not specifically mention the pedagogical nature of her contribution, her methodology seems to be well suited to teaching Tolkien, which is the subject of the essays I have grouped at the beginning of the next section. Green uses the method of cognitive linguistics, (also called cognitive poetics) which analyzes language through the study of metaphors, to support her claim that the "The Riddle of Strider" is more memorable than the other fifty-six poems listed in the index of *The Lord of the Rings* because it is constructed of conceptual metaphors that are familiar to readers. Green also points out in the abstract to her essay that the use of "such metaphors as 'life is a plant' and 'life is a journey' frees the reader to apply these not only to the

character the poem describes, but also to him or herself.” Drawing primarily upon the work of George Lakoff and Mark Johnson (*Metaphors We Live By*, 1980; *More than Cool Reason: A Field Guide to Poetic Metaphor*, 1989), Green notes that conceptual metaphors must embody values that are shared by members of a given culture—in this case, Western culture—in order to be effective. In her analysis, Green shows how each line of “The Riddle of Strider” refers to a specific conceptual metaphor; “All that is gold does not glitter” is another way of expressing the idea “Life is a Precious Possession,” “Not all those who wander are lost” is an extension of “Life is a Journey,” “Renewed shall be blade that was broken” falls under the category of metaphors describing “Life as a Battle,” etc.

But if this riddle is so heavily imbued with commonly shared concepts, why isn’t Frodo able to solve the riddle? In fact Green does not address this question because she is more interested in the appeal of the riddle to readers than its function within the greater narrative of *The Lord of the Rings*. She notes that the riddle contest between Gollum and Bilbo in *The Hobbit* constitutes a turning point in that narrative, “if Bilbo looses the game, he looses [sic] his life” whereas “The Riddle of Strider” is merely a postscript to a letter. But in its own way Frodo’s acceptance of Strider as being who he claims to be is also a matter of life and death, for at this point in their journey, the hobbits could not survive without him. Green argues that all other poems and songs in *The Lord of the Rings* “are, in the grand scheme of things, irrelevant,” whereas “The Riddle of Strider,” thanks to its conceptual metaphors, is “applicable to the reader’s own life.” Green’s reading diminishes the dramatic intensity of the riddle because she approaches it as if it were a stand-alone poem and fails to see that like all of the poems and songs which Tolkien wrote into the text of *The Lord of the Rings*, it has an important narrative function. Many readers would also contest her claim that this poem is among the most popular verses in *The Lord of the Rings*, and would strongly disagree that by comparison, the other verses are “irrelevant.” In my view, the most significant aspect of Green’s essay is that it provides yet another example of how Tolkien’s works can be very useful teaching tools in both elementary and secondary education, as well as in introductory college literature courses. What more engaging way to illustrate to young learners how metaphors work than to follow Green’s close reading of “The Riddle of Strider,” asking students to discuss the concepts that are expressed in each line?

Three essays of Section Seven, Tolkien’s Legacy, deal with the teaching of Tolkien’s work. Patty Howerton, who is founder of Skies of Rohan (The Tolkien Society of Idaho and Montana) and also the U.S. representative on the Education Committee of the Tolkien Society, presents two essays, the first of which is “Tolkien and *The Lord of the Rings*: An Inspiration for Education and Study Worldwide,” an overview of how

Tolkien's work has inspired new scholarly and pedagogical initiatives on a variety of levels and helped cultivate the taste for reading among students of elementary and secondary schools. Howerton notes the dramatic increase in courses at all levels which incorporate Tolkien's works, from elementary-level classes that use *The Hobbit* for teaching reading, to university courses devoted entirely to Tolkien or that use Tolkien's work as a gateway to teaching medieval literature, twentieth-century literature, fantasy and folk tales, or other genres. Howerton comments that such courses "are typically found in English departments," but in fact courses on Tolkien can now be found in departments comprising a variety of disciplines, including Anthropology, Classics, Romance Languages, Philosophy, Theology, and others.

The increase in dissertations on Tolkien is another important indicator of how his work has gained wider recognition in the academic community. Howerton cites the Tolkien Society's Education Volunteer Database as a valuable resource for graduate students, particularly those in non-English speaking countries, who seek guidance in their research on Tolkien. At the elementary and secondary school level, the resurgence of interest in Tolkien triggered by the immense popularity of Peter Jackson's films left schools ill-prepared to teach Tolkien's works. The Tolkien Society's Education Committee in England and the Tolkien Society of Idaho and Montana rose to the occasion and aided their school districts in an impressive array of outreach activities. These included providing ideas for lesson plans and reading and teaching guides, organizing seminars on teaching Tolkien, gathering information about how Tolkien is taught in other countries, and even purchasing and distributing copies of Tolkien's works to schools. This should be an inspiration to other Tolkien societies and scholars at large to share their research and teaching skills with their local communities.

In "Tolkien's Middle-earth: Lesson Plans for Secondary School Educators," Howerton presents lesson plans designed in 2004 by a team of high school and college English teachers, to help secondary schools meet the challenge of providing quality courses using Tolkien's three main works, *The Hobbit*, *The Lord of the Rings*, and *The Silmarillion*. (In passing, I cannot fail to comment that the decision to invite only English teachers to participate in this project reflects a disciplinary bias that English instructors are the best qualified to teach courses on Tolkien. Including teachers of History or Modern and Classical Languages may have yielded more diverse but equally satisfactory results. For example, in a discussion of the nature of the hero, while an English teacher might draw comparisons between Aragorn and Arthur as heirs to their respective kingdoms who live through periods of exile or obscurity before claiming their thrones, a teacher of World History might also draw parallels with Sundiata,

the hero of the 12th-century Malian epic upon which Disney's *The Lion King* was based. Making references to non-European material might be particularly useful in school districts with diverse student populations.) These new guides were commissioned by Houghton Mifflin, which in addition to being the U.S. publisher of Tolkien's works, is one of the foremost educational publishers in the United States. The guides were made available in both printed and electronic form, and can be legally downloaded and printed free of charge. The lesson plans for *The Lord of the Rings* are divided into nine units on a variety of themes, and for each unit the following materials are provided: Unit-Specific Learning Goals, Comments, Suggestions and Hints for teachers, Preliminary Quiz, Key Terms, Handouts, Discussion Topics, Suggested Activities, and Bibliography (with web links). Howerton's essay is a summary of the themes and learning goals for the nine units, which are still available on-line at <http://www.houghtonmifflinbooks.com/features/lordoftheringstrilogy/teachers.jsp> Howerton's two contributions to this volume are valuable in the sense that they make readers aware of the teaching resources available through the Tolkien Society, Houghton Mifflin, and regional societies such as Skies of Rohan.

Mike Foster, who has been teaching Tolkien at the college level for more than thirty years, shares his "best practices" for student papers, in-class activities, discussion topics, and field trips related to study of Tolkien's work. One of the most intriguing activities used by Foster is to ask students to self-segregate into one of four "races": Men, Hobbits, Dwarves, and Elves, and then to explain what characteristics make them prefer that race over others. Foster uses this exercise to illustrate how Tolkien "divides the human personality into three parts: we all have within our personalities the comfort-loving hobbit, the gold-craving cunning businessman dwarf, and the nature-attuned song-making pilgrim elf. At different times, one of the three dominates, but in more or less measure, each of us has all of these 'visible souls' within our own." There may be some truth to this; however, to claim that Tolkien's main reason for creating a secondary world so rich in peoples, languages, and cultures was to make a statement about the human personality is stretching things a bit. Tolkien was a linguist, not a psychologist, and the diversity of peoples found in Middle-earth seems to be more a statement about how distinct cultures and languages grow out of the history of a given people and their relationship to their environment than a treatise on pop psychology. Still, Foster's exercise could be useful in initiating a discussion among students about what makes each people or "race" distinct from the others, how they came to be that way, and how each race views the others.

Another small point on which I beg to differ with Foster is when he explains that he eliminated an assignment in which students were asked

to write a “sub-subcreation, a new chapter added [to] any Tolkien story, written in his style and consistent with his subcreation,” first, because the quality of the student papers was uneven (which can happen with any writing assignment) but mainly, because “mimesis is hardly scholarship; it is literary karaoke.” I would argue that to succeed in writing a plausible and readable sub-subcreation (to use Foster’s term) would in fact require from the student much more than a talent for mimicking style and tone, but rather, a thorough understanding of Tolkien’s aesthetic, a firm grasp of Tolkien’s use of language (both his English prose and his created languages) and deep insight into Tolkien’s characters—where they come from, what motivates them, how they interact with each other. In my own experience teaching Tolkien, I have had a handful of students who asked if they could do just such an assignment, and the results were extraordinary. In a class on Tolkien, an author whose scholarship inspired and informed his creative writing (as Vincent Ferré’s essay illustrates) it makes perfect sense to offer students the possibility of working on both scholarly and creative writing.

Foster has replaced his “sub-subcreation” assignment with a “Character Study,” which of course is also a useful exercise in incorporating critical works into original analysis; he reports that one student produced a publishable analysis of Gríma Wormtongue. (Rather than replace one assignment with another, I would have given students a choice between the two, which probably would have yielded good results in both cases, as the creative writers in the class would have gravitated towards the “sub-subcreation,” and the more analytical students would have chosen the character study). Foster’s other paper assignments, “Chapter Study, Source Study and Critical Study” are all very well-crafted, and each help students develop a particular critical skill, including close textual analysis, plot analysis, comparative analysis, and analysis of secondary materials. Finally, Foster is to be applauded for organizing a trip to Marquette University’s Tolkien collection so that students can experience the thrill of studying a hand-written manuscript. In this technology-driven era, far too little attention is paid to paleography and archival work, with the result that students can hardly decipher any handwriting but their own, and they do not know how to handle fragile documents. Of course not everyone lives or teaches within geographical proximity of a Tolkien archive, but many university libraries have special collections in which students could have a look at manuscripts or letters from Tolkien’s era; anyone lucky enough to be near a library with medieval manuscripts should avail themselves of the opportunity to show students the kind of documents that that medieval scholars like Tolkien work with.

It seems appropriate to end this review of Volume I of these proceedings with Nils Ivar Agøy’s essay on “Why Is Tolkien So Popular?” or to

paraphrase the title of the Conference, “Why *does* the Ring go Ever On?” Agøy has translated *The Hobbit*, *The Silmarillion*, *Unfinished Tales* and *The Children of Hurin* into Norwegian, and is also author of a book *Mytenes mann: J.R.R. Tolkien og hans forfatterskap* (2003), the main themes of which he presents here. It appears that this work has not yet been translated into English, which is a pity, for Agøy’s essay left me wanting to read more of his Tolkien criticism. A good translator has to get inside of a work in order to fully understand all of the nuances of tone, style, vocabulary and dialogue used by the author in the original text. In an article on the challenges of translating *The Silmarillion* Agøy explains that he needed to construct an ancient-sounding contemporary Norwegian (not Old Norse, mind you!) to approximate the archaic style of language found in *The Silmarillion*, for example. (See “A Question of Style: On Translating *The Silmarillion* into Norwegian,” *Tolkien in Translation*, ed. Thomas Hon-egger, 2003). It is perhaps this sensitivity to linguistic issues which allows Agøy to make such astute remarks about the appeal of *The Lord of the Rings* from the perspective of a reader. By this I don’t mean how readers have responded to the text (although Agøy deals with that too), but rather what the very *process* of reading *The Lord of the Rings* is like.

This leads Agøy to make some statements which on the surface seem to contradict each other, but which upon further reflection, are quite accurate. On the subject of “drawing the reader in,” a characteristic of *The Lord of the Rings* which Agøy argues is essential to its success, he writes: “we have to work while reading the book. One might say that we are encouraged to work as philologists—that Professor Tolkien is sharing the joy of thrilling discoveries in ancient texts with us . . . the feeling is that Middle-earth lies there to be discovered quite irrespective of author or reader.” A few paragraphs later Agøy claims that “he [Tolkien] does not charge much for entry. His words are short, his sentences simple. You do not have to know Latin or Greek, and you are not required to learn Old English, Sindarin or Quenya either (although you may find that you want to).” Here Agøy lays his finger on a quality of *The Lord of the Rings* which sets it apart from many other works, the fact that it “invites participation” from all readers, regardless of their prior knowledge of literature, mythology, or languages. Agøy makes it clear that *The Lord of the Rings* is not an easy read, however: the work which Tolkien requires of his readers entails patience and attention to detail “Parts of the *legendarium* . . . should be read as one reads Old Icelandic sagas, where it is essential to keep in mind on p. 72 that Ingar’s great-grandfather on p. 8 accidentally insulted the woman Torvad’s grandfather subsequently married,” but it also allows for the reader to fill in details from her own imagination: “the book encourages, almost forces the reader to make make her own, more detailed pictures of people and settings.” Some readers might take issue

with Agøy's claim that descriptions in *The Lord of the Rings* are not very detailed: "People, buildings, and objects are usually described more or less as the scenery or weather is described, quite vaguely, that is; as seen from a distance." Surely, *The Lord of the Rings* contains some of the most lush and vivid examples of nature writing of any twentieth-century work; who cannot imagine the stunning beauty of the golden-leaved Mallorns in the forest of Lothlórien or the towering giants of Fangorn? But perhaps my use of the word "imagine" proves Agøy's point: Tolkien's prose is rich in creating atmosphere and environment, but he allows the reader to finish the scene in her mind.

Two other aspects of *The Lord of the Rings* which in Agøy's view have contributed to the universal appeal of the book are "identity" and "values." For Agøy, *The Lord of the Rings* is an "identity-affirming" work, in that it taps into a deep sense of belonging to a shared human experience of living in Middle-earth, i.e., this world as we know it, which cuts across cultures, generations, and political and religious ideology: "they [the books] tell us . . . about who we are; make us aware of the roots we have always had . . . But it is most interesting that they evidently have this affirming effect on readers from many different cultural backgrounds . . . If they . . . touch some of the same chords as nationalism did in earlier generations, they clearly do so in a much more inclusive manner, and without political overtones." Agøy's interpretation of the influence of Tolkien's deeply-felt Christian beliefs on *The Lord of the Rings* is nuanced; while he notes that Tolkien "did not wish to preach in his books," he acknowledges that "the values and truths" expressed in the story to a large extent derive from Tolkien's Christian faith. In Agøy's view, the fact that Tolkien felt that *The Lord of the Rings* "reflected reality, and therefore the values and truths he held to be real" contributes to the sense of authenticity that pervades the work: "just as we sense that the book feels genuine because it fits into a pattern of history, myth and philology far greater than one author can draw, we sense that it was written in the author's life-blood." Readers from any religious background or none at all can relate to the moral values of *The Lord of the Rings*, precisely because Tolkien did not preach, but rather illustrated through his characters his own beliefs and also "things that really mattered to people in the mid and late twentieth century." The fact that these things—concern for the environment, acceptance of cultural differences, respect for human dignity, resistance against abuse of political, economic or military power—continue to matter to people as we enter the second decade of the twenty-first century is an indication that "The Ring will go ever on" for some time.

Volume II of the Proceedings opens with Section Eight: Theology and the Nature of Good and Evil. As the title of this section suggests, nearly all of the essays in this section are written from a Christian

perspective, but of course not all perspectives on Christianity are the same. This is exemplified in an unusual essay by Greg Wright, "Fellowship and the Rings: An Ecumenical Approach to Tolkien," in which the author, an ordained evangelical pastor in a non-denominational Protestant church, comments on his extended correspondence with Regina Doman, a Catholic novelist. Wright reproduces here condensed versions of a few of their letters, in the interest of encouraging interfaith dialogue through discussion of *The Lord of the Rings*. Doman and Wright discovered through the exchange of over 100,000 words debating their different spiritual interpretations of *The Lord of the Rings* and other works that "Tolkien's work can help bring Christians into community with one another." Wright sees the image of the squabbling Dwarves, Men, Elves and Hobbits that is reflected in the Ring during the Council of Elrond scene in Jackson's *Fellowship of the Ring* as a sad reflection of the often fractious nature of the Christian Fellowship in the real world, "often divided against itself and against its own interests."

Most of the essay is composed of the letters between Wright and Doman, and the immediacy of the epistolary form makes their theological debate quite engaging. It began with Wright's claim on his website *HollywoodJesus.com* that the spirituality conveyed in *The Lord of the Rings* was "strained" and "impoverished" because it lacks "Christ and the Spirit," essential elements of any work that could be considered Christian, in Wright's view. In her responses to Wright, Doman takes issue with this, noting that because the men in Middle-earth are "pre-Christian and possibly also pre-Mosaic, even pre-Abrahamic," they can only "prefigure Christ," and while she believes that "Tolkien is the best example of a Christian who is a fiction writer (not a writer of Christian fiction)," she disagrees with critics who would call the work "pagan." Doman sees *The Lord of the Rings* however as a "preparation for the Gospels," while Wright argues that an acceptance of the Gospels is preparation for a deeper understanding of *The Lord of the Rings*. Neither Doman nor Wright agree with Christian critics who argue that *The Lord of the Rings* actually presents the Gospel, and Tolkien would certainly not have wanted his work to be read in this allegorical manner. Had he been able to join in Wright's and Doman's correspondence, he would no doubt have welcomed the opportunity to respond to Wright's question, "What role can art play in the fellowship of mankind?"

Three essays in this section deal specifically with the concept of evil. Tim McKenzie joins the critics who maintain that Tolkien's concept of evil is primarily Augustinian. McKenzie begins his essay "I Pity Even His Slaves: Tolkien and the Theology of Evil," by explaining that Manichaeism perceives evil "as a substance in its own right," while Augustinianism perceives evil as "the privation of good, with no existence of its

own.” The Boethian view of evil is also in opposition to Manichaeism, because it posits that evil is in fact nothing, since it is part of fortune and part of the cosmic order, which is always good. The claim that evil is the privation of good or that evil is part of a larger scheme which is overall good has the disadvantage of making evil seem unimportant or illusory, which is why Tom Shippey has argued in *The Road the Middle Earth* (1982) and *J.R.R. Tolkien: Author of the Century* (2002) that *The Lord of the Rings* contains both the Manichaean concept and the Augustinian/Boethian concept: sometimes the Ring acts like an external evil force imposing its will upon individuals, while at other times, it has more subjective manifestations, as a Augustinian/Boethian internal perversion of good. McKenzie finds many merits in Shippey’s interpretation, but maintains that the Augustinian concept of evil is more complex than Shippey sees it, and in fact encompasses all of the aspects of evil found in *The Lord of the Rings*. In his analysis McKenzie draws upon the theology of Rowan Williams, who rejects the Boethian view that evil is insignificant because it is part of a beautiful picture. Williams argues that the Augustinian view of evil as “privation of good” has been misunderstood; evil is a distortion or perversion of the creation, which is inherently good, but this distortion creates very tangible devastating results in the world. Evil does not exist in its own right, but rather is dependent upon the force of will of individuals with free will who seek to pervert goodness for their own ends. In William’s words, “the more power, dignity and liberty adhere to a created being, the more energy there will be for the pursuit of false or destructive goals, illusory goods.” (R. Williams 111). McKenzie finds Williams’ take on Augustine “very useful” for understanding evil in *The Lord of the Rings* because “it allows us to sympathize with Gollum and Boromir and Denethor.” Williams’ explanation of Augustine also helps explain the nature of the evil of the Ring, which Shippey interprets as an external force acting upon individuals (hence the Manichean view) because beings as powerful as the Maia Sauron or the Vala Morgoth have the power to impose their will on others. The dissension sown among the Elves and the fabrication of the Ring are thus the results of the perversion of beings created by Ilúvatar, not of a separate evil force opposing Ilúvatar, according to McKenzie: “Theologically speaking, we are not able to say of Middle-earth that Ilúvatar has created it to contain evil that balances out from the divine point of view. Evil is a taint in a good creation, that comes from the will of independent creatures.”

Thomas Fornet-Ponse shares the view that there is no dualism present in *The Simarillion*, because “evil has its origin in the freedom of Melkor who rebelled against Ilúvatar, the one and only God,” but he finds that things are not so clear in *The Lord of the Rings*. In “Different Concepts of Evil in *The Lord of the Rings*?” Fornet-Ponse presents a detailed analysis

of three competing theories about evil in *The Lord of the Rings*: Shippey's perception of two types of evil, Manichean dualism and Augustinian/Boethian Neo-Platonism, the Neo-Platonic view of Augustine and Boethius (supported by critics Houghton, Keese, Gunton, Kelby, Spivack and Zimbardo) and finally, more developed, modern views expounded by Enlightenment philosopher Immanuel Kant, Protestant theologian Karl Barth, and former Catholic Bishop of Aachen, Klaus Hemmerle. In Fernet-Ponse's opinion Hemmerle's theory of evil best applies to *The Lord of the Rings* because it avoids the pitfalls of dualism (which runs counter to Christian theology) the weakness of the Boethian viewpoint (which sees evil as only internal, and thus could lead to its not being resisted) and the Augustinian viewpoint, which is insufficiently grounded in empirical reality.

Kant examined the problem of evil in *Religion within the Limits of Reason Alone*, and argued that the root of both good and evil lies in human freedom; men have an innate moral law within them, and know that they should follow it; evil consists in subordinating this moral law to desire or inclination, which leads to a corruption of this internal sense of morality. In Kant's view, then, humans are naturally or radically evil. But because Kant never really explains the origin of evil, and limits his examination to the confines of reason, thus excluding notions of transcendence or the belief in a benevolent Creator, Fernet-Ponse finds his theory problematic, particularly as it might apply to Tolkien's concept of evil. Karl Barth's concept of evil diverges from all previous theories, which are rooted in a stark opposition between "Being" and "Nothingness" in that it neither affirms evil as substantial reality (as Manichaeism does) nor minimizes its impact as an absence of good (as Neo-Platonism does). Evil in Barth's view is a "third way of acting" which is "a complete negation of the creation and its nature." This view of evil as "nullity" is nonetheless historical, in that it posits evil as "a responsible, inexcusable, and obscure deed of men." (Barth 330, 353, 347-352). However because Barth tried to reconcile this view with "the assumption of belief in a benevolent God who does not want evil," he claims that ultimately evil will be defeated, and so we can already consider it as subdued. Fernet-Ponse finds that Barth thus fails to "reflect evil as real, as effective" because "he returns to the definition of evil as being without substance and void." This view is certainly not compatible with the world portrayed in *The Lord of the Rings*, in which evil and its effects are very tangible.

According to Fernet-Ponse, Klaus Hemmerle's concept of evil (Hemmerle 470-475) is most in agreement with Tolkien's worldview, because it is real yet allows for a benevolent creator, free will, and the possibility of resistance. Hemmerle posits evil as the antithesis to good; it can only exist in relation to good and can therefore not create anything, but it can

destroy. (In *The Silmarillion*, this could apply to the way in which Melkor takes something that is good, the Elves, and twists them into a “mockery” of themselves, the Orcs, which are used to wreak destruction in Middle-earth.) Evil does not emanate from God, nor is it an external force as strong as God, because it is dependent upon the free will of part of God’s creation, and God can only create that which is good. Since evil “springs from the will, which is related to the whole, it has a radiating power which leads to its spreading.” It is this aspect of Hemmerle’s theory that Fornet-Ponse finds most applicable to *The Lord of the Rings*, for it serves to explain the contagious and overwhelming power of the Ring without resorting to some form of dualism, in which the Ring emanates from an external force: “Because evil springs from the will and because of its radiating power, it can affect the thought and hearts of the good, wherefore it is necessary that Frodo takes the Ring.” Fornet-Ponse concludes that Hemmerle’s theory is also in harmony with the death and resurrection of Jesus—Tolkien called this the greatest fairy story—because this *eucaastrophe* occurred thanks to Jesus accepting death “in radical agreement with his Father’s will,” thus rejecting and overcoming evil.

Whether it is Neo-Platonic, Boethian, Kantian, or Manichean, evil exists in the world, and the challenge for ordinary folks is how to deal with it. In “Hobbits, Tolkien and God: Writing Eucatastrophe and the Problem of Evil,” Jill Delsigne explains how “Tolkien finds a solution to the problem of evil by writing a fairy-story, in which the characters also write to think about their own experience of evil and redemption.” *The Lord of the Rings* contains many “self-reflexive moments” in which the Hobbits pause and ponder their role as characters in a story much larger than themselves, in which others have struggled to combat external evil forces and the internal temptation to despair. Delsigne likens the Hobbits’ integration of storytelling, poetry and writing into their journey to Tolkien’s own use of writing as a response to the horrors of war. “Tolkien, Bilbo, Frodo and Sam all turn to writing to express the redemption that they experience from the perilous adventures of their stories.” In her essay Delsigne quotes some interesting passage from Tolkien’s correspondence with his son Christopher during WWII, in which he encourages Christopher to write as a way of mentally and emotionally processing what he is experiencing: “You are inside a very great story! . . . I think if you could begin to write . . . you would find it a great relief . . . the desire to express your *feeling* about good, evil, fair, foul in some way to rationalize it, to prevent it from just festering. In my case it generated Morgoth and the History of the Gnomes.” (*Letters* 78).

Sam’s ability to relate ancient stories to the present and to recite and compose poetry in response to dangerous situations reveals his growing self-awareness as a player in a saga that far surpasses the individual

hurdles he and his companions have to surmount. Thus during the treacherous journey of Strider and the Hobbits from Bree to Rivendell, Sam is able to recall verses from the epic of Gil-galad, the great Elf warrior who fell fighting against Sauron in the last alliance of Men and Elves, and also to improvise some humorous verses related to Bilbo's escape from the Trolls. By comparison, Frodo is more reluctant to compose poetry and seems content to repeat Bilbo's old verses until the aftermath of Gandalf's fall into the Mines of Moria, when Frodo is the first to "put something of his sorrow into halting word" (*FR*, II, vii, 374). Delsigne notes that "Frodo's attempt to write poetry marks the change he has undergone." Tolkien's concept of eucatastrophe, which in theological terms can also be described as "God's transformation of evil into an unexpected good," is illustrated in both *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*, in episodes such as the Eagles coming to help Elves and Men in their final battle against the goblins in *The Hobbit*. When Bilbo cries "The Eagles! The Eagles are coming!" according to Delsigne, "the reader who emotionally engages in the story feels this emotion with Bilbo." Tolkien himself admitted to being moved by Bilbo's emotion at this eucatastrophe (*Letters* 101). Thus just as composing poetry and songs helps the Hobbits in Tolkien's fairy-stories arrive at a greater awareness of their role in the greater scheme of things, "Reading fairy stories can improve the reader's moral awareness by moving the reader to feel what Tolkien calls the eucatastrophic emotion." I think it is fitting to give Sam the final word on this subject: what reader has not felt a stirring of emotion upon reading Sam's exclamation of joy and disbelief when he awakes in a soft bed after going through a living hell in Mount Doom: "Is everything sad going to come untrue?" (*RK*, VI, iv, 230).

The resilient Sam embodies a distinctly human characteristic, hope, as noted by Donald T. Williams in "The Everlasting Hobbit: Perspectives in the Human in Tolkien's Mythos." Another trait which sets humans apart from all other beings in our world is the ability to use language for creative, not just communicative purposes. This connection between language and creation is first and foremost a divine attribute, as seen in the opening passages of Genesis: "First, He is creative; second, He is articulate." Created in the image of God, "Man too will be creative and articulate." Williams draws a sharp distinction between animals' ability to communicate through various types of sounds and the human capacity for speech, noting "Language allows us to contemplate things not immediately present in the physical environment and then to manipulate them in our heads. It is therefore the foundation of our capacity for abstract thinking and reason . . . in a manner not true of the other animals, we are accountable for our actions, i.e., we have a moral nature." Since Tolkien envisioned the act of subcreation as a homage to the Creator, it

is only fitting that in his rich secondary world, language is paramount. Williams does not view Tolkien's fiction as "overtly Christian and even evangelistic," like C. S. Lewis's but rather finds a Christian world view "buried much deeper . . . its roots go down to the very foundations of that world in the reflected Logos that drove the language-making mind of its maker." In addition to the importance of language, another human aspect of the peoples of Tolkien's mythos, perhaps best embodied in Bilbo, is their urge to go on journeys in search of something unspecified, but certainly greater than the routine of their daily existence: "The very structure of Tolkien's stories emphasizes that the children of Ilúvatar are people on a quest. Whether it is to recover the Silmarils or to destroy the Ring or to find the Entwives or just become the master of Bag End, the children of Ilúvatar are always searching for something." Williams stresses that "this is not a Post-Modern seeking for our own sake, with no hope of finding." The characters in *The Lord of the Rings* know that they are part of some larger scheme, a greater purpose, though they may not understand how they fit in. "Gandalf tells Frodo, 'Behind that there was something else at work, beyond any design of the Ring-maker . . . Bilbo was *meant* to find the Ring, and not by its maker. In which case you were also *meant* to have it.'"

The question of whether Divine Providence can be detected working through the characters of Frodo, Sam and the other members of the Fellowship is examined by David Cattaneo in his short essay "Divine Presence and Providence in *The Lord of the Rings*." Rather than illustrating "divine forces in action," Cattaneo argues, "Tolkien prefers showing human freedom in action throughout human facts and deeds." At the same time, Providence reveals itself through these very deeds: "Nevertheless, characters are not only pawns moved on a chessboard by an invisible hand: every one of them is called to make individual choices and these choices sometimes go along with the divine plan, but at times they err away from it," writes Cattaneo. As examples of "hateful and vile characters" who err from the divine plan, Cattaneo cites Boromir, Denethor, Saruman, and Gríma Wormtongue, all of whom refuse the offer of "conversion." Surely, Boromir does not belong in this company, as he not only dies valiantly defending Merry and Pippin from the Orcs, but makes a "confession" to Aragorn, who forgives him and weeps for his passing. The case of Denethor is more nuanced than that of Saruman and Gríma Wormtongue; the latter two obstinately and deliberately refuse any forgiveness or redemption (if one follows Cattaneo's detection of Providence at work, one could liken them to Pharaoh in the Book of Exodus, whose "heart is hardened" by God) while Denethor seems to be driven by despair and perhaps even madness. Cattaneo views Gollum's role in the story as the most obvious example of a Divine Providence at

work through the choices of several individuals: “First it was Bilbo, then Aragorn, then the Elves, then Frodo (more than once) to show him mercy, sparing his life.” Cattaneo cites a passage from “Mount Doom” (*RK*, VI, iii, 222) in which Sam contemplates killing Gollum, but is restrained by “something in his heart.” It is interesting to compare Cattaneo’s brief mention of this scene to Jill Delsigne’s analysis of the Sam-Gollum pair: “Gollum’s story provides an example of dyscatastrophe and the failure of the ethical force of eucatastrophic emotion on Sam. Sam fails to cultivate pity and mercy for Gollum from the moments of divine mercy given to Sam” (II: 101, footnote 1). Delsigne refers to Tolkien’s correspondence, in which he described Sam’s lack of pity for Gollum as “‘perhaps the most tragic moment in the Tale,’ because it ‘blight[s]’ Gollum’s ‘repentance’ (*Letters* 330)” (II: 101, footnote 1). If it was part of a divine plan for Gollum’s covetousness to lead him to perish along with the Ring in the depths of Mount Doom, how might the story have ended if Sam had shown pity towards Gollum, and aided his “repentance”? The “Choices of Master Samwise,” whether they are part of a divine plan or not, are crucial to determining the outcome of the story.

Davide Cattaneo and Beppe Roncari claim in the abstract to their paper “Tolkien and Christianity” that “Tolkien’s work will be examined, especially *The Lord of the Rings*, to ask whether this book could be considered a ‘fundamentally religious and Catholic work’ (as Tolkien himself described it) or not.” Most of their short essay is devoted to a general discussion of Christianity, however, with a few paragraphs mentioning the importance of Catholicism in Tolkien’s life, and there is little or no analysis of *The Lord of the Rings* or any other work of Tolkien’s. Cattaneo and Roncari mention only briefly the theological significance of eucatastrophe in *The Lord of the Rings*, giving the example of “the greedy and wicked Gollum” turning into an “instrument of salvation” through a combination of free will, but also “Grace and Pity, and Mercy, turning Evil into Good.” They caution readers who would be so inclined against imposing an allegorical Christian reading on the text: “Galadriel is not the Virgin Mary. Lembas is not the holy bread,” and argue that Christian themes in *The Lord of the Rings* manifest themselves more often as metaphors.

Pedro Ángeles-Ruiz also addresses the “fundamentally religious and Catholic” nature of *The Lord of the Rings* in “Catholic ‘Contrafactura’ of Myth in Some of J.R.R. Tolkien’s Writings.” On a very basic level, Ángeles-Ruiz argues that a Catholic work is one that contains a Catholic world view. This being said, a work that is “fundamentally religious” does not necessarily have to have overt religious references in the text. Ángeles-Ruiz cites Victor Hugo’s historical novel *Les Misérables* as an example of a work which by the author’s own admission has religious

themes, although they may not seem overtly apparent to readers. The same could easily be said of *The Lord of the Rings*, but Ángeles-Ruiz argues that Tolkien went beyond this, and made “a Catholic ‘contrafactura’ of Celtic and medieval myths.” Ángeles-Ruiz defines the term “contrafactura” as a rewriting of a profane text, substituting religious or sacred themes for the original pagan or secular ones. This technique, which in English is also called “sacred parody,” was sometimes used by medieval clerics to amuse the public as they instructed them in Christian values. It is a genre that can easily veer off into allegory, but this can be avoided if the author “recasts it [the original story] all over again with the intention that the heathen message becomes expurgated; this is the technique used by Tolkien.” Specifically, Ángeles-Ruiz sees the tale of Aragorn and Arwen as a recasting, or “contrafactura” of the story of Tristram and Iseult. Tolkien’s couple is “devoid of the negative features” of Tristram and Iseult, the most glaring of which are Iseult’s adultery and Tristram’s betrayal of King Mark’s trust, which threaten to undermine the very notion of marital and political authority. If one removes these “negative features”, however, the story ceases to bear any resemblance to the original tale, because these features make the story what it is, i.e., not only a mythic tale of the dangers of sexual passion, but in its historical context, a text which is politically subversive in its undermining of key feudal values. Tolkien’s lovers must overcome many obstacles, it is true, and Arwen’s choice to forgo her destiny as an immortal Elf in favor of a mortal life with Aragorn is a source of bitterness for her father Elrond, but their union strengthens regal authority and reunites ancient bloodlines. Ángeles-Ruiz does make one very compelling point on favor of a symmetry between Tristram and Iseult and Aragorn and Arwen: in both stories, great passion, illicit or sanctioned, leads to death, a particularly bitter one for the heroines.

