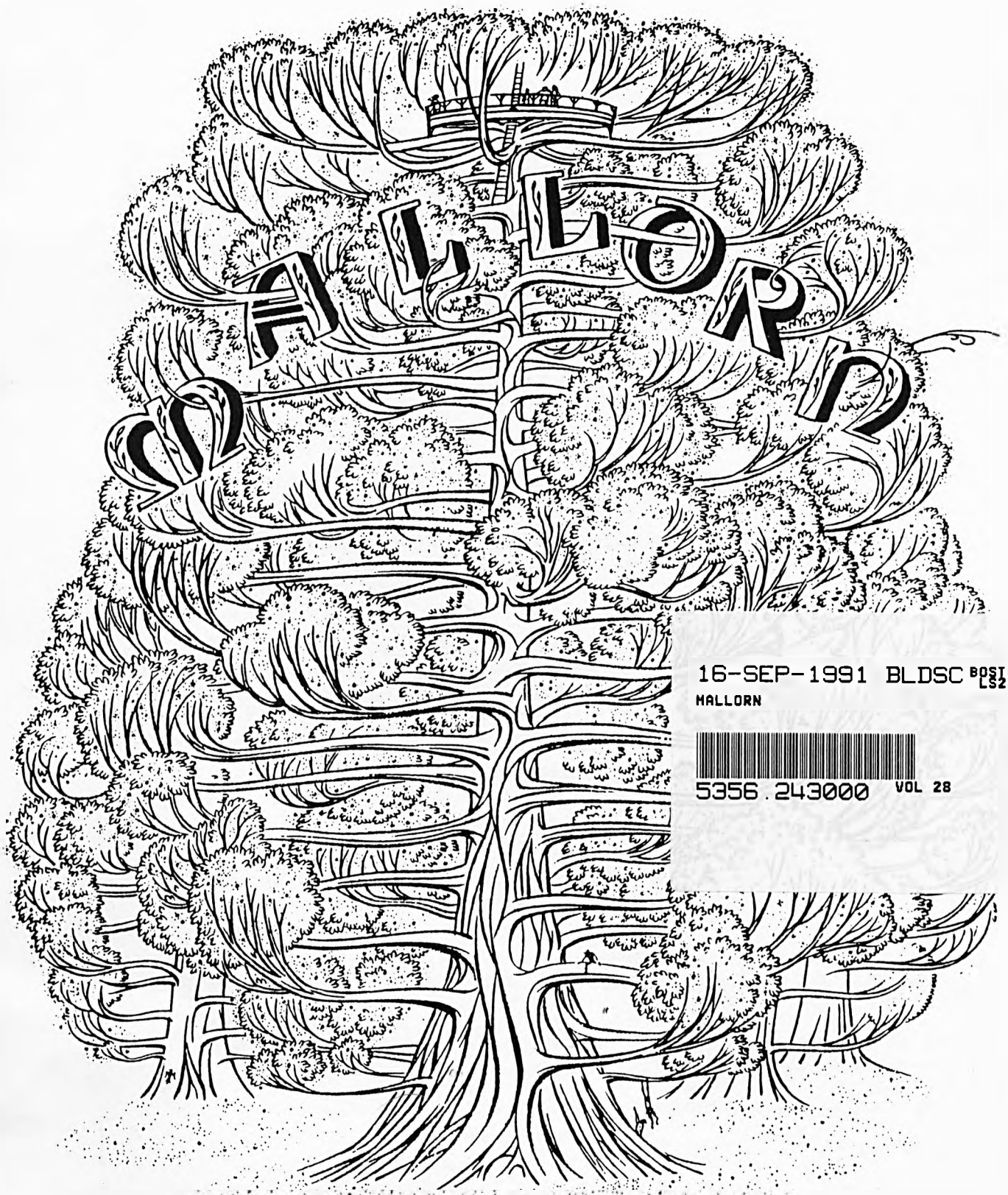

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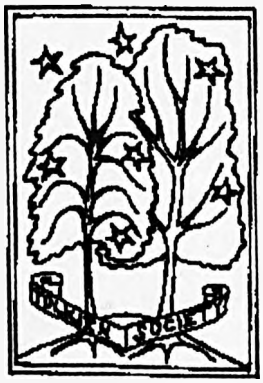

The Tolkien Society

Founded in London in 1969, the Tolkien Society is an international organisation, registered in the U.K. as a charity (No.273809), dedicated to furthering interest in the life and works of the late Professor J.R.R. Tolkien, C.B.E. (1892-1973), who remains its President 'in perpetuo'. His daughter, Miss Priscilla Tolkien, became Honorary Vice-President in 1986.

In addition to ***Mallorn***, the Society publishes a bi-monthly bulletin ***Anor Hen***. In addition to local gatherings ("smials"), there are three annual national meetings: the A.G.M. and Dinner in the Spring, the Seminar in the Summer, and "Oxonmoot", a celebratory weekend held in Oxford usually in late September.

