

Analysis

The History of Middle-earth: from a Mythology for England to a Recovery of the Real Earth

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One of J.R.R. Tolkien's great ambitions was to have *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Silmarillion* published together. This in fact delayed the publication of the former, since Allen & Unwin, who had originally instigated the trilogy and were willing to risk the publication of this unusual book, were not surprisingly unprepared for the additional publication of what seemed to be an altogether obscure work. In an undated letter (probably from late 1951) to Milton Waldman, a different potential publisher, the author presented a vision of his mythology.

Tolkien starts by stating his original motivation of creating a large mythology dedicated to England, which he felt to be missing in the tradition of his beloved country. The cosmogonical myth, he continues, introduces God and the Valar, the latter as "beings of the same order of beauty, power and majesty as the 'gods' of higher mythology."¹ The cycle then proceeds to the history of the elves, "or *The Silmarillion* proper," and the latter's great accomplishments and travails. Slowly men are introduced in the First Age of the Sun, wherein 'history', as such, or a regular chronology begins, and together through the agency of Earendil, who represents both 'races', they induce the assistance of the Valar to cast out the fallen Vala Morgoth, the perpetrator of the major woes of both races, into the Void.

The next cycle, or 'Second Age,' deals with the history of the 'Atlantis' isle of *Numenore* where the men who helped in the

Parallels with the process of myth creation found in the work of contemporary philosophers

conflagration with Morgoth are rewarded with an Eden-like island residence set between the "uttermost West" - Valinor, the residence of the Valar - and Middle-earth, while the elves who do not leave Middle-earth exercise a kind of 'antiquarian custodian function' in the lands they control. Meanwhile the former vassal of Morgoth, Sauron, grows in power, finding ways of undermining first the strength of the elves in Middle-earth and finally the nearly invincible men of the West. Tempting them with immortality Sauron convinces the Númenóreans to break the ban of the Valar and the latter tragically assault Valinor, the forbidden realm. Númenor is destroyed by direct intervention of Iluvatar, the one God (aside from the original creation of the world and the subsequent creation of his children, the Elves and Humans, this is the only such miracle in the mythology) who changes the shape of the world to a globe and "[t]hereafter there is no visible dwelling of the divine or immortal on earth. Valinor (i.e. paradise) and even Eressëa are removed, remaining only in the memory of the earth."² A few castaway Númenóreans make their way to Middle-earth, setting up kingdoms, and their history is

joined with the fortunes and misfortunes of the elves, in their combined struggle with Sauron, for the remainder of the Second Age. After their costly self-satisfaction with apparent victory, the struggle resumes for the full extent of the Third Age, wherein are set *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*. The former was independently conceived, but turned out to be essential in the history of Middle-earth:

*As the high Legends of the beginning are supposed to look at things through Elvish minds, so the middle tale of the Hobbits takes a virtually human point of view - and the last tale binds them.*³

The vision Tolkien cogently set out in the letter is basically the story that readers of *The Silmarillion*, *The Hobbit* and the trilogy will recognize. For those who take this as the whole story, there is a major flaw: the former was and remained to the end of the author's life a great, unfulfilled project. As is fairly well known, *The Silmarillion* as it was published constituted an edited compilation from different versions of the myths of the 'Elder Days' (as they came to be known upon the publication of LOTR. Moreover, the letter gives the false impression that each phase has been given equal treatment in the legendarium.

Following the publication of *The History of Middle-earth* series by Christopher Tolkien, we have a detailed record of the creative process by which this mythical world arose. Since there is no definitive version of the mythol-

ogy of Middle-earth, in a sense each part belongs to the corpus, with all its strengths and weaknesses. It might also be argued that for many the sum is worth more than the total of the literary merit of its parts. Especially if we look at the question from a Franklian perspective. According to Viktor E. Frankl⁴, “each man is questioned by life; and he can only answer to life, by answering for his own life.”

A major part of the artist's response to life is his creativity. The passion with which Tolkien responded to his creative need and the perfection he demanded of himself demonstrates to what a great extent he “answered for his life” through his art. Indeed, the author⁵ claimed of his major effort *The Lord of the Rings*, “[i]t is written in my life-blood, such as it is, thick or thin; and I can no other.”