Zach Watkins is interested in how other Christian writings may have influenced Tolkien. In “Satan and *The Silmarillion*: John Milton’s Angelic Decline in J.R.R. Tolkien’s Melkor,” Watkins detects a string of parallels between *Paradise Lost* and *The Silmarillion*. Milton and Tolkien, in spite of their different religious backgrounds, were the only two English poets “to presume to address Creation in an epic work.” Watkins notes an ambivalence towards gender in both Milton and Tolkien. Milton’s angels “Can either Sex assume, or both . . . [to] execute their aery purposes” (Milton l. 434-4), and the Valar “when they desire to clothe themselves . . . take upon them forms some as of male and some as of female” (S 21). Music plays an important role in creation in *The Silmarillion*, in which the Ainur, with the exception of Melkor, participate in the themes of music propounded by Ilúvatar. Likewise, Milton imagined the creation as “the song of the angels singing for joy” (Hughes 184). Both Satan and Melkor

seek to elevate themselves above the other divine beings, and create great strife, Satan by waging “impious War”(1.38-44) and Melkor by creating “a war of sound” (S 16) with his discordant notes. After their respective falls, both Satan and Melkor lose the ability they once had to assume the form of their choice; Satan adopts the form of a serpent, and Melkor remains forever in the form of “a dark Lord, tall and terrible (S 73). Finally, both fallen beings dwell in a fiery and yet dark underworld, and subsequently have an abhorrence for the Sun and Moon. One poetic detail that Tolkien may have borrowed from Milton is the verse describing the flames of the fiery furnace as projecting “No light, but rather darkness visible.” (1.62-3) Watkins sees similar imagery in the “cloak of darkness” that Ungoliant helps Melkor weave, “an Unlight.”(S 74) To what extent did *Paradise Lost* influence Tolkien? As Watkins states, “Tolkien’s sources are so faintly and yet so thickly intertwined in much of his fiction that picking out a single strand from the elaborate rope of Middle-earth is almost always impossible”, but he agrees with Tom Shippey that in spite of their different religious persuasions, Tolkien would have accepted Milton as “a poet capable of true poetry” (Shippey, *Author* 204).

Dean Slavic also delves into the underworld, but not necessarily in the company of Melkor or Satan; in “The Underworld in Tolkien’s novel *The Lord of the Rings*,” Slavic examines the motif of *katábasis* and *anábasis* (descent and ascent) into the underworld in Christianity, Western mythology and literature and *The Lord of the Rings*. Some of the best known examples of this are Odysseus’s descent to the underworld to speak with the dead Tiresias in the *Odyssey*, and Christ’s descent into Hell to “by which he went and preached to the spirits in prison,” according to the First Epistle of Peter. Beowulf fights a hellish monster, Grendel, and then engages with Grendel’s mother in an underwater battle. Not all descents into Hell are described in such literal terms; Hamlet battles many demons in a psychological hell which claims Ophelia as a victim, and the protagonists of Balzac’s novels live in a social and economic hell in the middle of nineteenth-century Paris. Slavic sees Tolkien’s works as a return to the “elemental simplicity and directness of myth” in an era in which “subtle artificiality and fine obliquity” were the norm in literature. The motif of a descent into the underworld is thus expressed in physical and spatial terms, and is worked into episodes which advance the narrative. Some of the examples of *katábasis* and *anábasis* (the hero always emerges from his descent) identified by Slavic are Frodo and the Barrow Downs, Gandalf’s fall into Moria, Aragorn and the Paths of the Dead, Sam and Cirith Ungol (Shelob’s lair) and Frodo at the Cracks of Doom. Each of these episodes meets five conditions that apply to *katábasis* and *anábasis* in myth and legend: the hero or someone he loves was in trouble before the descent, the hero has a helper, the hero was in deadly peril or

met the dead in the underworld, the hero had to save somebody or something, the hero's future life or death depended on his success or failure in the underworld. Slavic's careful analysis of this theme in *The Lord of the Rings* shows how Tolkien incorporated mythic patterns into his story in a way that both contributes to the readers' sense that they are reading a mythology for England, and makes for some very suspenseful prose.

The themes of Mortality and Immortality were discussed at a roundtable organized by Unquendor, the Dutch Tolkien society. Participants were Harm Schelhaus of the Dutch Tolkien Society, Johan Vanhecke of the Belgian Tolkien Society Elanor, Nils Ivor Agøy, translator, of the Norwegian Tolkien Society, Peter Buchs of Walking Tree Publishers and the Swiss Tolkien Society, and Thomas Honegger of Walking Tree Publishers, and the German and Swiss Tolkien societies. The panel discussion was chaired by Ewout Deurwaarder of Unquendor and transcribed by Dorine Ratulange with the help of Sjoerd van der Weide and the members of the panel from the recordings made by Andrew Armstrong. The two themes discussed include: "Mortality is a Gift versus Mortality is a Punishment," and "Is a marriage between a mortal and an immortal a good thing, or not, in Tolkien's work?"

It seems fitting to discuss Ronald Hutton's article "The Pagan Tolkien" at the end of this section, for Hutton takes the attitude that "a Christian message is hardly explicit in his novels." Furthermore, Hutton warns against the practice of using Tolkien's letters to bolster a Christian interpretation of *The Lord of the Rings*, noting that most of these letters were written retrospectively during the last three decades of Tolkien's life, after he had completed *The Lord of the Rings* and long after the earliest versions of his legendarium were written. Tolkien was also responding to criticism that *The Lord of the Rings* did not contain any religious elements by trying to reaffirm his own Catholic faith, and so he was receptive to comments from readers who stated that they found references to the Divine Eucharist in the life-sustaining *lembas* of the Elves, or saw traits of the Virgin Mary in Galadriel. At the same time, Tolkien repeatedly stated in his letters that the Christian message was not explicit in *The Lord of the Rings*. Above all, as Hutton reminds us, Tolkien was a creative writer, and not a theologian. In one letter Tolkien defended the reincarnation of the Elves and the presence of magic in his work because "what is 'bad theology' in the 'Primary World' was 'a legitimate basis for legends.'" (*Letters* 188-96). Hutton argues that Tolkien deliberately chose to create a cosmology that diverged considerably from the Judeo-Christian worldview.

In order to grasp the unique nature of Tolkien's imagined cosmos, we need to look carefully at the earliest versions of it, found in *The Book of Lost Tales*, conceived in the late 1910s. Here one can find three essential components. The first is Ilúvatar, the Supreme Being, who is very much

a Christian God, “male and ever-loving,” albeit a Neo-platonic one, who “emanates power to bring lesser divinities into being,” the Ainur. The second element is that of a pantheon of deities, the Valar, who are “preposterously unangelic,” having sex, bearing children, constantly squabbling with one another, and each controlling a particular aspect of the created world, Arda. While Hutton pays tribute to Marjorie Burns “excellent work” on Tolkien’s debt to Norse mythology (“Norse and Christian Gods: The Integrative Theology of J.R.R. Tolkien” in *Tolkien and the Invention of Myth*, ed. Jane Chance), he finds even stronger parallels between the Valar and the Homeric, Olympian gods and goddess in these earliest versions of Tolkien’s theology, which evolves from Christian Neo-Platonism to pagan Neo-Platonism once the Valar start misbehaving, as it were.

The third essential element that sets Tolkien’s mythic cosmos apart from both Scandinavian and Greek mythology and from Judeo-Christian theology is “his love of fairies and Faërie.” Hutton draws a contrast between the deities of ancient pagan mythologies who constantly intervene in human affairs, which is “their main preoccupation,” and Tolkien’s gods, for whom Valinor is “an idyllic land reserved for themselves, their own servant spirits, and their invited guests”—a “fairyland, which humans reach only in dreams, or after death, but which lurks on the edge of their consciousness.” Hutton stresses the fact that unlike other mythological narratives, Tolkien’s mythology is “never viewed through human eyes.” This unique characteristic is Tolkien’s greatest homage to the world of Faërie, but his “resolute determination to portray a world in which humans are not the highest form of intelligent and corporeal life is utterly unChristian.” Hutton posits that *The Silmarillion* was a late effort by Tolkien to rework his earlier pagan mythology into a “coherent and harmonious Christian Neo-Platonism” in an “effort to re-establish his credentials as a Catholic author.” Hutton seems to regret this choice, for he feels that it was the “distinctive theology” of the earlier mythology that laid the foundation for his masterpiece, *The Lord of the Rings*.

The overall theme for Section Nine is Tolkien’s Sources. If asked to name other twentieth-century authors whose works share common themes with that of Tolkien, most readers would probably never give a thought to the French existentialists, let alone French feminists, as evidenced by Renée Vink’s confession in the opening paragraph of her essay “Immortality and the Death of Love: J.R.R. Tolkien and Simone de Beauvoir,” that she was “positively shocked” to hear Tolkien speak favorably of a work by de Beauvoir in a documentary on Tolkien aired in 1992. Because de Beauvoir is best known for the feminism expressed in her groundbreaking work *The Second Sex* and her autobiographical writings and for her leftist political views (like her lifelong companion

Jean-Paul Sartre, she was outspoken in her admiration for the communist regimes of the USSR and the Peoples Republic of China), her reflections on aging, death, and mortality/immortality have attracted less critical attention. On second thought, it should come as no surprise that one of the key thinkers of the existentialist movement should have pondered issues that are so integral to the study of human existence. De Beauvoir explored these themes in her 1946 novel *Tous les hommes sont mortels*, which appeared in English translation in 1955 under the title *All Men Are Mortal*. The story is set in Renaissance Italy, and its lead character, Fosca, is a powerful political leader who accepts an immortality potion from an old beggar. Rather than enhance his pleasure or power, immortality becomes a curse, as Fosca sees everyone and everything slip away throughout the years, while he is doomed to continue his existence for all eternity. Vink draws parallels between de Beauvoir's novel and Tolkien's episodes in *The Lord of the Rings*, *The Silmarillion*, and "Athrabeth." As in the stories of Arwen and Aragorn, Beren and Lúthien, and Andreth and Aegnor, the plot of *All Men Are Mortal* includes a relationship between a mortal being and an immortal being, which allows for reflection on the finite—or infinite—nature of love. Whereas in *All Men are Mortal*, in Vink's view, "immortality ultimately means the death of love itself" Vink points out that "in Tolkien's entire legendarium, there is one instance of a romance between an undying Elf and a mortal that fails because their fates are different." Vink argues that Tolkien's approach to the mortality/immortality dichotomy is more complex and bolder than de Beauvoir's in that Tolkien creates a secondary world in which both mortal and immortal existences are posited as natural, whereas in *All Men are Mortal*, the main character's immortality is unique, and therefore distinctly unnatural: "by embracing immortality he has, in fact, relinquished his humanity and turned into a monster—for all men are mortal." Tolkien's preoccupation with mortality and immortality is often attributed to his Catholicism, but in her insightful and informative essay Vink reminds us that even an atheist philosopher such as de Beauvoir found this subject relevant to the human condition and worthy of analysis through fiction.

In "How Much Does Tolkien Owe to the Work of George MacDonald?" Colin Manlove sets out to examine Tolkien's literary debt to the Scottish fantasist George Macdonald—a debt that Tolkien himself acknowledged in "On Fairy-stories"—and in so doing, draws some fascinating comparisons and contrasts between the two writers. Manlove notes that "MacDonald is one of the few modern writers apart from William Morris and E. R. Eddison to whom he [Tolkien] refers with any frequency," and sees some influence of MacDonald reflected in the plot of *The Lord of the Rings* and some of its characters. Manlove finds predecessors of the Orcs, Old Man Willow and the Ents in MacDonald's

goblins, the carnivorous Ash Tree, and moving trees of *Phantastes*, and sees strong resemblances between Galadriel and “the mystic young/old grandmother figures of MacDonald’s fantasies.” In terms of plot, Manlove argues that *The Lord of the Rings* follows closely the structure of “The Golden Key,” a story in which a boy finds a key and then must travel far and wide through many perilous landscapes in order to find a lock that fits it. A sense of spiritual yearning (Manlove uses the German term “*sehnsucht*”) is pervasive in the work of both authors, although in Tolkien’s work “the yearning is more for the wonder of the created world itself than for anything that comes through it.” It is in the articulation of this *sehnsucht* within their literary subcreations that Manlove sees the most fundamental differences between MacDonald and Tolkien. In Tolkien, *sehnsucht* is expressed in outward movement, both in terms of the characters’ journeys throughout the physical landscape and in the way they relate to each other: “the movement is outward, from the enclosed world of the Shire to the wild world. It is also a journey towards the other, the sense of beings different from oneself.” The role that language plays in the expression of this *sehnsucht* is paramount: “symbol of it all is the attention that Tolkien gives to language, that means by which one may go out from oneself to communicate with another.” MacDonald’s work, on the contrary, manifests an inward movement in the quest for spiritual wholeness: because for MacDonald “the inner mind has supreme value,” his fantasy “usually focuses on the growth of the protagonist, on whom all events and characters centre.” Manlove reminds us of the extent to which *The Lord of the Rings*, a work in which “the ordering of intelligence, and the solidity of the outside world are prominent,” is an illustration of Tolkien’s proclamation that “fantasy is a rational, not an irrational, activity.” While he may have taken some inspiration from MacDonald, Tolkien’s subcreation invites us to leave the confines of our primary world in order to satisfy our *sehnsucht*, while MacDonald’s mystical landscapes draw us inward.

Jessica Yates examines four aspects of William Morris’s work which may have left their mark on Tolkien: his tapestries based on paintings by Pre-Raphaelite painter Edward Burne-Jones; his translations of Norse sagas; his prose romances; and his poetry. Yates begins her essay “William Morris’s influences on J.R.R. Tolkien” by noting that Exeter, where Morris and Burne-Jones met and Tolkien studied, boasts of three Burne-Jones/Morris tapestries. Yates thinks it may have been possible that Tolkien saw the pair of Burne-Jones/Morris tapestries representing the goddesses Flora and Pomona located in the Morris room of Exeter, and the tapestry *The Star of Bethlehem* hanging in the chapel before he left for war in 1915. Her theory is that Tolkien took “visual inspiration” from Flora and Pomona for Yavanna and Vana, goddesses of the natural

world in *Valaquenta*, and that the angel of *The Star of Bethlehelem* tapestry may have evoked for Tolkien the angel Eärendel, who, according to some sources which Yates cites, was associated with the Star of Bethlehelem by the Anglo-Saxons. Tolkien later stated that the name Eärendel was at the foundation of his entire mythology, and while he was no doubt already familiar with the Anglo-Saxon poem *Christ I* in which the name appears, Yates argues that his viewing of the Burne-Jones/Morris tapestry may have imprinted a visual image in Tolkien's imagination, which resurfaced when he began writing the earliest parts of his legendarium. As for the Norse sagas, Yates suggests that it was Tolkien's early contact with Morris's works, in particular his translation of the *Volsunga Saga*, that sparked Tolkien's life-long interest in Old Norse, and led him to populate *The Hobbit*—"Tolkien's true legacy from Morris"—with dwarves, trolls, dragons and goblins. Tolkien's flare for writing suspense-filled prose set in a quasi-mythical past amidst primeval forests (including one called Mirkwood), snow-capped mountains, dales and vales, certainly owes something to works of Morris's such as *The House of the Wolfings*, *The Roots of the Mountains*, and *The Sundering Flood*, with their pagan heroes and warrior maidens. Yates points out that while Tolkien may have learned to write archaic fantasy from Morris, he was also able to incorporate a more modern style and perspective into the narrative of *The Lord of the Rings*, which have certainly contributed to the success of his works. Finally, Yates suggests that Tolkien's extensive use of octosyllabic couplets in his verse was also inspired by Morris. Readers interested in Tolkien as a poet will find Yates's detailed inventory and analysis of the various types of meter that Tolkien used throughout his work to be of interest. Not all will agree however, with Yates's assessment that Tolkien's poetry is "a wonderful enhancement of the magical mood of the saga, but usually unable to stand alone in an anthology of many poets' work." Yates concludes her exhaustive and somewhat exhausting essay (at fifteen single-spaced pages, with many digressions which should have been placed in footnotes or left out entirely) by observing a certain irony in the relationship between Tolkien and Morris: "Tolkien was inspired by Morris; Morris was revived thanks to Tolkien."

Tolkien's reaction to the allegation made by Åke Ohlmark in his introduction to his Swedish translation of *The Lord of the Rings* that the idea of the Ring had been borrowed from Wagner has been quoted so often that it is now famous among Tolkien scholars: "Both rings were round, and there the resemblance ceases" (*Letters*, 306). Still, the specter of Wagner returns to haunt Tolkien's legacy every now and then, usually through the medium of a critic seeking to denigrate Tolkien's work. As Michael Scott Rohan points out in "Which story, I wonder?" said Gandalf . . . ? Was Tolkien the Real Ring-thief?" such comments are often

made by “self-appointed literati” (or “chatterati,” as he also calls them) whose familiarity with both Tolkien and Wagner is superficial, to say the least. As an author of heroic fantasy and a classical music critic, Rohan is particularly well placed to examine Tolkien’s relationship to Wagner’s opera cycle *The Ring of the Nibelung*. In spite of Tolkien’s insistence that he owed nothing to Wagner, Rohan is able to list no fewer than twenty similarities in plot, place, character and theme between *The Lord of the Rings* and Wagner’s libretto. Among these, the forging of a ring for evil purposes, the breaking and reforging of a sword, the heroines’ (Brunhilde’s and Arwen’s) sacrifice of immortality for the love of a mortal, and most significantly, the general plotline of “the passing of an elder, immortal race, morally compromised by their own hubris, and the delivery of the world for better or worse to men” are the most significant. Rohan also notes that Tolkien was very familiar with Wagner’s work, as were most educated people of his generation. Tolkien attended performances of the *Ring* cycle at Covent Garden with C.S. Lewis, with whom he had read and discussed Wagner’s entire libretto. Tolkien’s favorite composer was Carl Maria von Weber, an early Romantic German composer of the same generation of Beethoven who had a profound influence on Wagner. Most importantly, Rohan points out that “it was Wagner, in search of a symbol to embody his views of corrupting wealth and power, who invented the Ring itself, and the surrounding story. The story is *not* in the sources. There is *nowhere else* Tolkien can have come by it.” How then, could Tolkien so categorically deny any influence whatsoever of Wagner’s *Ring* on *The Lord of the Rings*?

Aside from possible political objections that Tolkien may have had with Wagner’s revolutionary radicalism or anti-clericalism, and even taking into consideration the many similar motifs and plot devices which both Wagner and Tolkien borrowed from the world of the *Volsungasaga*, the fact is that *The Lord of the Rings* and Wagner’s *Ring* are fundamentally different works. While Wagner strips Nordic myth down to “an intense and concentrated drama” with a very limited cast of characters, a practically non-existent landscape, and a paucity of details regarding the races inhabiting this world, Tolkien creates a universe rich in linguistic, cultural and historical depth and diversity. “Tolkien sprawls, in the best sense, as real lands and cultures do, and in many dimensions.” And as for the Ring itself, here is where Rohan’s first-hand knowledge of creative writing comes in. Tolkien’s Ring, he reminds us, was little more than a plot device, “the most traditional of fairy-tales props,” in *The Hobbit*. Even admitting that Tolkien’s ring shared with Wagner’s Tarnhelm the property of conferring invisibility, it was completely “neutral and conventional in doing so.” It was “*chiefly through the demands of the story,*” as Tolkien neared completion of *The Lord of the Rings*, that his Ring became “a malevolent

entity with a will of its own. . . . Tolkien's creative processes had already come a long way down the line on their own, *before* they reached anything like a Wagnerian model." If Wagner exerted any influence on Tolkien, he can simply take his place alongside "William Morris and Rider Haggard . . . and the anonymous voices of *Beowulf*, *Sir Gawain, the Seafarer* . . ." and even the *Oxford English Dictionary*.

One Nordic source from which Tolkien readily admitted to borrowing is the Finnish *Kalevala*. In his correspondence Tolkien cited both the Finnish language and Elias Lönnröt's literary reconstruction of ancient Finnish creation myths and legends as having "set the rocket off in story" and described the beginning of his legendarium as "an attempt to reorganize some of the *Kalevala* especially the tale of Kullervo the hapless, into a form of my own." (*Letters* 214). Thanks to Verlyn Flieger, who transcribed and edited "The Story of Kullervo" from a manuscript dating from 1914 (along with two drafts of an essay "On the *Kalevala*" which Tolkien wrote between 1914 and 1919 (*Tolkien Studies* 7, published in 2010)), we now have a fuller picture of the various stages of Tolkien's reworking of the "Kullervo the hapless" character before it reached its incarnation as Tolkien's own Túrin Turambar of *The Silmarillion*. The essay "On the *Kalevala*," which Tolkien delivered at Exeter and then Oxford when still a student, offers insights into the aspects of the *Kalevala* that Tolkien found most appealing, and from which he would take his inspiration. Sash Uusjärvi's essay "Influences of the *Kalevala* in *The Silmarillion* by J.R.R. Tolkien" is remarkable in that the author did not have the benefit of these hitherto unpublished texts, and yet she draws many astute parallels between the *Kalevala* and Tolkien's work that go beyond the Kullervo/Túrin Turambar plot. Uusjärvi stresses the aesthetic and intellectual affinity that Tolkien had with Lönnröt, although nearly a century separated the two authors.

Like Tolkien, Lönnröt had been immersed in the study of languages, and wished to preserve the mythology and legends of his country in literary form. Uusjärvi also notes that while both men were devout Christians, this did not prevent them from finding beauty and a simple spirituality in the beliefs of pagan cultures. Lönnröt, mindful that he was writing for a staunchly Lutheran public, reshaped ancient Finnish polytheism into a pre-Christian monotheism, presenting Ilmatar as the Supreme Being of creation, a role which Tolkien's Ilúvatar would also assume. Theological concerns such as the origin of evil are present in both the *Kalevala* and *The Silmarillion*: "there is not evil at all in the beginning, but then the opposition arises due to greed and envy," notes Uusjärvi. Fëanor's creation of the Silmarils and Ilmarinen's making of the Sampo, a magic mill, both invite reflexion on the complex relationship between an artist and his subcreation, and the ethical implications thereof, a theme dear to

Tolkien. Uusjärvi adds to these comparisons of plot, theme and character a perceptive discussion of the prominent place of nature and music and how these relate to mythopoeia in the *Silmarillion* and the *Kalevala*. Uusjärvi mentions in her biographical statement that this essay is a summary of her B.A. thesis. If she was doing work of this quality during her undergraduate studies, we can look forward to many more enlightening contributions to Tolkien scholarship from her in the future.

Two essays in this section deal with linguistic sources in Tolkien, in particular, word and name origins. In “Sir Gawain’s *Pentangle*,” Joe R. Christopher conducts some linguistic detective work on the word *pentangle* in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, the 14th-century Arthurian romance written by the *Pearl*-poet in the dialect of the northwest midlands of England and edited by Tolkien and E.V. Gordon in 1925, then later translated by Tolkien into modern English in the 1950s. What intrigues Christopher is the fact that the word appears for the first time ever in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, and yet Tolkien claimed that it existed in Middle English and was in popular use. The *pentangle* designates the design on Sir Gawain’s shield, a five-pointed star, which the *Pearl*-poet also refers to as an “Endless Knot.” In their critical edition, Tolkien and Gordon break the word down into two parts, *penta* (five) and *angel* (angle), and derive it from the Old French *pentacle*, and the Medieval Latin *pentaculum* “by assoc. with *angle*” (181) Norman Davies reprinted this derivation in his edition, but added that that *pentangle* must have combined the words *pentacle* and *angle*, since in Medieval Latin and French the word did not have the *angle* ending, but rather ended in *-aculam*, *-acle*, *-alpha*, *-onon*, or *-amma*. Christopher agrees with Davies’s theory, but argues that the merging of *pentacle* with *angle* was done deliberately by the *Pearl*-poet himself, and did not occur through popular usage; in other words, the “clever Poet invented a word *pentangle* because he wanted to emphasize the five points—that is, five major angles—of the pentagram.” Christopher also offers an explanation for why the Pearl poet could make the claim that the pentagram, a mystical symbol usually associated with the ancient Hebrews or the ancient Egyptians, was well known in England at the time of the composition of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*: it was introduced by the Normans several centuries earlier through board games. Hats off to Joe R. Christopher for unraveling this “Endless Knot.”

In “Hobbit Names Aren’t From Kentucky,” David Bratman attempts to lay to rest once and for all assertions by Tolkien biographer Daniel Grotta and writer Guy Davenport that some Hobbit names, and perhaps even the landscape and customs of the Hobbits, had been inspired by stories that Tolkien heard from a friend and fellow-student at Exeter College, Oxford, named Allen Barnett (1888-1970), a Kentuckian and Rhodes scholar. Incidentally, Davenport, an acclaimed author of poems,

short stories and literary criticism who taught at the University of Kentucky for over 30 years, had also been a Rhodes scholar at Oxford (many years later, in the 50s) and in fact took a course with Tolkien. Bratman takes issue with an article Davenport published in 1979 in which he recounts having interviewed Allen Barnett, who remembered his conversations with Tolkien: "You know, he used to have the most extraordinary interest in the people here in Kentucky. He couldn't get enough of my tales of Kentucky folk. He used to make me repeat family names like Barefoot and Boffin and Baggins and good county names like that." Davenport claimed not to be in the least bit surprised by this because he had run across such names in the Lexington phone book or in the surrounding countryside. Bratman builds most of his argument against Kentucky-inspired Hobbit names on this reference to the phone book, to which he responds, "I don't know what Davenport may have seen in his phone book in 1973—or 1979 or whenever he looked, or what form of pipe-weed he was smoking at the time, but when I passed through Shelbyville in 1999 . . . I couldn't find much in the way of hobbit names in the local phone book. One Cotton, one Underhill, and a pair of Grubbs was all." It doesn't seem to occur to Bratman that in a span of 25 years demographics change; people move away, or die, or take another name.

Bratman then does the same thing he derides Davenport for doing, and looks up Hobbit names in an internet phone directory, but he claims his approach is more "systematic" because he tallies up the names for all fifty states and compares the lists. He reports that only the names Grubb, Underhill, Noakes and Thistlewood were more common in Kentucky than in certain other states. But Barnett knew Tolkien between 1911 and 1914, and so Bratman should have looked for Hobbit names in records going back to that time or before in order to conclusively deny the prevalence of such names in Kentucky. Bratman says he did not include such data because he was "unaware of any complete geographic indexes to surnames in old U.S. census returns," but evidence of names can be found in other archives such as birth and death certificates, marriage licenses and property deeds, and even cemeteries. Bratman does report the results of his consultation of 1901 census data for Great Britain, which reveals that the names Cotton, Underhill and Boffin were prevalent in the West Midlands, where Tolkien could certainly have come across them. All of this statistical data may seem "systematic," but does it prove that Tolkien didn't hear his friend Barnett tell stories of Kentucky folk named Underhill or Cotton, or "Barefoot and Boffin and Baggins?" Nicknames are common in rural Kentucky, and such names of course are not recorded in official documents, so who's to say that Barnett didn't also know folks called Twofoot, or Headstrong, or Cotton or Fatty, and that Tolkien didn't decide to use some of these as both surnames and

given names for Hobbits? There may be a system for tracing geographical origins of names, but there is no system for determining where an author takes his inspiration. Bratman does concede that “Barnett’s tales may have contributed a soupçon to the Tolkien cauldron of a story” (pun intended) but his categorical rejection of the possibility that Tolkien may have used some names that he remembered hearing in these same tales is unconvincing.

In “Tolkien’s Writings in Old Germanic Languages,” Maria Artamanova demonstrates that these writings are “almost as varied as the scope of his writings as a whole.” Beginning with the very earliest example of Tolkien’s writing in an Old Germanic language, his Gothic inscription on a copy of Thucydides that he used as a schoolboy, Artamanova traces Tolkien’s writings in these languages throughout his career. The rare *Songs for the Philologists*, which Tolkien composed with his colleague E.V. Gordon in the 1920s, contains thirty songs in Icelandic, Gothic, Latin, and Old, Middle and Modern English. Of the thirteen songs which Tolkien composed, six are in Old English and one in Gothic. Most notable among these is Tolkien’s poem “Bagme Bloma,” which Artamanova suggests may be the only example of a poem written in Gothic, since no Gothic poetry has survived. Artamanova refers to this poem and to the Anglo-Saxon poems as “experiments, something that may perhaps be grudgingly called ‘post-modern’ ancient poetry,” because they are in fact written in modern metre, and in the case of Gothic, Tolkien had no examples of authentic ancient Gothic poetry to use as a model. This in fact left him greater artistic possibilities as a creative writer: When composing original verse in Anglo-Saxon, Tolkien varied his style, sometimes using modern metre (as in the *Songs for the Philologists*) and at other times, Old English alliterative metre (as in an Anglo-Saxon translation of a modern riddle about a egg published in a collection of poems called *A Northern Venture*, from 1923) and at other times, borrowed poetic formulas used by Anglo-Saxon poets (as in a poem written for the festschrift honoring W.H. Auden in 1967.)

Throughout her highly informative and well-written essay, Artamanova makes the important point that the Anglo-Saxon language was not just a topic of research for Tolkien, nor a clever linguistic exercise, but was at the very core of his subcreation. We see this in the character of Aelfwine, who appears in some of Tolkien’s earliest writings as a mariner who sailed to the Undying Lands and later translated the Elvish stories he heard there into Anglo-Saxon. Artamanova notes that in *The Book of Lost Tales* and in *The Shaping of Middle-Earth*, the idea of translation from Elvish tongues is present in the form of Anglo-Saxon chapter headings, poem titles and names. Aelfwine the mariner/minstrel/translator also appears in “The Lost Road” and “The Notion Club Papers,”

and in both texts sings a short poem reminiscent of the Anglo-Saxon poem *The Seafarer*. Aelfwine is also the subject of a poem composed in Anglo-Saxon that figures in these two texts. In "The Lost Road" it is recited first in Anglo-Saxon by Alboin, and then in English translation. Artamanova suggests that the prevalence of Anglo Saxon in Tolkien's work can be explained not only by his love of the language, but because "it was perceived as an intermediate link between our own time and the mythological past of which it still preserved some vestiges." I would add to Artamanova's perceptive comment that the theme of translation is a key to understanding how Tolkien viewed his own role as the creator of his secondary world, in which Anglo-Saxon figured so prominently: he was in fact a translator, both in the literal sense, of texts such as of *Beowulf* and *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, and in a figurative sense, as a mediator between the culture, the ethos, and the world view of ages past and the modern world.

Christina Fawcett also considers the way that values of the modern and medieval eras are articulated through language in "Reluctant Warrior: Tolkien's Conflicted Language in *The Lord of the Rings*." Fawcett examines the tension in the text of *The Lord of the Rings* between the rhetoric of the medieval warrior cultures, in which valor in battle and allegiance to notions of honor and duty are stressed, and condemnation of the machine-made mass destruction and wastefulness of modern war, which reflect Tolkien's perspective as a twentieth-century writer having lived through two world wars, as combatant in WWI and father of two sons who served in WWII. Fawcett perceives a "conflict between Tolkien's personal values and his literary and academic influences" in the passages dealing with warfare. She astutely notes that "less than 5% of the book actually describes armed conflict or instances of fighting," and points to ambiguities in the description of the Battle of Helm's Deep, in which Tolkien uses a natural metaphor to refer to the Orcs "a great field of dark corn, tossed by a tempest of war;" and describes the piles of both slain Orcs and men as "heaps of carrion." Fawcett is correct in noting that "the idea of absolute victory does not exist in Tolkien's text," and she highlights the death, suffering and sense of loss that accompany each battle. In her analysis Tolkien's own stance is represented by the Hobbits, a peace-loving people who, swept up in the bloodiest conflict of their age, are capable of taking up arms, as Merry and Pippin do, but "only for the sake of someone they love."

Undoubtedly Tolkien's epic story emphasizes the moral superiority of friendship, love, selflessness, and respect for others over aggression, greed, and lust for power, but even the most passive individuals can be transformed into fighters by circumstances, and they do not always shed this role after the last battle has been fought. Fawcett neglects to mention

the zeal with which Merry and Pippin, proudly sporting their armor and weapons, become leaders of a armed coup in “The Scouring of the Shire.” In this important episode several Hobbits are killed—much to Frodo’s distress—but the end result is that the Shire is rid of tyranny, the prisons are opened, and the mechanization of the landscape is halted. Fawcett describes Tolkien as an “ardent pacifist,” but she seems to confuse pacifism—the refusal to fight under any circumstances—with a Tolkien’s criticism of mechanized modern warfare and its capacity for killing millions. It is interesting that Fawcett does not mention Tom Bombadil, the only character in *The Lord of the Rings* whom Tolkien describes as a pacifist. But while Tolkien acknowledged that Bombadil’s “natural pacifistic view” was something he felt was important, he was quick to add that “only the victory of the West will allow Bombadil to continue or even to survive. Nothing would be left for him in the world of Sauron” (*Letters* 179). In other words, pacifists can only survive tyranny if others are willing to fight against it.

Murray Smith presents a fascinating inquiry into “Some Possible Origins of the Stewards of Gondor” in his essay by the same name, which is a paragon of historical and legal erudition. Smith combines his expertise in constitutional law and with the sort of attention to textual detail that is shared by legal and literary scholars, enriched by the focus on historical precedent that is a hallmark of legal scholarship. Smith combs through Tolkien’s legendarium and traces the origins of the Stewards of Gondor back to the very first examples of a regent, Hallatan of Hyarastoni, who governed Númenor when the monarch Tar-Aldarion returned to Middle-earth circa 883-884 of the Second Age, as recounted in *Unfinished Tales*. Regencies in Númenor were rare, however, as they were only used in the event of the absence or incapacity of a monarch. Arnor was ruled for some time by a regent because Isildur’s youngest son Valandil was not of age when his father was killed, and lived with Elrond until he could assume the throne at age twenty-one. As a precaution against this sort of vacuum of leadership, the Gondorians created the office of Steward under the reign of Rómendacil (see *The Lord of the Rings*, Appendix A), and this tradition continues after Aragorn returns to Gondor as monarch at the end of the Third Age. Smith postulates that there are both historical and linguistic sources for Tolkien’s construction of the office of Steward of Gondor. The Old French word *seneschal* referred to an individual responsible for the administration of a monarch’s household, including the administration of justice, a role which the Stewards of Gondor fulfill. Etymologically, *seneschal* is a Latinized form of words from Old Teutonic and Gothic, and given Tolkien’s love for Gothic, this may have influenced him in his construction of the position of steward.