For further information about the Society, please contact the Secretary, Debra Haigh-Hutchinson, Flat 2, 42 Frankland Place, Leeds LS7 4DG.

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Handwritten contributions will be considered ONLY if *extremely* legible, and should in any case be in the format outlined above. The editor reserves the right to reject the less than completely legible out of hand.

As a general rule, prose items should be between 1,000 and 5,000 words in length (including notes); authors of longer submissions may be required to do some drastic cutting.

Quotations should always be identified; references should include the work's author (or editor), title, place and date of publication, and the publisher's name, together with part or volume number (where appropriate) and page number.

VERSE ITEMS, which should not usually be more than 50 lines, may be presented either in the format indicated above, or in calligraphed form, in which case the specifications for artwork given below should be followed.

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The editor reserves the right to reject any item, or to ask for changes to be made.

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Celtic Influences on the History of the First Age

By Marie Barnfield

Introduction

In 1937 *The Silmarillion* was described by Edward Crankshaw, a reader of Allen and Unwin, as having "something of that mad, bright-eyed beauty that perplexes all Anglo-Saxons in face of Celtic art" and containing "eye-splitting Celtic names". J.R.R.Tolkien's reply was indignant. Of the names he wrote: "Needless to say, they are not Celtic," adding: "Neither are the Tales. I do know Celtic things (many in their original languages Irish and Welsh), and feel for them a certain distaste: largely for their fundamental unreason. They have bright colour, but are like a broken stained-glass window reassembled without design. They are, in fact, 'mad', as your reader says...".[1]

And there one might be tempted to leave matters, seeking the inspirations of Tolkien's mythology only in the Germanic material for which he expressed an affection. However, by 1950, Tolkien was admitting that he had at the outset desired his work to possess "the fair elusive quality that some call Celtic" (still qualifying this with the gloss "though it is rarely found in genuine ancient Celtic things ...")[2]; the influence of the Welsh language upon the development of Sindarin he later freely acknowledged.[3]

Tolkien was apt to deny the sources of his material (as, for instance, the debt he owed to Wagner's Ring[4]). He was familiar with both branches of the Celtic languages, and with Celtic mythology; the Celts too, as the Germanic tribes, belong to the North-west corner of the Old World of which *The Silmarillion* and *The Lord of the Rings* represent the legendary past. It is likely, therefore, that the sound quality of Sindarin is not the only Celtic feature of Tolkien's world. In the following article I propose to examine the mythology of the First Age for Celtic narrative influences, the Second Age and the question of language being worthy of separate study in their own right.

"Celtic Things"

In describing Celtic things as "mad", Tolkien was probably referring to the unsatisfactory state of the tales as they have come down to us. Celtic tales lack the superficial cohesiveness and structure of Greek mythology, and some of the Norse matter. The druids allowed nothing concerning their religion to be written down, so that the tales were not recorded until after the decline of the beliefs upon which they had rested. Suppression of the old faith was stronger in Britain, and may account for the more garbled state of the *Mabinogion* and of the Arthurian matter. In Ireland, tales were written down by Christian monks who not only suppressed the divinity of the heroes and grafted their history on to the early chapters of the Bible, but were engaged in a process of synthesising various local traditions whose meanings they probably did not understand. But to dismiss "Celtic things" on these grounds would be to throw out the baby with the bathwater. With this thought in mind, I perused *The Silmarillion* briefly to see if any trace of the Celtic "baby" was to be found in Arda.

The Geography of Arda

The surviving Celts of the western seaboard resemble the peoples of Beleriand in one important respect, and that is their abode on the shores of the ocean, with the vast unnavigable sea stretching out westward before them. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that it is from the Celtic matter that Tolkien has drawn the inspiration for that which lay upon the ocean's further shores.

Alwyn and Brinley Rees point out[5] that "in metaphysical formulation a 'crossing of water' always implies a change of state or status"; to the Irish there therefore existed across the Great Sea (as they too call the Atlantic) a happy Otherworld, home of the gods, known variously as the land

of the Living, the Islands of the Blessed or the land of Promise, "a paradise overseas, situate in some unknown, and, except for favoured mortals, unknowable island of the west ..."[6]. Jewels strew the shores of Valinor, and upon the Land of the Living "dragonstones and crystals rain".[7] Irish voyagers reach their goal after passing various enchanted islands and traversing a final hedge of mist. Valinor similarly was guarded by the Enchanted Isles, where "the waves sighed for ever upon dark rocks shrouded in mist".[8]

But perhaps the most famous Other-world island in Celtic legend is the Arthurian Avalon, derived from the Welsh "Avallawn", Place of the Apple Trees. Tolkien relates that a portion of the high Elves returning from Middle-earth dwelt upon an island within sight of Aman (Tol Eressëa); the haven for their ships upon this isle they called by the name of "Avallonë". It is hardly possible to doubt that the similarity of these names is intended, that under the enchantment of secondary belief one is to view the tales of Avalon as but a faded memory of Avallone of Eressëa.