The earliest version of the Silmarillion mythology - started shortly after the author's experiences in the trenches of the First World War arose from a number of kernel stories which were originally loosely sutured together. The earliest component story itself permitted such a construction; a mortal sailor named Eriol - roughly from Beowulfian times - reaches an enchanted island of elves (which in one of the author's conceptions is eventually to become England), where through a succession of tales recounted to him he learns the complicated history of Middle-earth. Thus the history, eventually published in two volumes as *The Book of Lost Tales* grows out of an oral tradition which naturally enough focuses on certain high points, or ‘tales’. The *Tales*, however, although worked upon extensively, as each new tale required some integration into the whole and affected the latter cor-

respondingly - were never actually completed and fizzle out toward an earlier poetic core.

Around 1931 a major narrative change took place in the *Silmarillion* mythology. While ‘Tales’, are oral, ‘Quenta Noldoriwa’ - the only complete version of the Silmarillion mythology - is rather like a medieval chronicle. As an immediate consequence, the mythology acquires the elf-centred perspective Tolkien refers to, as opposed to tales recounted to a human listener contemporary with Arthur. Conceptually, this is a move away from - though not a complete sundering with ‘a mythology for England.’ Józef Lichański suggests it is not a coincidence that the author had more or less simultaneously com-

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pleted the first version of *Mythopæia*, Tolkien's philosophical poem concerning the “subcreative” urge of humanity. In other words, the author becomes more interested in the cosmological aspect of his mythology;⁶ approximately a movement from the particular (national), to the universal.

Almost at the very end of his creative life, Tolkien wrote fictional essays that in theory were to help him rewrite the entire opus. Sometimes these reflections if taken seriously change the sense of completed works. Consider the nature of Aman (the geographical location of Valinor) where the immortal Valar and Eldar, or high elves, live: Tolkien reflected on what a mortal would feel if he happened to live in this blessed realm. The problem he

‘foresaw’ was that a person would achieve nothing upon gaining, access to Aman since his own mortality would not be changed, indeed

*he would become filled with envy, deeming himself a victim, denied the graces given to all other things. (...) He would not escape the fear and sorrow of his swift mortality that is his lot upon Earth, in Arda Marred, but would be burdened by it unbearably to the loss of all delight.*⁷

Hardly the best place for Frodo and eventually Sam, who make their way there at the conclusion of the trilogy, to have gained a rest from their psychological burdens as Ring bearers.

Out of the welter of texts - often fragmentary and of very mixed literary worth - arises at once an alternative world and one that is very much our own. A new or revised geography and imaginary history grows with practically each version. Over the years Middle-earth undergoes a growth in almost all fields of human thought and perception: geographical, historical, philosophical and aesthetic. At the very least, with the number of genres that are explored to convey it (novel, verse, fictional essay, etc., with a children's story to boot!), to the chagrin of the traditional literary critic, this world has broken out of the convention of the closed text.

Lichański gives the writing of *Mythopoeia* as the turning point in the development of Silmarillion mythology. A serious examination of Middle-earth must include a look at the author's concept of myth. Maria Kuteeva observes of Tolkien's thinking as to the origin of myth, that “he generally relates it to the origins of language and the human mind,” which brings him into line with some of Ernst Cassirer's ideas,

for whom...

*Language and myth stand in an indissoluble correlation with one another, from which both emerge but gradually as independent elements. They are two diverse shoots from the same parent stem, the same impulse of symbolic formation, springing from the same mental activity, a concentration and heightening of simple sensory experience.*⁸

As Tolkien⁹ phrases it, "The incarnate mind, the tongue, and the tale are in our world coeval." Thus if you have a habit of creating languages, one of the earliest passions of this author, naturally enough "your language construction will breed a mythology."¹⁰ Tolkien's dominant artistic concept, which he largely inherited from the Romantic tradition, is that which he called sub-creation. According to the concept the religious artist imitates his Creator by imagining his own world. According to the author¹¹ "God is the Lord, of Angels, and of Men - and of elves" i.e. of the author's art. Thus at one level the act of creating is an invitation to an I-Thou relationship with the most enriching *Other*.

Hardly surprising in this process is the modern mentality clashing in the artist with cultural tradition. For instance, by his own admission¹² he describes the transition from a flat world to a globe in his mythology, as "an inevitable transition, I suppose to a modern 'myth-maker' with a mind subjected to the same 'appearances' as ancient men, and partly fed on their myths, but taught that the Earth was round from the earliest years."