Smith also presents the historical background of the positions of the

Carolingian Mayor of the Palace, the Justicar of England, the Lord High Steward of Scotland, and the Lord High Steward of England, in support of his thesis that Tolkien may have borrowed various aspects of these positions for his Stewards of Gondor. For example, the Lord High Steward of England carried the crown at a coronation, as Faramir does at the coronation of Aragorn, and the Lord High Steward of Ireland carried a white staff, the same symbol of his authority wielded by Denethor. Smith includes some relevant biographical information, such as the fact that in 1911 Tolkien attended the coronation of George V, the monarch who had insisted on removing anti-Catholic language from the declaration taken by the British monarch. Another aspect of the history of regencies in Great Britain which Smith elucidates is that all of the regency legislation from 1707 up to the twentieth century prohibits Catholics from serving as regent. Smith makes the argument that “in his portrayal of the Ruling Stewards Tolkien made use of, and may have been making an ironic point about, the history of the loyalty of Catholics to a state . . . that . . . had persecuted and discriminated against them.” This is pure speculation on Smith’s part, but whether one accepts this hypothesis or not, one can only admire the meticulous manner in which Smith has examined the Stewards of Gondor from every possible historical perspective including that of Tolkien’s personal history.

Section Ten is on Middle-earth at the Movies, and the two first essays—“Peter Jackson and Tolkien’s Catholicism” by LeiLani Hinds and “Implicit and Explicit Treatments of Catholic Imagery in Tolkien’s *The Lord of the Rings* and Jackson’s Film Trilogy” by DawnEllen Jacobs—both deal with how Jackson’s films address (or fail to address) Catholic themes that they see as permeating *The Lord of the Rings*. Hinds defends Jackson against the criticism that his films “ignore” Catholicism; she suggests that “Jackson and the artists at WETA, perhaps both consciously and subconsciously, pay tribute to the novel’s Catholic themes in the visual imagery” of the films, through “art design for certain sets and locations in Middle-earth, the staging on several scenes, and the appearance of certain characters.” In her analysis, Hinds excludes scenes from the book “described by Tolkien with a great deal of Catholic detail” (without identifying these scenes) because such scenes would not “reflect the ideas of Jackson and his artists.” Hinds focuses instead on scenes that either expand upon a scene in the book, differ considerably from the book, or do not appear at all in the books at all. This is a logical approach, but Hinds could have perhaps given at least one example of a scene from the books which she views as having “a great deal of Catholic detail,” so that readers could see how Tolkien’s treatment of such material is handled in the films. Among the sets and locations that Hinds mentions as having Catholic imagery is Minas Tirith, which the design team says was inspired by

Byzantine and Roman churches. Hinds sees reflections of the cathedral of Strasbourg, the church of Santa Maria del Fiore of Florence, and the chapel of Charlemagne at Aix-la-Chappelle in some of the specific buildings of the set, and is of the opinion that this is not accidental. She notes that secular buildings such as castles and fortified cities could have served as models. This is true, but the greatest innovations in engineering and building techniques during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance are found in church architecture, and the design team could have been trying to evoke a city of rich history, great learning and artistic brilliance by choosing structures from the cities of Michelangelo and Charlemagne. A set which seems to have more overt religious overtones is featured in the scene in which Aragorn visits his mother's grave, in which Hinds notes a statue resembling the Virgin Mary. Hind's strongest evidence for the deliberate inclusion of Catholic imagery in the films are the scenes on which the characters themselves are used as religious symbols, such as when Gandalf takes on the shape of Jesus on the cross as he falls into the abyss with the balrog, and of the resurrected Christ when he appears to Legolas, Aragorn and Gimli in Fangorn Forest. Hinds also notes the prevalence of religious gestures throughout the film, such as Legolas kneeling to the "resurrected" Gandalf, Aragorn making a gesture similar to the sign of the cross over Boromir after hearing his confession, and Frodo having a "vision" of Galadriel as he holds her phial up in the darkness of Shelob's lair.

While Hinds concludes that the explicit religious images and gestures in the films prove that Jackson did not overlook Tolkien's Catholicism and its presence in his books, Jacobs argues that such external manifestations of religious belief are superficial, and only serve to underscore the fact that Jackson did not comprehend the deeper Catholic values embedded in the books. In Jacob's view, "Jackson . . . misses the essence of that [Tolkien's] world because he makes the religious world explicit. He does not truly grasp that it is there implicitly in the truth of the work." Jacobs agrees with scholars such as Thomas Howard, Joseph Pearce and Fleming Rutledge who stress the importance of narrative in Catholicism, as opposed to Protestant theology, which tends to emphasize abstract concepts like grace and atonement. As a writer of narrative, Tolkien wrote realistically because "he was imitating and describing not the way the world is, but the way God works in the world." Jacobs argues that Tolkien weaves strands of Biblical narrative together through the motif of trees, which "appear significantly throughout the Bible and are, along with the rest of God's natural creation, in tune with their maker and the events of His world." A tree was central to the story of Adam and Eve, and is found throughout *The Lord of the Rings*, beginning in the "Edenic Shire" with Bilbo's eleventy-first birthday party, which is held near an enormous

tree. Jacobs draws a comparison between the tree of life featured in the Book of Revelation, and the mallorn tree that grows in the place where the Party Tree once stood, from the seed and earth that Galadriel gave Sam. Jacobs cites another use of trees in religious context in the Old English poem *The Dream of the Rood*, in which a tree used to make Jesus's cross tells the story of the Crucifixion and Resurrection from its perspective. Likewise, Tolkien's personified trees, the Ents, participate in a story of liberation and salvation; they represent for Jacobs "the corruption of the Creator's world," whereas she feels that Jackson uses them to represent ecological disaster. But couldn't ecological disaster be a manifestation of "the corruption of the Creator's world," as was the Biblical flood? Jackson gives the Ents and their attack on Isengard some of the most memorable scenes in his film trilogy. Jacobs also points to Jackson's replacing Galadriel's gift of seeds and earth with a rope as evidence that he misses the real point of *The Lord of the Rings*, because "the film seems to hint that the Shire is saved from . . . corruption by the actions of the Fellowship. . . . Tolkien clearly intended to imply that salvation does not lie within the individual but in a greater power as represented by Galadriel's seeds." Perhaps Jacobs didn't notice that Galadriel's rope comes undone of its own accord after Sam and Frodo have used it, as if it were responding to a greater power. Jackson may not have entirely missed the point, after all.

Gwydion M. Williams states at the beginning of his essay "Eyeing Sauron: Tolkien in the Language of Film," that he did not intend "to complain about how Peter Jackson produced his own Tolkien-related artwork," but rather that he wished "to talk about what was done and how else it might be done," which in fact amounts to the same thing. Williams spends much of his essay telling us what he thinks of Jackson's choices in the films, in particular in regard to the characters, and while readers may agree with comments such as "the ethical self-denial of the Elves and of Aragorn has been glossed over" or that "Denethor becomes cruder than he should be; not recognised as a good man broken by an impossible task" or that "Gimli gets reduced to comic relief." Williams' comments are purely subjective in nature—he approves or disapproves of something—and are not accompanied by any sustained analysis of how Jackson's choices fit into the larger narrative framework of the films, and why they do or don't work. On the other hand, when Williams reflects on how material from *The Hobbit*, *The Lord of the Rings*, *The Silmarillion* and other writing of Tolkien's legendarium might be handled in future cinematic productions he makes some interesting, if not necessarily feasible, suggestions. For example, Williams envisions a 42-hour television mini-series "telling . . . Tolkien's tale in a different style, slower and more artistic," in which *The Hobbit* and each of the six books of *The Lord of*

the Rings could be given six-hour episodes. This would certainly allow for more detailed exploration of characters and cultures, in particular the “plurality of Elven cultures” with their complex history, languages and traditions. Williams also sees great cinematic potential in the tale of Beren and Lúthien, “a love story which also includes horror-elements such as Sauron’s Isle of Werewolves . . . the sinister and quarrelsome sons of Fëanor . . . the vampire-lady Thuringwethil.” Interestingly, Williams doesn’t mention the exciting challenge that the multi-dimensional character of Fëanor would provide a talented, versatile actor. Tolkien may have wished a “murrain on Will Shakespeare” for his treatment of fairies in *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, and his “shabby” handling of Dunstan forest in *Macbeth* (*Letters* 143, 212), but Fëanor is in many respects what many refer to as a “Shakespearian” character, in that he becomes a tragic victim of his own superior talents, physical attributes, and force of will. With the advent of the two forthcoming Peter Jackson *Hobbit* films, Williams’ dream of a BBC-style dramatization of *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit* may never be realized, but we can hope that quality screenwriters, director and actors will one day tackle other rich material in Tolkien’s legendarium.

While Williams regrets the “Perry-and-Mippin effect” of the films, that is, “Jackson’s failure to distinguish between the serious, well-behaved Merry and the unreliable and ingenious Pippin,” making the two characters “almost identical,” Lance Weldy argues on the contrary that “Jackson has carefully ascribed different personalities to each Hobbit through action and dialogue.” In “Peregrin’s ‘Journey in the Dark’: Jackson’s Substitution in Agency,” Weldy demonstrates that Jackson’s choice to “enhance Pippin’s tomfoolery” in the films serves not only to “highlight a Hobbit characteristic (childish naiveté)” but also allows Pippin’s character progressively to develop agency (the ability to act) as he grows in maturity, courage and care for others throughout the story. In his analysis Weldy compares several scenes in Jackson’s films with Tolkien’s books, not to pass judgment on whether or not Jackson made good or bad choices, but rather to examine how Jackson’s divergences from the text contribute to the understanding of the character of Pippin in the film. Weldy refers to Robin Reid’s discussion⁴ of screenwriter Philippa Boyens’s deliberate choice to have Frodo help Gandalf solve the riddle of the door of Moria in order to give Frodo a more active role in the scene. Weldy sees in the same scene a similar “substitution” or “assigning [material] to a different character” occurring in regard to Pippin, who is depicted as the individual responsible for disturbing the monster in the pool in the screenplay, whereas it is Boromir who throws a stone into the water in Tolkien’s text. This substitution of Pippin for Boromir places more responsibility on Pippin for putting the Company in danger and forcing them into the

mines, it is true, but it also gives Pippin a larger role “as an important impetus to Tolkien’s plot. Where would the company have gone if they had retreated?” Pippin’s role in stirring up minions of Orcs and consequently alerting the Balrog to the Company’s presence is also enhanced in the film version of *The Two Towers*, which substitutes Pippin’s simple dropping of a stone into a well to his knocking a skeleton of a Dwarf, along with a noisy bucket, into the well, because he had been playing with an arrow held by the skeleton. This initiates the chain of events that will eventually cause Gandalf’s fall. By laying the responsibility for this tragic event primarily on Pippin’s impetuosity and childishness, which are amplified throughout the screenplay, Jackson’s films also allows for a greater transformation of Pippin’s character; Pippin’s convulsive sobs once the Company reaches safety reveal his genuine grief and remorse for his impulsiveness. In *The Return of the King*, when Jackson allows Pippin to substitute for Gandalf in pulling Faramir’s body off of the pyre where he is about to be burned alive, viewers admire Pippin’s bravery all the more because he has captured their hearts as the most child-like and innocent of the Hobbits.

In “Songs of Innocence and Experience: Tolkien at the Movies,” Christopher Garbowski reflects upon how Tolkien’s stories and his essay “On Fairy-stories” may have indirectly influenced the genre of fantasy film, by restoring “a sense of wonder” to fiction for both children and adults. In Garbowski’s view, a major reason that *The Lord of the Rings* was able to evolve out of *The Hobbit*—“to be a children’s story that grew up . . . without growing sour”—was Tolkien’s successful application of his concept of eucatastrophe or “joyous turn” in the plot and structure of *The Lord of the Rings*, which in other respects was a much “darker work.” Garbowski argues that largely thanks to the use of eucatastrophe, and in spite of all the suffering, sadness and sacrifice, *The Lord of the Rings* is “essentially a comedy in the traditional meaning of the word,” because “it accomplishes what Northrop Frye describes as the essence of romance, i.e. the struggle to maintain ‘the integrity of the innocent world against the assault of experience’” (Frye 201). Garbowski draws an unlikely but perfectly convincing comparison between *The Lord of the Rings* and Frank Capra’s film *It’s a Wonderful Life* (1946), in which the protagonist and his family suffer many hardships and humiliations before the unexpected happy turn of events at the end of the film. I would add that another thing Capra’s film and Tolkien’s books have in common is that they possess such a high level of verisimilitude in terms of their characters’ struggles with the emotional and material hardships they face that the intervention of supernatural beings such as angels and wizards in the plot to help bring about the eucatastrophe appears to be perfectly natural. In this sense you could say that they are both examples of “realistic fantasy,”

in that they meld realism and fantasy in a seamless manner. Garbowski in fact maintains that *It's a Wonderful Life* and Peter Jackson's film trilogy are the best examples in film history of cinematic fantasy. In his view, John Boorman's *Excalibur* (1981) fails as a fantasy film because its subject matter, Arthurian legend, is "essentially a tragedy," and Garbowski questions "whether fantasy can actually sustain tragedy." Far more successful, in his view, were the first *Star Wars* films, in which "'the Force' symbolizes the power of enchantment." Garbowski asks to what extent "magic" is possible in the scientific age, and finds his answer in *Star Wars*: "Lucas seems to imply in the initial episodes of his saga that the very success of Tolkien's tale in capturing our imagination answers this question affirmatively." One study that needs to be done is an exploration of the influence of Tolkien's epic on the original 1960s television series *Star Trek*. Am I wrong in seeing some echo of Tolkien's multicultural Fellowship in the (at the time) unheard-of transnational, multicultural, and multiracial crew of the Starship Enterprise?

The Greek term "logos" is defined by the *Oxford English Dictionary* (2nd ed., 1989) as "word, speech, discourse, reason," but is also used by philosophers and theologians to refer to "the divine reason implicit in and ordering the cosmos, giving it form and meaning," according to *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica* (15th ed., 1974). Maggie Fernandes explores how these various meanings apply to Tolkien's work and to Peter Jackson's films in "Logos, the Silver Path to *The Lord of the Rings*: The Word in Novel and Film Writing." Logos is a particularly apt word to refer to the creative process used by writers, for they use words to create an "ordered" universe, and to "give it meaning." Tolkien illustrates the concept of logos in *The Silmarillion*, in which, as in the Hebrew Bible or Hesiod's *Theogony*, the Word—sung or spoken—brings things into being, and gives them meaning. Tolkien stressed this creative power of logos in "On Fairy-stories," his defense of fantasy writing, perhaps the ultimate example of literary subcreation. Within his rich subcreation, Tolkien uses logos to create individual cultures—the Elves, the Dwarves, the Hobbits, the various communities of Men—which in turn define themselves through their use of logos for conveying their history and traditions through songs, stories, and poetry. Tolkien's universe is quite literally a logocentric one, with language at its core. "Words are the writer's tools—a sort of wand—in this sub-creation. . . . Words are the raw material, just like clay in the hands of a potter." Language also provided a key to understanding character development, and Fernandes sees Sam as an excellent example of this. Because filmmakers have other tools to help them tell a story—sets, the actors' voices, gestures and expressions, sound and visual effects—they have a different approach to language, often wanting "to economise in words, though not in meaning." Some

meaning is inevitably lost, however, if screenwriters are not sensitive to the way that language conveys meaning through differences in diction and register. She compares the dialogue between Sméagol and Gollum in “The Passage of the Marshes” with Peter Jackson’s adaptation of the same dialogue, and notes how in Tolkien’s text, the “childish, broken language” of Gollum as compared with the more correct grammar of Sméagol reveals “that the most rational, conscious of the personalities is dominated by the wicked-minded, but more animal and childish one.” In the film dialogue, both “characters” speak in the same register, with the result that Gollum appears merely mean and bullying of Sméagol, who draws all of the viewers’ sympathy. Tolkien’s character elicits a far more complex reaction from the reader, who is “drawn to both, because the wicked child deserves pity, the guilty subdued grown-up deserves mercy, and good and evil is seen in both.” While Fernandez acknowledges the exigencies of screenwriting, in which “the focus is on the plot and how it develops,” she cannot help but wish that the screenwriters of Peter Jackson’s films had a better “understanding of the linguistic work and function of language in the novel.”

Cherylynn Silvia offers a Foucauldian reading of Peter Jackson’s trilogy in “One Ring to Rule Them All: Power and Surveillance in the Film Adaptations of *The Lord of the Rings*.” Central to Foucault’s theory is the link between knowledge and “the historical production of truth” to power. During the opening segments of *The Fellowship of the Ring*, the Council of Elrond scene and other scenes in which the history of the Ring is recounted, Jackson uses close-ups and extreme angles of the Ring to draw the viewer’s gaze. Characters with the deepest knowledge of the Ring and its history, in particular, Gandalf and Galadriel, are featured in scenes in which the power of the Ring is enhanced through special effects, such as Galadriel being transformed into a frightening negative image of herself when Frodo allows her to hold the Ring for a few moments in Lothlórien. The palantíri are an example of how “power produces ‘truths’ through knowledge.” Sauron exerts his power over Saruman through the palantír, which conveys the “knowledge” (which is in fact a fiction) that there can be no victory over Mordor. In his book *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault examines the technology of power, which he refers to as “discipline.” This perverse sort of technology is at work in prisons in which every moment of existence of the prisoners is regulated and subject to a strict schedule, and Silvia sees the same concept at work in the sway the Ring has over its bearers; Frodo is “disciplined” by the Ring. Foucault argued that prisons are more concerned with capturing the soul than with disciplining the body, and so once prisoners have been punished, as Silvia explains, “they are forever caught up in the prison system as part of an information-gathering network serving the dominant power.” Thus prisoners

are transformed into perpetual “delinquents,” whose main function is to observe. In Silvia’s analysis the Ringwraiths, disembodied souls of men, fulfill this function of delinquency, as does Gollum. Like the prisoner who allies himself with the guards in the hopes that his surveillance and betrayal of other prisoners will lead to his release, Gollum tracks Frodo and Sam in the hopes of recovering his “precious” for himself, only to be betrayed by it. His scheme to use the monstrous spider Shelob to do away with Frodo and Sam backfires, for by leading the pair of Hobbits into Shelob’s lair, he also provides them with a “loophole,” a tunnel which will take them into Mordor unobserved. This even the most oppressive system of control and surveillance can be undermined inadvertently even by individuals who are complicit in the system.

Martin Barker’s essay “Tolkien’s Books and Peter Jackson’s Films” is an appropriate conclusion to this section, because it is broad in scope and provides some fascinating data on the relationship between the experience of reading *The Lord of the Rings* and viewing the films. Barker, Professor of Film and Television Studies at the University of Wales, put together an international consortium of researchers in twenty countries in order to conduct an international project studying the reception of Jackson’s films, which turned out to be the “largest piece of audience research ever undertaken,” with nearly 25,000 “usable responses collected. The principle method of data collection was a web-based questionnaire, available in fourteen languages, which included questions collecting quantitative data from participants (age, sex, profession, level of enjoyment of films, previous knowledge of the books, etc.) and open-ended questions such as who were their favorite characters, and which aspects of the films they found most disappointing. Barker provides clear charts illustrating the results of his questionnaire, and offers useful comments as to how one might interpret these results. For the purpose of the audience of the Tolkien Society he focuses primarily on the question “what can we learn about the ways knowledge of the books affects people’s responses to the film?” The most surprising finding was that “*The more people had read the books, the more likely it was that they would enjoy the film.*” As Barker notes, very often a deep knowledge of a literary work will result in a very critical assessment of a film adaptation of the work.

Some findings which are less surprising are that the higher the level of education of the participant, the more likely it was that they had read *The Lord of the Rings* more than once, or that the older the readers, the more disappointing they found the prominence of battle scenes in the films. (The fact that younger views did not mind the battle scenes as much is a sad commentary on the level of violence to which they have become accustomed in contemporary films). Repeat readers were more likely to find the absence of “The Scouring of the Shire” more

disappointing than participants who had read *The Lord of the Rings* only once, who also constituted a larger percentage of the group who had “no disappointments” in the film. One aspect of reading that emerged from the questionnaires that Barker found most intriguing was what he calls the “reading anew, reading as new process.” Barker was initially perplexed by the number of respondents who stated that they enjoyed re-reading *The Lord of the Rings* because each time they noticed something different. He later came to the conclusion that “a truly complicated process” is at work among repeat readers of *The Lord of the Rings*, a process in which readers approach the text as if they “don’t know the story, don’t know the outcomes, don’t know the fate of the characters and are ‘travelling with them’ as they face dangers.” Barton concludes that through such a process, the reader is able “to become innocent again,” which heightens their emotional reaction to and enjoyment of the text. Many repeat viewers also reported experiencing a similar sense of re-discovery of the story each time they viewed the films. Despite the fact that many Tolkien scholars are quite critical of Jackson’s films, for a plethora of reasons, what we can learn from Barker’s survey is that the narrative power of Tolkien’s story is strong enough to make readers/viewers want to accompany the Fellowship on their journey many times over, whether it is through the “Silver Screen” or the pages of their well-worn paperback editions.

Section Eleven: Tolkien’s World is the final grouping of papers in these proceedings. The study of philology and etymology leads naturally to an interest in what Tom Shippey calls “survivor-genres,” genres which have their origins in oral cultures, are very ancient, have generally been neglected by scholars, and yet are still very much a part of daily life and popular culture today. These include nursery-rhymes, riddles, names, fairy-tales and proverbs. In “A Fund of Wise Sayings: Proverbiality in Tolkien” Shippey laments the fact that “all of these genres have become *déclassé*. They have sunk down, like fairy-tales and nursery-rhymes, to being in the possession of children, or old wives . . . or like names are felt to have lost any meaning they once had.” This is arguably not the case for fairy tales, about which there has been a plethora of excellent scholarship in recent years by Jack Zipes, Maria Tatar and others, but scholarly editions of “proverbs, maxims or wise sayings” are scarce. *As They Say in Zanzibar: Proverbial Wisdom from Around the World* by David Crystal (a linguist, coincidentally) is a notable exception to this, but this was not yet in print at the time of the Tolkien conference. According to Shippey, the body of proverbial literature in Old English, Old Norse and Middle English literature is vast, but has been largely unexplored. Leave it to Tolkien, of course, to use proverbial sayings liberally throughout *The Lord of the Rings*, and in ways that are as varied and rich in context, form and

meaning as the tradition itself. This diversity of proverbial wisdom also reflects the diversity of cultures, languages and traditions held by the peoples of Middle-earth, and constitutes what Shippey's refers to as a "proverbial core" which is very close to the "structural core" of *The Lord of the Rings*.

For Shippey the magic wrought by Tolkien in his subcreated world is to present a world view, a set of truths and values, through the multiplicity of characters, all from different backgrounds and having different histories, who contribute in their own ways to a collective proverbial wisdom. Gimli's proverbial sayings tend to be uttered "in a rather grim and archaic style," and reflect the seriousness of purpose and taciturn manner of the dwarf, while the loquacious Merry and Pippin mimic the scattered-brained innkeeper Butterbur's use of trite sayings such as "it never rains but it pours . . . as we say in Bree" with "handsome is as handsome does . . . as we say in the Shire," in their Hobbit manner of diffusing tension and danger with humor and levity. These examples and others illustrate Shippey's point that "Tolkien . . . used proverbs for humour; and to set a scene; and to indicate cultural variation." Many proverbial sayings in *The Lord of the Rings* are more modern formulations of ancient proverbs. Shippey laments the lack of an annotated *The Lord of the Rings*, in the style of Douglas A. Anderson's *Annotated Hobbit*, which would provide possible sources for these, but he also identifies one type of proverb as being original to Tolkien: "proverbs about ignorance, about not knowing things." These are sayings that underscore the inscrutability of the future but at the same time stress the ability and indeed the necessity of individual characters to choose their own paths. Gandalf's statement, "even the very wise cannot see all ends" at the beginning of "The Shadow of the Past," and Galadriel's admonition not to let the scenes revealed in her mirror determine Sam and Frodo's actions are examples of what Shippey refers to as the "ideological core" of *The Lord of the Rings*, a kind of Providentialism in which a "free-will actions . . . weave together, in ways which not even the wisest can foresee."

Proverbial sayings are also the subject of Charles E. Bressler's essay "J.R.R. Tolkien's Love of Words: The Revelatory Nature of Tolkien's Aphorisms in *The Lord of the Rings*," but Bressler focuses his study on a particular type of saying, the aphorism, which can be roughly defined as a philosophical or wise saying that has not yet passed into common usage. Bressler reminds us of the Greek origins of this word and the concepts it encompasses. The term "aphorismos" meant "definition" in Ancient Greek, and was first used by the physician Hippocrates in his collection of medical principles, *Aphorisms*. Just as the primary goal of these principles or aphorisms was healing, Bressler argues, "many of Tolkien's aphorisms . . . help to muster courage, to provide encouragement, and to

bring a type of psychological, spiritual and even physical healing both to their speakers and the listeners.” While Shippey sees reflections of cultural diversity, personality, and different approaches to difficult situations in the large variety of proverbial sayings in *The Lord of the Rings*, Bressler attributes the differences in tone, content and diction of these utterances to hierarchy, both social and divine: “Characters’ words reflect their social class, their education or learning, their moral development, their ethics, and their overall relationship—either consciously or unconsciously—to Ilúvatar.” Accordingly, the characters higher up in what Bressler calls Tolkien’s “‘Great Chain of Being’ cosmogony,” such as Gandalf, a Maia, and Legolas, an Elf, use a higher form of diction, and utter aphorisms that are more original and deeper in philosophical content than the “lower ordered characters,” such as the Gaffer, a Hobbit of low station.

Of course, it is Tolkien’s sensitivity to the nuances of language that makes him so attentive to the correlation between a character’s social and educational background and his speech, but Tolkien was far from being a behaviorist or Social Darwinist, and so he allows for both spiritual and intellectual growth and the enhancement of social standing of even his humblest characters. This is reflected in Tolkien’s 1955 letter to the Houghton Mifflin company, in which he commented “The ennoblement of the ignoble I find specially moving” (*Letters* 220). Tolkien translated this ennoblement in terms of speech as well, and Bressler notes that aphorisms can also reveal a growth of character. “What a change in Frodo’s aphorisms after bearing the Ring to the Cracks of Doom and experiencing its full power. This life-changed hobbit says about the pathetic Saruman . . . ‘It is useless to meet revenge with revenge: it will heal nothing.’” Bressler notes the importance of choice and free will for Tolkien: “What is fascinating . . . is the connection Tolkien makes between a character’s choices and each character’s words. For Tolkien, a character can become wise by continually choosing the good, no matter what the character’s social class.” This wisdom that comes from “choosing to do good—to follow the will of Ilúvatar” allows Frodo and Sam become “agents of grace,” and therefore to “speak words of grace, words of healing, words of comfort.” Bressler attributes this linguistic transformation to a kind of divine grace that descends upon Frodo and Sam, which ultimately allows them to become “a theotokos despite social rank, education, or class.” Bressler states at the beginning of his essay that “Tolkien knew the etymology of countless words,” so let us check the etymology of *theotokos*. According to the Oxford English Dictionary, *theotokos* is “a title of the Virgin Mary as Mother of God,” from “θεός God + -τοκος bringing forth.” Somewhere about two-thirds of the way through his article, Bressler shifts his emphasis from philology to theology, with very bizarre results, to say the least. Frodo and Sam as “Mother of God?” And isn’t

the distinguishing characteristic of the concept of grace the fact that it is divinely bestowed upon an individual, irrespective of his or her good or bad deeds? (The Jesuits and the Jansenists nearly started another war of religion over this issue in the eighteenth century!) Bressler's interesting discussion of the origins of the term *aphorism* and its relationship to healing get lost in his forays into theology. He should stick with philology in the future.

The cosmology of Tolkien's subcreated world has been the subject of much discussion and disagreement since the publication of *Morgoth's Ring* (2002), the tenth volume of *The History of Middle-earth*. In "The Question of the Round Arda": An Abandoned Idea, or Another Perspective on Tolkien's Legendarium?" Michael Leśniewski refutes the objections of those who see the introduction of a new cosmology containing the concept of a round Arda (or Imbar, as it is called in the "Ainulindalë C" and "Myths Transformed") as something akin to literary heresy or treason on Tolkien's part, a betrayal of the "canon" of his legendarium, which includes the flat-earth cosmology contained in *The Silmarillion*, published by Christopher Tolkien in 1977. Leśniewski reminds us that *The Silmarillion* was never a part of "the framework of Tolkien's legendarium" at all, and that it is not the same "Silmarillion" mentioned in the appendices of *The Lord of the Rings*. He views it as analogous to Edith Hamilton's *Mythology* or Robert Graves's *Greek Myths*, a collection of stories edited and compiled by someone other than the original author. Had Tolkien been able to publish a "Silmarillion" in his lifetime, it might have been a very different work. Most importantly, Leśniewski rejects the idea that there is any sort of "canon of Tolkien texts"—the publication of *The History of Middle-earth* proves that there is not—and prefers to speak of "a corpus of mythological and historical texts." Another objection some have to the new round-Arda cosmology is that it is not as fully developed as the older, flat-Arda mythology, "with its many tales, stories and lays." But Tolkien continued to work on his secondary world after the publication of *The Lord of the Rings*, and he never strayed from his claim that he was reconstructing a history of the primary world, Earth, in his secondary world, which he never intended to be a sort of "literary Never Never Land," completely disconnected from reality.

Leśniewski argues that in including a round-earth concept in writings such as "The Drowning of Andûne" and "Athrabeth Finrod ah Andreth," completed between the 1940s and 1960s, Tolkien was in fact adhering to the principle stated in "On Fairy-stories" that fantasy must have an "inner consistency of reality" in order to succeed. Tolkien's changes also reveal his concern for continuing acceptance of his mythology among his readership: "you can make up stories of that kind [Flat Earth] when you live among people who have the same general back-

ground of imagination, when the Sun ‘really’ rises in the East and goes down in the West, etc. When however (no matter how little most people know or think about astronomy) it is the general belief that we live upon a ‘spherical’ island in ‘Space’ you cannot do this any more” (*Morgoth* 370). For Leśniewski this underscores Tolkien’s firm belief that fantasy and reason are not incompatible: “The keener and clearer is the reason, the better fantasy will it make” (*OFS* 65). Furthermore, Tolkien’s introduction of new source material—Gondorian and Númenorian archives in addition to the account of Aelfwine/Eriol—for the transmission of the stories of the creation of Arda, and his own pose as translator, compiler and editor of these tales, serves to add depth to the legendarium and to give it more credence as an authentic history. Just as historians do not necessarily view the existence of a multiplicity of sources as incompatible, but rather see them as presenting different world view and perspectives over time, Tolkien scholars and fans should welcome accounts of the “round-earth Arda” as “another mythological perspective, which moves Middle-earth closer to the reality we live in, and makes the secondary reality more convincing.”

In her fascinating and informative essay “A Little Earth of his Own’: Tolkien’s Lunar Creation Myths,” Kristine Larsen offers scientific explanations for Tolkien’s reconfiguration of his mythical universe. Larsen focuses specifically on the origin of the moon, and why Tolkien abandoned his “canonical explanation of the moon as the last flower of the dying Telperion, the eldest of the Two Trees of Valinor,” in favor of more realistic theories. Like Leśniewski, Larsen stresses Tolkien’s concern for “the inner consistency” of his universe, and his insistence that Middle-earth was modeled after our Earth “in a time far before all recorded history.” Larsen also notes evidence from *Letters* and other sources that Tolkien had a keen interest in astronomy and was also well aware of contemporary theories concerning the nature and the origin of the moon. In the “Ainulundalë C*,” written probably between 1946-1948, Melkor seizes a portion of the Earth, makes it into a small planet for himself, and hurls it into space so that he will always be able to follow the Earth and observe everything that happens there. Larsen notes that in several respects this account of the creation of the moon is consistent with scientific reality: the Earth’s core is described as fiery, the Moon’s distance from the Earth has increased over time, and the Moon’s surface reflects the light of the sun. Alternate lunar creation myths can be found in “Myths Transformed,” texts dating from the late 1950s, which are also included in *Morgoth’s Ring*. Larsen argues that these myths—which she refers to as IIa and IIb—all reflect “the ongoing scientific debate concerning the origin of the Moon circa 1930-1960.” For example, in IIb, we read “some say that it was out of the Earth itself that Ithil was made” which is in keeping

with theories dating from the late nineteenth century postulating that the Moon had been formed from particles and material that had spun off the Earth. The same passage of IIB continues to explain that the Moon “was made of like things to the Earth,” (*Morgoth* 382), which is compatible with the theory of lunar fission developed in the 1870s by George H. Darwin, who held that the Earth and the Moon had once been part of the same mass. By the 1950s, the fission theory was viewed skeptically by the scientific community, but the educated population at large still held to the belief that the moon had come out of the Earth. The fact the Tolkien would, in Larsen’s words, “continue to search for balance between mythological aesthetics and scientific realism” indicates how seriously he took the art of subcreation, and the concern he had that his mythology be acceptable, both rationally and artistically, to his readers.

By comparison with the meticulously conceived cosmology, languages and history of his legendarium, and the richness of the descriptions of the natural world in *The Lord of the Rings*, the material culture of Tolkien’s subcreated world almost seems lacking. Tolkien himself was aware of this deficiency, and Dimitra Fimi begins her essay “Material Culture and Materiality in Middle-earth: Tolkien and Archaeology” with a quote from Tolkien in which he admits to this shortcoming: “I am more conscious of my sketchiness in the archaeology and *realien* than in the economics: clothes, agricultural implements, metal-working, pottery, architecture and the like” (*Letters* 196). Fimi explains that what Tolkien meant by “archaeology and *realien*,” is what scholars today call “material culture,” which includes the study of archaeology but does not evoke the “romantic” notion of searching for the remains of great lost civilizations amidst the ruins of palaces and temples. The study of material culture seeks to understand how people lived their daily lives based on a careful examination of all the physical evidence available, independent of written records. Of all the peoples of Middle-earth, Fimi finds that the cultures of Men and of the Hobbits have material cultures which are the most developed and which have the most similarities with actual historical cultures. The Gondorians and the Númenóreans bear resemblances to both the ancient Scandinavians and the Egyptians, while the people of Rohan are distinctly Anglo-Saxon, “both in terms of their language but also as far as their materiality is concerned.” However, this creates an historical inconsistency, as several thousand years separate the historical culture of the Egyptians from that of the Anglo-Saxons. In another letter, Tolkien explained “I could have fitted things in with greater verisimilitude, if the story had not become far too developed, before the question ever occurred to me” (*Letters* 283). To further complicate things, there are the Hobbits, to whom Tolkien once even referred as “an historical accident” (*Letters* 197)—and whom he described more than once

as typifying rural inhabitants of Warwickshire in the late Victorian era. Hobbits were not part of the mythical tales that Tolkien began writing during WWI, but he that found he had to integrate them into *The Lord of the Rings*, once a sequel of *The Hobbit* was demanded. Fimi asks “How can Middle-earth accommodate for such creatures and their own inconsistency?” What is interesting and quite remarkable is that for all its historical incongruities—literate and sophisticated Gondorians, the pre-literate warrior society of the Riders of Rohan, and the very middle-class, rural, pipe-smoking Hobbits, the Third Age of Middle-earth does have an “inner consistency of reality” that seems coherent to the reader. In Fimi’s analysis, this is because “it is mainly the romantic envisioning of a remote heroic past in Middle-earth that appeals to the reader, rather than any accuracy in the depiction of the material cultures of the peoples of Middle-earth.”