The other chief similarity between Arda and the world of Celtic mythology lies in its sacred centres. Mythologies world-wide speak of a single Centre, the World Axis, an umbilical link between our world and the Other. Its chief symbols are those of mountain, pillar and tree. Each people, however, observed its own territorial Centre, so that the Earth in ancient times was full of such symbolic holy places.[9]

The world of *The Silmarillion* too abounds with sacred centres of various models. Those in which the axis is represented by a tree may indeed have been inspired by the Norse Centre, with the world-tree Yggdrasil and the three wells at its roots. However, Celtic mythology also has its tree Centres, such as Emain Ablach, the Other-world "Palace of Apple Trees". The goddess who invited Bran across the sea gave him as token a "silver white-blossomed branch from the apple tree of Emain in which branch and fruit are one"; Niam, in a similar situation, offered to Oisín a golden apple.[10] These apple trees of silver and gold bear more resemblance to Telperion and Laurelin than does Yggdrasil, these are, indeed, to quote Yeats, "the silver apples of the moon, the golden apples of the sun."[11]

It was from the final fruits of Telperion and Laurelin that the Sun and moon were formed, and the Silmarils, last repositories upon Earth of their light, were objects of quest, as are the Other-world apples of Celtic legend. The male and female nature of the Trees of Valinor has its analogies too in the numerous male and female tree-pairs of the Celtic world, such as the pines of Deirdre and Naoise, or the rose bush of Esyllt and the vine of Trystan.

There are tree Centres in Tolkien's mythology with other characteristics closer to Irish models than to the Yggdrasil Centre. Perhaps the best example in The *Silmarillion* is Valmar.[12] A brief comparison of this sanctuary with Uisneach, the sacred centre of Ireland[13], will illustrate the similarities:

"In the midst of the plain beyond the mountains they built their city, Valmar of many bells": the royal seat of Tara;

"Before its western gate there was a green mound, Ezellohar": the hill of Uisneach to the west of Tara;

"The Máhanaxar, the Ring of Doom, near to the golden gates of Valmar": the rath or enclosure at Uisneach which held the board for the sacred fate-game of fidchell;

"... upon the mound ... the two trees of Valinor": the Ash of Uisneach (the feminine centre) and the Lia Fáil, the pillar-stone of Tara (the masculine centre);

"... the dews of Telperion and the rains that fell from Laurelin Varda hoarded in great vats like shining lakes, that were to all the land of the Valar as wells of water and of light": Connla's Well and the Well of Segais.

The History

The historical pattern set out in The *Silmarillion* strongly resembles that of the Irish mythological cycle, particularly as related by Charles Squire in his *Celtic Myth and Legend*, a work with which Tolkien could have been familiar. The Elves may be equated with the Tuatha Dé Danann, originally the gods of the Celts but presented by monkish redactors as an immortal race who inhabited Ireland before the coming of the Gaels: "the most handsome and delightful company, the fairest of form, the most distinguished in ... their skill in music and playing, the most gifted in mind

and temperament that ever came to Ireland."[14] A resumé of the histories of both peoples will make the similarities plainer still.

The Elves came to Middle-earth from the city of Tirion in Valinor; they knew wars and sorrows in their long labours against Morgoth, until their fading and final departure into the West to make way for the age of Men. The Tuatha Dé Danann came to Ireland from the Other-world cities of Findias, Falias, Murias and Gorias. They knew wars and sorrows in their long struggles against the Fomorian demons, only to be doomed at last by the coming of mortals. Many of them then "chose to shake the dust of Ireland off their disinherited feet, and seek refuge in a paradise ... situate ... in some unknown ... island of the west...".[15] The rest ceded to mortals the upper earth, and retired into their "sidhe" or fairy mounds.

This, then, appears to be the inspiration for Tolkien's motive of the "fading". Squire contends that this is an ancient Celtic motive. "The story of the conquest of the gods by mortals ... is typically Celtic. The Gaelic mythology is the only one which has preserved it in any detail, but the doctrine would seem to have been common at one time to all the Celts."[16]

The other great theme of *The Silmarillion*, that of the quest of the three Silmarils themselves, cursed as it was by the kinslaying of Alqualondë, may have been inspired by the Irish tale "The fate of the Children of Tuirenn". Here, the murder of Cian by the sons of Tuirenn results in Cian's son laying on them an eric to seek and bring back for him the chief treasures of the world, first among these being the three golden apples from the apple-tree of Findchaire, or (in a later, classically influenced redaction) the Garden of the Hesperides. Though after long labours they succeed in their task, all die of the hardships and wounds they have sustained in their quest.