In Tolkien's analysis, the major elements which go into the creation of fairy stories are independent invention, inheritance and diffusion.¹³ Although diffusion is not absent in his Middle-earth,

most interesting is his creative use of inheritance at virtually every step of its creation: e.g. elves, dwarves, etc. Tom Shippey, who has done the most significant research on this facet of the author's work, says¹⁴ in regard to the elves of Middle-earth, "the strong point in Tolkien's 're-creations' [is] that they take in all available evidence, trying to explain both good and bad sides of popular story; the sense of inquiry, prejudice, heresay and conflicting opinion often give the elves (and other races) depth."

There is, however, a hierarchy the elements. Tolkien stresses that diffusion (borrowing in space) and inheritance (borrowing in time) are in the end dependent on invention. Invention is largely dependant on the imagination. For Tolkien the imagination of the artist is only different in degree to that of another person; it is the faculty of imagination in itself that is really

'... it is the faculty of imagination in itself that is really amazing.'

amazing. Not many clues are given as to how imagination works. Among the few hints that he gives, it seems that for the author "the invention of the adjective was a great step in the evolution of mythical grammar."¹⁵ In Tolkien's words¹⁵, "The mind that thought of *light, heavy, grey, yellow, swift*, also conceived of magic that would make heavy things light and able to fly, turn grey lead into yellow gold, and the still rock into a swift water".

Yet in practice the three elements are not simply separated, but are combined for a specific purpose. Tolkien pointedly argues this in

his elegant allegory concerning the Beowulf poet and the latter's use of older traditions to create a 'tower'. "[F]rom the top of that tower," Tolkien informs us, "the man had been able to look out upon the sea."¹⁶

The question arises - what did Tolkien see from the top of his tower? We might start by considering in turn the higher and lower aspects of myth for the author. There is something of Keats' "Beauty is truth, truth is beauty" in Tolkien's thinking. Recognising that beauty gave no guarantee of truth, he nonetheless felt it to be "concomitant of truth."¹⁷ Although he knew beauty could be connected with evil, he also stated,¹⁸ rather enigmatically, that presently "goodness is itself bereft rather of its proper beauty." One aspect of his mature art that he felt was an expression of beauty aiming at truth was the happy ending, or 'eucatastrophe'.

Eucatastrophe is indicative of a desire for the 'good', which is itself a fact even if it proves unattainable. Much as Tolkien writes¹⁹ concerning 'inward peace' to his son during world war II: 'If you cannot achieve inward peace, and it is given to few to do so (least of all to me) in tribulation, do not forget that the inspiration it is not a vanity, but a concrete act.'

At the of lower level, myth gains relevance by facing the question of the "monster", connected intimately, although not solely, to the problem of evil. Surprisingly after the experiences of Auschwitz and the Gulag Archipalago, evil is not rarely rationalized and treated as if it were a human invention or construct, the subsequent intellectual attitude being: 'monsters are made, not given. And if monsters are made, they can be unmade, too.'²⁰ Nor was Tolkien free of this temptation; in

Farmer Giles of Ham the dragon is finally tamed by Giles. The story tends towards a rather typical contemporary children's story where the monster is eventually mollified.

Obviously Tolkien does not offer a solution to the problem of evil, a task beyond the scope of any art. The point is in his not relativising it. Although identifying the monster in Middle-earth is not that simple, undoubtedly a vital element is the evil of war. One of the few personal experiences Tolkien admitted to having affected his most important work was the horror of the First World War. Not without reason Brian Rosebury²¹ claims of the trilogy that "[i]t might indeed be seen in certain respects as the last work of first world War literature, published almost forty years after the war ended."