As an example of this romanticizing of the past, Fimi examines Tolkien’s use of the Sarehole Mill as a model for the Old Mill in Hobbiton. Drawing upon facts brought to light through the discipline of Industrial Archaeology, Fimi provides an informative summary of the history of the Sarehole Mill. The mill was originally used for corn grinding as long ago as 1562, and went through numerous transformations over the centuries—eventually acquiring a red brick building and a chimney—until it became an important site for the experimentation with steam, one of the main energy sources of the Industrial Revolution. (The mill stopped operating in 1919 and can be visited as a museum today.) In spite of the presence of the chimney and red brick building, Tolkien’s recollection of the Sarehole mill he knew during his childhood was of an old water mill located on a pond with swans, near a dell full of flowers. Fimi speculates that the mill had become idealized in Tolkien’s memory to such an extent that it was to figure prominently (in its romanticized version) in his drawings and sketches for *The Hobbit*, such as “The Hill: Hobbiton-across-the Water,” which subsequently greatly influenced descriptions of the Shire in *The Lord of the Rings*. Fimi’s essay gives us another insight into Tolkien’s extraordinary talent for mythopoeia: through Tolkien’s literary and artistic talent, a structure which was part of the material culture of the Industrial Revolution was transformed into a mythic symbol of the “lost Arcadia” represented by the Shire.

Sarehole Mill appears in the role it once played during the Industrial Revolution in *The Return of the King* when the Hobbits return to the Shire, where they see “the new mill in all its frowning and dirty ugliness: a great brick building straddling the stream, which it fouled with a steaming and stinking outflow” (*RK*, VI, viii, 296) as Natalya Prilutskaya notes in “The Problem of Machine Technology in *The Lord of the Rings*.” Prilutskaya compares the views of Tolkien and the existentialist philosopher Martin

Heidegger on handicraft and machine technology, the dangers of machine technology, and the role of machine technology and science in the pursuit of power. For Heidegger as for Tolkien, the problem with technology in general was that it was not used to promote progress in the sense of improving the human condition, but had become an end in itself. Both authors were reflecting on technology's threat to the essence and dignity of human beings at roughly the same time, during the first half of the twentieth century. Tolkien referred continuously to the dangers of technology and the industrialization of the English countryside in his *Letters*, and also addressed the issue in "On Fairy-stories" (1939) and in *The Lord of the Rings* (1954) and Heidegger's most significant philosophical critiques of technology appeared in his essays "The Age of the World Picture," published in 1938, and "The Question Concerning Technology" and "Science and Reflection," both published in 1953. Like Heidegger, Tolkien drew a sharp distinction between handicraft technology and modern machine technology, because the former does not alter or pose a threat to nature, while the latter exploits nature.

Prilutskaya draws an interesting parallel between the transformation of the old mill of the Shire into a water-polluting factory and Heidegger's example of old wooden bridges which were once built to accommodate the natural ebb and flow of rivers, as contrasted with electric power stations which transform rivers into hydraulic pressure suppliers. Prilutskaya notes that Heidegger and Tolkien both believed that technology was too easily used for the pursuit of power, but she argues that for Tolkien "machine technology is directly connected with the powers of evil and is in their service," while Heidegger saw machine technology as "a natural result of the development of European metaphysics and thinking of Modern Times." Even though Tolkien deplored the destructive capacity of machine technology, having witnessed its ravages first-hand during the Battle of the Somme, he did not, in Prilutskaya's view, perceive it as fundamentally changing "the very essence of man's nature," whereas Heidegger did. For Tolkien, even though machine technology was associated with evil, man still has a free will, and can at least attempt to resist corruption; Heidegger argued that in a machine-driven age, man loses his free will, and "can no longer choose to use or not to use machine technology." It seems to me that there is yet another difference between Tolkien's and Heidegger's approach to the question of technology and how one chooses to use it. While it is certainly true, as Prilutskaya notes, that Tolkien reveals a preference for fine craftsmanship and artistry over machine technology through the many fine examples of jewelry, textiles, masonry, armor, and metalwork produced by Dwarves, Elves, and Men that are prevalent throughout his works, he clearly believed that individuals could become as much corrupted by the work wrought by their own

hands as they could by the Machine. Fëanor's possessiveness of the magnificent Silmarils, the subcreation of his own divinely bestowed genius, is an example of this. Machine technology may have indeed transformed the world, but it did not transform human nature.

For Michael J. Colvin, it is Tolkien's emphasis on free will throughout *The Lord of the Rings* that sends the strongest message about how to resist power—be it political, technological, or military—and the temptation to use it. In “Frozen Nature: Abiding Technology in Tolkien's World,” Colvin argues that much as he deplored many aspects of technology, Tolkien did not see technology itself as intrinsically evil, but rather the uses people make of it. Again, the Sarehole/Shire mill is a useful symbol for understanding Tolkien's attitude toward technology. Colvin cites a letter Tolkien wrote in 1954 in which he admits that “it would no doubt be possible to defend poor Lotho's introduction of more efficient mills; but not of Sharkey and Sandyman's use of them.” (*Letters* 200) Tolkien was not, in Colvin's view, a Luddite, for throughout his legendarium he presents change as not only inevitable but even divinely ordained: “Eru Ilúvatar has decreed that his plan must unfold, change must occur; thus scientific and technological advancements are inevitable.” Colvin also notes that in another letter written in 1954, to Naomi Mitchison, Tolkien presents the Elves' resistance to change as a transgression against Ilúvatar, because they “wanted to have their cake and eat it: to live in the mortal historical Middle-earth because they had become fond of it . . . and so tried to stop its change and history, stop its growth, keep it as a pleasaunce” (*Letters* 197). For Colvin it is significant that the two main characteristics of the Rings of Power were that they could prevent change (as seen in the remarkably well-preserved one hundred and eleven year-old Bilbo) and that “they enhanced the natural powers of a possessor” (*Letters* 152). Thus resistance to change can be itself an abuse of power, a challenge to the natural unfolding of things.

In short, *The Lord of the Rings* is not so much about a conflict between Good and Evil or the contrast between Nature and Technology as it is about Power, although Colvin sees the “succor and regenerative power of Nature” as one antedote to “the lure of technological power.” Power can easily be abused and misused, but Tolkien gives his characters choices. Faramir, Gandalf and Galadriel all have the Ring within their grasp at some point, but understand that they would not be able to harness the power it would unleash in them, and so they choose leave it in the hands of Frodo. For Colvin it is the example of the Hobbits, “the best representatives of the common man,” who offer the most encouraging example, for if beings so “weak, unimpressive and simple” are able to resist the lure of absolute power of the Ring for so long, then surely twenty-first-century humankind can find “the means to exist and even thrive

uncorrupted in the modern age of the Domination of Man.” But the picture of free will and choice that Tolkien presents in the final chapters of *The Lord of the Rings* is perhaps more nuanced than Colvin sees it, for it is ultimately both Gollum’s and Frodo’s succumbing to the power of the Ring that leads to its destruction. In “Mount Doom,” when Gollum ambushes Frodo, who is so weak with exhaustion that Sam has to carry him, Frodo “fought back, with a sudden fury that amazed Sam, and Gollum also.” (RK, VI, iii, 220). Once he frees himself from Gollum’s grasp and makes his way to the rim of the fiery chasm into which he must throw the Ring, Frodo declares, “But I do not choose to do now what I came to do. I will not do this deed” (RK, VI, iii, 223). It is ironically Gollum’s last, desperate struggle with Frodo over the Ring that leads to the Ring’s destruction, as Gollum falls into the inferno, taking both the Ring and a bit of Frodo with him. The Ring of Power and Sauron’s Reign of Terror meet their end, but not through an act of free will.

The Lord of the Rings presents a bleak view of the dangers of the unfettered use of technology and science to humanity and the environment, but it also provides alternatives to a technology-centered human ecology. In “From Conqueror to Citizen: Tolkien’s Fantastic Ecology” Luke Niiler examines the concepts of “deep ecology” and “shallow ecology” and sees in *The Lord of the Rings* “a means of thinking about the relationship between culture and nature” and “a basis for taking ecologically sound action.” The Norwegian philosopher Arne Naess developed the ethic of “deep ecology,” which is founded on the belief that “all elements of nature have intrinsic value,” and that “humans cannot be separated from the rest of the natural world.” By contrast, “shallow ecology,” as analyzed by the Austrian physicist Fritjof Capra, “understands nature strictly in terms of its human utility,” and works in service to values of “expansion, competition, quantity and domination” (Capra 10). Niiler finds the values of both deep ecology and shallow ecology in Middle-earth. Saruman’s destruction of the forest for the purpose of fueling his furnaces is a clear example of the latter, while Treebeard and Tom Bombadil “recall what Naess would term a complex and diverse ecology, a rich ecosystem that can easily be destroyed by the terrible self-interest exacerbated by the One Ring.” The Hobbits are an interesting case in that they have been for the most part good stewards of Middle-earth, but owing to their lack of interest in the world around them, they have been oblivious to the fact that “the rest of Middle-earth has completely abandoned sound ecological principles that they themselves take for granted.” Through their travels to places like Fangorn and The Old Forest but also The Dead Marshes and Isengard, and their encounters with characters both kind and hostile to the environment, the Hobbits experience Tolkien’s notion of a “‘recovery’ of a clear view,” as expressed in “On Fairy-

stories.” It is in “The Scouring of the Shire,” however, that we find “the most explicit and familiar articulation of deep ecological ethics.” Frodo’s refusal to take up arms, even when there seems to be no other solution, his preference of clemency to revenge, his consideration of others’ well-being even before the interest of his beloved Shire “demonstrates a deep ecological sensibility at its finest,” in Niiler’s view. Frodo’s view does not prevail, and the Shire is liberated only at the expense of the lives of many Men and Hobbits, but Tolkien shows the reader that alternatives to the use of violence and power exist if we choose to “see ourselves as members of a vast interdependent system.”

Several essays examine particular aspects of the natural world and the role that they play, symbolic or other, in Tolkien’s legendarium. In “Niggle’s Picture—Parish’s Garden: Gardens in Tolkien’s Work,” Christian Weichmann examines gardens throughout Tolkien’s work, and finds that most of them share certain common features. In general gardens are highly desirable places that offer a feeling of safety because they tend to be designed and cared for by benevolent characters, and are usually protected by a hedge, wall or some other kind of barrier. Gardens also appear as places of temptation, however, as in Lothlórien, where Galadriel’s mirror tempts Sam—albeit for only a few moments—to abandon the quest and rush home to the Shire, or in the garden used by the cor-rigan to lure Aotrou in “The Lay of Aotrou and Itroun.” Some of these characteristics are shared with the Biblical Garden of Eden, and perhaps evoke for readers “distant reflections and memories of this garden in a fallen world.” Gardens can indeed ultimately prove to be perilous, such as the garden Aotrou dreams about in “The Lay of Aotrou and Itroun,” in which he sees himself walking with the children he hopes to have with Itroun. Weichman sees this as “an interesting anti-parallel to the garden from the Middle English poem *Pearl*,” because the garden of *Pearl*—perhaps a reference to the graveyard where the poet’s daughter lies—is “a place of loss, which finally leads to eternal hope,” whereas the garden in “The Lay of Aotrou and Itroun” is “a place of misleading hope, which finally leads to a complete loss.” One cannot speak of gardens without thinking of Sam Gamgee, of course, whom Weichman compares to the gardener Parish, Niggle’s neighbor in “Leaf by Niggle.” While the two characters are very different in terms of personality and relationship to the world around them, both “use their gardening skills to the common good.” Sam uses the earth from Galadriel’s orchard to enhance his own garden but also to help restore the Shire, and Parish counsels Niggle about which flowers to plant in “Niggle’s Parish,” an area that Niggle wishes to transform from his own private park to a public place of recreation. Tolkien no doubt would have agreed with the sentiment expressed in the last line of Voltaire’s satirical tale *Candide*, that before one can right

all the wrongs in the world, one has to “cultivate one’s own garden.”

Ian Russell Lowell begins his essay “Two Legs Bad, Four Legs Good. Eight Legs Evil?” with a reference to a farm rather than a garden, Orwell’s allegorical *Animal Farm*, in which animals act out the parts of members of a corrupt totalitarian regime. He then turns briefly to spiders, which he argues were chosen by Tolkien as the embodiment of evil because of the visceral response of fear that they provoke in many people (50% of men and 10% of women in the United Kingdom, according to Lowell, although he doesn’t give the source for these percentages). The next three pages of Lowell’s essay are quotations from the poem “The Vision of Empire,” and the play *The House of Octopus*, by Charles Williams, in which octopuses ostensibly represent evil and corruption. Lowell concludes that evil in fact “can be incarnated just as easily in us” and that creatures such as cephalopods and arachnids just “remind us of the dangers of corruption.” There is very little close analysis of any of these texts, nor is there a clearly defined thesis, and Lowell misses an opportunity to explore more deeply the ways that the contemporaries Orwell, Tolkien and Williams used allegory and fantasy to comment upon the ills of their century.

Anna Adamczyk also examines the personification of animals, plants, and other natural elements in “Tolkien and Nature.” For Adamczyk, *The Lord of the Rings* is in many ways a hymn to Nature, but a Nature which is not just content to provide a setting for young Tolkien and Edith’s walks through the woods during his convalescence in WWI, but rather a Nature “which is wild, uncontrollable; which Elves, Dwarves and Hobbits are afraid of: frost, snow, darkness, heat, earthquakes, wild woods, and animals, Caradhras, Mirkwood, Eryn Muil, the Valley of Gorogoroth etc.” In Adamczyk’s analysis, the juxtaposition between this “wild nature,” and the “nature cultivated and controlled by man” exemplified in the “meadows of Rohan, fields of Gondor,” and, one might add, the gardens of the Hobbits, is a legacy of the Nature-Culture dichotomy (with Culture having the upper-hand) promulgated by the European Enlightenment. Tolkien was heir to this world view, whether he approved of it or not. As a deeply religious man, Tolkien also presented the conflictual relationship between Man and Nature, according to Adamczyk, as the result of a Fall: “Men in Tolkien’s stories commit a sin, reject the Voice and become Melkor’s subjects . . . They try to bring Nature under control and finally dominate it and exploit it.” Adamczyk sees Dwarves as having a “rather neutral” attitude toward Nature, because they prefer mining to farming. This claim overlooks the tension that arises during the First Age between Yavanna, creator of the trees, and Aulë, when the latter reveals that he has created the Dwarves, who will need wood for building and for their forges. Yavanna pleads with Manwë to help protect her trees, and so

the Ents are created to be shepherds of the trees (S 46). The assertion that the Men's fear of Nature and their compulsion to dominate it stems from their "sin" of having rejected the voice of Ilúvatar also seems disputable, since many of the Elves also failed to follow the wishes of Ilúvatar, and commit many other heinous crimes such as the kinslaying, yet the Elves continue to have an almost symbiotic relationship with the natural world throughout the ages. Adamczyk strives too hard perhaps to see parallels between a pre-lapsarian Arda and the Garden of Eden, but she is absolutely right to see a connection between Tolkien's deep knowledge of the literature and languages of the early Middle Ages, a time when the separation between the animate and inanimate world was not so clear, and his envisioning of a world in which "nature is personified: foxes think, ravens speak," "plants and animals have souls" and stars are alive. This presentation of nature on "a human scale" is one of the reasons for the enduring appeal of Tolkien's books, especially in the increasingly nature-deprived atmosphere that we live in.

The Ents are an element of the natural world which environmentalists have used as a symbol of the revolt of Nature against its destruction. Tolkien saw them as much more, describing them in a letter to W. H. Auden as a combination of "philology, literature and life" (*Letters* 212). In "The Loss of the Entwives: the Biological Dimension of Gender Construction in *The Lord of the Rings*," Magarita Carretero-González examines the relationship between the Ents and the Entwives to shed light on Tolkien's construction of gender roles in *The Lord of the Rings*. Carretero-González rejects the views of feminist critics Catharine Stimpson and Brenda Partridge who, focusing their analysis on the female spider Shelob, categorically label Tolkien as a sexist or misogynist. At the same time, when Carretero-González polled members of the British Tolkien Society in 1995, she found that some female readers would have liked to see more female characters in *The Lord of the Rings*, or were disappointed that Éowyn renounces the sword for the spindle, as it were, when she becomes betrothed to Faramir. On the contrary, Carretero-González, argues, "with Éowyn Tolkien gives voice to the conflict experienced by an active woman who feels trapped by her body, having to fulfill the roles dictated by the society in which she lives." Furthermore, Carretero-González makes the important point that one needs to look at both female *and* male characters when analyzing gender in *The Lord of the Rings*, which "tells the story of the end of an age and the beginning of another." Éowyn comes from the warrior society of Rohan, in which bravery and prowess in battle are the highest values, whereas Faramir "is a new type of hero, one who knows that war is not an end in itself, or an honourable way to achieve glory." Thus when she sheds her role as shieldmaiden and vows to be "a healer, and love all things that grow,"

Éowyn embraces a the new heroic code embodied by Faramir, and joins the ranks of male characters such as Tom Bombadil and Frodo, who also reject war as a way of life.

It is the relationship between the Ents and Entwives however that Carretero-González finds most revealing. Because they “are part of a world that existed long before any human society was organized,” she argues that “gender roles in these should follow a more natural pattern, one almost exclusively biologically determined, and [which] offers new insights into Tolkien’s views concerning the differences between the genders.” Regarding the Entwives’ departure, which will necessarily lead to the extinction of their race, Carretero-González does not agree with Jane Chance’s analysis that “Tolkien intended to lay the responsibility for this estrangement on the Ents’ incapability of accepting female difference.” Rather, she finds that “Tolkien becomes subtly critical of the Entwives’ irresponsible decision to abandon their male counterparts in pursuit of their own interests, jeopardising with their action the continuation of their species.” In contrast to the Ents’ appreciation of trees and other growing things in their natural state, the Entwives wish to impose order on nature through gardening. They leave the Ents because they no longer need their male partners: “when females are given the possibility to pursue their own interests, a male is no longer needed to provide for them.” Through comparing the negative portrayal of the Entwives’ departure in the text of *The Lord of the Rings* with passages from Tolkien’s letters dealing with relations between the sexes, Carretero-González argues that Tolkien’s view on gender issues was indeed sexist, “not so much in the sense that he believed one gender to be superior to another, but rather in his conviction that gender differences made some occupations more suitable to men, while some were more appropriate to women.” If Tolkien really felt this way, one has to wonder how it was that he tutored and mentored so many female students, at a time when all fields of study at Oxford were not open to them.

C. Riley Augé’s essay “Crossing the Threshold: Doors and Other Passageways in Tolkien’s Words and Images” discusses the “archetypal, symbolic, and psychological meanings behind . . . omnipresent doors and other passageways” in Tolkien’s writings, sketches and drawings. As a result of her work compiling a comprehensive list of the passageway motif in *The Hobbit*, *The Lord of the Rings*, and *The Silmarillion*, Augé concludes that “virtually every page in *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* refers directly or indirectly to a door, window, gate, or other passageway that leads to a change in a character’s physical, metaphysical, or metaphorical state.” Since Tolkien worked so meticulously, these references to passageways and openings were deliberate and highly significant. Augé explores four functions of openings in Tolkien’s graphic and written work:

“Transitions, Barriers, Demarcations, and Framing Devices.” On the theme of transitions, Augé notes that “doors, gates, windows and other openings express the concept of transition from one state of existence to another,” or “the idea of ‘becoming’”; in other words, a change that is about to take place in a character. In *The Lord of the Rings* there are numerous instances in which Tolkien signals a change in a character’s status through “passing through a door or crossing a threshold.” Frodo shuts and locks the door of Bag End before leaving the Shire, Sam crosses the Brandywine River for the first time, the Hobbits enter into the Old Forest; the physical transition from one type of place to another reflects the fact that the Hobbits’s essence will be forever changed by their experiences. Thresholds can also serve as barriers, or as liminal spaces, as is the case with Tom Bombadil’s Old Forest, which he oversees independently from anyone else in Middle-earth, and protects against evil. Augé notes how the Hobbits are “drawn to this barricaded land against their will,” as if they are meant to receive respite, replenishment and wisdom before carrying on their journey. The third function of openings is demarcation, which Augé describes as “the threshold between alternate realms.” Frodo often is able to explore alternate realities through dreams, where “the dreamer never questions the irrational or impossible occurrences.” Windows as openings often provide the fourth function, framing, “a means by which to assess the world before using the door to step into it.” Augé finds Tolkien to be almost obsessed with windows, and refers to one of his letters (she doesn’t give the exact reference, but it is in *Letters* 81), in which he mentioned the idea of writing a story around the premise of a person whose life revolves around the comings and goings he witnesses from a window. In any case, Augé’s overview of the significance of passageways is insightful and encourages us to pay more attention to such details in Tolkien’s work.

Tolkien’s desire to create a mythology for England is well known, and much has been written about the myths and legends that inspired the characters and creatures in his work. But what about climate? From which myths do the richly described landscapes and climes of *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Silmarillion* draw their inspiration? Or, stated differently, what impact does climate have on myth? In “Influence of Climate on Myth: Tolkien’s Theory and Practice” Rhona Beare argues that Tolkien’s mythic universe has an atmosphere that is decidedly Celtic. Before she reaches this conclusion, Beare compares statements by C. S. Lewis, Tolkien and others on the differences between Mediterranean myths and Northern ones, and how the gods and their stories were seemingly shaped by climate and landscape. She quotes Simon Schama, who states in *Landscape and Memory* that he cannot think of the Grimm Brothers’ tales without imagining a forest (Schama 107), and from Donald Mackenzie,

author of *Teutonic Myth and Legend*, who saw a connection between stormy, gloomy skies and a gloomy Teutonic mythology. C.S. Lewis was also sensitive to the effect of landscape and climate on myth, writing in *Surprised by Joy*, “I felt keenly the difference between the stony and fiery sublimity of Asgard, the green, leafy amorous, and elusive world (of Celtic myth), the harder, more defiant, sun-bright beauty of Olympus” (23). Tolkien agreed that the “tone and quality” of the mythology he hoped to write for Britain should “be redolent of our ‘air’ (the clime and soil of the North West, meaning Britain and the hither parts of Europe: not Italy or the Aegean, still less the East)” (*Letters* 44). When Beare looks closely at the “clime and soil” of Middle-earth she finds that the Misty Mountains and Blue Mountains evoke the landscape of Celtic mythology, in which “mist has a special function . . . it marks the frontier between our world and the Other World.” Beare also notes the presence of sylphs, spirits of the air that became particularly popular during the Celtic Revival, in *The Book of Lost Tales*. Another Celtic influence comes from Yeats’s poem “The Song of the Wandering Aengus,” in which the narrator’s encounter with a fairy is heralded by the fluttering of white moth; in the tale of Beren and Lúthien, white moths also announce Lúthien’s appearance. There are also similarities between Yeats’s maiden and the description of Lúthien in *The Lays of Beleriand*.

Beare ponders the effect of climate on language, noting that in Greek and Latin and the Romance languages, the words for “sun” are masculine. In the Celtic and Germanic languages, “sun” is feminine. This gendering of the Sun is carried over into mythology: “it has been suggested that in hot countries like Italy the sun is fierce, like a warrior, and therefore is male; in the countries where Celtic and Germanic languages are spoken the sun is milder and comforting, like a mother, and therefore is female.” Beare concludes: “if this is true, then climate influences myth. Tolkien’s *Silmarillion* is a mythology for England, and therefore the sun-tree is feminine and there is a sun-goddess, Arien.” A linguist as accomplished as Tolkien was certainly aware of the different genders assigned to the sun by Romance, Celtic and Germanic languages, and so it is fair to assume that it was no coincidence that he ascribed the female gender to the tree Laurelin whose last fruit is used to form the sun, and to Arien, the Maia who is chosen to guide the vessel of the sun. But Arien bears little in common with a mild and comforting mother. In the chapter “Of the Sun and the Moon and the Hiding of Valinor” she bears more resemblance to the Greek warrior-sun god Apollo, by virtue of her description as a “spirit of fire” who resisted the corruption of Melkor and a “naked flame, terrible in the fullness of her splendor” who dazzles the eyes of the Eldar. As Marjorie Burns, Kate Karagoergi, and Sash Uusjärvi note in their respective essays, Tolkien sought inspiration

in Celtic but also Greek, Germanic, and Finnish mythology as he shaped his own unique “corpus” of myths.

In “Dealing with Elvish Languages” Carolina A. Panero hopes to refute the view that the study of Tolkien’s languages is merely a passing trend related to fandom, but her essay is so full of incomplete or inaccurate information or data gathered randomly that it almost serves to reinforce this view. She begins with a definition of language which is very restrictive, “a system of communication by written and spoken words which is used by the people of a particular country or area.” Such a definition excludes languages that only exist in oral form—the vast majority of the world’s languages—or that are spoken by members of a diaspora—and her citation of the source is incomplete (only the author’s last name and a page number), so we don’t know if this definition comes from a linguist or a popular work on language. Following this, Panero makes a number of erroneous and imprecise statements about language, for example, that there are only sixty “official” languages in the world, giving no indication of what definition of “official” she is working with. If she means languages given legal status by sovereign countries, then there are twenty-three official languages in Europe alone,⁵ and well over one hundred official languages in the world⁶ not counting what Panero refers to as “created, archaic, or artificial languages.” Most languages in the world do not have official status, but they are languages nonetheless: linguists place the overall number of languages in the world to be between 5,000-7,000.⁷ Panero is also confused about the difference between an unofficial language and a dead language: she refers to Esperanto as a “dead language,” because “it was not recognized as an official language by any international organization” whereas in fact Esperanto has been recognized by the United Nations and UNESCO as a medium for international understanding, and *Ethnologue*, the encyclopedia of languages of the world, estimates that it has as many as 2 million speakers and is spoken in 115 countries. Once Panero gets past her rocky introductory paragraph, she focuses on two main points: why Tolkien created his languages and why people are attracted to them. On the first point, her essay repeats facts that are well known to most readers of Tolkien: the great pleasure he took in languages from an early age, and the role of Welsh and Finnish in the creation of Sindarin and Quenya. On the topic of the attraction of Tolkien’s languages for readers, Panero quotes from a couple of individual e-mails she received (without noting how she solicited this information—if these e-mails were part of a survey, for example and if so, how large her sample was), websites and on-line discussion groups. She notes some scholarly sites, such as Carl Hostetter’s “Linguistic Resource Page,” but also non-scholarly discussion forums such as “Elfling,” an on-line Yahoo group. The use of informally collected data

and websites related to fandom is unfortunate, because it plays into the hands of those critics who dismiss Tolkien's works as too much a part of popular culture to have any intrinsic intellectual or artistic merit. Panero cites fantasy writer Neil Gaiman as deploring this academic prejudice, "There's something about fantasy that rubs critics the wrong way—and so does popularity."⁸ Panero attempts to counterbalance the negative effect (according to the literary establishment) of the mass appeal of Tolkien's languages by declaring "it is striking to see that many people that become interested in making a study of Elvish languages are professionals related to the field of language and science such as linguistics, philology, astronomy, literature, language teachers, translators, among others," but she doesn't quote from any of these professionals. Panero also notes that there are college courses that teach Tolkien's languages, and yet she doesn't give any specific course titles or even mention which departments these courses are taught in. Panero's efforts to defend Tolkien's languages are well-intentioned, but had she really wanted to write a convincing rebuttal to the naysayers in the literary establishment, she would have done better to give examples from more scholarly sources and to get her own linguistic facts straight.

The theories of French philosopher, anthropologist and erotic novelist Georges Bataille (1892-1962) may seem an unlikely critical framework within which to analyze *The Lord of the Rings*, and yet Benjamin Rollins's essay "I will [not] serve the master of the Precious': Bataille's Economy in Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*," purports to "patch a critical crevice in the discussions of the societies in Tolkien's epic by looking at Tolkien's epic as a functioning economy." Rollins claims that "Bataille's ideas . . . deconstruct the overt morality of the work and thus broaden decades of Tolkien criticism," in which Rollins finds "relatively few texts that address the text itself." Rollins takes to task those few (in his view) critics who do address the text, such as Jane Chance and Verlyn Flieger, because they either "avoid discussion of the society of Middle-earth or banally reduce the discussion of societies to a struggle of good versus evil within the context of Christian temptation and redemption." However Rollins's approach is equally as reductionist in that it focuses exclusively on a rigorous Bataillan analysis of the material economy of Middle-earth, which by its rigidity shuts the door on any other type of reading of the text. Rollins seems to relish the outcry his essay might create among Tolkien critics, by stating provocatively that "before he was ever a perverse philosopher, critic, and theorist, Bataille was a devout Catholic," then adding in a footnote "perhaps before Tolkien was a devout Catholic, he was a pervert." Such comments are beside the point; what matters is how the theories of Bataille might contribute to our understanding of *The Lord of the Rings*.

Rollins summarizes his Bataillian reading of *The Lord of the Rings* thus: “the dichotomy of Bataille’s economy locates work, production, increase, usefulness, and prosperity in homogeneity whereas waste, counterproductivity, decay, disruption and decadence define heterogeneity. Homogeneity requires servitude and conformity; heterogeneity rejects them both. In this economic struggle of Middle-earth, the homogeneity, represented by the men, Elves, Dwarves, and Hobbits, vainly tries to eliminate the heterogeneous ‘other,’ represented by Sauron, Saruman, and the Orcs.” Rollins’s application of Bataille’s definitions of “homogeneity” and “heterogeneity” to the characters in *The Lord of the Rings* is problematic from the start, since if any group represents “homogeneity,” with its requisite “servitude and conformity,” it is surely Sauron, Saruman and the Orcs, and not the Men, Elves, Dwarves, and Hobbits. Rollins justifies the placing of the Free Peoples of Middle-earth within the “homogenous society,” in which “each man is worth what he produces; in other words, he stops being an existence *for itself*,” by simply noting that “the nine that comprise the Fellowship have their names and thus their identities subsumed by their function.” Even a superficial reading of the text of *The Lord of the Rings* reveals that this is clearly not the case. While Legolas, Gimli, Sam, Frodo, Merry, Pippin, Boromir and Aragorn represent their respective peoples in the Fellowship, and willingly accept Gandalf as their leader, their individual talents, personalities, and contributions to the quest are highlighted throughout the narrative, and they are referred to primarily by their given names. Furthermore, Tolkien’s careful crafting of the plot of *The Lord of the Rings*, which breaks off into three separate threads at the end of *The Fellowship of the Ring*, emphasizes the separate struggles and challenges of Frodo and Sam, Merry and Pippin, Legolas, Aragorn and Gimli.

Of course the major pitfall of imposing a single critical reading on a text is that it does not allow for complexity of plot or character development. Even the virtue of pity is reduced in this analysis to an economical function, since the sparing of Gollum’s life by Bilbo and Frodo, which ultimately permits Gollum to play the role of “the sacrificial animal” (another important Bataillian concept) and destroy himself and the Ring in Mount Doom, “allows production to continue.” Rollins’s conclusion that the *The Lord of the Rings* “demonstrates the dependency of the two economies and the futility and foolishness of one economy trying to expunge the other,” on the surface seems contradicted by the end of the War of the Ring, and the restoration of peace and order in Middle-earth. Sauron is defeated, a king returns to Gondor, the Hobbits take back the Shire from Saruman/Sharkey, the Elves continue their departure to the Undying Lands, the Wild Men return to their mountains, and the men who fought with Sauron are granted amnesty. But what of the Orcs?

Tolkien says nothing of their fate. If we are to assume that every last one of them was not killed, then Rollins is right on this point: they have not been “expunged,” and will perhaps continue to play some role in the economy of Middle-earth.

Christopher Kreutzer’s essay “Numbers in Tolkien” grew out of an on-line discussion on the subject which prompted him to begin compiling a list of symbolic uses of numbers in Tolkien’s work. Kreutzer then carried out a more comprehensive survey on Tolkien’s use of numbers, the results of which are published as an appendix to his essay. Kreutzer makes a useful distinction between numbers which have what he calls “story-internal symbolism,” or symbolism “that arises from, and is part of, the story,” and “story-external symbolism,” in which numbers or other symbolic devices may have significance outside of the text. Kreutzer’s analysis focuses primarily on story-internal symbolism, examples of which can be found in “the seven stars on Aragorn’s banner,” which Kreutzer traces back to the “gift of the palantíri to the faithful of Númenor . . . and possibly even further back than that,” and the symmetry between the nine riders and the nine rings given to mortal men. The numbers seven and nine seem to have had special significance for Tolkien because in early drafts of *The Fellowship of the Ring*, the number of members of the Fellowship is seven. In the “palantíri verse,” which Gandalf recites as he rides with Pippin to Minas Tirith, Kreutzer notes a possible influence of alliteration on Tolkien’s choice of the number seven in the verse “Seven stars and seven stones and one white tree.” Tolkien commented in a letter to W. H. Auden written in 1955 (*Letters* 217) that this “rhyme of lore” had been running through his mind, and that it wasn’t until he wrote the episode in which Saruman tosses the Orthanc-stone out of his tower window that he matched up this stone with the stones in the rhyme, and came upon the idea of the palantíri. Kreutzer sees this as a fascinating example of Tolkien’s creative process: “just as Tolkien wrote stories that were inspired by his languages, this seems to be an example of Tolkien writing a story that was inspired by an alliterative ‘rhyme of lore.’” Kreutzer traces the use of other numbers in Tolkien’s work and explains how in each case the numbers either have particular meaning within the narrative, or resonate with readers as number with mythical meaning. Kreutzer concludes that “Tolkien’s use of numbers reinforces the sense of an underlying history and tradition on Middle-earth and that Tolkien also demonstrates in his writings an awareness of the way numbers are used in mythology, legends and literature.”

As in the title of these conference proceedings, “The Ring Goes Ever On” but this review now comes to an end, and I hope it will be seen as a useful guide to the contents of these very rich volumes, covering some of the many paths that Tolkien’s works invite us to follow. There seem

to be as many approaches to appreciating and understanding Tolkien's work as there are readers of *The Lord of the Rings*, and while the quality of the essays is uneven both in form and in content, there is much to learn overall from these proceedings. These two hefty volumes will certainly enhance the personal library of students and scholars of Tolkien, and are a "must" for university libraries.