Some few of the Valar, Elves and Men have their counterparts too in Celtic legend. Others are such universal mythological archetypes that it would be unwise to claim for them any particular inspiration. Amongst the Valar, Ossë shows a clear resemblance to the Gaelic Manannan. Ossë is the vassal of Ulmo, "master of the seas that wash the shores of Middle-earth", who "loves the coasts and the isles".[17] Manannan is the son of the sea-god Ler. He is known by the title of "Lord of the Headlands", and is the special patron of sailors. Like Ossë, he summons storms. His homes are the isles of Man and Arran. Of Uinen, Ossë's spouse, Tolkien had this to say: "to her mariners cry, for she can lay calm upon the waves, restraining the wildness of Ossë".[18] "Fand", the name of Manannan's wife, means "gentle".

Oromë "is a hunter of monsters and fell beasts, and he delights in horses and in hounds ... and he is called by the Sindar Tauron, the Lord of Forests .... The Valaróma is the name of his great horn."[19] Here we have a description of Cernunnos, the Celtic horned god, Lord of the Animals, who appears in English folklore as Herne the Hunter. In Irish legend he appears as Finn Mac Cumail, leader of the war band known as the Fianna. Finn, a deer deity beneath his mortal guise, lived by hunting in the forests and had two faithful hounds. His Welsh counterpart is Gwynn ap Nudd, the leader of the Wild Hunt.

Mandos "is the keeper of the Houses of the Dead, and the summoner of the spirits of the slain".[20] With him the souls of dead mortals rest before leaving the world. In Irish legend it is in the House of Donn (an island of the Skelligs) that "the dead have their tryst". McCana relates that "the belief has survived in Ireland that on moonlit nights the souls of the dead can be seen over the Skellig rocks, on their way to the Land of the Young."[21]

Of the individual tales which make up the history of the First Age, there is one which was close to Tolkien's heart and has enough Celtic influences to form the subject of an article in its own right. That is the story "Of Beren and Lúthien".

Elopements form a recognised narrative branch in Irish mythology ("aitheda"). Their underlying symbolism, like that of abduction tales, is that of the rivalry between the gods of winter and summer for possession of the earth goddess. In the elopement stories, the lover represents the summer king with whom the goddess naturally chooses to flee despite attempts to prevent her by the old god of winter (represented either as her father or an aged husband who keeps her in seclusion).[22] The

best known Celtic elopement tales are "Deirdre and the Sons of Uisle", "Diarmuid and Gráinne", and "Trystan and Esyllt". Other secluded maiden stories based on a similar theme are "Culhwch and Olwen" and "Cian and Ethne".

In "Deirdre and the Sons of Uisle", Naoise encounters the "loveliest woman in all Ireland" hidden "in a place set apart" by the aged King Conchubar who has brought her up to be his bride.[23] Deirdre, like Gráinne, Esyllt and Lúthien, elopes with her young love and endures with him many perils in the wild. Ethne's father attempts to keep her from marriage by shutting her away in a tower (neither on earth nor in heaven), just as Thingol imprisons Lúthien high in the boughs of the tree Hírilorn. Olwen's father, like Thingol, agrees to give his daughter in marriage if her lover will seize for him certain Other-world treasures.[24] Gráinne's lover Diarmuid, like Beren, is slain by a magical wild beast (the Boar of Ben Bulben), which has been harrying the area and which he has hunted in company with his rival, Finn. The final scenes of "Of Beren and Lúthien" strongly recall "Diarmuid and Gráinne". Gráinne, watching from the ramparts of her castle, sees the hunters returning home, Finn leading by the leash Diarmuid's own hound, and thus she knows that her lover is dead. The body of Diarmuid is placed upon a golden bier and carried back to the home of his foster-father Aengus, the Irish god of love.[25]

Thingol's opposition to Beren places him, mythologically, in the role of the winter king seeking to avert the doom pronounced by the coming of his rival. The text of The *Silmarillion* shows Beren clearly to be the representation of summer. He passed the winter in Doriath with "a chain ... on his limbs" so that he could not reach Lúthien. Yet "on the eve of spring", her song "released the bonds of winter", and "the spell of silence fell from Beren ... doom fell on her, and she loved him."[26]

Other Celtic motives may be detected in this tale. The shadow cloak that Læthien wove of her hair is reminiscent of Celtic cloaks of invisibility and darkness, and also of the magic cloak without which the immortal bride may not return to her own kind. Celegorm, like the husbands in these tales, hides Læthien's cloak, and she does not escape from him until Húan has retrieved it for her.