Moreover, Tolkien never forgot what he called the 'animal horror' of trench warfare. A number of the *Lost Tales* were written shortly after his experiences on the front and seem to bear the freshest traces of his impressions. One of the key scenes in "Turambar and the Foaloke" (later Turin Turambar) portrays the confrontation of a select band of warrior elves, together with Turin's mother and sister, with the dragon Foaloke. Some of the passages, although brief, are quite telling: "Now was the band aghast as they looked upon the region from afar, yet they prepared for battle." The dragon comes out to meet the attackers, but instead of doing battle another tactic is used:

Straightway great fog and steams leapt up and and a stench was mingled therein, so that that band was whelmed in vapours and well-nigh stifled, and they crying to one another in the mist displayed their

*presence to the worm; and he laughed aloud*²²

Although nothing in the description goes against mythic sources, the two main elements here could almost be taken as a stenographic short-hand from memories or perhaps nightmares of the war recently experienced, the defoliated wasteland and the panic caused by a gas attack. These elements are expanded in reworkings of the Turin story. Here, shortly after the fact, it is almost as if the trauma they remind him of is too close to be treated in greater detail. The theme of the story of Turin likewise matches the internecine nature and moral ambiguity of the first world war.

'The Fall of Gondolin' presents a different aspect of the war. On the one hand, quite against the spirit of trench warfare, we have

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human bravery brought to the fore (cf. Shippey), on the other hand, a sophisticated war machine appears. In retrospect the episode seems almost like a nightmarish prophesy of world war II. Some of the weapons involved are reminiscent of tanks, which is quite interesting since tanks were actually used by the Allies in WWI: proof that the horror of war had greater impact on the sensitive artist than being on the right side. This is confirmed in a letter to his son during WWII, one that casts a good deal of light on *The Lord of the Rings*, where Tolkien²³ writes:

Well, the War of the Machines seems to be drawing to its final inconclusive chapter - leaving,

alas, everyone the poorer, many bereaved or maimed and millions dead, and only one thing triumphant: the Machines.

In LOR itself ancient literary sources merge with modern experience. For instance, an echo of Beowulf can be surmised in a particular incident from the siege of Minis Tirith where the enemy flings captured heads over the walls of the besieged city in order to dishearten its defenders:

*They were grim to look on (...). But marred and dishonoured as they were, it often chanced that thus a man would see again the face of someone that he had known, who had walked proudly once in arms, or tilled the fields, or ridden upon a holiday from the green vales in the hills.*²⁴

In the Anglo-Saxon epic²⁵ the company with Beowulf on the trail of Grendel's mother comes across a grisly sight on a sea-cliff "Of slaughtered Æschere's severed head." The source seems clear enough, yet the differences are striking. The head from the epic is Hrothgar's good friend, an identifiable person of high status. The twentieth century novel presents numerous all but anonymous disfigured visages which have met their postmortem fate through mechanical means. The resultant effects from the catapults of the orcs require little imagination to transform into the shrapnel or any number of mauling tools of total warfare.

Where is the embodiment of the war monster in Tolkien's mature art? Although there are many terror inspiring creatures in *The Lord of the Rings*, the ones most suitable for such a role in the 'War of the Machines' of modern warfare are the more mundane orcs. Rather than some impressive creature, the orcs represent the horde, or collective monster of total warfare; wielders of the

catapults, they themselves were cogs in the machine. Critics have pointed to the orcs as the weak point of Tolkien's mythology and the author himself toiled over rationalizing their existence in Middle-earth, but if the elves are the embodiment of certain positive human characteristics, orcs are symbolic of the process of dehumanization - dehumanization in the direction of the Machine.

Rosebury²¹ has written fairly accurately of *The Silmarillion* that "[t]he earlier mythical writings have (...) an insistent, almost pagan, pessimism, and a surprisingly grim level of violence, which darken, indeed come close to undermining, the affirmative theistic universe they postulate." Many factors, biographical and otherwise, may have contributed to such a tone in his earlier work. Tolkien was, after all, orphaned early in life. Nonetheless the mark of the war experience, still evident in the trilogy so many years after the event, seems unmistakable.

Yet if the malice of war is one of the primary monsters of the Middle-earth mythology, it is not necessarily the main concern. Moreover, as mentioned, a different concept makes itself felt in LOR - eucatastrophe, "the sudden joyous turn"²⁶ rescues optimism from an undercurrent of pessimism in the novel.

The concept is introduced theoretically in the lecture of 1939 *On Fairy Stories*. No doubt there is a connection - suggested already by Rosebury - between the theory and the earlier practice in *The Hobbit*, which was written with children in mind. What marks this story off from other children's stories Tolkien had written earlier was its greater inclusion of elements of the *Silmarillion* mythology. The story reciprocated: aside

from introducing the hobbits, the book changed the tone of the mythology; it seems Tolkien had gained enough inner strength to listen to the child within. This contributed to his overcoming his longstanding artistic pessimism.