NOTES

- 1 The authors cite an interview of McKellan by Steve D. Greydanus at <http://www.decentfilms.com>
- 2 Ulrich cites this as from Isaacs and Zimbardo's *Tolkien and the Critics: Essays on J.R.R. Tolkien's The Lord of the Rings*, but this essay actually appears in Isaacs and Zimbardo's follow-up *Tolkien: New Critical Perspectives*.
- 3 A message about Messages/Plausibility in Fantasy/Plausibility Revisited. www.ursulaLeGuin.com
- 4 Williams lists the source of Reid's analysis as a handout used for a talk given by Reid in 2004, "Tolkien's Book/Jackson's Film," but does not list the venue.
- 5 See website "European Commission: Multilingualism," http://ec.europa.eu/education/languages/languages-of-europe/index_en.htm
- 6 Various websites list the languages recognized officially by countries around the world. See for example "Wolfstone Translation," http://www.wolfstone.co.uk/official_languages.php; "Infoplease," <http://www.infoplease.com/ipa/A0855611.html>; The World Fact Book, Central Intelligence Agency, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/fields/2098.html>,
- 7 Linguists differ in their estimation of how many language are spoken in the world today, partly because of differences in how they classify languages, and partly because of the unreliability of "official" documents such as census results. Peter Austin puts the number of languages at roughly 6,900 in *1000 Languages: The Worldwide History of Living and Lost Tongues*, while Claude Hagège gives a more conservative estimate of 5,000 in *On the Death and Life of Languages*.
- 8 The only reference Panero provides for this quote is "Tolkien Online website, 2003."

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The Year's Work in Tolkien Studies 2008

DAVID BRATMAN and MERLIN DE TARDO

Much of the activity in Tolkien studies goes on at scholarly conferences, and volumes of conference proceedings have often been notable among publications in the field. Such volumes have been important contributions in many years, and they were particularly prominent in 2008. The largest item in the year's Tolkien studies bibliography was *The Ring Goes Ever On: Proceedings of the Tolkien 2005 Conference: 50 Years of The Lord of the Rings* (Coventry, England: Tolkien Society, 2008), edited by Sarah Wells. This two-volume set, issued also on CD-ROM, includes some 97 papers from an anniversary conference in Birmingham sponsored by the Tolkien Society. Most of the contributions are short—presentation slots at the conference were 30 minutes, and few of the papers are much expanded—and some are notably sketchy in content. A few of the pieces from foreign contributors are, forgivably, in less than perfect English; the collection is minimally edited. The topic spread is very wide and some of the papers are most valuable; altogether, this is the single most extensive multi-author collection of articles on Tolkien ever published. A few of the contributions have been published elsewhere in the interim; most of these having been covered in previous installments of the “Year's Work,” they are not discussed here.

Four other important collections of the year also had their origins as collections of conference presentations. *Tolkien's Shorter Works: Proceedings of the 4th Seminar of the Deutsche Tolkien Gesellschaft & Walking Tree Publishers Decennial Conference* (referred to as “the Jena Conference 2007” on the cover), edited by Margaret Hiley and Frank Weinreich (Zurich: Walking Tree, 2008), brings together papers on *Farmer Giles of Ham*, *Smith of Wootton Major*, “Leaf by Niggle,” and some poetry. Most of its articles were published in the Deutsche Tolkien Gesellschaft journal, *Hither Shore* 4 (2007), whose English-language contents were covered in the 2007 “Year's Work”; the Walking Tree edition's new contributions, and those first published in English here, are discussed below. *Tolkien's The Lord of the Rings: Sources of Inspiration*, edited by Stratford Caldecott and Thomas Honegger (Zurich: Walking Tree, 2008), concentrates on biographical, philosophical, and moral influences rather than literary sources. *The Mirror Crack'd: Fear and Horror in J.R.R. Tolkien's Major Works* (Newcastle, UK: Cambridge Scholars, 2008) gets a fair amount of mileage out of what might seem at first glance a limited topic. *Lembas-extra: Proceedings of Unquendor's 5th Lustrum* ([Leiden, Netherlands]: Tolkienshop.com, 2008), something between an anthology and a journal issue, published

on behalf of the Dutch Tolkien Society “Unquendor,” concentrates on philology and translations.

Significant scholarly monographs of the year include *Tolkien, Race and Cultural History: From Fairies to Hobbits* by Dimitra Fimi and *The Evolution of Tolkien’s Mythology: A Study of the History of Middle-earth* by Elizabeth A. Whittingham, both of them large-scale surveys of Tolkien’s creative project, both chronicling its transformation from a mythology into a history and theology, but each taking entirely different angles. Fimi’s, as her title suggests, takes a cultural, historical, and biographical approach to the whole *legendarium*, from the early poetry and including *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*, while Whittingham concentrates on the theology and mythology in *The Book of Lost Tales* and the “Silmarillion.” Fimi’s book received the Mythopoeic Scholarship Award in Inklings Studies in 2010. *The Lord of the Rings and the Western Narrative Tradition* by Martin Simonson, an attempt to integrate Tolkien’s work into the various narrative genres with which it is often loosely associated, is also an important work. *Tolkien On Fairy-stories*, edited by Verlyn Flieger and Douglas A. Anderson, brings the documentary history and annotation project of Tolkien’s works, previously applied to *The Silmarillion*, *The Lord of the Rings*, *The Hobbit*, *Farmer Giles of Ham*, *Smith of Wootton Major*, and “*Beowulf*: The Monsters and the Critics,” to the essay “On Fairy-stories.”

Biographical studies made a significant return to the forefront of Tolkien studies this year, with new geographically oriented books on Tolkien’s connections with Oxford and with Gedling (Nottinghamshire), an important research study on Tolkien’s college career by John Garth, and many analytical works. Religious studies of Tolkien have shifted from the devotional to the moral, with major clumps of articles on the religious sensibility of Tolkien’s work and the ethical theology of evil. Philological work on Tolkien’s use of English has continued to expand and to cover stylistics as well as vocabulary.

Journal publications of the year include volume 5 of the journal in hand, *Tolkien Studies: An Annual Scholarly Review*; two double issues of *Mythlore* from the Mythopoeic Society, Vol. 26 no. 3/4 (issues 101/102, dated Spring/Summer 2008) and Vol. 27 no. 1/2 (issues 103/104, dated Fall/Winter 2008), each with several articles on Tolkien; two issues of *Mallorn* from the Tolkien Society, issues 45 (Spring 2008) and 46 (Fall 2008), introducing the journal’s new frequency (twice yearly instead of annually), new editor (Henry Gee), and new publication policy (briefer articles, with more reviews and fiction); issue 2 (Fall 2008) of *Silver Leaves . . . from the White Tree of Hope* from the White Tree Fund of Canada, this issue with the special topic “The Inklings”; and the July-August 2008 issue of *St. Austin Review*, a special issue on the topic “The Catholic Genius of J.R.R. Tolkien.”

Authorship of the individual sections of the “Year’s Work” that follow are designated by their author’s initials: David Bratman [DSB] and Merlin DeTardo [MTD].

WORKS BY TOLKIEN

[DSB]

Tolkien’s essay “On Fairy-stories” joins the now long list of his works which have been reprinted with commentaries, drafts, and supplementary texts. The title, *Tolkien On Fairy-stories: Expanded Edition, with Commentary and Notes*, edited by Verlyn Flieger and Douglas A. Anderson (London: HarperCollins, 2008), is slightly misleading: this is not a new edition of a previously-published book called *Tolkien On Fairy-stories*, but the first-ever separate book publication of the essay. The volume includes the complete text of its final form, as corrected by Christopher Tolkien for *The Monsters and the Critics and Other Essays* in 1983, and diplomatic copies of two previously unpublished manuscripts: an incomplete short version that was perhaps the script Tolkien had before him as he gave it as a lecture at St. Andrews University in 1939, and a much longer rewriting, with many cancellations and inserts, that was the rough draft for the final copy for its first publication in 1947. The first manuscript roughly matches the descriptions given in two unsigned newspaper reports on the lecture, from *The Scotsman* and *The St. Andrews Citizen*, which are also reprinted here. The second draft is of particular interest for a number of sections Tolkien omitted from the final essay, apparently for being too discursive. Notes explaining the exact nature of his argument against the motor car and airplane fouling civilization (269-70, 275-77) are most valuable to understanding his thinking, as are pungent expansions on children’s dislike of infantile fairydom (210, 248-49) and modifications of his definitions. Each of the three texts is accompanied by textual annotations by the editors, who also provide an introduction, notable for a lucid summary of the essay’s argument (10-14), and a lengthy history of the essay: how Tolkien came to be asked to deliver the lecture, what he did to prepare it, and the revisions he put it through for published editions in 1947 and 1964. Some of the editorial points are awkwardly put, but others are trenchant and most are highly valuable.

“Chaucer as a Philologist: *The Reeve’s Tale*,” originally published in *Transactions of the Philological Society* in 1934, is the longest of Tolkien’s scholarly articles not to have been previously reprinted. It appears in *Tolkien Studies* 5: 109-71, with corrections from Tolkien’s personal copy. Tolkien posits that Chaucer in this poem was a pioneer in English dialect humor, setting East Anglian characters against others from northern England (Northumberland or County Durham), whose speech was

strange and humorous to speakers of southern English. Tolkien finds Chaucer quite accurate and even learned in his depiction of Middle English dialectal variation.

To serve as textual supplement to this article, *Tolkien Studies* 5: 173-83 reprints Tolkien's edition of the Middle English text of the poem, published as a pamphlet in 1939. Titled "*The Reeve's Tale: Version Prepared for Recitation at the 'Summer Diversions,' Oxford: 1939,*" this is slightly abridged, emphasizes the dialect spellings more than in previous editions, and includes a prefatory note by Tolkien addressing the dialect clash.

"The Battle of the Eastern Field" is a deliberately fragmentary poem by Tolkien published in his school magazine, *The King Edward's School Chronicle*, in 1911, describing a school rugby match in elevated language parodying Macaulay's *Lays of Ancient Rome*. It is reprinted in *Mallorn* 46: 20-22, together with a lengthy commentary by Maggie Burns (15-20), explaining school references, finding the parallels to Macaulay, and noting similarities to Tolkien's later work: the evocation of mythology and the presence of human sympathy.

Tales from the Perilous Realm (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2008; this edition first published London: HarperCollins, 2007) is an expanded edition of a 1997 collection, bearing the same title, of Tolkien's shorter works. This edition includes *Roverandom*, *Farmer Giles of Ham*, *The Adventures of Tom Bombadil*, *Smith of Wootton Major*, and both parts of *Tree and Leaf*. Illustrations are by Alan Lee, who provides a brief Afterword (401-3) on his response to Tolkien's tale-telling skills. There is also a new Introduction by Tom Shippey (ix-xxviii), describing the origin of each story and identifying some of its important allusions, placed within a context comparing Tolkien's burgeoning creativity with the allegory of Niggle's ever-growing tree painting.

GENERAL WORKS

[DSB]

The Evolution of Tolkien's Mythology: A Study of the History of Middle-earth by Elizabeth A. Whittingham (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2008) is a pioneering study in the literary style and value of the "Silmarillion" legends, primarily their prose manifestations, as presented in *The History of Middle-earth*. After a largely superfluous biographical chapter (interesting for a digression into C. S. Lewis's influence on "The Lay of Leithian"), the core of the book consists of six useful essays each discussing a major philosophical or theological theme of the *legendarium*: its cosmogony (the creation in the "Ainulindalë"), theogony (the pantheon of Valar in the "Valaquenta"), cosmology (the physical world of Eä), thanatology (death and immortality among Elves and Men), and eschatology (forecasting of

the end of creation). Though each topic is considered as Tolkien treated it throughout his career, in general the earlier chapters find the most source material in early work in *The Book of Lost Tales*, while the later chapters concentrate on Tolkien's work of later date. Each chapter begins with a summary of the topic's treatment in Biblical and mythological sources that may be presumed to have inspired Tolkien, before turning to his own treatment of the material. Whittingham is sometimes low on detail, repeats herself, and occasionally gets excessively caught up in details of minor wording changes. One recurring problem is the use of phrases like "final text" to describe what Whittingham clearly understands to be only the last version, as there is no final version of anything in the "Silmarillion." Generally, however, this is a clear consideration of the broad trends of the evolution of both content and style of the work. She shows Tolkien evolving from mythographer to philosopher, changing his model from pagan mythology to Biblical theology (a useful context for discussing the Valar as beings whose nature lies between pagan gods and Biblical angels), slowly leaching female power out of the story and then beginning to restore it, dealing with the cosmological and literary effects of the Round World version, and balancing his pessimistic nature with his ultimately optimistic theology.

J.R.R. Tolkien: The Books, The Films, The Whole Cultural Phenomenon (Maidstone, UK: Crescent Moon, 2008) is an appropriate title for Jeremy Mark Robinson's huge (801 pages; 808 pages in the 2010 second edition from the same publisher, which the copy here reviewed came from), small-print collection of his assorted thoughts on topics such as literary style and plot themes in a Tolkien canon limited to *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Silmarillion*. Approximately the first 40% of the book is on Tolkien and his cultural phenomenon, the rest on Jackson and his, but that's about the only organization the book has. Robinson jumps randomly from topic to topic and returns to previous topics frequently; the labeling of some chapters on the movies as "pre-release thoughts" and "first reactions" also contributes to the impression that the contents are unedited and undigested. The style is informal, even brash, and, though many parts are introductory in approach, the sheer accumulation of detail would deter readers not already well familiar with the subjects. From his perspective as primarily a movie critic, Robinson shows occasional insight into Tolkien's practical storytelling techniques, particularly his use of viewpoint. A note that many of Tolkien's viewpoint characters are poets (63) and a discussion of the place of veneration of the past in Middle-earth (93) may serve as examples. But Robinson is close to obtuse on the moral imperatives of the plot and on the inherent complexity of the story. Like other writers who view Tolkien's vast canvas as if it occupied the limited scope of a war game board, he claims that Sauron

could easily have foiled Frodo's quest and captured the Ring if he and the orcs hadn't been terminally stupid (281-82, 320, 323), while simultaneously complaining that the Fellowship's victory is overdetermined and predestined (306-9), ignoring the effort and daring required to get there. Even more constrictingly, he criticizes the Wise for not figuring out earlier that the Necromancer in Dol Guldur was Sauron, on the grounds that who else could it be? Robinson's chapters on sources and critical topics rely too much on unannotated lists, and for biographical facts and critical insights he relies to the greatest extent on the worst of writers on Tolkien. Chapters on the movies include extremely detailed and often useful itemizations of the differences between them and the book. Robinson is critical of the movies' lapses and longueurs from a position of basic sympathy ("So much is lost," as he wittily quotes Jackson's Galadriel, 348), but though his grasp of Jackson's aesthetic goals enables his understanding of where the movies fail to achieve them, Tolkien's goals and strategies continue as often as not to elude him.

Robert Rorabeck defines *Tolkien's Heroic Quest* (Maidstone, UK: Crescent Moon, 2008) as a work of social criticism. His touchstone is *ofermod*, which he defines as "excessive pride and brashness of heroes" (38), as described by Tolkien in "The Homecoming of Beorhtnoth Beorhthelm's Son." This only takes Rorabeck so far, however, as the only Tolkien-created hero discussed who strongly suffers from *ofermod* is Túrin (Fëanor, an equally good example, is relegated to an appendix). Rorabeck's counter to *ofermod* is the faithful servant, idealized as Sir Gawain (relevant due to Tolkien's essay on the poem), whose sacrifice saves King Arthur from his *ofermod*. But Rorabeck can't find any good examples of that in Tolkien, either. He criticizes Beren for being too submissive to Thingol, and points out that Bilbo is not Thorin's faithful servant but his contracted employee, a different type of relationship. Rorabeck's ideal Tolkien-created servants, Frodo and Sam, don't serve anyone with *ofermod* at all. Deprived of his touchstone, Rorabeck is reduced to claiming that the hobbits "follow Gandalf almost blindly" (58), the opposite of the truth; in writing about Frodo and Sam's relationship, he uses "homosocial" to imply "homosexual" without having the courage to make the claim directly, and he throws in Tolkien's friendship with C. S. Lewis as an even dodgier parallel (51-57).

Two collections edited by Harold Bloom, *J.R.R. Tolkien* and *J.R.R. Tolkien's The Lord of the Rings* (both New York: Bloom's Literary Criticism, 2008), are nominally new editions of previous books by the same titles and editor (both Philadelphia: Chelsea House, 2000), presenting reprints of selected Tolkien criticism. In fact, the substantive contents of both volumes are entirely different from those of their predecessors. Among others, such notable authors as Paul H. Kocher, Tom Shippey, and

Humphrey Carpenter are now gone, though two writers in the *Lord of the Rings* volume (Jane Chance and Jared Lobdell) return from the previous edition with different essays. Most of the new editions' contents postdate the editing of the earlier books, though a few selections are older. The essays largely range from the adequate to the admirable—here the *Tolkien* volume, with Charles A. Huttar and Brian Rosebury, scores above the other, though both books include essays by Marjorie Burns and Verlyn Flieger—but they seem arbitrarily selected on random subtopics. Jorge J.E. Gracia's "The Quests of Sam and Gollum for the Happy Life" (in the *Tolkien* volume) and Mark T. Hooker's "Frodo's Batman" (in the *Lord of the Rings* volume) are decent essays but hardly major highlights in Tolkien criticism, unless one is especially interested in Sam Gamgee. The *Tolkien* volume focuses largely on *The Hobbit*, though some essays concern *The Lord of the Rings* and a couple discuss *The Silmarillion*; no other Tolkien works are more than mentioned in passing.

What is the same, or nearly so, in both the new volumes and their predecessors is Bloom's very brief and superficial introductions. In both of these, Bloom refers nostalgically to Roger Sale as "Tolkien's best critic," a tribute undercut by Sale's removal from the revised contents. The introduction for the *Tolkien* volume (1-2) eulogizes Bilbo's character in *The Hobbit*; that for *The Lord of the Rings* (1-2) denigrates the novel that the book has been created to discuss, a judgment shared by only two of the critics included, Michael Moorcock and Sue Zlosnik. Bloom's primary beef is with Tolkien's style, to which he attributes a "heavy King James Bible influence," and he carefully selects a paragraph out of context from the peroration at the end of Book V, Chapter 8 to prove this. (He says he "opened [the book] pretty much at random," but he could have found less elevated language on the same two-page spread. That would, however, have undercut his claim that the novel consists of "about fifteen hundred pages of this quaint stuff.") Bloom acknowledges that Tolkien "met a need" in the 1960s; in the 2000 version of the introduction, he concludes, "Whether he is an author for the coming century seems to me open to some doubt." Aware that eight more years had passed and Tolkien had still not gone away—indeed, after the Jackson movies he is more notable than ever—in the new edition Bloom alters "the coming century" to "the duration of the twenty-first century," thus illustrating Tom Shippey's observation that Tolkien's negative critics assume, with hope springing eternal, that the fad will pass any minute now if they can just outwait it.

Rhetorics of Fantasy by Farah Mendlesohn (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2008) is an important critical study describing different methods of presenting the fantastic within a story, and the rhetorical approaches characteristic of each. *The Lord of the Rings* is, of course, a

landmark in any such study. Mendlesohn considers it a “portal-quest fantasy,” as the Shire is a land of normality from which the hobbits venture into fantasy lands as strange to them as to the reader, rather than an “immersive fantasy” set in a fully-inhabited secondary world (in which category she places, but does not discuss, *The Silmarillion*; 2-3, 67). Immersive fantasies tend to be close-up heroic adventures, though *The Silmarillion* is not; in *The Lord of the Rings*, Sam in Cirith Ungol is the only character who comes near to this (36-37). One characteristic of the portal-quest fantasy is exposition of unquestioned reliability delivered in elevated language (here by Gandalf and Aragorn). Tolkien uses contrasting demotic conversation by the hobbits to ground the story in reality, where his imitators use it only as a character attribute (31-34).

The Magician’s Book: A Skeptic’s Adventures in Narnia by Laura Miller (New York: Little, Brown, 2008) records the author’s personal reactions as both a child and as an adult reader to C. S. Lewis—and to Tolkien, who also gets a lot of page time in this book. Miller frequently compares and contrasts the two biographically and aesthetically, drawing skillfully on the standard literature and adding her own interpretation. The most extended comparison begins on page 200 and roughly follows their joint biographies for about seven chapters. Miller has mixed feelings about Lewis and is close to dismissive of Tolkien. She calls *The Lord of the Rings* an inadequate novel (213-14) and then undercuts her criticism by explaining that it is a romance rather than a novel (227-28). She mocks Tolkien’s Anglo-Saxon ethnic self-identity (255), and criticizes Tolkien’s fans for admiring “the quantity, rather than the quality, of invention” (214), not realizing that the quantity is an essential component of the quality of his kind of invention.

The critic George Steiner (French-born and living in England) wrote an appreciation of Tolkien on the occasion of Tolkien’s death in 1973, published in the French newspaper *Le Monde*. Ross Smith has unearthed this little-known article and translated it into English as “Tolkien, Oxford’s Eccentric Don” (*Tolkien Studies* 5: 186-88). Smith’s introduction (“Steiner on Tolkien,” 185-86) notes the article’s value as an early evaluation based on Steiner’s depth and breadth of cultural knowledge. Steiner describes England as a hermetic, myth-drenched country, and Tolkien as embodying this character, combining myth with creative philology in the persona of that typically English figure, the eccentric don. His genius lies in his ability to make his abstruse interests meaningful to a large readership.

BIOGRAPHICAL

[DSB]

Robert S. Blackham says his *Tolkien's Oxford* (Stroud, Gloucestershire: History Press, 2008) is not a biography (9), but it is most accurately described as a short biography of Tolkien's years in Oxford, geographically-oriented to the point of speculating what routes he took on his first journeys to the city in 1910 and 1911. The text is brief, hasty in tone and consequently unreliable, and speckled with random comments about places which, as they remind Blackham of locations in *The Lord of the Rings*, he guesses they must have inspired Tolkien the other way around. The book's principal value is its immense collection of period photographs of Oxford, supplemented by recent photographs in color, all vividly reproduced. Like Blackham's previous book on Tolkien's Birmingham, *The Roots of Tolkien's Middle Earth* (Stroud: Tempus, 2006), it is not laid out in the form of a tourist's guidebook, and indeed has too many errors and omissions to be recommendable as one. Blackham also contributes a short article describing the homes and some other historical sites in "Tolkien's Birmingham" (*Mallorn* 45: 24-27). More period photographs are included.

Tolkien's Gedling, 1914: The Birth of a Legend, by Andrew H. Morton and John Hayes (Studley, Warwickshire: Brewin Books, 2008), is a short volume serving primarily as a local history of this Nottingham suburb and the farms there which Tolkien's aunt, Jane Neave, co-owned between 1911 and 1923. Using references to memoirs and local documents, the account clarifies much that was previously uncertain or unpublished about Jane Neave's biography. This is of at least tangential interest to the Tolkienist. Tolkien himself finally comes to the center in chapters 5-6, a light consideration of the circumstances and state of mind in which he wrote the poem "The Voyage of Éarendel the Evening Star" during a visit to Gedling in 1914, and his sources for the name Éarendel. Chapter 7 briefly recounts the holiday in the Swiss Alps Tolkien took in 1911 in the company of his aunt and other residents of the farm.

"John Ronald's Schooldays" by Maggie Burns (*Mallorn* 45: 27-31) is a description of King Edward's School, Birmingham, and Tolkien's attendance there from 1900 to 1911, based on school documents. Tolkien's participation in academic competitions and school assemblies is described briefly.

John Garth classes his "Tolkien, Exeter College and the Great War" (Caldecott and Honegger 13-56) as a supplement to his book, *Tolkien and the Great War*. This article is an extensively documented biography of Tolkien's career as an undergraduate in 1911-15, with an epilogue concerning his relations with Exeter College during his brief return to

Oxford in 1918-20, and recounting the fates of his fellow students who did, and those who did not, survive the Great War. Garth's concentration is on Tolkien's social life: his relationships with fellow undergraduates, particularly in societies. A mock-epic club minutes entry, quoted at length, is noted as Tolkien's earliest prose narrative (28). Also of note is a copy of a previously-published 1912 photograph of the Apolausticks, another club, with all the members now identified. Garth mentions Tolkien's early creative and extracurricular scholarly writings of this period and the books he borrowed from the college library; there is little on his strictly academic work.

"Gilson, Smith, and Baggins" by Verlyn Flieger (Caldecott and Honneger 85-95) roots the deep sense of loss and eulogy in *The Lord of the Rings* and some of Tolkien's other works in the grief he felt at the breaking of his fellowship of the T.C.B.S. with the death of Rob Gilson in battle in 1916. Flieger specifically if speculatively compares Gilson with Frodo as war victims whose personal value lies less in their particular talents than in being ordinary people called against their will to participate in great deeds. The point is that Tolkien uses his creative art to find meaning in the seemingly random events of personal tragedy.

"The Shadow of War: Tolkien, Trauma, Childhood, Fantasy" by Mark Heberle (*Under Fire: Childhood in the Shadow of War*, edited by Elizabeth Goodenough and Andrea Immel [Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2008]: 129-42) is a psychoanalytical study, describing Tolkien's work—concentrating on *The Book of Lost Tales*—as self-therapy (or, in Heberle's words, "post-traumatic recovery" [134]). Voyages westward, mirroring the direction of his own post-combat "escape" from France to England, other echoes of the war, including descriptions of war machines resembling tanks, and the composition of the story in non-chronological order, which Heberle sees as characteristic of post-traumatic narratives, are cited in the service of this thesis. Heberle sees the removal of some of these elements from the later "Silmarillion," and the general distancing effect of Tolkien's writing the story as a heroic myth rather than a direct war narrative, as problems with his theory, but not significant ones. Bilbo's and Frodo's non-combat roles are also seen as expressing Tolkien's post-traumatic recovery.

"The Complexity of Tolkien's Attitude Towards the Second World War" in the eyes of Franco Manni and Simone Bonechi (Wells 1: 33-51) is that, despite his criticism of the moral failings of the Allies, Tolkien acknowledges a moral clarity and justification in the fighting of the second war which is reflected in the morality of the War of the Ring. The authors conclude that Tolkien came to feel that writing *The Lord of the Rings* was his way of participating in the conflict, and even suggest that, though Tolkien could be caustic about Churchill, he admired him as well, and

that the hope that Gandalf brings to the people of Rohan and Gondor reflects the hope and dogged courage of Churchill as war leader. The authors examine the composition dates of *The Lord of the Rings* to argue that it was chronologically possible for the war, and before it the intimations of impending war, to have influenced the course of the narrative. All this is sharply contrasted with the Wars of Beleriand in the "Silmarillion," which, like the First World War that inspired them, were morally murky and ultimately fruitless in a way that the Second War and the War of the Ring were not.

"Women, Oxford and Tolkien" by David Doughan (*Mallorn* 45: 16-18) explores Tolkien's attitude towards women, outside of the domestic sphere, in the context of the story of their slow and only partial acceptance as students at Oxford. In that environment, Tolkien's specialty in teaching women students and his popularity with them was advanced. This makes his letter of 1941 to his son Michael, dismissing women's intellects, surprising and uncharacteristic. In later years, Tolkien seems to have developed a more egalitarian attitude, quoting Simone de Beauvoir in an interview, creating the strongly feminist character Erendis, and retiring to Bournemouth at his wife Edith's request.

"Invented, Borrowed, and Mixed Myths in the 'Kinds of Books We Want to Read'" by Sharin Schroeder (*Wells* 1: 22-32) muses over the friendship of Tolkien and Lewis and their literary reactions to Faërie. Schroeder writes sympathetically about both men's antipathy to being studied biographically (without note of the irony of it). Schroeder is very much one for rigid categorization. She believes that Lewis's willingness to read in modern literature means that his pact with Tolkien to write their preferred kind of books themselves, as they weren't finding enough of that kind of literature elsewhere, was not serious, and that Tolkien's admiration of Lewis's *Perelandra* means that his dislike of allegory wasn't that serious either.

The Tolkien 2005 Conference proceedings has two articles on the relationship of Tolkien with Charles Williams. "'We Had Nothing To Say To One Another': J.R.R. Tolkien and Charles Williams, Another Look" by Eric Rauscher (*Wells* 1: 66-69) is strictly biographical, sorting Tolkien's preserved comments on Williams as a man into contemporary and retrospective, finding that the contemporary ones show a warm friendship, and the sour remarks are all distantly retrospective. This sorting had already been done by John D. Rateliff in 1986, with more insightful commentary, but the claim that Tolkien always disliked Williams still needs rebuttal. "On Tolkien, and Williams, and Tolkien on Williams" by Richard Sturch (*Wells* 1: 70-76) is more literary, presenting a running commentary on the criticisms of Williams's work in Tolkien's "Our dear Charles Williams" poem. Sturch discusses differences in attitude

between the writers, finding Tolkien more concerned with men's external evil deeds than Williams's focus on corrupted souls, while Tolkien is paradoxically more doubtful than Williams of the possibility of repentance. Sturch does not discuss Williams's few known views on Tolkien, but Rauscher does. Both papers were previously published in the *Charles Williams Quarterly*, no. 118 (Spring 2006): 8-14 and 15-26 respectively, but were not covered in this survey at that time.

"Romantic Conservatives: The Inklings in Their Political Context" by Charles Coulombe (Wells 1: 52-65) emphasizes the similarities among Tolkien's, Lewis's, and Williams's views of the political organization of society, a respect of the need for hierarchy and stability combined with a distrust of the elevation of the proud. Coulombe places this within the historical context of the development of English literary romantic conservatism from the 19th century up to Distributivism. He finds examples from the fiction of Lewis and Williams to illustrate their views, but not from that of Tolkien, whose opinions are quoted from his letters and from secondary sources.

"The Ace Copyright Affair" by Nancy Martsch (Wells 1: 2-8) succinctly summarizes the history and reasons behind the uncertain U.S. copyright situation that led Ace Books to consider itself legally able to publish an unauthorized paperback of *The Lord of the Rings* in 1965. Although Martsch attributes the book's ensuing fame to the publicity over this affair, she does not draw heavy moral conclusions, and explains Ace's behavior simply by noting that it "was not a member of the gentleman's club" of publishers who did not exploit loopholes in U.S. copyright law (6).

"Discussing Language with J.R.R. Tolkien" (*Lembas-extra* 2008: 16-25) is a memoir by Arne Zettersten, broadly recounting his conversations with Tolkien between 1959 and 1973. They worked on editions of the *Ancrene Wisse* together, and discussed other Old and Middle English texts as well as Gothic. Zettersten amused Tolkien with descriptions of finer points of the Swedish and Norwegian languages. He notes that Tolkien quickly switched between the topics of philology and his *legendarium*.

"Tolkien and Belgium" by Johan Vanhecke (*Lembas-extra* 2008: 51-62) is primarily a biographical article about Tolkien and Simonne d'Ardenne, his Belgian student and scholarly collaborator who later became a professor at the University of Liège. Vanhecke describes briefly the philological publications they jointly worked on. Tolkien visited d'Ardenne in Belgium on four occasions, most notably in 1954 to receive an honorary degree from the University of Liège. The article quotes from her encomium on Tolkien proposing him for the degree, and includes three business letters by Tolkien to the rector of the university. Vanhecke continues with a brief survey of Belgian illustrators of Tolkien's work.

“‘That Most Unselfish Man’: George Sayer, 1914-2005: Pupil, Biographer, and Friend of Inklings” by Mike Foster (*Mythlore* 26 no. 3/4: 5-27) is largely based on quotations from Sayer’s own and others’ writings and on Foster’s personal recollections. Foster alludes without comment to Sayer’s warm but chronologically impossible story that it was on his suggestion that Tolkien submitted *The Lord of the Rings* to Rayner Unwin. Brief anecdotes of Tolkien reciting Chesterton and playing with the Sayer children are also included.

A few smaller items discuss Tolkien biographically. Diana Pavlac Glyer’s “Lewis, Tolkien, and the Inklings” (*The New Writer’s Handbook* 2: 226-30) briefly retells the account from her book *The Company They Keep* (104-7) of Tolkien revising *The Lord of the Rings* in a more serious, less hobbitocentric, direction under influence from Lewis. The context is a suggestion that the Inklings’ example of mutual criticism would be useful for other writers looking for feedback on their work. *Who the Hell is Pansy O’Hara?: The Fascinating Stories Behind 50 of the World’s Best-Loved Books* by Jenny Bond and Chris Sheedy (New York: Penguin, 2008) covers *The Hobbit* (98-103) in the form of a brief workmanlike summary of Tolkien’s life up to that point, with a description of the novel’s setting and the circumstances of its writing and publication. “The Fellowship of J.R.R. Tolkien” by Kathryn E. Darden (*Silver Leaves* 2: 13-14) recounts fellowships in Tolkien’s life: his friendships with the T.C.B.S. and the Inklings, and his love for his wife, Edith.

GENERAL CRITICISM: *THE LORD OF THE RINGS* AND TOLKIEN’S WORK AS A WHOLE

[MTD]

Tolkien, Race and Cultural History: From Fairies to Hobbits by Dimitra Fimi (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009; published in 2008, despite the date listed in the book) is a work of great erudition that does not shy from challenging ideas. As per the subtitle, Fimi chronicles the changing nature of Tolkien’s fantasy project from his fairy poetry of the 1910s to his unsuccessful attempts in the 1950s and after to rework the “Silmarillion” to be consonant with *The Lord of the Rings*. She integrates material from a great range of Tolkien’s literary, linguistic, and scholarly publications, refers regularly to a variety of historical documents and research to contextualize Tolkien’s ideas, and shows a sharp eye for inconsistencies and points of tension in his “biographical legend.” The book’s first two sections concern the initial strands of Tolkien’s mythology: fairies and languages. While much else changed, at least two aspects of Tolkien’s delicate early fairies persisted long after they became the noble Elves. First, in the *Qenya Lexicon*, the fairies teach “holiness” to mankind, a

notion that recurs as late as the mission of Alf in *Smith of Wootton Major* (41). Second, the fairies in poetry like “Goblin Feet” often were fading or departing and thus a source of melancholy for humans, a theme that would continue through *The Lord of the Rings*. Turning to linguistics, Fimi asks if Tolkien really had an inherent taste in language, as he believed. She refers to studies in language attitudes showing that opinions toward dialects are colored by social circumstances, and then to sound symbolism research that finds only a limited connection between sounds and meaning (Tolkien knew of work on this by Edward Sapir). Next she suggests extrinsic reasons for Tolkien’s specific language tastes: he enjoyed Finnish because of the *Kalevala* and Welsh for associations with his childhood; and he disliked Irish from embarrassment at failing to learn it. (Couldn’t the reverse be true instead?) As for Tolkien’s invented languages, Fimi boldly proposes that his readers like the ones Tolkien tells them to, by assigning them to Elves. Fimi’s final section investigates how Tolkien changed his creation from a mythology to a novelistic history, with consequences for the tales’ transmission and for cosmology, which Tolkien contemplated changing radically. As Tolkien tried realistically to portray Men, who had become much more important to his tales, he divided them into kinds, with some uncomfortable hierarchal and racial overtones—even in *The Lord of the Rings*. However, he could also undermine these ideas, as when the so-called “Middle Men” of lesser nobility prove more robust than the Númenóreans. The Woses also confound expectations, though Fimi describes them as childlike (150), forgetting Ghân-buri-Ghân’s refutation of that very idea (*RK*, V, v, 106). Finally, for all Tolkien’s attention to detail in *The Lord of the Rings*, as regards material culture, he is vague and inconsistent. (But how well do other fantasists manage?) Gondor mixes elements of Egyptian and Viking culture, and despite Tolkien’s denials, the Rohirrim share much with Anglo-Saxon society. The Red Book translation conceit is meant to cover a multitude of inconsistencies but also introduces new difficulties. However, all this serves as a reminder that Tolkien’s world is literary not historical.