The motive in Tolkien's work of the union of mortals with women of immortal race is, as already mentioned, intimately woven with that of the Celtic notion of kingship, and is therefore to be found in several Celtic tales. As the representation of the land, the goddess became symbolic of its sovereignty, and no king could claim the right to rule save that she had accepted him as her spouse. "Nowhere was this divine image of sovereignty visualised so clearly as among the Celts, and more especially in Ireland where it remained a remarkably evocative and compelling concept for as long as native tradition lasted."[27] Lúthien's mother Melian also fulfils the role of goddess of sovereignty. She is wed to a king of non-divine race and herself maintains the land inviolate and free of stain. She inhabits, indeed, a sacred wood in the Celtic tradition, her nightingales reminiscent of the birds of Rhiannon, which "lulled the living to sleep".[28] This role is to be repeated again in a later age with Lúthien's descendant Arwen.

The Celtic goddess as simple personification of the earth's fertility is also easily recognisable in The *Silmarillion*. Of the Welsh Olwen we are told that four white trefoils sprang up wherever she walked.[29] Similarly, Tolkien wrote of Vána[30]: "All flowers spring as she passes"; and of Lúthien[31] that "flowers sprang from the cold earth where her feet had passed".

Conclusion

In summary, it may be said that Edward Crankshaw was correct: The *Silmarillion* is rich in Celtic inspiration; indeed, it is Celtic at its very core. The topography of its enchanted West, and the greatest of its Other-world treasures, the Two Trees of Valinor and the Silmarils that entrapped their light, have a provenance in the apple-trees of Avalon and Emain Ablach. If it was from Teutonic myth that Tolkien took the name of "Elves", then it was from Irish legend that he drew their soul. From Irish legend too comes the history of their long defeat, the motive of the "fading". Though the meeting of Beren and Lúthien was "conceived in a small woodland glade filled with hemlocks at Roos in Yorkshire"[32] where Tolkien's young raven-haired bride danced and sang, it was upon

ancient Celtic "aitheda" that the tale of their elopement was modelled.

A closer study of the tales of the First Age would no doubt yield enough Celtic material to fill a volume of its own, but the borrowings cited above are enough to demonstrate that, though there are many other influences upon it, there is a sense in which The *Silmarillion* is the broken stained-glass window of Celtic myth, reassembled *with* design. And that the light that shines through it, the Light of the Blessed Realm, is the very same that greeted St. Brendan as he emerged from the hedge of mist upon the shores of the Land of Promise, that land that "will remain forever without the shadow of night. For its light is Christ."[33]

NOTES

1. *Letters*, ed. Carpenter Allen and Unwin, 1981. no. 19.

2. Ibid. no. 131.

3. Allan, J. *et al An introduction to Elvish* Bran's Head, 1978. p.49.

4. This subject was discussed by K.C.Frazer in his article "Whose Ring was it anyway?" *Mallorn* 25).

5. Rees, Alwyn and Rees, Brinley *Celtic heritage* Thames and Hudson,1961. p.107.

6. Squire, Charles *Celtic myth and legend* (2nd ed.) Newcastle Publishing Co. Inc., 1975. p.133.

7. From "The voyage of Bran, son of Febal", in: MacCana, Proinsias *Celtic mythology* (2nd ed.) Newnes Books, 1983. p.125.

8. *The Silmarillion*, Allen and Unwin, 1977. p.102.

9. See: Tolstoy, Nikolai *The quest for Merlin* (Sceptre ed.) Hodder and Stoughton, 1988. Chapter 9.

10. See: Graves, Robert *The white goddess* (pbk. ed.) Faber, 1961. p.254, and Rees, op.cit., p.314-315.

11. From "The song of Wandering Aengus" in Jeffares, A. Norman *W.B.Yeats: selected poetry* Macmillan, 1965. Golden apples, of course, appear in other European mythologies and folk tales, having in some (such as the Firebird) a clear solar significance. Niamh of the Golden Hair herself would appear to be a solar deity. Her name means 'brightness', and her other epithet, 'Deor-gréine', is 'Tear of the Sun'.

12. *The Silmarillion*, p.38-39.

13. Rees, op.cit., Chapter 7.

14. *Ibid*, p.30.

15. Squire, op.cit., p.133.

16. *Ibid*, p.119.

17. *The Silmarillion*, p.30.

18. *Ibid*

19. *Ibid*, p.29.

20. *Ibid*, p.28.

21. Rees, *op.cit.*, p.97-98.

22. *Ibid*

23. From *The Tain*, tr. Kinsella, Thomas. (2nd ed) OUP, 1970.

24. *The Mabinogion*, tr. Jones, Gwyn and Jones, Thomas. Dent, 1974.

25. Taken from: Neeson, Eoin *The second book of Irish myths and legends* Cork: Mercier Press, 1966.

26. *The Silmarillion*, p.165-166.

27. MacCana, *op.cit.*, p.92.

28. *The Mabinogion*, p.115-116. The name "Rhiannon" itself means "Great Queen".

29. *Ibid*, p.111.

30. *The Silmarillion*, p.29.