Artistic optimism requires existential support to avoid sentimentality. At the very core of our existence we feel the unique quality of our own life. Frankl⁴ acknowledges this intuition, stressing its task-oriented nature. "Everyone has his own specific vocation or mission in life; everyone must carry out a concrete assignment that demands fulfillment. Therein he cannot be replaced, nor can his life be repeated."

However that may be, much in our own experience tends to deny the feeling of this exceptional

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characteristic of life. For instance, people in known circumstances are often (though not always) all too predictable. W. H. Auden²⁷ similarly claims that most lives are usually static:

If I (...) try to look at the world as if I were the lens of a camera, I observe that the vast majority of people have to earn their living in a fixed place, and that journeys are confined to people on holiday or with independent means.

Certainly people are more mobile now than when Auden wrote his observation, but the gist of the argument remains valid. It is in response to just this criticism that Tolkien²⁸ himself plausibly replied: "That is another reason

for sending 'hobbits' - a vision of a simple and calculable people in simple and long-settled circumstances - on a *journey* far from settled home into strange lands and dangers."

There is an axiological significance to the unexplored vistas which the prose of the trilogy constantly suggests. Different vistas suggest that whichever way you go, there are subsequently many roads you will not take, many things you will not see. The problem arises: which road do you take?

The gravity of the decision is all the more important in that the journey thus understood suggests the course of self-transcendence. Treebeard says of the Ents that they "are more like Elves: less interested in themselves than Men are, and better at getting inside other things."²⁹ Similarly, self-transcendence is propelled less by greater self-awareness than by more profound external-awareness. Too much self-awareness can even be a hindrance; according to Frankl³⁰ the self should be like an eye, an organ that is only aware of itself when suffering a visual defect and "[t]he more the eye sees itself, the less the world and its objects are visible to it."

This is one of the reasons Tolkien's heroes seem so simple (although they are more complex than meets the eye). The hobbits, for instance, display a number of characteristics, such as curiosity, which help them get "inside other things" From the Franklian perspective one might risk saying these heroes are not traditional pre-, but rather post-psychanalytical characters. The profoundest meaning of quest can only be understood by relating it to the individual protagonist. According to Frankl,³¹ the prime motivation a person possesses,

above that of his instincts or a desire to control his/her environment, is the will to meaning. And in finding meaning "we are perceiving a possibility embedded in reality." Tolkien's protagonists demonstrate three major roads to discovering sense: purposeful action, service, and suffering, embodied primarily by Aragorn, Sam Gamgee and Frodo.

In his active quest Aragorn demonstrates that freedom means accepting responsibility. He accepts Elrond's task in regard to Arwen his love, a task unreasonable at one level, yet which ultimately requires him to become fully himself. Throughout his quest Aragorn shows the different qualities of emotional intelligence needed to do what is humanly possible under the circumstances.

Jane Nitzche³² suggestively compares the 'gold' of Bilbo's poem - i.e. Aragorn - to the false gold of the Ring. Throughout the trilogy Sauron is never in possession of the Ring while Aragorn has it within his reach for lengthy periods; Aragorn becomes the true Lord of the Ring by rejecting it. Through what Frankl calls paradoxical intention, he becomes 'true' gold.

There is a relatively clear relationship between service and self-transcendence. Needless to say, service must be voluntary. The glaring contrast of Sam's service with that of Gollum's illustrates this: the latter also enters Frodo's service, but on the basis of an oath. This particular oath depended on power. Gollum swears by the Ring, the embodiment of power in the trilogy. Frodo and Gollum have an uncanny understanding of each other; this understanding is partially positive (both have suffered on account of the Ring) yet primarily based on their common relationship to

power, i.e. to the factor that annihilates their individuality and makes them uniform; even Frodo eventually calls the Ring 'precious'.

Conversely, Sam serves his master even when he ostensibly betrays him. Faramir, to whom this 'betrayal' was made, comforts the servant: "Your heart is shrewd as well as faithful, and saw clearer than your eyes."³³ This way he wins him unlooked for, but crucial assistance. Ultimately, Sam's deep empathy with his master allows him to get inside the *other*, and thus enlarge himself.