Fimi’s “Material Culture and Materiality in Middle-earth: Tolkien and Archaeology” (Wells 2: 339-44), excerpted from her tenth chapter, notes that Sarehole mill, a source for the Shire’s bucolic description, ironically was an artifact of the Industrial Revolution. Further, it more closely resembles the replacement mill Lotho Sackville-Baggins had built than the original shown in Tolkien’s painting of Hobbiton.

E.L. Ridsen, in *Heroes, Gods and the Role of Epiphany in English Epic Poetry* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2008), having analyzed the classical epic tradition and six poems from *Beowulf* through Derek Walcott’s *Omeros* (with scattered references to Tolkien throughout), addresses an afterword to the epic novel (165-80; 194), particularly *The Lord of the Rings*, and how

it answers his book's questions of "how we practice heroism and how we meet our gods" (169). Tolkien's story is most like *Beowulf* in that God does not directly appear, requiring even more courage from the heroes, but differs notably in the nature of the leading figures: unlike the hobbits, Beowulf wants to be a hero. *The Silmarillion* is considered to be a myth not an epic.

Anne C. Petty's *Dragons of Fantasy*, originally published in 2004, appears in a second edition (Crawfordville, FL: Kitsune Books, 2008). The chapter on Tolkien (33-61), with comments on Glaurung and Smaug, has been retouched at many points for style, but the content has changed only to acknowledge the publication of *The Children of Húrin*. Bard is still described as Númenórean (52).

Attitudes toward technology and the environment are the subject of three articles in the Tolkien 2005 Conference proceedings. Anna Adamczyk's "Tolkien and Nature" (Wells 2: 389-93) sees the call in Genesis for humankind to have dominion over other living things shown in Tolkien's writings by a preference for domesticated nature over true wilderness. However, realizing that some people will misuse their authority, Tolkien created the Ents to bring semi-divine retribution. This essay is an abridged version of one previously published in a special English-language edition of *Aiglos* (Summer 2005: 57-77) from the Tolkien Section of the Silesian Science-Fiction Club, but was not covered in this survey at that time. Most of its ideas were previously offered in Verlyn Flieger's 2000 essay "Taking the Part of Trees: Eco-Conflict in Middle-earth" (in *J.R.R. Tolkien and His Literary Resonances*). "From Conqueror to Citizen: Tolkien's Fantastic Ecology" by Luke Niiler (Wells 2: 287-90) proposes that Tom Bombadil and Treebeard help the hobbits to appreciate deep ecology, which is appreciation of the environment without regard to its utility for humanity. This philosophy, in its rejection of seemingly reasonable and safe courses of action, is likened to Frodo's developing sense of pity for Gollum. The hobbits apply both lessons in the Scouring of the Shire. More thoughtfully, "Frozen Nature: Abiding Technology in Tolkien's World" by Michael J. Colvin (Wells 2: 314-24) focuses on the use of machines and *magia* in *The Lord of the Rings*. Both are forms of power, which only *tends* to corrupt, and with temperance can be wielded for good. In a letter, Tolkien even allowed that the new mills built by Lotho Sackville-Baggins were not bad in themselves, only in how they were used. To reject technological innovation absolutely is to deny the naturalness of change, and become moribund. Gandalf, divinely sent, is a Trickster figure meant to unsettle those who, like the Gaffer, "can't abide changes."

C. Riley Augé, with "Crossing the Threshold: Doors and Other Passageways in Tolkien's Words and Images" (Wells 2: 296-302) offers a

framework for further analysis of Tolkien's many uses of gateway motifs in *The Lord of the Rings*, *The Hobbit*, and *The Silmarillion*, as well as in his artwork. Thresholds are defined very broadly: even the One Ring serves as Frodo's door to the wraith-world. Symbolically, entrances and passages offer characters opportunities for new perspectives and personal growth; they also act as defining boundaries.

The last point connects Augé's article to "Containment and Progression in J.R.R. Tolkien's World" by Marjorie Burns (Wells 1: 78-86), which contrasts circle and line imagery in *The Lord of the Rings*. Allowing for exceptions—a smoke ring is just a smoke ring—Burns argues that circles, with suggestions of life cycles and the natural world, point toward Elves (and to a lesser degree, Hobbits). Lines, symbolic of progress or journeying, represent Men and Dwarves. In this contrast, Tolkien may be reflecting Celtic and Germanic mythology, respectively. At a deeper level, circles imply inward thinking, seclusion, and the concentration of power, while lines denote service and sacrifice.

"Unlocking Supplementary Events in the Dreams, Visions, and Prophecies of J.R.R. Tolkien's Work" (Wells 1: 122-26), explains Catherine Hefferan-Hays, means interpreting the mystical experiences that aren't necessary to move the plot of *The Lord of the Rings* forward. Frodo's dreams and his visions in Galadriel's mirror foreshadow his fate, which adds resonance to the story. Hefferan-Hays also finds that dreams hold the reader's interest when the characters are asleep, which is a confusion of literature and journalism.

"Song as Mythic Conduit in *The Fellowship of the Ring*" by Cami Agan (*Mythlore* 26 no. 3/4: 41-63) builds on the work of Verlyn Flieger and Gergely Nagy to argue that songs about the First Age featured in *The Lord of the Rings* have a moral quality for the characters, giving them models to guide their behavior (Agan doesn't elaborate sufficiently on this) and that the characters retell the songs in ways that heighten their relevancy to the characters' situations.

Goldberry is the subject of two studies in *Mythlore*. "Fair Lady Goldberry, Daughter of the River" by Ann McCauley Basso (27 no. 1/2: 137-46) notes that previous writers have identified Tom Bombadil, who describes himself as "eldest," as an analogue of Adam, with Goldberry echoing Eve. Basso suggests that Goldberry's characteristics in this regard may derive from Milton's *Paradise Lost*, and that the Old Forest can be considered vaguely Edenic. "Investigations of the Role and Origin of Goldberry in Tolkien's Mythology" by Taryne Jade Taylor (27 no. 1/2: 147-56) suggests, with too little attention to detail, that, in her abduction by Tom Bombadil and her connection with the seasons, Goldberry was inspired by Proserpina in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and the Celtic figure Étaín. Her home with Bombadil is an intrusion of Faërie into Middle-

earth, and the purpose of both characters in *The Lord of the Rings* is to provide the hobbits (and readers) with an appreciation of the natural world for its own sake—something also noted by Martin Simonson and Alana M. Vincent.

“Strange Visions of Mountains: The Montane Motif in Tolkien’s Fiction” by Maria Raffaella Benvenuto (*Mallorn* 46: 33-37), expanding on Benvenuto’s 2006 article on mountains in the *J.R.R. Tolkien Encyclopedia*, discusses the thematic function of ranges and peaks mainly in *The Lord of the Rings*, *The Hobbit*, and “Leaf by Niggle.” They serve as destinations, obstacles, opportunities for journeys underground, and sacred places. Tolkien’s description of mariners’ rare glimpses of drowned Meneltarma echoes the tale of Ulysses in Dante’s *Inferno*.

“Niggle’s Picture—Parish’s Garden: Gardens in Tolkien’s Work” by Christian Weichmann (*Wells* 2: 375-82) lists 32 gardens from more than a dozen of Tolkien’s writings, and comments on a few of them. The dream gardens in “The Lay of Aotrou and Itrou” may be a response to the garden where the narrator dreams in the Middle English poem “Pearl.” Sam in the restoration of the Shire and Parish in Niggle’s Parish share their gardening skills with others.

In “The Cry in the Wind and the Shadow on the Moon: Liminality and the Construct of Horror in *The Lord of the Rings*” (Forest-Hill 119-38), Michael Cunningham explains that Tolkien withholds or postpones close descriptions of monstrous creatures like the Black Riders, Barrow-wight, Watcher in the Water, Balrog, and Shelob, allowing the reader’s imagination to suggest the worst. Deceptive shadows and fog, unexplained sounds (especially in Moria and Torech Ungol), and rumors of evil also help to create an atmosphere of terror. Cunningham’s title refers to the hobbits’ experiences in the Dead Marshes, which he does not discuss.

“Evil Reputations: Images of Wolves in Tolkien’s Fiction” by Julie Pridmore (Forest-Hill 197-227) is an apparently exhaustive but mechanical compilation of wolf and wolfhound imagery in Tolkien’s fiction and scholarship, with the greatest attention given to Carcharoth and Huan in the many iterations of the story of Lúthien and Beren. Wolves have a particularly legendary status in England, where they have been extinct since the fourteenth century. Pridmore notices an odd juxtaposition in wolves, creatures of the desolate wilderness, being kenneled by Saruman in the industrial waste of Isengard.

Kristine Larsen, in “Shadow and Flame: Myth, Monsters, and Mother Nature in Middle-earth” (Forest-Hill 169-96), somewhat diffusely surveys Tolkien’s descriptions of cataclysmic events, which suggest geologic and astronomical phenomena told in the language of genuine myths created to ameliorate fear of the unknown and uncontrollable. The dimming sun when Beren dies suggests an eclipse; the northern glow

as the Valar fight Morgoth evokes an aurora; meteors have associations with dragons, as when Eärendil fights Ancalagon; and the Battle of Sudden Flame resembles the devastation caused by a volcano. Larsen also discusses generalized images of fire and darkness.

“Of Spiders and Light: Hope, Action, and Medieval Aesthetics in the Horrors of Shelob’s Lair” by Reno E. Lauro (Forest-Hill 53-79) is a difficult treatment of Tolkien’s use of light, for which Lauro sees a possible source in medieval theories on light (as in the writings of Robert Grosseteste and St. Bonaventure), which sees it as a substance bearing elements of the divine and revealing truth. Lauro more certainly finds support in Owen Barfield’s theory of semantic unity, which claims the imagined and real were once undivided, or nearly so. The reality of Eärendil’s light described in *The Silmarillion* is transmitted via Galadriel’s phial to drive off Shelob’s palpable darkness in an imaginative act, presaged by Sam’s comments about the continuity of story: hope and light grow together. Tolkien means for us to resist evil with creativity.

“The Blade against the Burden: The Iconography of the Sword in *The Lord of the Rings*” by Michael J. Brisbois (*Mythlore* 27 no. 1/2: 93-103) would benefit from more detail in support of the argument that Tolkien emphasizes swords to empower characters like Éowyn and the hobbits with opportunities for social advancement, whereas rings, which would serve in other tales as symbols of unification, here denote the lust for power. Brisbois also finds that Aragorn shows some characteristics of Sigurd from the *Völsunga Saga*, but in a Christianized form: he wins his kingdom through healing. Placing contemporary values in an ancient setting increases the book’s appeal for modern readers.

“Tolkien, the Author and the Critic: *Beowulf*, *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, *The Homecoming of Beorhtnoth* and *The Lord of the Rings*” by Vincent Ferré (Wells 1: 162-68) discusses how contrarian ideas Tolkien expressed in his medieval scholarship reappear in his fiction. Much of this is familiar: *The Lord of the Rings* imparts the same feeling of a lost past that Tolkien praised in *Beowulf*, while Denethor and Boromir demonstrate *ofermod*, which Tolkien claims is condemned in *The Battle of Maldon*. More intriguing is the observation that Tolkien did not consider the failures of either Frodo or Gawain to be sinful. Both characters are scarred by their ordeals. Ferré offers no suggestions as to what Frodo’s equivalent of the girdle in *Sir Gawain* might be.

In “Boromir, Byrhtnoth, and Bayard: Finding a Language for Grief in J.R.R. Tolkien’s *The Lord of the Rings*” (*Tolkien Studies* 5: 73-97), Lynn Forest-Hill finds that Tolkien emphasizes the redemptive nature of Boromir’s death rather than its prideful causes (though she understates Boromir’s part in bringing about his own demise), in contrast to Tolkien’s interpretation of how the death of Byrhtnoth is portrayed in *The Battle of*

Maldon. A closer model may be the death of Bayard, a sixteenth-century knight.

“Tolkien’s ‘Love Triangle’: Aragorn’s Relationships with Éowyn and Arwen” by Romauld Ian Lakowski (Wells 1: 304-14), cites numerous passages describing the developing romances, real and aborted, between those three characters in *The Lord of the Rings* and its published drafts. Lakowski finds that Tolkien seems to prefer the romance of Faramir and Éowyn to that of Aragorn and Arwen. Overlooking some references to Arwen, Lakowski also suggests that Tolkien gave up too easily on the attempt to integrate her more thoroughly into the main text, while offering no consideration as to how further development might have changed the story.

Corey Olsen draws out the tragic element in “The Myth of the Ent and the Entwife” (*Tolkien Studies* 5: 39-53) through explication of Treebeard’s Elvish song about his people’s loss. Ents and Entwives should complement each other, but grow competitive because of their excessive attachment to material, albeit living, things. This is the more ironic in that Ents claim to be both more changeable and empathetic than other peoples. Without the influence of their spouses, the Ents incline to dangerous isolationism—as shown in their idleness regarding Saruman’s devastation—and the Entwives to tyranny. Though urged to reconcile by the west wind (probably a sign from the Valar) only at the world’s end will they meet again.

Margarita Carretero-González also seeks to understand “The Loss of the Entwives: The Biological Dimension of Gender Construction in *The Lord of the Rings*” (Wells 2: 383-88) and as her subtitle suggests, she believes that Tolkien offers an unfortunately essentialist view of gender (to which Éowyn is acknowledged as a partial exception), particularly in his portrayal of the Entwives. Noting that Tolkien once wrote that women have a “gift to be receptive, stimulated, fertilized” (*Letters* 49), Carretero-González argues that the Entwives are being punished for moving across the Anduin, thus spurning the Ents and rejecting maternal roles. She is apparently unaware that Treebeard himself describes the Entwives’ migration as an attempt to escape the shadow of Morgoth.

There are two further articles about gender roles in *The Lord of the Rings*, both by Beatriz Domínguez Ruiz. “Mimetic Patterns of Masculinity or Just Another Fantasy Book” (*Atenea* 28 no. 2 [Dec. 2008]: 135-44) contrasts Rohan’s patriarchy which, Éowyn again excepted, is found to be modeled on *Beowulf*, and the more chivalrous society of Gondor, described as “the White Tower place” (139), which is exemplified in the feminine characteristics of Faramir. Domínguez Ruiz turns to Tolkien’s biography for elucidation and finds that Tolkien’s deep mourning for close friends killed in World War I shows his homosocial attitudes. She

also relates the experiences of the T.C.B.S. to those of Frodo and Sam. "The Concept of Masculinity in Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*" (Wells 1: 291-95) covers the same ground more briefly while misidentifying movie episodes as Tolkien's work.

Marek Oziewicz in "Setting Things Right in *Farmer Giles of Ham* and *The Lord of the Rings*: Tolkien's Conception of Justice" (Hiley and Weinreich 37-57) looks at Tolkien's response to W.H. Auden's review of *The Return of the King* and finds a working description of just behavior in wartime. This applies to Farmer Giles's bloodless rebellion against Augustus Bonifacius, who has failed to uphold his responsibilities as king, and to Frodo's role dispensing mercy during the Scouring of the Shire.

"Reluctant Warrior: Tolkien's Conflicted Language in *The Lord of the Rings*" by Christina Fawcett (Wells 2: 198-203) notes the dismay Tolkien expressed in his letters at the waste and destruction of World War II, and how he shows war in *The Lord of the Rings* being won by personal sacrifice rather than martial victory. Fawcett interprets Tolkien's battle descriptions as conveying disgust instead of glory, but her pacifist interpretation leads to misunderstandings, such as a claim that neither Merry nor Pippin kills anyone in the story (202).

"Courage and the Ability to Adapt" by Lynnette R. Porter (Wells 1: 369-73) considers four kinds of bravery in *The Lord of the Rings*. Pippin's cheerful courage is based in irrepressible hope, and he laughs when he thinks he's dying. Merry, the careful planner, demonstrates courage in adjusting to events beyond his control. Sam's courage stems from love, and is seen even in his acceptance of Frodo's departure over the Sea. Gimli and Legolas show courage in overcoming racial enmity. Porter cites the movies, intentionally, when she feels they illustrate her points.

"Tolkien's Theory of Courage: The Good, the Bad, and the Evil" by Emily Bowerman (*Inklings Forever, Vol. VI* [Upland, IN: Taylor University, 2008]) is a brief introduction to the heroes and villains of *The Lord of the Rings*, largely summarizing the work of Tom Shippey. The bad are twisted in service to a cause, while the good maintain their courage no matter how hopeless the situation. To explain how Orcs were created, Bowerman cites only the story in *The Silmarillion*.

"The Virtues of Fellowship" by Daniel Timmons (*Silver Leaves* 2: 43-46) are the seven classical virtues; Timmons feels that each member of the Fellowship of the Ring embodies one or more of these. Sam and Frodo are exemplary in this regard, though Frodo loses hope and Sam does not. Like Ralph Wood, Timmons stresses the voluntary nature of the Fellowship, which by Elrond's advice is not bound by oaths.

"Transfigured Sadness: Characterizations of Sadness in *The Lord of the Rings*" by David Weber (Wells 1: 333-37) compares the sorrows of Denethor, Frodo, and Arwen to that of Abraham, as characters whose

lives would be hopelessly absurd without divine intervention. Weber misreads the "Ainulindalë," cites movie dialogue as if it were Tolkien's, and seems to think that *The Lord of the Rings* was written in the trenches of World War I.

"Seven Paths of the Hero in *Lord of the Rings*: The Path of the Wizard" by Robin Robertson (*Psychological Perspectives* 51 no. 1: 119-40) is the third in a series of seven essays which discuss Tolkien's characters as archetypes. Robertson summarizes Gandalf's career in *The Lord of the Rings* at length, with each paragraph of plot followed by a paragraph of analysis. The wizard's actions either help to define wisdom, or show that he is behaving wisely. Robertson's inconsistently allegorical comments are often insightful, occasionally mystifying, and invariably too brief. Minor misunderstandings of the story abound.

"So Far from the Shire: Psychological Distance and Isolation in *The Lord of the Rings*" by Ginna Wilkerson (*Mythlore* 27 no. 1/2: 83-91) analyzes Frodo using the Duluth Model of psychological abuse, with the Ring as his abuser. Wilkerson doubts Tolkien would be sympathetic to her approach, but he did compare Frodo to victims of torture and brainwashing (*Letters* 234, 252). However, there are limits to her model: Frodo's despair, when he believes in the Tower of Cirith Ungol that Sauron has recovered the Ring, is *not* an irrational emotional response.

"Tolkien as a Benchmark of Comparative Literature: Middle-earth in Our World" by Giovanni Agnoloni (Wells 1: 93-104) is an impressionistic and personal discussion of elusive resonances he finds between *The Lord of the Rings* and various classical, medieval, and modern works, including Virgil's *Eclogues* and Hermann Hesse's *Narcissus and Goldmund*. Agnoloni fails to develop his catalog of evocative elements into a consistent analysis.

"Approaching Reality in *The Lord of the Rings*" by Andrea Ulrich (Wells 1: 87-92) argues that while *The Lord of the Rings* does not present what Kathryn Hume has termed "consensus reality," in its detailed world-building and the story's adherence (usually) to physical laws, it has the sub-created consistency that Tolkien described in "On Fairy-stories." Ulrich compares Tolkien's comments there to those of Goethe justifying the unreality of opera, and suggests that critics who prefer that novels end tragically are themselves denying part of reality.

Ella van Wyk, in "The Great Questions" (Wells 1: 111-21), finds fault with *The Lord of the Rings* for aspects that violate the strictures of textbooks on fiction writing, including archaic dialogue, unbelievable character transformations, and a repetition of adjectives that suggests to her a generalized rather than particular appearance for certain elements, like mountains. When Burton Raffel offered the third complaint in "*The Lord of the Rings* as Literature" in 1968 (in *Tolkien and the Critics*), he at least

addressed the justifications Tolkien gave for that technique in “On Fairy-stories.” Van Wyk’s larger argument is that the book is a masterpiece despite these flaws, because of its symbolism, subtle portrayal of good and evil, and egalitarian collection of unlikely heroes.

GENERAL CRITICISM: OTHER WORKS

[MTD]

Kristine Larsen in “(V)Arda Marred: The Evolution of the Queen of the Stars in Tolkien’s Legendarium” (*Mallorn* 45: 31-36) carefully traces the enlargement of Varda’s role from “stelliferous interior decorator” (32) in *The Book of Lost Tales* to the powerful figure in the later “Silmarillion” tradition who is revered in *The Lord of the Rings*. Bilbo’s poem in the Hall of Fire even gives her an important part in Eärendil’s story, and thus by implication in Frodo and Sam’s use of Galadriel’s phial. However, cosmogonic changes that Tolkien contemplated in the “Myths Transformed” texts published in *Morgoth’s Ring* diminish Varda’s importance.

“Tolkien’s Fortunate Fall and the Third Theme of Ilúvatar” by Jason Fisher (*Truths Breathed Through Silver: The Inklings’ Moral and Mythopoeic Legacy*, edited by Jonathan B. Himes, Joe R. Christopher, and Salwa Khoddam [Newcastle, UK: Cambridge Scholars, 2008]: 93-109), while acknowledging that Tolkien wrote no stories in which Melkor, Fëanor and the Noldor, and mankind (twice: in Hildórien and in Númenor) did *not* fall, contemplates the good resulting from those disasters, and suggests that each was a *Felix Culpa*. Ilúvatar’s statements to Melkor and Ulmo in the “Ainulindalë” imply this. Although Fisher’s focus is on *The Silmarillion* published in 1977, he does cite *Morgoth’s Ring*, so it is surprising that he claims that Tolkien never wrote a narrative of humanity’s first fall: “The Tale of Adanel” appears in that volume.

“Reconstructing Arda: Of Fëanor and the Unchaining of Melkor” (*Mythlore* 27 no. 1/2: 9-19) is a preview chapter from Douglas C. Kane’s 2009 book, *Arda Reconstructed: The Creation of the Published Silmarillion*. Kane identifies multiple source texts in *The War of the Jewels* for the sixth chapter of the 1977 version of the “Quenta Silmarillion,” notably including a separate chapter titled “Of Finwë and Míriel” that was only excerpted in the text assembled by Christopher Tolkien, who is criticized by Kane for cutting philosophical passages and reducing the roles of Indis and Nerdanel.

“The Politics of Fantasy: *The Hobbit* and Fascism” by Peter E. Firchow (*Midwest Quarterly* 50 no. 1 [Autumn 2008]: 15-31) is a straight-faced parody of social criticism. Problematic subjects such as the apparently irredeemable nature of Tolkien’s villains or Beorn’s interrogation and execution of prisoners are seriously raised, then exaggerated to comic

proportions. Bilbo is identified as a bourgeois exploiter, while Thorin's quest seeks *Lebensraum* in the East. Repeated caveats allow that Tolkien was probably not himself a fascist. A few factual mistakes, like the confusion of poets Roy Fuller and Roy Campbell, appear to be deliberate. But were the journal's editors in on the joke, or is the running page header that reads "Tolkein's [*sic*] Fascism" a genuine error?

Patrick Brückner in "'Until the Dragon Comes': Tolkien's Dragon-Motif as Poetological Concept" (Hiley and Weinreich 101-33) means to show how the presence of Smaug in *The Hobbit* draws the merely novelistic character of Bilbo into a world of historical and epic qualities, by suggesting the qualities of the two fictional dragons Tolkien praised for their reality, in *Beowulf* and the *Völsunga Saga*. (The White Dragon serves to offer a taste of the same quality in *Roverandom*.) Brückner tries to plot his scheme onto the map of Wilderland, but he makes too much of the "Edge of the Wild" and the trolls' appearance on the wrong side.

"Time and J.R.R. Tolkien's 'Riddles in the Dark'" by Marie Nelson (*Mythlore* 27 no. 1/2: 67-82) reprints all nine riddles from that chapter in *The Hobbit*; for Bilbo these are "neck-riddles," on which his life hangs. Nelson offers suggestions as to how the circumstances of the game suggest answers to the contestants. Then she tries to explain how Bilbo's riddling conversation with Smaug retells the story of his journey to the Lonely Mountain, but some details elude her. Nelson also translates Bilbo's dialogue into Old English to show its likeness to riddles in the *Exeter Book*.

"*Farmer Giles of Ham*: The Prototype of a Humorous Dragon Story" by Friedhelm Schneidewind (Hiley and Weinreich 77-100) describes Tolkien's comic tale, places it in the context of his other dragon writings (a supposedly comprehensive listing including "The Hoard" but omitting "The Dragon's Visit"), praises its linguistic jokes and applicability to political questions, and suggests that it influenced the portrayal of dragons by such fantasists as Anne McCaffrey and Roger Zelazny. Schneidewind and Marek Oziewicz (in the same collection) don't reference the story's 1999 annotated edition, where they would have learned that Tolkien wrote its first version well before 1936.

Bertrand Alliot claims "The 'Meaning' of 'Leaf by Niggle'" (Hiley and Weinreich 165-90) is that the longing for artistic expression should be tempered by service to the needs of daily life. Left unchecked, the desire for distantly glimpsed but unattainable places, as described in Yves Bonnefoy's *L'Arrière-Pays* (this seems to be the same feeling to which C. S. Lewis applied the term *sehnsucht*), can lead to such disasters as the Númenórean expedition to Valinor. But if this is Niggle's lesson, what does Parish learn? Alliot doesn't say.

"Leaf by Niggle" is also the subject of "The Autobiographical

Tolkien” by Heidi Steimel (Hiley and Weinreich 191-208), along with *Smith of Wootton Major*. Building from earlier interpretations by Paul H. Kocher and Tom Shippey, Steimel finds moments from Tolkien’s life reflected in both stories. Niggle’s only surviving painting of a leaf suggests *The Hobbit*, which Tolkien in the early 1940s may have expected to be his only published fiction. Smith’s son, Ned, like Christopher Tolkien, works in the same profession as his father but does not venture into Faery. That story’s sense of bereavement derives in part from the death of C. S. Lewis.

In “Two Views of Faërie in *Smith of Wootton Major*: Nokes and His Cake, Smith and His Star” (*Mythlore* 26 no. 3/4: 89-100), Josh B. Long suggests that *Smith of Wootton Major* is a fictional demonstration of the principles Tolkien put forward in “On Fairy-stories.” The fay-star gives Smith the clear vision Tolkien called “recovery” (and on relinquishing it, Smith’s vision is blurred). Nokes embodies various misunderstandings of fairy tales: that they are for children, that they are dreams, and that Elves are diminutive.

“*Smith of Wootton Major*, ‘The Sea-Bell’ and Lothlórien: Tolkien and the Perils of Faërie” by Maria Raffaella Benvenuto (Hiley and Weinreich 251-62), in comparing that story, poem, and episode, observes that the narrator of “The Sea-Bell,” like Boromir in Lórien, finds in Faërie the danger he brought with him. Boromir has the clearest invitation to the perilous realm, but humility enables Smith to return to a normal life. The Queen of Faery and Galadriel both carry suggestions of the elf-ladies of “La Belle Dame sans Merci” and “Thomas the Rhymer.”

“The Homecoming of Beorhtnoth Beorhthelm’s Son”: J.R.R. Tolkien’s Sequel to “The Battle of Maldon” by Marie Nelson (*Mythlore* 26 no. 3/4: 65-87) is a long summary of Tolkien’s play and the Old English poem. Nelson describes characters’ utterances using terminology of J.L. Austin and John R. Searle’s speech act theory. What this says about the play and poem is unclear.

TOLKIEN’S LITERARY THEORY AND PRACTICE

[MTD]

The Lord of the Rings and the Western Narrative Tradition by Martin Simonson (Zurich: Walking Tree, 2008) is a highly ambitious but introductory analysis of the “dialogue” among the modes of myth, epic, romance, and novel in *The Lord of the Rings*; as Simonson acknowledges (116-17), the investigation that constitutes the second half of his book could go much further. He introduces a complicated scheme in a very accessible manner (114-16): each subject is to be analyzed under three headings: genre (the four modes listed above), situational elements (Simonson lists

five: location, character, theme, action, and “focalisation” or narrative attention), and transitions between genres (of which there are seven types, either gradual or sudden). Those subjects are five sequences or “narrative zones” (the Shire, the Bombadil chapters, Rivendell, Moria, and the return journey from Gondor) and three characters or groups (Aragorn, Gandalf, and Frodo and Sam). It’s not clear whether the emphasis Simonson places on *The Fellowship of the Ring* represents his own interests or a reduction in the amount of intertraditional dialogue after the first volume. Each section yields valuable insights. For instance, Simonson notes that Tom Bombadil and Sam don’t function well outside of their different modes, and so they hardly speak to each other. Bilbo’s request for a lunch break in the Council of Elrond deflates the other characters’ heightened tone, allowing Frodo to volunteer. (Here, as elsewhere, Simonson’s finding suggests a point for further study: notice that Frodo has little direct dialogue in the Council.) The Book of Mazarbul is a device that links the novelistic travelogue that opens the Moria sequence to its mythic conclusion with the Balrog. And from Aragorn’s first appearance, there are hints of epic that are held in check by first, his need to believably converse with the hobbits; second, his subordination to Gandalf; and third, his having to appear less arrogant than Boromir. Overall, Simonson finds that the predominant modes are novel and romance. His scheme at times gets in the way of his interpretation, and he could use more detail throughout. Comparison to Tolkien’s trial run at balancing different modes in *The Hobbit* would be helpful, as would more attention to *The History of The Lord of the Rings*, where Tolkien can be seen working on the narrative problems that Simonson discusses. A generally excellent conclusion argues that Tolkien, like such modernists as Ezra Pound and James Joyce, uses older narratives, but for their modes rather than for obscure and distancing allusions; almost all of Tolkien’s allusions are internal to his created world. The first third of Simonson’s book, on the history of the traditions, is perhaps longer than his study requires. A middle chapter discusses Tolkien in the context of early twentieth century literature, including the World War I poets and “ironic myths” like T.S. Eliot’s *Four Quartets*. The bibliography is frustratingly divided into four parts based on subject, with Tolkien’s works appearing in three of them.

Ralph C. Wood calls “J.R.R. Tolkien: Our Post-modern Contemporary” (Wells 1: 148-60) because of Tolkien’s [1] openness to diversity, as in his incorporation of both pagan and Christian elements into his stories, as well as in the composition of the Fellowship; [2] recognition that knowledge is contextual, by which Wood means that Tolkien, unlike C. S. Lewis, doesn’t reply to modernism from a supposedly neutral Socratic perspective but simply offers his story for consideration and hopes for its acceptance; [3] opposition to coercion (the Ring, representing the

addiction of convenience) through a “heroism of submission” (155)—which is postmodern because an anti-modern approach would have featured a Christian warrior; and [4] acceptance of the limits of the individual, who need assistance from the community or God. Wood misreads at times: Gimli was not appointed to the Fellowship for his exceptional knowledge of mines (157), and the returning heroes do not find that most of the Shire’s Hobbits have “gone over to Sauron’s side” (156).

“Tolkien’s Project” (Caldecott and Honegger 211-32), according to Stratford Caldecott, was to convey the essence of Englishness to a country without a clear identity. He describes Tolkien’s predecessors and sources in this regard, outlines the development of Tolkien’s mythology from *The Book of Lost Tales* to *The Lord of the Rings*, and suggests that he finally achieved his goal by creating the Shire (which is, however, not located on the “edge of Wilderland” [213]; nor does Rosie Cotton appear in the opening chapters [227]). In the Scouring, Caldecott sees the influence of Charles Kingsley’s novel, *Hereward, the Last of the English* (1865). Elves represent both the Celtic and feminine aspects of Britain, embodied at the book’s conclusion in the elvish beauty of Sam and Rosie’s daughter, Elanor.

Patrick Curry contemplates the dangers of “Enchantment in Tolkien and Middle-earth” (Caldecott and Honegger 99-112), with reference to the philosophical writings of Jan Zwicky. The sense of loss Tolkien conveys when describing the departure from Lórien hints that enchantment carries a risk of dependency, not unlike the addictive qualities often attributed to the One Ring. Zwicky resolves her notion of “lyric value” by which things are valuable for themselves, with the necessity of human beings to consume, through the principle of “domesticity”: the refusal of absolutes. Curry sees this mediate course as the proper approach to enchantment, and most obviously embodied by Tolkien in the Hobbits.

“Leaf by Tolkien? Allegory and Biography in Tolkien’s Literary Theory and Practice” by Fabian Geier (Hiley and Weinreich 209-32) usefully synthesizes Tolkien’s apparently contradictory comments on the appearance of messages or source elements in his fiction, to argue that “Leaf by Niggle” is not a fully developed theological or biographical allegory but a subcreative elaboration (though an inconsistent one) around allegorical themes. Another of Tolkien’s works began with biographical-allegorical elements but soon abandoned them: “The Notion Club Papers.” Geier further observes that Tolkien seems not to have used the term “applicability” before 1957, having previously described that concept as not-allegory.

Two contributions to the Tolkien 2005 Conference proceedings concern characters’ perceptions of their lives as stories (also the subject of Kristina Sepe’s comparison of Tolkien and Philip Pullman). In “Life as

a Shared Story: Narrative Freedom in *The Lord of the Rings*" (Wells 1: 132-38), Tanya Glofcheskie claims that Tolkien shares the creation of meaning in his story with his readers by allowing them the freedom of applicability. His characters also seem to share in the tale's creation by recognizing their lives as stories. In this way, Tolkien emphasizes their freedom, gives them hope, and suggests the transcendent. The characters' feeling of eucatastrophic joy at the Field of Cormallen when they hear the end of the song of Frodo and Sam echoes what the reader felt at Mount Doom. Jill Delsigne's "Hobbits, Tolkien, and God: Writing Eucatastrophe and the Problem of Evil" (Wells 2: 99-107; also published at Wells 2: 23-31) makes the same points, with a particular focus on the written words and poetry of Bilbo, Frodo, and Sam, the three imagined authors of the Red Book of Westmarch. Delsigne further compares their stories to the Gospels.