31. *Ibid*, p.165.

32. *Letters*, no.340.

33. Severin, Tim *The Brendan voyage* Arrow, 1979.

Frithuwold and the Farmer: *Farmer Giles of Ham* and his place in history

by Patricia Reynolds

Tolkien, writing to his publishers about *Farmer Giles of Ham* wondered "if this local family game played in the country just round us is more than silly"[1]. *Farmer Giles of Ham* has long been appreciated as a tale told by a philologist. The folly of Thame (with an H and without a warrant) is exposed, and the blunderbuss definition of the four wise clerks of Oxenford[2] is related. The storyteller as historian is less easily observed: after all, that same blunderbuss appears in a tale set "before the Seven Kingdoms of the English."

The distance between philologist and historian is not as great as first appears. The philologist looks at language within time: in looking at language change, he is also looking at the history of people. The idea that languages are "related", with common "ancestors" lead to the search for the "ancestor" language. Comparison of words in different languages, meaning the same thing, leads to an understanding of the laws of sound change which produced them, and of the word from which they "evolved". Words never actually met in any text, never actually heard are marked with an asterisk, * thus. The vocabulary of the "ancestor" language of English, Proto-Indo-European is thought by some to reflect the reality experienced by its speakers. It contains, for example, the words for various trees and domesticated animals. From this, it was deduced that the Proto-Indo-European speaker (who was often confused with a racial group, or a group with a common culture) lived a nomadic life (there was actually little evidence for this) on the steppe of Southern Russia. This may be described as asterisk-reality, in the same way as their language is an asterisk-language[3].

Farmer Giles of Ham can be considered as history as it should have happened: an asterisk-history which is not contradicted by "textual" history, history which is evidenced by language, by documentary history or by archaeology. It is not easy to place *Farmer Giles of Ham* into the history of Sir Frank Stenton's *Anglo-Saxon England*, published 1943, about four years after *Farmer Giles* was largely written. Tolkien places his tale "after the days of Coel maybe, but before Arthur or the Seven Kingdoms of the English"[4]. An attempt to ascribe absolute dates to the tale shows Tolkien to have used three very vague dating guides. Arthur is well known as an ambiguous figure, if historical at all. Stenton, who one may take as a guide to generally accepted history at the time Tolkien was writing, places Arthur at the generally accepted date of around 500AD, and Tolkien gives this date when discussing "Arthurian" illustrations of *Farmer Giles of Ham*[5].

The Seven Kingdoms of the English were in existence from some time after the Anglo-Saxon invasions. Initially, the settlers seem to have been in localised groupings, such as the delightfully named Wreocensætan, who Sat on the Wrekin, or the Hæstingas, who lived in Hastings. Larger entities such as Kent and Wessex can gradually be recognised. The Seven Kingdoms of the English, that is the Heptarchy, might include Kent, Sussex, Wessex, Essex, Mercia, Anglia and Northumbria - the precise list depends on the historian one talks to[6]. There is a firm date for the end of the Heptarchy, in the end of the ninth century: "The same year [886] king Alfred occupied London, and all the English people submitted to him, except those who were in captivity to the Danes."[7]

The start date, Tolkien's *terminus ante quem*, is much harder to define. This is because the kingdoms were continually being re-defined - Deira and Bernicia were later Northumbria, for example. And one must add to their number groups such as the Cilternsætan and Hicce (of Hitchin) who continue to be treated as separate groups as late as the tenth century, and British Kingdoms such as Elmet, which was not conquered until the seventh century.

King Coel is, according to the twelfth-century historian Geoffrey of Monmouth, a contemporary of St. Alban, and father of St. Helena, living in the third century AD. St. Helena went on to find the True Cross and give birth to

Constantine.[8] Coel is almost certainly a hero formed from the name of Colchester, and may be associated with the nursery rhyme "Old King Cole was a merry old Soul".[9]

Thus Tolkien places his story in a time, defined by semi-myths as lying somewhere between the fourth and sixth centuries, between the late Roman and early English. He never specifies the vernacular, although the use of "dog latin" would suggest a British population.

John Blair, in his paper *Frithuwold's Kingdom and the Origins of Surrey*[10], introduces "One further piece of evidence, never before considered in this context, [which] implies that Frithuwold ruled an area extending well beyond the boundaries of Surrey". The place-names appearing in this paper (Quarrendon, Aylesbury and Bicesteru take Surrey into northern Oxfordshire and central Buckinghamshire. I would like to suggest that before Blair, Tolkien the historian used his knowledge of Anglo-Saxon charters to construct a speculative early history for the kingdom, which he called The Little Kingdom. To do this I have had to make use of Blair's excellent and convincing research and fully acknowledge my debt to him.

It is interesting to read the history of Surrey given by Collingwood and Myres in *Roman Britain and the Anglo-Saxon Settlements* (1937), a book which Tolkien "helped ... untiringly with problems of Celtic philology" (p. viii).