Gollum has been called Frodo's alter ego; more accurately, the

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characters illustrate the difference between suffering which eventually leads to meaning and the existential vacuum which denies it. There are roughly three major phases to Frodo's suffering. The first is after experiencing the wound on Weathertop, when he suffers in the manner of those with an illness. Further on, when Frodo enters Mordor and his burden is heaviest, his road is largely patterned on the *Via Dolorosa* (Sam takes the part of Simon the Cyrenean at times). The last phase of his suffering, where any semblance of a quest is gone, is more subtle: after his traumatic experiences Frodo realizes that he can never be like other people. On his return journey he complains:

"There is no real going back. Though I may come to the Shire, it will not seem the same, for I

*will not be the same. I am wounded with knife, sting, and tooth, and a long burden. Where shall I find rest?"*³⁴

Gandalf, to whom the question was addressed, does not answer because he seems to realize that no one else can provide the sense in suffering for you: you must find your own sense. Eventually Frodo does find meaning in his suffering. He realizes the sacrifice of his personal happiness has helped others, moreover, he devotes his time to writing (perhaps an autobiographical element can be detected here).

Of the three roads to meaning, suffering provides the greatest challenge. Nonetheless, if it is not possible to attain, then meaning is lost in the other roads as well. Frankl³⁵ validates the meaning Frodo has found for himself: *The way in which a man accepts his fate and all the suffering it entails, the way in which he takes up his cross, gives him ample opportunity - even under the most difficult circumstances - to add a deeper meaning to his life.*

The arguments presented to this point have hopefully given some credence to Alan Garner's³⁶ assertion, that "the elements of myth work deeply and are powerful tools. Myth is not entertainment, but rather the crystallization of experience, and far from being escapist literature, fantasy is an intensification of reality".

This intensification of reality is more than a little related to its defamiliarization; the alternative world reflects back on the well known one. "The elvishness of the elves," Tom Shippey³⁷ so aptly phrases it, "is meant to reflect back on the humanity of man."

Tolkien's art, however, differs from the avante-garde artist's concept of making the familiar strange, since the latter tends to

view reality as a construct, whereas Tolkien is inclined to treat the world as real. The author makes the point in *On Fairy Stories* that fantasy, which for him is virtually synonymous with art, depends on the reader's possessing a clear cognition of the difference between the created and the real world.

Yet this 'real' world must be seen for the amazing creation it is. A sceptic of Rohan says to Aragorn: "Do we walk in legends or on the green earth in the daylight?" To which the Ranger replies: "(...) The green earth, say you? That is a mighty matter of legend, though you tread it under the light of day."³⁸

Tolkien³⁹ called this aim of art 'recovery'. That basically means not simply assisting in 'seeing things as they are', but rather in 'seeing things as we are (or were) meant to see them.' There is then a dynamic aspect to recovery: we do well to remember Goethe's

words "If I take man as he is, I make him worse; if I take him as he ought to be, I make him become what he can be."⁴⁰ Tolkien's concept, however, is not purely anthropocentric, so that it includes implications for ecological awareness.

Much of my analysis of Tolkien's fantasy has been based on concepts taken from Viktor E. Frankl's existential analysis. Perhaps it is more than a coincidence that some of the ideas of the latter resonate so strongly in the art of the former: if *The Lord of the Rings* is virtually the last work of world war I literature, Frankl's psychology has emerged from the crucible of his years spent in WW II concentration camps.

In Tolkien's trilogy there is a passage⁴¹ where in the depths of Mordor Sam sights a star and *The beauty of it smote his heart, as he looked up out of the forsaken land, and hope returned to him. For like a shaft clear and*

cold, the thought pierced him that in the end the Shadow was only a small and passing thing: there was light and high beauty for ever beyond its reach.

At this juncture fantasy and concentration camp literature briefly meet. The above passage is reminiscent of those in Frankl's memoirs "Experiences in a Concentration Camp" (in his *Man's Search for Meaning*) where he speaks of the hope prisoners gained from the beauty of the sunset, the sound of a bird singing or the memory of a loved one. What's more, at some level, at least, one detects a commonality of experience here in what Tolkien must have similarly felt during the nightmare of trench warfare. In the art of one and the psychology of the other simple truths are wrested from the cataclysms of the twentieth century. It would be a pity if these truths were lost on those of us not so profoundly tried.

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