"Catastrophe and Eucatastrophe: Russell and Tolkien on the True Form of Fiction" by Christopher Toner (*New Blackfriars* 89 no. 1019: 77-87) disputes Bertrand Russell's claim that because it conveys defiance in the face of certain annihilation, tragedy is the noblest literature. Toner believes the most exalted writing instead to be either absurdist existentialism (like Albert Camus's *The Myth of Sisyphus*) or "tragedy baptized," depending on whether one's worldview is naturalistic or theistic (80). The latter includes "Leaf by Niggle" and *The Lord of the Rings* but extends to non-fantastic work like Evelyn Waugh's *Brideshead Revisited*. Such works succeed to the degree that their eucatastrophic turn avoids *deus ex machina* and that they acknowledge that victory, within time, is temporary. Toner's citation in support of the first point lets him down: Frodo does not use the Ring to command Gollum to leap into the fire—he's not even wearing it then, and his severed finger doesn't count. Regarding the second point, Toner's disparagement of the phrase "happily ever after" flies in the face of Tolkien's comment that this is a mere formula irrelevant to the quality of fairy-stories.

Gregory Bassham, in "Lewis and Tolkien on the Power of the Imagination" (*C. S. Lewis as Philosopher: Truth, Goodness and Beauty*, edited by David Baggett, Gary R. Haberman, and Jerry L. Walls [Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2008], 245-60), identifies various methods by which Tolkien and C. S. Lewis believed that fantasy literature benefits the imagination, with regular citation of "On Fairy-stories" and supporting examples from *The Lord of the Rings* and the *Chronicles of Narnia*. Fantasy offers new perspectives, for example, as in the understanding of time held by immortal beings like Elves or Ents.

"Metaphysics of Myth: The Platonic Ontology of 'Mythopoeia'" by Frank Weinreich (Hiley and Weinreich 325-47) claims that Tolkien's poem condemns science and presents a dualistic description of reality as

having apparent and true forms. The first interpretation seems unlikely given that Tolkien described Elves as representing, in part, the “scientific aspects of the Humane nature” (*Letters* 236). The second interpretation’s validity depends on selective line readings that refuse to engage with the poem’s nominal subject, which is mythmaking.

SOURCE AND COMPARATIVE STUDIES

[MTD]

““Which Story, I Wonder?” said Gandalf . . . : Was Tolkien the Real Ring-thief?” by Michael Scott Rohan (Wells 2: 147-55) is the definitive response to claims that *The Lord of the Rings* is a retelling of Richard Wagner’s *The Ring of the Nibelung* cycle of operas. Rohan begins with an impressive list of similarities between the two works, and shows that Tolkien was exaggerating when he claimed that the stories were alike only in prominently featuring a ring: in fact, Rohan feels that the One Ring is the one element that Tolkien probably borrowed from Wagner, through a complicated process of development. However, in fine detail, broad structure, and technique—Tolkien’s method is elaboration and Wagner’s method is concentration—the differences far outnumber the similarities.

In “Barrows, Wights, and Ordinary People: The Unquiet Dead in J.R.R. Tolkien’s *The Lord of the Rings*” (Forest-Hill 139-50), Amy Amendt-Raduege finds that Barrow-wights share characteristics with Icelandic *draugr* and *haugbúi*, grave-haunting spirits. She also identifies connections to the Old English *Soul and Body* and *Guthlac* poems. Tolkien refrains from using the word “barrow” for Rohan’s mounds, to avoid evil connotations, but the Dwimorberg, the haunted mountain behind Dunharrow, could be read as a barrow over the Paths of the Dead. Amendt-Raduege suggests that like those Dead who were doomed by their oathbreaking, so might the Barrow-wight, servant of the Witch-king, likewise have been punished for treachery. She could add that Frodo is tempted in the Barrow to betray his friends.

“From *Beowulf* to the Balrogs: The Roots of Fantastic Horror in *The Lord of the Rings*” by Maria Raffaella Benvenuto (Forest-Hill 5-14) briefly summarizes previous source studies of Tolkien’s monsters, including balrogs, Gollum, and the Ringwraiths. Many horror tropes that H. P. Lovecraft once identified in medieval works are found in *The Lord of the Rings*. Oddly, Benvenuto feels that illustrators have largely ignored the darker aspects of Tolkien’s stories.

“Fear and Horror: Monsters in Tolkien and *Beowulf*” by Jessica Burke (Forest-Hill 15-52) has two purposes. First, to distinguish between fear, terror, and horror, with citations of “Stephen King, a master of horror, and Charles Darwin, a master of life itself” (19), and indicate where

Tolkien evokes these emotions. Second, to explain the monstrousness of such characters as Melkor, Shelob, Ungoliant, and Gollum in light of previous scholarship on Grendel and Grendel's mother. Unfortunately the article when not incoherent is tendentious, as when Burke claims that it is only because Grendel's mother is a female character who nearly manages to kill Beowulf (the hero of the poem, after all), that some readers think she is evil (34). The message seems to be that while some monsters are just evil (but not absolutely so, as Burke says repeatedly), others are misunderstood, or scapegoats of patriarchal societies.

A shorter, better consideration of Tolkien and *Beowulf* is "Cain-Levian Typology in Gollum and Grendel" by Brent Nelson (*Extrapolation* 49 no. 3 [Winter 2008]: 466-85), which, despite the title, notes that Gollum is a character, not a type. Nelson relates the two characters as outcasts with watery and bestial associations. Grendel is descended from Cain (as Burke also notes), while Gollum is like Cain in having killed someone close to him. Gollum's smaller size indicates the more internal and personal nature of his conflict, in contrast with the external and social dimension of Grendel's situation. Tolkien makes Gollum more obviously human than Grendel, and seems in his comments on *Beowulf* to downplay Grendel's outcast status, reading him as a pure monster. Nelson suggests a parallel between Grendel's hand and Frodo's finger, but the Barrow-wight's arm seems a likelier Tolkien analogue.

Woody Wendling does not answer the title question of "The Riddle of Gollum: Was Tolkien Inspired by Old Norse Gold, the Jewish Golem, and the Christian Gospel?" (*Inklings Forever, Vol. VI* [Upland, IN: Taylor University, 2008]) in the course of briefly suggesting a half-dozen sources for Gollum's creation.

"The Underworld in Tolkien's Novel *The Lord of the Rings*" by Dean Slavic (Wells 2: 70-77) argues that there is a similar pattern of descent in the Harrowing of Hell, Beowulf's adventure in Grendel's mere, and the graveyard scene in *Hamlet*, and tries to show that this pattern applies to incidents in *The Lord of the Rings*, including the Barrow-downs, Moria, and Shelob's Lair. Setting aside dubious folk etymology (such as Rómenna as an analogue for Rome [73]), the article's formatting problems, particularly a failure to distinguish quoted material from Slavic's own statements, make for hard reading. Also, Slavic uses Burton Raffel's translation of *Beowulf*, which Tolkien disliked.

"Tibbles, Fauna of Mordor" by David Doughan (*Mallorn* 46: 50), with a nod to Shakespeare's epithets, "rat-catcher" and "king of cats," applied to Tybalt in *Romeo and Juliet*, identifies "Tibert," the cat of the "Reynard the Fox" medieval beast fables, as the source of "Tiberth Bridhion Miaugion," a name for Tevildo, Prince of Cats, the early version of Sauron in Tolkien's "Tale of Tinúviel."

Romauld Ian Lakowski's "Horror and Anguish: The Slaying of Glaurung and Medieval Dragon-Lore" (Forest-Hill 151-68) summarizes the textual history of Túrin's story and notes motifs shared with *Beowulf*, the *Völsunga Saga*, and *The Faerie Queene*. As the story developed, Glaurung's malice became more important than his greed.

"How Much Does Tolkien Owe to the Work of George MacDonald?" by Colin Manlove (Wells 2: 109-16) ranges widely and engagingly through the themes of both authors, noting their different reasons for disliking allegory, comparing *sehnsucht* in MacDonald to elegy in Tolkien, and describing their characters' contrasting attitudes toward death. Manlove also identifies broad similarities in the plots of *The Lord of the Rings* and "The Golden Key," and smaller parallels between other works, though he is careless, as shown by his reference to the Nazgûl as "Shadowraiths" (115) and his claim that Tolkien's Eagles (compared to the pigeons in *The Princess and Curdie*) turn the tide of battle at Minas Tirith (110).

Marek Oziewicz, in "From Vico to Tolkien: The Affirmation of Myth Against the Tyranny of Reason" (Caldecott and Honegger 113-36) compares Tolkien's themes and methods to those of Giovanni Battista Vico, an early eighteenth century linguist, philosopher, and historian. (Tolkien was probably unaware of Vico, though Owen Barfield knew his work.) Vico's *New Science*, largely described by Oziewicz at second hand, is a systematic history of classical civilizations that shares some qualities with Tolkien's historical *legendarium*. Both Vico and Tolkien recognized the limitations of reason, feared the loss of tradition, and felt the inescapable presence of myth. Unlike Ralph Wood, Oziewicz thinks Tolkien is pre-modernist rather than postmodernist.

"Frodo or Zarathustra: Beyond Nihilism in Tolkien and Nietzsche" by Peter M. Candler, Jr. (Caldecott and Honegger 137-68) does not propose that Tolkien was inspired by the writings of Friedrich Nietzsche who, it is noted, was professionally a philologist not a philosopher. Instead the article compares their ideas about language, modernism, and mythology, contrasting in particular Nietzsche's deliberately anti-Christian myth of the eternally and identically returning Zarathustra, ever destroying and creating, with Tolkien's story in *The Lord of the Rings* of a return with change and growth.

"Tolkien, Chesterton, and Thomism" by Alison Milbank (Caldecott and Honegger 187-98) sees Tolkien's subcreation as embodying Thomas Aquinas's principles of existence, changeability (implying potential), and diversity. Elvish art demonstrates Aquinas's *splendor formae*, the radiance of things fully made, but they are at the risk of becoming enamored or enslaved to their works, which happens, in a way, even to Sauron, who cannot survive when the Ring is destroyed. (However, Milbank, like

Candler, believes Sauron exists in *The Lord of the Rings* as a disembodied eye [159, 197]). Gandalf's fireworks, representing Thomist qualities, are described in terms suggestive of both "On Fairy-stories" and G.K. Chesterton's writings on Aquinas.

"The Problem of Machine Technology in *The Lord of the Rings*" by Natalya Prilutskaya (Wells 2: 310-13) is an opaque comparison of Tolkien and Martin Heidegger's concerns about modern industry (which is also touched on in Reno E. Lauro's article). Prilutskaya attributes differences between Heidegger and Tolkien to their sources in ancient Greek and Scholastic philosophies, respectively.

In "A Little Earth of His Own": Tolkien's Lunar Creation Myths" (Wells 2: 394-403), Kristine Larsen connects three of Tolkien's proposed revisions of mythological explanations for the origin of the moon, from the mid-1940s and late 1950s, to much-debated astronomical theories of that time. Her title refers to the "Ainulindalë C*" text, in which the moon, rather than being the final flower of the tree Telperion, is a portion of the molten earth pulled free by Melkor to serve as a base of operations against the Valar, in a fantastic retelling of the "daughter" theory of lunar origin.

"Influence of Climate on Myth: Tolkien's Theory and Practice" by Rhona Beare (Wells 2: 345-52) is a discursive study comparing aspects of Germanic, Celtic, and Classical mythology to Tolkien's *legendarium*, with special attention to geography and weather: in the first two pantheons, as in Tolkien's work, the sun is feminine. Beare also discusses Tolkien's mixed feelings about Celtic stories, and suggests that the description of Lúthien in "The Lay of Leithian" echoes lines in Yeats's poem "The Song of the Wandering Aengus."

"William Morris's Influence on J.R.R. Tolkien" by Jessica Yates (Wells 2: 204-19), with frequent digressions (including a comparison between Eärendil and the Silver Surfer comic book hero), speculatively examines four areas where Tolkien may have drawn on Morris's work. Tapestries in Exeter College, where Tolkien was a student, vaguely suggest elements in Tolkien's earliest mythological writings. Morris's interest in the Old Norse sagas led Tolkien to a deeper love of that literature (as Carl Phelpstead also observes). As previously noted by other writers like Tom Shippey, some words and situations in Morris's prose romances appear in *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*. Finally, Yates sees similarities between Morris's and Tolkien's octosyllabic poetry.

"With Chunks of Poetry in Between": *The Lord of the Rings* and Saga Poetics" by Carl Phelpstead (*Tolkien Studies* 5: 23-38) notes Tolkien's stated early desire to write a prosimetric romance in the manner of Morris, and Morris's own inspiration for that form in Old Icelandic sagas. This Tolkien fully achieved in *The Lord of the Rings*, where he includes not only

the sagas' "authenticating" verses, offered by the narrator in further support of the story, and "situational" verses, spoken by the characters in response to their circumstances, but also a combined form in which characters recite verses that explain historical matters. Tolkien further follows the sagas in using poetry to allow characters to express matters of higher emotion than they could in prose.

"Gandalf and Merlin: J.R.R. Tolkien's Adoption and Transformation of a Literary Tradition" by Frank P. Riga (*Mythlore* 27 no. 1/2: 21-44) surveys portraits of the Arthurian sorcerer across a millennium, then compares these to Tolkien's presentation of Gandalf in *The Lord of the Rings* and in the "Istari" essay from *Unfinished Tales*. Riga never mentions *The Hobbit* or Tolkien's one brief comment on Merlin and Gandalf in his letters. Many of Riga's points of comparison were previously noted by Todd Jensen in "Tolkien and Arthur: Part III: Merlin and Gandalf" (*Beyond Bree*, November 1992: 2-5). New here is Riga's conclusion, repeated many times, that Tolkien breaks with tradition to emphasize Gandalf's renunciation of power and respect for free will.

"'I Will (Not) Serve the Master of the Precious': Bataille's Economy in Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*" by Benjamin Rollins (*Wells* 2: 360-69), applying the philosophical (and sometimes scatological) theories of Georges Bataille, argues that *The Lord of the Rings* presents an example of a productive, oppressive homogeneous culture—the forces of the West—in conflict with the wasteful, rebellious, and (in this case falsely) heterogeneous culture of Mordor. While Tolkien likened the lava expelled from Mount Doom to vomit, Rollins believes that it should be read as defecation, an identification further solidified in his view because Latin *anus* translates as "ring." After complaining that most critics fail to analyze the text carefully, Rollins confuses Tolkien's book and Peter Jackson's movies on two different points.

"Redefining the Romantic Hero: A Reading of *Smith of Wootton Major* in the Light of Ludwig Tieck's *Der Runenberg*" by Martin Simonson (*Hiley and Weinreich* 233-50) compares two stories whose protagonists, Smith and Christian, escape from the mundane and recover a fresh vision of the world, but while Tolkien's hero is reconciled to his life, Tieck's goes mad. A mysterious guide figure is a healer for Smith and a tempter for Christian. What differentiates Tolkien's approach from Tieck's is his attitude toward tradition, which he felt must be restored rather than rejected.

Two studies by Murray Smith find sources for Tolkien in history and law. "'Seven Signatures of Witnesses in Red Ink'" (*Mallorn* 46: 23-27) notes that English law would call for Bilbo's will to be signed by only two witnesses. However, during World War I, Tolkien presumably would have encountered the Roman law that the British used for soldiers' wills.

This may be what gave him the idea of applying Roman civil requirements, calling for seven witnesses, to hobbit wills. The use of Roman law may be intended to reflect the Shire's origin as part of the Númenórean kingdom of Arthedain. "Some Possible Origins of the Stewards of Gondor" (Wells 2: 169-92) thoroughly summarizes Tolkien's portrayal of the stewards in *The Lord of the Rings* and in *Unfinished Tales*, with reference to drafts in *The Peoples of Middle-earth*; scarcely one of Tolkien's notes on the subject escapes Smith's attention. He then considers various historical stewardships and regencies that may have served as models. Tolkien probably took ceremonial details such as the stewards' white rod from the Lord High Steward of England, which is a temporary and nearly powerless position. For the Gondorian stewards' duties and powers, he would have found examples in the Lord High Stewards of Scotland, among others.

"Influences of the Kalevala in *The Silmarillion* by J.R.R. Tolkien" by Sash Uusjärvi (Wells 2: 128-46) dutifully notes Tolkien's love of Finnish, similarities between the lives of Tolkien and the *Kalevala*'s compiler and reviser, Elias Lönnrot, and some broad parallels between the texts, before turning to specific comparisons. Jonathan B. Himes previously identified many of these examples, and more convincingly, in "What J.R.R. Tolkien Really Did With the Sampo?" (*Mythlore* 22 no. 4 [Spring 2000]: 69-85).

Zach Watkins discusses "Satan and *The Silmarillion*: John Milton's Angelic Decline in J.R.R. Tolkien's Melkor" (Wells 1: 338-42). Tolkien's Melkor and Milton's Satan both hate the Sun, become trapped in a physical form, and know that Ilúvatar or God intends to adopt their evil actions for good ends. Satan literally falls to a Hell where flames burn without light; Melkor descends metaphorically to a similar state. Watkins actually quotes Tolkien's statement in the "Valaquenta" that the Valar are inherently gendered, and then says this shows that their genders "represent their individual inclinations" (41). This would make the Valar essentially genderless, like Milton's angels—if it were true.

In "The Sacrament of the Stranger in C. S. Lewis, J.R.R. Tolkien, and George MacDonald" (Himes, Christopher, and Khoddam 138-50), Kerry Dearborn explains that, by becoming a pilgrim in other lands, one not only learns to welcome strangers but gains new perspectives. She describes instances of this behavior, or the lack of it, in MacDonald's *The Princess and Curdie*, Lewis's *Out of the Silent Planet* and *The Great Divorce*, and Tolkien's *The Fellowship of the Ring*. Despite misgivings, the Elves of Lothlórien welcome the Fellowship, to the benefit of everyone but mistrustful Boromir. Gimli finds more to value than gems, and Frodo learns more fully the implications of his quest. Dearborn doesn't say how the Elves benefit.

“Two Legs Bad, Four Legs Good, Eight Legs Evil?” by Ian Russell Lowell (Wells 2: 303-09) too briefly compares Tolkien’s evil spiders with the octopus figures in Charles Williams’s Byzantine-Arthurian mythology, and overstates Williams and Tolkien’s rivalry for C. S. Lewis’s friendship. However, for those who have been perplexed by Tolkien’s poetic comment, “O, Buttocks to Caucasia!” applied to Williams’s writing in Humphrey Carpenter’s *The Inklings*, the accompanying reprint of a drawing from Williams’s *Taliessin through Logres* is useful. (Richard Sturch also discusses Tolkien’s Williams poem.)

“Putting Away Childish Things: Incidents of *Recovery* in Tolkien and Haddon” by Alana M. Vincent (*Mythlore* 26 no. 3/4: 101-16) applies Tolkien’s concept of “recovery” from “On Fairy-stories” to his presentation of the natural world in *The Lord of the Rings* and to the entire narrative of Mark Haddon’s 2003 novel, *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*. The unusual way that Haddon’s autistic narrator perceives the world requires the reader to adopt a distanced point of view. Similarly, Vincent feels that Tolkien portrays Tom Bombadil and Shelob as allied with neither the West nor Sauron, and unconcerned with the protagonists’ objectives, in order to indicate that those characters, and nature generally, are opportunistic rather than good or evil. She ought to describe them as either good or evil—and “unaligned.”

“Tell Them Stories”: The Consciousness of Myth in Tolkien and Pullman” by Kristina Sepe (Wells 1: 266-73) contrasts Frodo and Sam in *The Lord of the Rings* with Lyra and Will in Philip Pullman’s *His Dark Materials* trilogy. Tolkien’s heroes recognize how their actions continue or recapitulate old tales, but while Pullman’s protagonists know ancient stories, they don’t realize that they are reenacting them. This shows Tolkien and Pullman’s opposing attitudes toward progress (though Sepe’s valuable analysis would be further improved by some consideration of Tolkien’s condemnation of the Elves as embalmers). Further, Tolkien values stories most for themselves, while for Pullman they are tools for conveying a message.

Renée Vink, in “Immortality and the Death of Love: J.R.R. Tolkien and Simone de Beauvoir” (Wells 2: 117-27), builds from Tolkien’s approving reference to a passage in Beauvoir’s 1964 memoir, *Une morte douce* (*A Very Easy Death*) to a masterful and ever-deepening comparison between his 1959 dialogue, “Athrabeth Finrod ah Andreth,” and her 1946 novel, *Tous les hommes sont mortels* (*All Men Are Mortal*). Both stories feature a conversation between an immortal man (a male Elf, in Tolkien’s tale) and a mortal woman. Confronted with the existence of immortals, some mortals come to detest their lot. Beauvoir conveys a tragedy in immortality that Tolkien only hints at in Gandalf’s description of the Ringwraiths (Vink forgets the partial exception of Gollum), but arguably cheats by

making immortality a lonely affair. Whether or not Tolkien had read Beauvoir's novel before composing the "Athrabeth" (the English translation did appear in time), Vink compellingly argues that it shows Tolkien advancing past both Beauvoir's story and his own earlier examples of mortal-immortal love, and comments on Tuor and Idril, Beren and Lúthien, Aragorn and Arwen (Vink misidentifies their tale's author as Findegil; it's actually Faramir and Éowyn's grandson, Barahir), and the unrealized romance of Túrin and Finduilas.

RELIGIOUS AND MORAL

[DSB]

The July/August 2008 issue of *St. Austin Review*, edited by Joseph Pearce and Robert Asch, is a special issue titled "The Catholic Genius of J.R.R. Tolkien." Some, though not all, of its fairly short articles are religious in focus. Pearce's editorial (1-2) describes *The Lord of the Rings* as fundamentally religious and continually relevant. David Alton in "J.R.R. Tolkien, Catholicism, and the Use of Allegory" (4-7) goes through some of the non-allegorical religious concepts in *The Lord of the Rings*, and concludes by taking a random swipe against cloning and abortion. Elizabeth A. Whittingham describes the "Ainulindalë" in "Tolkien's Creation Mythology: The Sovereignty of Eru, the One" (8-10), emphasizing the point stated in her subtitle. The "Life-Giving Ladies: Women in the Writings of J.R.R. Tolkien" by Sandra Miesel (11-15) are from *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Silmarillion*, but not other works. Miesel suggests that the major and minor female characters in *The Lord of the Rings* balance and parallel each other, but denies that the three principal figures form a Triple Goddess. She also interestingly suggests that the Ring, like Ungoliant and Shelob, carries a fundamentally feminine form of evil. Catherine Barnett in "Tolkien, MacDonald, and the Cauldron of Story" (16-19) finds MacDonaldesque "grandmother" figures in Galadriel and Goldberry, as well as other shared themes, including talismans, respites, and an emphasis on eyes, color, and a love of nature. Jef Murray interviews fellow Tolkien artists John Howe, Alan Lee, and Ted Nasmith for "Middle Earth as Muse" (22-24). They all say, in one way or another, that the richness of Tolkien's myth is what drew them to him; Murray, the only Catholic in the group, is also the only one to draw a religious connection. Roger Thomas depicts "Denethor: Knowledge Worse than Ignorance" (25-28) as a victim of Sauron's propaganda machine, and plays on applicability by calling the media our own misleading *palantír* depicting a darkening world, without suggesting what our equivalent might be of the good news that Denethor didn't see (though he actually knew more of it than Thomas says). "The 'Other' Ring" by Susan Treacy (29-30) is more

a brief introduction to Wagner for Tolkien readers than a comparison, interestingly suggesting that Jackson's multi-media movies are more operatic than Tolkien is. Dwight Longenecker seeks "Catholicism Visible: Peter Jackson's *Lord of the Rings*" (39-40) in the Christ-like or Mary-like roles of some of Tolkien's major characters, increased by Jackson in Arwen's case.

Shandi Stevenson finds "The Shadow Beyond the Firelight: Pre-Christian Archetypes and Imagery Meet Christian Theology in Tolkien's Treatment of Evil and Horror" (Forest-Hill 93-117). Stevenson describes the characteristics of northern European culture and literature in the pre-Christian era that Tolkien replicates in his Middle-earth works: the pervasiveness of darkness and cold, the danger of wild animals, the ambivalence and mixed connotations of fire and mountains, and nostalgia for a brighter, more civilized past (in Britain for the Roman era). In such a context, with fear and danger looming out of the dark, it's difficult to make a clear distinction between the (equally dangerous) natural and supernatural, and Tolkien refuses to make such a distinction, leaving the borders to and the characteristics of the supernatural vague and misty. Instead, he makes moral sense out of the fictional environment by interposing a purely Christian sense of good and evil. The horror of evil comes from its capacity to corrupt the good and from the power it gives to control others.

By "The Pagan Tolkien" (Wells 2: 32-39), Ronald Hutton means that Tolkien's mythology is not purely Christian in its religious origin. Hutton views the early "Silmarillion" of the 1920s—a period when, by Tolkien's own testimony, he was lax in his personal religious practice—as an un-integrated mixture of three elements: a Christian and/or Neo-Platonist God over all, a pagan and specifically Olympian pantheon in the form of the Valar, and a layer of Faërie in which the gods are distant, and Elves rather than humans are the crown of creation. Hutton sees the declarations of Christian foundational intent in Tolkien's later letters as part of his larger attempt in the 1950s to purge the mythology of its pagan elements. However, the Faërie pagan strain remains in *The Lord of the Rings* in elements usually seen as Christian, in that the providentialism is not explicit and that the characters do not choose good out of a hope for salvation. Hutton's observation that the author took several drafts to settle on Gollum's part at Mount Doom is meant to suggest that Tolkien did not deliberately intend to use the incident as an demonstration of the effects of Christian mercy. Hutton concludes that Tolkien as an author is not straightforwardly Christian but an interesting mixture of Christian and pagan, and that the purging of pagan elements came from Tolkien's concern that he might be viewed as heretical.

Pedro Ángeles-Ruiz writes "Catholic 'Contrafactura' of Myth in

Some [of] J.R.R. Tolkien's Writings" (Wells 2: 51-64) to suggest that Tolkien melds pagan elements and Catholicism by taking myths and rewriting them with a severer moral sensibility. He cites the tale of Aragorn and Arwen as being based on that of Tristan and Iseult shorn of its adultery and tragic ending. What remains is the high passion and deep union of a knight errant and an elevated lady, treated as a chaste courtship and marriage. Ángeles-Ruiz tries to tie this to broader consideration of the practice and legitimacy of such "contrafactura" rewritings.

John Stanifer's "Rags of Lordship: Tolkien, Lewis, and the Meaning of Myth" (*Inklings Forever, Vol. VI* [Upland, IN: Taylor University, 2008]) is a plainer argument that Tolkien and Lewis found religious truth in pagan myth, citing for Tolkien the allusions to the fall of Lucifer in the rebellion of Melkor and to the expulsion from Eden in the fall of Númenor.

In "Fellowship and the *Rings*: An Ecumenical Approach to Tolkien" (Wells 2: 15-22), Greg Wright, a Protestant minister, reproduces parts of his correspondence with Regina Doman, a Catholic novelist, on the topics of the extent to which Tolkien's pre-Christian setting may be seen as prefiguratively Christian, and what effect the author's intent has on the reader. Doman sees Tolkien's characters, due to the pre-Christian setting, as lacking access to divine truth; Wright does not correct this, and doubts Doman's belief that a specifically Christian spirituality clearly comes through anyway. Wright presents this dialogue as a demonstration of how the spiritual values in Tolkien's work can lead to ecumenical understanding among Christians of different sects.

"The Everlasting Hobbit: Perspectives on the Human in Tolkien's Mythos" by Donald T. Williams (Wells 2: 2-11) is a sermonized consideration of Tolkien's characters—not individual characters, but treated as a group—in the context of the theological concept of humans being made in the image of God. They are creative and articulate, they find meaning in life, they have freedom of choice, they feel temptation and hope, they are able to let life go in the end.

Truths Breathed Through Silver: The Inklings' Moral and Mythopoetic Legacy, edited by Jonathan B. Himes, Joe R. Christopher, and Salwa Khoddam (Newcastle, UK: Cambridge Scholars, 2008) has two papers putting Tolkien in a spiritual context of fellow writers beginning with George MacDonald. In "Lewis, Tolkien, and Williams as Spiritual Mentors" (151-57), Thomas Howard presents Tolkien as a creator of imaginary realms suffused with holiness and an intimation of the divine. He considers Tolkien's letters on courtship and marriage to be "exalted reflections" (154), an unusual reaction among contemporary readers. "Doors Out and Doors In: The Genius of Myth" by Rolland Hein (17-26) is more theoretical, treating Tolkien's concept of eucatastrophe as his expression of the ineffability of myth.

Two papers in *Re-Embroidering the Robe: Faith, Myth and Literary Creation Since 1850*, edited by Suzanne Bray, Adrienne E. Gavin and Peter Merchant (Newcastle, UK: Cambridge Scholars, 2008), discuss “On Fairy-stories” from a theological perspective. Aesthetic theology is the subject of “Myth, Fact and ‘Literary Belief’: Imagination and Post-Empiricism in C. S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien” by Rod Rosenquist (115-26). Tolkien’s concept of secondary belief, the conditional literary faith in the fiction one is reading, connects with reality by opening the mind through subjective experience to the theological truth in myth. Rosenquist takes his argument the rest of the way with Lewis, citing Puddleglum’s faith in Narnia in *The Silver Chair* to illustrate the position that subjective experience can describe reality more deeply than objective perception. Joanny Moulin summarizes Tolkien’s argument in “J.R.R. Tolkien’s ‘Eucatastrophe,’ or Fantasy as a Modern Recovery of Faith” (77-86), adding little except references to some other intellectual movements, for instance suggesting that Tolkien was a follower of the Pre-Raphaelites and Rudolf Steiner (85-86).

“Theology and Fairy-Stories: A Theological Reading of Tolkien’s Shorter Works?” by Thomas Fornet-Ponse (Hiley and Weinreich 135-65) is a highly misleading title, redeemed only by its question mark. After extensively rehearsing the arguments of “On Fairy-stories,” Fornet-Ponse briefly combs over *Roverandom*, “Leaf by Niggle,” *Farmer Giles of Ham*, and *Smith of Wootton Major* for Tolkien’s fairy-tale functions, finding “small eucatastrophes” (158), possibly a contradiction in terms, in any minor plot twist. His justification for this logic is that theology should concern itself with the mundane as well as the ineffable.

Literature and Theology by Ralph C. Wood (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2008) sequentially considers seven Christian creative writers whose works, Wood believes, convey Christian meaning. Chapter 3 (25-36) is “The Call to Companionship in J.R.R. Tolkien’s *The Lord of the Rings*.” Frodo, though he is but an ordinary hobbit, and indeed because of it, is called to a challenging and life-changing quest. But he does not take it alone. He has the Fellowship, friends to support him. Evil may have allies but no friends, and it also lacks wisdom and the cardinal virtues. Pity, forgiveness, and providence save the quest at the end.

Beppe Roncari and Davide Cattaneo in “Tolkien and Christianity” (Wells 2: 65-69) modestly suggest that Tolkien’s faith in religious eucatastrophe and in the imitation of Christ are the Catholic elements in *The Lord of the Rings*. Cattaneo also contributes “Divine Presence and Providence in *The Lord of the Rings*” (Wells 2: 12-14). This is more a brief sermon than a scholarly article, noting the book’s deep-rooted religiosity in the form of a sense that divine guidance is shaping the action. Characters retain individual choice, however, and the evil are allowed chances to

change their path, though they don't take them.

Guglielmo Spirito, in "The Influence of Holiness: The Healing Power of Tolkien's Narrative" (Caldecott and Honegger 199-210) tries to describe the inherently indescribable phenomenon of holy spiritual presence with which *The Lord of the Rings* is imbued. He finds it expressed in a couple specific passages: the unveiling of Henneth Annûn (*TT*, IV, v, 282), and Gandalf's remark that Frodo "may become like a glass filled with a clear light for eyes to see that can" (*FR*, II, i, 235).

Martin Sternberg makes a similar argument in "*Smith of Wootton Major* Considered as a Religious Text" (Hiley and Weinreich 293-323). Sternberg argues that Smith's experiences in Faery are numinous and that the numinous is religious, that those experiences are granted him by spiritual grace, and that, as with God, the enchantment of Faery is not maintained solely by distance, but retains itself on proximity. Using Tolkien's supplementary texts from Verlyn Flieger's extended edition of *Smith* as evidence, Sternberg describes the King of Faery's intent as the spiritual and even economic renewal of Wootton Major, combined with its counter-reformation from the Protestant bland dullness of Nokes.

Leon Pereira states that "Morals Makyth Man—and Hobbit" (Caldecott and Honegger 171-85), finding in Tolkien a specifically Catholic morality, based on the meaning of life being the direct consequence of the existence of God, who as ultimate authority grants providence to the world. Pereira illustrates the practical application of this by the pity shown by Frodo to Gollum, the love of Sam for Frodo, and their God-given consequences. Sam is the real hero of *The Lord of the Rings* because, unlike Frodo, he goes back to lead an ordinary life, centered in his love of home and family, the true and proper expression of his religious faith.

Thomas Fornet-Ponse fills "Different Concepts of Evil in *The Lord of the Rings*" (Wells 2: 78-90) with rarified theological summaries of views of the nature of evil—is it being or nothingness?—and decides that the best applicable view for *The Lord of the Rings* is that of Klaus Hemmerle, who holds that evil arises in a disharmony of the human will with itself, defining the will as good rather than ensuring that the will comports with God's good. Fornet-Ponse states, without demonstrating, that this theory accounts for such phenomena as Frodo's increased susceptibility to the Ring.

Tim McKenzie in "I Pity Even His Slaves': Tolkien and the Theology of Evil" (Wells 2: 91-98) blithely solves the theological problem of the source of the Ring's positive malevolence by pointing out that it expresses the powerful will of Sauron. Perhaps this escaped previous scholars. McKenzie's source is Rowan Williams's reading of Augustine, stating that the more powerful a being, the greater its capacity for evil,

something that should not need to be explained to a reader of *The Lord of the Rings*.

In a somewhat more sophisticated manner, Judith Klinger in “The Fallacies of Power: Frodo’s Resistance to the Ring” (Wells 1: 354-68) treats the Ring as a positive malevolent outside entity bent on corrupting Frodo (or Sam, when it’s in his hands). The clue lies in the diction of Frodo’s statement taking possession of the Ring: it doesn’t sound like him, so it must not really be him speaking. Frodo survives contact with the Ring as well as he does because of his humility and his love for Sam.

“Frodo’s Temptation, Frodo’s Failure” by Douglas Charles Rapier (Wells 1: 296-303) takes an entirely practical approach to the Ring’s evil. Rapier intriguingly suggests that Frodo’s failure to destroy the Ring is partially redeemed by his having realized when taking on the quest that it would not be possible to resist the Ring’s seduction, but then backs away and says that the examples of Gandalf and Aragorn would have told Frodo that continued resistance was possible. The article concludes with a fantasy of Frodo’s actions as Ring-lord, ignoring Tolkien’s statements that Frodo would not initially have had the knowledge or power to wield the Ring on that level and could not have wrested control of the Nazgûl away from Sauron (*Letters* 331-32).