"The Thames must in any case have been the route by which Surrey was settled, and it is in the Wandle valley, the nearest tributary to London, that the earliest remains, including cremation-cemeteries have been found. ... The distribution of the earliest type of place names here again supplements and confirms the archaeological evidence... this may well have been a corner of England to which the new religion came late. ... the name Surrey, Suthrige, the southern district, is there to remind us that at one time its political connections were with the regions north of the Thames ... As far back as there is any record Surrey was dependent upon either Kent or Wessex." (pp370-371).

Stenton adds to this "a certain Frithuwold, who gave a great estate to Chertsey abbey with the consent of Wulfhere, king of Mercia ... looks like an under-king appointed by a superior lord rather than the representative of a local dynasty". This comment is prompted by the description Frithuwold is given in this charter as "of the province of the men of Surrey, sub-king of Wulfhere, king of the Mercians". Patrick Wormald[11] suggested that the Frithuric who was the first witness to the Chertsey charter was the "Friduric *princeps*" who gave land at Breedon-on-the-Hill, Leicestershire to Medehamstead. Wulfhere issued the charter at Thame.

Blair's "further piece of evidence" is a twelfth-century life of St Osgyth of Aylesbury. It relates the story of Osgyth, a daughter of Wilburh, sister of king Wulfhere of Mercia, and "king Fredeswald". Born at her father's palace at Quarrendon, she was brought up by her maternal aunt St. Eadgyth at Aylesbury. Another aunt, St. Eadburh probably lived at Bicester, and yet another, St. Cyneburh at Castor. Blair deduces that although the *Vita* is late and dubious, it gives a plausible name to Osgyth's mother, and can be understood in a context of Wulfhere of Mercia founding minsters on the borders of Mercia, "and placing them in charge of his numerous surplus sisters". Wilburh was given, not to a border-land minster, but as wife to a sub-king of Mercia, Frithuwold of Surrey.

Blair goes on to speculate on a possible connection with Frithogyth, wife of King Athelearď of Wessex who went to Rome in 737 and Frithuswith ("St. Frideswide") who was reputedly buried in Oxford in 727.

Blair's conclusions deserve to be quoted in full:

"To take the Quarrendon story seriously entails greatly enlarging Frithuwold's realm, to include not merely Surrey but a swathe of the Thames valley and Chilterns extending up into northern Buckinghamshire. If it seems rash to propose so large a principality on so slender a basis, it must be acknowledged that there is room for it. The Middle Angles lay to the north and east, the Middle Saxons extended well into Hertfordshire but not necessarily far, if at all, into Buckinghamshire. If these two *provinciae* were indeed late and artificial amalgams of tribal territories, formed in a context of Mercian overlordship, there is no reason why Wulfhere should not have created a third such *provincia* for Frithuwold. The lack of any clear record

is hardly surprising, for the principality must have been very short-lived - perhaps only formed in c.670 and and abandoned by the mid-680's. Wulfhere's ratification of the Chertsey charter at Thame, more than thirty miles from Chertsey, is worth recalling in the context of the present hypothesis. If Frithuwold's kingdom extended to the modern Oxfordshire/Buckinghamshire boundary, where Thame lies, there may have been some symbolic appropriateness in this choice of a royal villa on the frontier between land in Wulfhere's direct control and land ruled by his sub-king.

"This investigation well illustrated the difficulty of understanding the relationships between tribal territories and delegated power under the seventh-century overkingships. We are still left uncertain whether the original Surrey was (i) a heterogeneous group of *regiones*, some looking towards Kent and Sussex and others towards the Thames valley; (ii) merely that fraction of its eventual self which lay west of *Fullingadic*, the southern part of an early unit of which the northern part was perhaps the Staines or *Wixan* territory; (iii) the southern part of a putative 'greater Middlesex', probably an artificial creation of the late seventh century but perhaps more stable than this and a century or so older; or (iv) the southern part of a different artificial Mercian province, created by Wulfhere for his client and brother-in-law Frithuwold." (p.107).

There is a gap in the "textual" history of Oxfordshire, a lack of archaeological remains coupled with a lack of documentary evidence for human activity. The *only* things which tell us that people were here is the linguistic evidence of place-names and extrapolations from later evidence and comparisons with other parts of the country. Collingwood and Myres (p. 407) noted a dearth of archaeological material "in east Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire". The authors believe Saxon settlement was late, and that a considerable number of the pre-Saxon population may have survived. Their conclusions were supported by the work of Jackson[12], but it is important to note that their views were divergent from the belief expressed by Leeds[13] and summarised by Baugh (first published in 1935) "Many of the Celts undoubtedly were driven into the west and sought refuge in Wales and Cornwall"[14].