“Demons, Choices, and Grace in *The Lord of the Rings*” by Chad Chisholm (*Mallorn* 45: 20-23) compares the diabolical evil in Tolkien to that in Orwell’s *1984*. Frodo and Orwell’s Winston Smith are both tested to the extreme, and both, Chisholm says, make the free choice to fall into evil. The difference is that Frodo is redeemed by the author’s choice to apply grace.

“Devilry and Images of Evil in Tolkien” by Colin Duriez (*Silver Leaves* 2: 35-42) expounds for a popular audience Tom Shippey’s conception of Tolkien’s ideas of evil, reconciling evil as a nullity with evil as a positive malignant force through treating it as a corruption of the good. Much of the article is devoted to descriptions of parallels in Lewis, Williams, and Rowling.

Nicole Topham gives examples of three moral principles in “The Time That Is Given to Us: Hope, Sacrifice, and Courage in *The Lord of the Rings*” (Wells 1: 327-31). Sam exhibits hope, and Frodo exhibits sacrifice and courage. These principles are applicable and needed in our own time.

Constance G.J. Wagner further discusses the second of these principles in “The War Within: Frodo as Sacrificial Hero” (Wells 1: 338-42). Her precept is that Frodo is part of a Trinity (her capitalization) with Sam and Gollum, a character both at war with himself and able to shift part of his burden off onto the other persons of the Trinity.

“Revenge and Moral Judgement in Tolkien” by Brian Rosebury

(*Tolkien Studies* 5: 1-20) ranges widely through Tolkien's *legendarium* to find many examples of characters taking revenge, whether grand (Thorin and Company recovering their treasure) or petty (Frodo leaving the washing-up for Lobelia). Often the motivations are mixed, with Melkor's revenge against the Elves for causing his downfall being ancillary to his pride, and Bard's shooting of Smaug being less revenge on behalf of his ancestors than the practical need to stop the dragon from burning the town. Tolkien's ethics suggest that he would not endorse revenge, yet he does not condemn it strongly. Rosebury finds that Tolkien takes a utilitarian moral approach to revenge: while never warmly approved, it can be respected as an understandable reaction when proportionate to the provocation (Wormtongue stabbing Saruman) or performed after much deliberation (the Ents attacking Isengard). Túrin is a particularly interesting and complex case, whose character and circumstances lead him to take impulsive actions. Rosebury concludes that "revenge in Tolkien is complex and subtle" (17).

"J.R.R. Tolkien and Bioethics" by Joseph M. Knippenberg (*The City* 1 no. 1: 48-57) is a polemic using Tolkien's concept of death as the Gift of Men, and retelling the story of the rebellion of the Númenóreans against mortality, to chide medical researchers who, as Knippenberg sees it, are not just fighting disease but seeking to eliminate death.

TOLKIEN'S SUB-CREATION

[DSB]

"Galadriel and Her Lovers" by Beth Russell (Wells 1: 343-53), written largely from a sub-creational perspective, describes Galadriel's relationships with her husband, Celeborn—whose disagreements with Galadriel Russell sees as showing signs of independent strength and judgment, rather than, as Robert Foster puts it, implying that "he does not seem especially bright"—and three males who worshipped her from afar: Fëanor, Celebrimbor, and Gimli. Gimli's devotion to Galadriel is intended by Tolkien to demonstrate an ideal courtly love, and his sincerity moves her to give him the strands of hair she had previously (within the sub-creation, though it came afterwards in Tolkien's writing) denied the haughty Fëanor, a refusal which had had mighty consequences. Galadriel's expression of power in the War of the Ring suggests that she is Fëanor as he should have been, as Gandalf is "Saruman as he should have been." Russell also declares that Galadriel takes the place in the *legendarium* of Meril-i-Turingi of *The Book of Lost Tales*, to whom she bears marked similarity.

Jason Fisher notes that readers of *The Lord of the Rings* have trouble remembering the emblems and ownership of the three Elven Rings, and

that even the author had trouble deciding on their number and disposition. “Three Rings for—Whom Exactly? And Why?: Justifying the Disposition of the Three Elven Rings” (*Tolkien Studies* 5: 99-108) is a guide to their thematic and philological associations with their final owners. This is mostly straightforward, though Fisher is undecided on the relevancy of references to *The Hobbit*, which, though it takes place after Gandalf and Elrond received their rings, was written before the rings were invented.

In “A Brief History of Libraries in Middle-earth: Manuscript and Book Repositories in Tolkien’s *Legendarium*” (Himes, Christopher, and Khoddam 81-92), David Oberhelman traces this interesting subject and compares it to corresponding developments in European history. The Eldar and Edain both begin as oral cultures, but develop writing systems and eventually great libraries in Gondolin and Númenor, both of which are largely destroyed in cataclysms. (The Chamber of Mazarbul is also a destroyed library.) In the Third Age, some written caches are preserved by both Elves and Men, but at least in Minas Tirith they are largely neglected. It is the Hobbits who preserve the ancient civilization in the end, as middle-class antiquarian book collectors.

Allan Turner wishes to be “Putting the Paratext in Context” (Wells 1: 284-89), by which he means, asking to what extent the Appendices, Prologue, and Foreword to *The Lord of the Rings* function as part of the story and not just as separable add-ons. Turner writes from the perspective of literary theory, but he contributes to the study of Tolkien’s sub-creation with his observation that the use of quoted material from secondary world documents within the Appendices and Prologue creates the sub-creational function of embedded narratives, something also found within the main text when characters tell stories or recite poems. Turner hopes to convince readers that the paratext is an essential contribution to the book’s effect.

Michał Leśniewski tackles “The Question of the ‘Round Arda’: An Abandoned Idea, or Another Perspective on Tolkien’s *Legendarium*” (Wells 2: 353-59). He assimilates the later Round World version of Arda’s cosmology into the overall conception of the *legendarium*, rather than abandoning it as many Tolkienists wish to do, by reminding readers that the “Silmarillion” is not a single canonical story as in the 1977 text, but a collection of divergent traditions, both intentionally and by happenstance on Tolkien’s part. From the sub-creational perspective, Tolkien should be seen as the editor and compiler of these divergent stories, not the transmitter of unquestionable fact. Thus we can have both the grand mythos of the Flat World version and the sketchier but more scientifically literate Round World as variant myths. This is an elegant argument marred only by Leśniewski’s uncertainty over whether to deem the Elves as being in possession of the true facts (355, 359) or not (358). This

paper was previously published, in a slightly different translation, in *Aiglos* (Summer 2005: 101-17).

PHILOLOGY AND TRANSLATION STUDIES

[DSB]

“The Word as Leaf: Perspectives on Tolkien as Lexicographer and Philologist” (Caldecott and Honegger 57-83) is a supplement to the book *The Ring of Words*, by the same authors, Peter Gilliver, Edmund Weiner, and Jeremy Marshall. It consists of three smaller essays, all well-documented. Gilliver’s, the longest, discusses Tolkien’s period on the staff of the *Oxford English Dictionary* in terms of his relationship with his editors, Henry Bradley and William Craigie, and goes on to recount his editorial relations with Kenneth Sisam of the Oxford University Press, starting with Tolkien’s contribution of *A Middle English Vocabulary* as a supplement to a Sisam-edited anthology, followed by the long story of his failure over decades to produce his agreed-upon work for a Chaucer edition Sisam was overseeing. Weiner writes of unusual English words Tolkien used that he could have found in works by Charles Kingsley and William Morris, and in dictionaries and grammars, the point being Tolkien’s ability to bring dry philology to life. Marshall defends Tolkien’s irregular plural *Dwarves*, citing previous and contemporary usages, and suggesting that Tolkien formed it by unconscious parallel with *Elves*.

Maria Artamanova briefly surveys “Tolkien’s Writings in Old Germanic Languages” (Wells 2: 156-63): poems in Old English and Gothic, published in *Songs for the Philologists* and various periodicals, and some Old English fragments in the *legendarium*. Much of this work dates from Tolkien’s period in Leeds in the 1920s. In different works, Tolkien copied Old English poetic formulae and wrote modern-meter poetry using the old languages’ vocabularies, renewing them as sources of literature. He also experimented with different dialects and periods of Old English.

“Sir Gawain’s *Pentangle*” by Joe. R. Christopher (Wells 2: 193-97) is a technical philological discussion of this word in *Sir Gawain*, and the plausibility of Tolkien’s theory that the word, otherwise unknown in Middle English, is a popular alteration of the Latin *pentaculum*. Christopher thinks the poet may have invented the word, but he considers likelier Tolkien’s other statement that the figure was probably well known in England.

Paul Battles offers a brief critique of translations of “*Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, Stanzas 32-34” (*Explicator* 67 no. 1 [Fall 2008]: 22-24), including Tolkien’s use of “hoar woods beneath” to imply that the woods are beneath the hills previously mentioned, rather than that Gawain is himself underneath the woods. Battles says that the second reading “literally heightens the menace.”

“Descriptions of Nature in *The Lord of the Rings*: Outline of a Method for Analysis” by Magne Bergland (Wells 1: 139-47) is, as the subtitle says, not a study of Tolkien’s words but a proposal for one. Bergland argues that quantifying Tolkien’s descriptions of nature would be worthwhile, then points out the difficulties of deciding what counts as “nature” and what counts as a description of it. A sample analysis proves, to nobody’s surprise, that chapters taking place in the woods have a lot of description of forests.

The revelations in “J.R.R. Tolkien’s Love of Words: The Revelatory Nature of Tolkien’s Aphorisms in *The Lord of the Rings*” (Wells 2: 291-95), by Charles E. Bressler, are revelations of character. Gandalf’s aphorisms are wiser and deeper than Gaffer Gamgee’s. All the speakers, even Gandalf, are shown to grow as characters by the increasing grace and comforting nature of their aphorisms.

Emma B. Hawkins states that “Tolkien’s Linguistic Application of the Seventh Deadly Sin: Lust” (*Mythlore* 26 no. 3/4: 29-40) is non-sexual. He uses the word to describe extreme, uncontrolled desire (as for, for instance, the Ring) or a strong wrath, using it in partnership with evocations of other sins, greed and gluttony, the latter also often not directed specifically at its normal object of food. Hawkins concludes that Tolkien’s is a fresh interpretation of the word *lust*.

Melody Green provides “The Riddle of Strider: A Cognitive Linguistic Reading” (Wells 1: 315-18), a close analysis of the reinforcing metaphors that make up “All that is gold does not glitter.” The poem is in the form of an Anglo-Saxon riddle; the answer to that riddle, Aragorn, is provided when the poem is introduced in *The Lord of the Rings*; so what is left for the reader to discover is the meaning of the individual metaphors. Green reaches for some heavy-duty condensations, summarizing the “wither” and “deep roots” lines as reflecting a metaphor that “people are plants.”

Cecilia Dart-Thornton in “Word Magic” (*Mallorn* 45: 50) notes Tolkien’s repeated use of tasting metaphors for experiencing new languages, and wonders if he experienced synesthesia.

By Hook or By Crook: A Journey in Search of English by David Crystal (Woodstock, NY: Overlook Press, 2008) is a popular miscellany on aspects of the English language organized in the form of a travelogue. On pages 195-204, the author gets to Sarehole and discusses Tolkien. In the midst of etymological chatter on Tolkien’s coinages, Crystal suggests a phonetic connection between *mithril* and *Bovril*, both words derived from invented languages. A short chapter, “Dialect in Middle Earth,” in Crystal’s earlier book *The Stories of English* (Woodstock, NY: Overlook Press, 2004: 510-13), notes dialect words in hobbit speech without exploring the subject.

“Shelob and Her Kin: The Evolution of Tolkien’s Spiders” by Rainer Nagel (Forest-Hill 81-92) turns out to be principally a philological article, tracing the history of *lob* (as in Shelob) and *attecop*. Nagel makes a stab at trying to find Tolkienian significance in the fact that *lob* was historically used in religious texts. He also traces the steps in the writing of *The Lord of the Rings* by which the Shelob episode evolved from a reprise of Bilbo’s encounter with multiple, somewhat comic giant spiders to a more serious struggle with a monster bearing characteristics of, but not really being, a spider.

“Hobbit Names Aren’t From Kentucky,” says David Bratman (Wells 2: 164-68), using U.S. surname distribution statistics to respond to the claim of Guy Davenport and Daniel Grotta that Tolkien was inspired by tales of Kentucky country folk. Instead, Tolkien’s own “Nomenclature of *The Lord of the Rings*” and further statistics suggest that he chose the names on the basis of folk etymologies appropriate to hobbit characteristics, and possibly the names’ geographic associations within England.

“Numbers in Tolkien” by Christopher Kreuzer (Wells 2: 325-38) is a specialized word study on number words in *The Lord of the Rings*. Large parts of the paper consist of the toting up of examples, but Kreuzer has some specific points to make. Tolkien uses numbers for symbolic purposes significant to characters in the story (e.g. the seven stars on Aragorn’s banner) and to refer to both objects and sequences of events. He’s particularly fond of sequences of three. Drafts of passages with symbolic weight to the numbers, such as the Ring verse and the appointment of the Fellowship, show Tolkien altering and exchanging numbers before settling down to the final version.

The Tolkien 2005 Proceedings has a section devoted to international studies. Four of these papers concentrate on translations. “Tolkien’s Legacy in Brazil” by Thomaz Brasil (Wells 1: 183-87) and “The Polish Story of *The Lord of the Rings*” by Anna Dąbkowska (Wells 1: 188-92) are histories of the book’s reception in translation in their countries. Brasil focuses on Brazilian Tolkien fandom, while Dąbkowska speculates on why Poland was by twenty years the first country behind the Iron Curtain to publish a translation of the novel (in 1961-63) and on its impact on the nation’s literary culture. Both emphasize the influence of changing political regimes on cultural life. Dąbkowska’s article as published in the Proceedings appears to be an abridged combination of two longer articles published in *Aiglos* (Summer 2005), “The Polish Story of *The Lord of the Rings*: Three Translations, Many Editions” by Tadeusz A. Olszański (4-24), and “Polish Tolkien Fandom” by Anna Dąbkowska (so spelled) (25-31).

The other two papers are technical translation studies. “The Translation of Tolkien’s Work into Spanish and Catalan” by Helios De Rosario-

Martínez (Wells 1: 193-96) compares two translations of *The Lord of the Rings*, finding the Catalan more accurate than the Spanish in terms of accuracy and reproducing Tolkien's effects. "Place Names in the Italian Translation of *The Lord of the Rings*" by Roberto Arduini and Raffaella Benvenuto (Wells 1: 197-205) discusses the two competing translators who worked on the same 1970 edition of the book, and classifies their place name choices into the good, the bad, and the ugly.

"Verbal and Visual Translations of Middle-earth: Cultural References and Wordplay in *The Lord of the Rings*" by Miquel Pujol Tubau (*Whose Story?: Translating the Verbal and the Visual in Literature for Young Readers*, edited by Maria González Davies and Riitta Oittinen [Newcastle, UK: Cambridge Scholars, 2008]: 45-56) also compares the Catalan and Spanish translations, citing various techniques for conveying wordplay and neologisms in a translation.

Renée Vink writes of "*In de Ban van de Ring: Old and New Fashions of a Translation*" (*Lembas-extra* 2008: 26-41), a study of archaisms in Max Schuchart's Dutch translation of *The Lord of the Rings*. The archaisms come in two kinds: attempts by the translator to reproduce archaisms in the English original, of which Vink finds that Schuchart did little, and subsequent revisions of the translation to update wordings that may have been current Dutch when the translation was first published in 1956-57 but have become obsolete since; Vink finds that this has been done inconsistently and badly.

"Things to Remember When Translating Tolkien" (*Lembas-extra* 2008: 42-50) contains comments by Nils Ivar Agøy on translating Tolkien in general, and on his experiences translating several books into Norwegian. Agøy identifies two approaches: a "hard-liner" one of pretending that Tolkien was himself the translator of ancient documents, which implies preserving the flavor of the original at all costs, and the opposite approach of domesticating references in the text for the target audience. Which to use depends on circumstances; Agøy tends towards the hard-liner approach, particularly with the posthumous volumes full of technical data, despite the obviousness of Tolkien's invention of their contents. Agøy's advice to translators may be summed as: be consistent, and understand your work's context.

"Tolkien and Universality" by Kate Karegeorgi (Wells 1: 257-65) is a somewhat philologically-oriented and intensely nationalistic survey of the influence of Greek mythology on Tolkien: the similarity of the fall of Gondolin to that of Troy, of the Valar to the Olympic pantheon, and of Aragorn's life to the journey of the Greek hero.

Carolina A. Panero in "Dealing with Elvish Languages" (Wells 2: 370-74) simply wants to say that Tolkien fans enjoy studying Quenya and Sindarin, despite controversies over the literary value of Tolkien's work.

RECEPTION STUDIES

[DSB]

Nils Ivar Agøy offers four reasonable answers to the question, "Why Is Tolkien So Popular?" (Wells 1: 375-80). Referring to *The Lord of the Rings* in particular, he says that Tolkien draws the reader in by offering compelling storytelling while requiring the reader to make an imaginative effort, by creating a detailed world with multiple levels and types of invention, by securely rooting this in the primary world, and above all by offering firm moral values and a belief in the meaningfulness of individual people.

Sarah Arthur considers "The Tale We've Fallen Into: Some Thoughts on Why We Never Outgrow *The Lord of the Rings*" (*Silver Leaves* 2: 56-57). Her principal suggestion is the spiritual comfort of watching characters fight outright evil and the assurance it gives us that we can face our own fears. Arthur addresses fans of the movie, and suggests they might even want to read the book, too.

"An Encyclopedia of Ignorance" by Tom Shippey (*Mallorn* 45: 3-5) is a typically vigorous Shippey polemic, attacking academics who still dismiss Tolkien, and pointing out large areas of study under-explored by Tolkien scholars: his poems; his editions, glossaries, and other technical scholarship; lesser-known influences on him; and his influence on later fantasy.

Dimitra Fimi, in "Teaching and Studying Tolkien" (*Mallorn* 46: 27-29) finds a full glass where Shippey sees an empty one. She depicts increasing academic acceptance of Tolkien in the burgeoning number of university courses in Britain and the U.S. covering his work.

In "From Beowulf to Post-modernism: Interdisciplinary Team-Teaching of J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*" (Wells 1: 105-10), Robin Anne Reid and Judy Ann Ford discuss their presentation of the book as "a postmodern text, characterized by chronological layering" (105), illustrating this by perceiving the War of the Ring as reflecting a layering of Tolkien's personal experience in World War I over his reading of medieval epics, with Jackson's movies adding an additional layer of the 2003 invasion of Iraq. Juxtaposing a conscious awareness of these layers brings the past alive to students.

"Tolkien and *The Lord of the Rings*: An Inspiration for Education and Study Worldwide" by Patty Howerton (Wells 1: 381-88) is an overview of the current state of classroom use of Tolkien. Students apparently love *The Lord of the Rings*, especially if they can skip the "slow" opening and dive directly into *The Two Towers*, getting caught up on the plot of the previous volume by watching Jackson's movie instead. They are inspired to study languages and even archery through reading Tolkien. Donations

of copies of the books to school libraries are earnestly solicited. Howerton expands on one topic from this article in “Tolkien’s Middle-earth: Lesson Plans for Secondary School Educators” (Wells 1: 389-94): lesson plans for *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* published by Houghton Mifflin in 2004. These divide the books into units, each of which is given a thematic focus, most of them reflecting Tolkien’s moral values.

“The International Relations of Middle-earth: Learning from *The Lord of the Rings*” by Abigail E. Ruane and Patrick James (*International Studies Perspectives* 9 no. 4 [Nov. 2008]: 377-94) is an extraordinarily ingenious application of the book to a field of study other than literature. As *The Lord of the Rings* is, among other things, a story of war, diplomacy, and inter-group interactions, it can be used as a textbook in International Relations. Ruane and James find contrasting sets of characters who illustrate well-established approaches to this topic—Saruman’s importuning pitch to Gandalf, for instance, is Machiavellian self-justification, while Gimli is a neoliberal interested in foreign alliances—and then go on to trace the history of feminism among the characters as well. Éowyn is a first-wave feminist trying to succeed on men’s terms; the Entwives are second-wave cultural feminists; and Galadriel is a practical postmodern feminist with high emotional intelligence. Ruane and James wrap up by combining their two sets into one broad integrated chart.

“Russian Followers of J.R.R. Tolkien” by Natalya Prilutskaya (Wells 1: 206-9) sketchily describes *The Ring of Darkness* by Nick Perumov, a Russian sequel to *The Lord of the Rings* notable for depicting a morally neutral rebellion of mortals against the Valar and Elves. Perumov russifies the landscape and culture and, in Prilutskaya’s view, imbues even his favored characters with overweening pride. This article raises, but does not address, interesting points about Russian perception of Tolkien, suggesting to this reader the possibility of comparing Perumov’s and other Russian sequels to equally amoral American Tolkien imitations and attempts to deconstruct other classic fantasy worlds, notably Baum’s Oz.

Where Prilutskaya finds Russian readers adapting Tolkien to a Russian model, Nataliya Oryshchuk, in “J.R.R. Tolkien and Alexander Grin: Two Literary ‘Cults’ in the USSR and Post-Soviet Russia” (Wells 1: 211-16), attributes Tolkien’s popularity to his creation of an imaginary world in which readers can escape prosaic reality. She compares this to the earlier popularity of Grin, a Russian writer who creates an imaginary fantastical landscape and whose appeal defied the claims of critics that his spirit and style were un-Russian.

“Tolkien in Fiction” by Colin Duriez (Wells 1: 243-49) is a very brief consideration of autobiographical elements in “Leaf by Niggle,” “The Lost Road,” and “The Notion Club Papers,” followed by an even briefer consideration, mostly consisting of quotations, of Tolkien’s appearance

as a character, or the inspiration for a character, in C. S. Lewis's fiction and that of a few more recent authors.

Wolfgang Penetsdorfer in "The Hunt for the One Tolkien" (Wells 1: 217-32) casually puts some of Tolkien's own stories, and the epic multi-volume sagas of several post-Tolkien fantasists, to what he calls "the test of Faërie," that is, does each work fit the criteria Tolkien set out in "On Fairy-stories" of being a believable secondary world for a variety of readers which provides recovery, escape, and consolation? Penetsdorfer is reluctant to judge any of his examples as completely failing the test.

Miriam Glasser in "The Fantasy Genre and Its Characteristics" (Wells 1: 401-7) takes a practical approach in contrast to Penetsdorfer's theoretical one, describing observed characteristics of epic fantasy. Notes on how *The Lord of the Rings* fits in are scattered throughout, the lengthiest being on the travel and separation of the characters (403).

David Emerson, in "Tolkien and Moorcock: Achieving Literary Depth Through Vertical and Horizontal Explorations of Time" (Wells 1: 233-37), proposes that two of the sources of the depth of Tolkien's sub-creation are the sense of recapitulation of past events in later settings (such as Arwen's fate echoing Lúthien's) and the existence of multiple versions of the "Silmarillion" tales. Emerson compares these techniques to the Eternal Champion who recurs in various novels and series by Michael Moorcock, concluding that Moorcock, despite his antipathy to Tolkien, better replicates Tolkien's creation of literary depth than do others who copy only the surface appearance of the sub-creation.

"After the Inklings" by Charles Butler (Wells 1: 238-42) is a brief but thoughtful discussion of how works by the children's fantasists Susan Cooper, Diana Wynne Jones, and Alan Garner share themes and even incidents with *The Lord of the Rings* without having been directly influenced by Tolkien. This article is a tantalizing introduction to the idea that a broader shared context can be responsible for more perceived influence than any direct imitation.

Judith Caesar in "Murakami and the Inklings" (*Explicator* 67 no. 1 [Fall 2008]: 26-30) reads Haruki Murakami's dream-fantasy *Hard-Boiled Wonderland and the End of the World* as, in part, "a critique of Tolkien's naïve idealization of communal values" (28). This is further emphasized by the presence of orc-like villains whom Murakami (or his translator) calls INKlings [*sic*], presumably after Tolkien's literary club.

Rosana Rios describes "Storytelling in the White Council" (Wells 1: 274-83), groups in Brazil carrying on a national tradition of mythic storytelling, specifically also inspired by the example of the peoples in Tolkien's *legendarium*, and indeed incorporating some of Tolkien's tales into their repertoire.

In two articles in *Journal of the Fantastic in the Arts*, both titled "*The Lord*

of the Rings Interlace,” on series of visual artworks inspired by *The Lord of the Rings*, Emily E. Auger finds the medieval interlace narrative of the story reflected by the choice and organization of the topics of the art. In both cases, arbitrary organizing factors have shaped the artist’s vision and helped it reflect the complexity of Tolkien’s narrative. The first article, subtitled “Tolkien’s Narrative and Lee’s Illustrations” (19 no. 1: 70-93) discusses Alan Lee’s illustrations for the 1991 edition of the book. Here the organizing factor was Lee’s decision to have each illustration reflect its immediate facing page, despite those pages having been chosen arbitrarily by binding needs. The second article, subtitled “From Tolkien to Tarot” (19 no. 3: 317-30), addresses *The Lord of the Rings Tarot Deck and Card Game* by writer Terry Donaldson and artist Peter Pracownik. Here the organizing factor was the arcana of a tarot deck. Auger catalogs recurring features and themes in each set of artwork.

“A Single Leaf: Tolkien’s Visual Art and Fantasy” by Jeffrey J. MacLeod and Anna Smol (*Mythlore* 27 no. 1/2: 105-26) discusses MacLeod’s creation of paintings depicting Lúthien and Smaug (reproduced with the article) in terms of Tolkien’s own visually-oriented creativity. The authors note Tolkien’s use of color words and the allegory of Niggle’s painting to describe secondary worlds. MacLeod says he honors Tolkien’s belief that fantasy should be anchored in the primary world by basing his Lúthien on a human model.

“Pictures to Accompany a Great Story” (*Lembas-extra* 2008: 4-15) is Dutch artist Cor Blok’s memoir of how he came to create a series of pictures illustrating *The Lord of the Rings* in 1959-61 (none reproduced here, unfortunately), and of his visit to Tolkien in the latter year to discuss them. Blok defends his primitivist style as leaving more vision open for the reader’s imagination than realistic painting does, and extols *The Lord of the Rings* as a “Great Story” with mythic significance.

Eileen Battersby celebrates *The Lord of the Rings* in her newspaper series “Second Reading” (*Irish Times*, June 28, 2008, book review section 12), reconsidering literary classics. She praises Tolkien’s compelling narrative, dense web of cultural history, and juxtaposition of cozy domesticity with the darker traditions of epic heroism and fairy tale.

“*The Lord of the Rings*: J.R.R. Tolkien vs the Modern Age,” by the science fiction writer David Brin, was originally published online in 2002 and appears in print in his book *Through Stranger Eyes: Introductions, Tributes & Iconoclastic Essays* (Ann Arbor, MI: Nimble Books, 2008: 27-38). The iconoclasm here is a vigorously one-sided argument accusing Tolkien of being an anti-modernist Romantic, with all that implies for belief in an aristocracy and disdain of the masses, democracy, and freedom from drudgery. The lowly should defer to their betters and not try anything that smacks of hubris, like using the Ring. Brin adds that after seeing

what the Nazis did to his mythic source material, Tolkien rethought himself and began blaming the Elves for preventing progress in Middle-earth. This is certainly a distinctive view, for all it has nothing to do with what Tolkien actually said or thought.

FILM STUDIES

[DSB]

Watching The Lord of the Rings: Tolkien's World Audiences, edited by Martin Barker and Ernest Mathijs (New York: Peter Lang, 2008) is a collection of marketing/reception studies based on an international survey of viewers of Peter Jackson's *Return of the King*. The editors suggest that the views of the people who all saw the movie at once might shed light on the harder-to-collect views of the people who read the book over many years, but this point is not pursued. (Most useful for that purpose is Barker's "The Functions of Fantasy" [149-80], analyzing the differences in patterns of responses of viewers who see the movie primarily as an epic vs. those who see it primarily as a spiritual journey. Barker also writes "Tolkien's Books and Peter Jackson's Films" [Wells 2: 271-77], an analysis of his survey respondents focused on the sense of involvement in the book that its readers have.) Viewer expectation is analyzed extensively, but this book's main value for Tolkien studies is its occasional discussion of the movie's capacity as an adaptation of the book. Most significant in this regard is a section of an article by Kate Egan and Martin Barker, "The Books, the DVDs, the Extras, and Their Lovers" (83-102), tracing through the DVD commentaries the screenwriters' evolving attitude from faithful transmitters of Tolkien's story to owners of their own story and fixers of Tolkien's supposed mistakes. "Involvement in *The Lord of the Rings: Audience Strategies and Orientations*" by Lothar Mikos et al. (111-29) contrasts a "Literary Generation" focus group, who understand the movie in terms of the book, with a "Media Generation" focus group who, lacking that orientation, find the movie's plot less comprehensible. "Understanding Disappointment: The Australian Book Lovers and Adaptation" by Sue Turnbull (103-9) briefly considers what Tolkien fans disliked in the adaptation, and the paradox that most of them enjoyed watching the movie anyway. "Heroism in *The Return of the King*" by José Javier Sánchez Aranda et al (191-98) also touches on this point, regarding the character of Aragorn.

James G. Davis in "Showing Saruman as Faber: Tolkien and Peter Jackson" (*Tolkien Studies* 5: 55-71) postulates that Jackson's movies can illuminate Tolkien's book by contrast. In this case, Jackson's extensive depiction of Saruman's industrial complex points out how little description it's given in Tolkien, who concentrates on the pastoral that Jackson

hastily skips through. Davis vigorously defends Verlyn Flieger's point that the Hobbits of the Shire have as antagonistic a relationship with the Old Forest as Saruman does with Fangorn; his reason for bringing this up is a more tentative suggestion that Saruman's evil lies not in cutting trees, nor even doing so extensively and wantonly, but in "his desire to dominate the free races" (65), whereas Jackson, by leaving out the Old Forest, simplifies Saruman into simple evil tree-killer. Though Davis is critical of Jackson, he is elsewhere defensive. Though he notes that Jackson is "almost too eager" to wallow in industrialization (59), implying that this alone is a major difference in tone from Tolkien, Davis criticizes Matthew Dickerson for making the same complaint (66-67), saying that it proves that Jackson's depiction "is far more powerful than Tolkien's," as if that were obviously a good thing. And Davis quotes Tolkien out of context to suggest, ludicrously, that fantasy drama in contemporary movies might earn his approval (66).

David Hyttenrauch takes a similar tack in "Peter Jackson and the Deforestation of Middle Earth" (*The Influence of Imagination: Essays on Science Fiction and Fantasy as Agents of Social Change*, edited by Lee Easton and Randy Schroeder [Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2008]: 32-43), but without the apologetics for the movies. Jackson's Saruman, says Hyttenrauch, is a melodramatic villain, not someone seduced by technology (41). Like Davies, Hyttenrauch sees the story as unbalanced by the omission of the Old Forest: what Hyttenrauch sees as vital in this episode is the hobbits', and the reader's, introduction to animism, animate nature. The article's thesis statement does not appear until page 37, a quotation of Tolkien complaining of an early radio adaptation, "Cannot people imagine things hostile to men and hobbits who prey on them without being in league with the Devil!" (*Letters* 228) Hyttenrauch's chief and clearest example is Jackson's snows of Caradhras rising at Saruman's direct command instead of, as in Tolkien, at the mountain's own inscrutable will.

For David Rozema, in "The Lord of the Rings: Tolkien, Jackson, and 'The Core of the Original'" (*Christian Scholar's Review* 37 no. 4 [Summer 2008]: 427-46), that core lies in the protagonists' possession of the theological and moral virtues. Rozema cites Tolkien's comment that the book is fundamentally Catholic, but he does not rely solely on this, using textual evidence to demonstrate Aragorn's and Faramir's faith and fortitude, Gandalf's hope and wisdom, and Frodo's charity and justice. His charge is that Jackson's characters—especially his self-doubting Aragorn and his Frodo who infamously banishes Sam in a fit of uncharity—show their creator to lack an understanding of the book he claims to respect. Further, as Jackson's heroes do not have these virtues, his villains' tragedy cannot lie in the contrasting lack of them, turning Denethor and Saruman from tragic figures who lack faith and hope into cartoon villains who

could never once have been good.

DawnEllen Jacobs writes on "Implicit and Explicit Treatments of Catholic Imagery in Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* and Jackson's Film Trilogy" (Wells 2: 228-32). She finds a Catholic worldview deep in the bones of Tolkien's work to which Jackson is entirely oblivious, though her only evidence for this is the movies' lack of Tolkien's sacramental treatment of the Party Tree and the Ents. As if in response, LeiLani Hinds in "Peter Jackson and Tolkien's Catholicism" (Wells 2: 221-27) catalogs visual images specific to the movies which she thinks might have a deliberate Catholic inspiration, among them Gandalf's lifting of the curse on Théoden, which she likens to an exorcism. Other examples are even more strained than that.

Maggie Fernandes, in "Logos, the Silver Path to *The Lord of the Rings*: The Word in Novel and Film Writing" (Wells 2: 260-70), tries to explain how the register of dialogue conveys Tolkien's story. Her main point is a direct comparison of Gollum's internal debate in the book and movie. In Tolkien, the Sméagol half is conscious of a moral code the Gollum half is breaking; in Jackson, he can offer nothing but sputtering denials.

"Peregrin's 'Journey in the Dark': Jackson's Substitution in Agency" by Lance Weldy (Wells 2: 233-40) is simply an accounting of the mischievous and trouble-making deeds of this character in Jackson's *Fellowship*. Weldy finds seeds of this character development inherent in Tolkien's book.

"'Grace of the Valar': *The Lord of the Rings* Movie" (*Communio* 35: 151-60) is a revision of Stratford Caldecott's movie review from his book *The Power of the Ring* (New York: Crossroad, 2005). Caldecott holds that Jackson conveys Tolkien's spirit, especially his sense of reverence, despite flaws and distortions in the adaptation.

Anna Smol in "Male Friendship in *The Lord of the Rings*: Medievalism, the First World War, and Contemporary Rewritings" (Wells 1: 320-26) begins by reading the tender relationship between Frodo and Sam as Tolkien's attempt to recover medieval depictions of male friendship as combined with male bonding under the stress of World War I. Having carefully distinguished this from homoeroticism, Smol then detours through Jackson's reluctance to depict such scenes on screen to a consideration of Frodo/Sam "slash" homoerotic fiction, which insists on reading the relationship through all-encompassing sexual and class-status terms.

"Songs of Innocence and Experience: Tolkien at the Movies" by Christopher Garbowski (Wells 2: 255-59) is a very tentative view of Tolkienian elements, including eucatastrophe, in some fantasy movies for adults, placing Jackson in the context of these cinematic predecessors.



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