I believe that Tolkien took the archaeological and documentary knowledge of Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire used in Collingwood and Myres and combined it with his knowledge of early Surrey and Middlesex and the idea of residual British populations to generate the idea of an early kingdom of "Greater Middlesex", i.e. "The Little Kingdom", existing some two hundred years before Frithuwold. Moreover, it is known that Tolkien was actively involved in the study of Celtic elements in place-names, and envisaged this kingdom as a *British* political unit. The precise nature - Saxon or British - of the population of the Little Kingdom is never revealed, and the date allows for a late sub-Roman mixed population.

Dumville has suggested that a kingdom conceived in terms of the people who dwell in a region "King of the people dwelling in Kent" "may be an indication of sub-Roman community and/or an avoidance of of a convenient racial label" such as "the Middle Angles". Frithuwold is "of the province of the men of Surrey", and it is possible that Surrey may be a sub-Roman unit.[15]

Unfortunately Dumville does not indicate whether this is his own idea, or whether it has been in existence for some time, so it is not possible to say if Tolkien could have read this piece of evidence for his Little Kingdom.

Tolkien, in a letter criticising an illustrator, says of the geography of *Farmer Giles of Ham* "This is a definitely located story (one of its virtues if it has any)"[16]. The English reader has probably never had any difficulty in locating Thame,

Oakley and Worminghall. The further from the centre, the more obscure the places: although the "standing stones" to the north are positively identified as the Rollright Stones in *Letters*[17] and intuitively recognised as such by some readers, few readers will have, like Doughan[18], recognised Venedotia as Gwynedd. Tolkien's description of the geographical boundaries are, as he says, vague. The kingdom "seems never to have reached far past the Thames into the West, nor beyond Otmoor to the North; its eastern borders are dubious". The one point he is firm upon is:

"The capital of the Little Kingdom was evidently, as is ours, in its south-east corner."[19]

Thame is called "chief town"[20], but the possibility is left for a capital in the south-east, possibly to be identified with Chertsey.
The foreword contains one hint of an extension of the kingdom beyond Otmoor, with "an outpost against the Middle Kingdom ... at Farthingho". I find this one of the most puzzling pieces of topography in *Farmer Giles of Ham*, and can come up with no satisfactory explanation to the question "Why Farthingho" (and conversely, why not Farthinghoe? Perhaps Tolkien had played with a folk etymology Far-thing-ho (distant-parliament-hill), or perhaps, like Queen Berúthiel's cats, it is just part of the mythology that explains itself. A letter hints at a "sketch" of this incident[21], which would be most interesting to read.

The Little Kingdom is an abbreviation of the "Little Kingdom of the Wormings"[22]. The name "Worming" is presumably Old English Wyrm - "reptile, serpent, worm" plus "ing" in its sense of "men dependent on". Tolkien recognised that the "Worming" element in *Worminghall* is purely from "wyrm", with no "ing" in early uses. At the time of Farmer Giles, the Little Kingdom appears to have been a sub-kingdom of the Middle Kingdom[23]. The "middle kingdom" has always been discussed as Mercia[24]; but Mercia did not become a power in Oxfordshire until the seventh century. If one looks for a "middle kingdom", Middle Anglia and Middlesex offer themselves, as well as Mercia. Blair writes:

"It is tempting to conclude from the name that Surrey was once the southern half of a Middle Saxon kingdom larger than modern Middlesex. But ... the 'Middle Saxons' seem somewhat late and artificial ... which only acquired a common name and identity in the context of Mercian overlordship."[25]

There are similar doubts about the Middle Angles, possibly a short-lived Mercian creation[26] and possibly, as Bede says, a *provincia* [kingdom] composed of *regiones* [tribal groupings, which presumably existed for long before the Mercian rule][27]. Only one constituent tribe of the Middle Angles is known, the Gyrwe of the fenland border, but another, the Fæ rpingas, appear in an Anglo-Saxon annotation of the Tribal Hidage. It is not known where this people settled, and I wonder if Tolkien played with the idea of Fæ rpingas-ho/ Fæ rþingas-ho.

Farmer Giles of Ham is not the only work where one may observe Tolkien using the philologist-as-historian approach to creation. Tom Shippey[28] says that in writing *The Hobbit*, Tolkien was creating "a sort of 'asterisk-world' for the Norse *Elder Edda*. Tolkien himself says that he wrote his mythology as "a situation in which a common greeting would be *elen síla lúmenn' omentielmo*" [29] - an 'asterisk-world' for an 'asterisk-language'. Or perhaps one should use some other punctuation mark when the language is created, not deduced.

! £ $?? @ # % & + ??!? (Ed.)

NOTES

1. *Letters* p.43

2. i.e. Murray, Bradley, Cragie and Onions, the four editors of the Oxford English Dictionary (see Oxford English Dictionary p. 947).

3. Renfrew, Colin *Archaeology and Language: The Puzzle of Indo-European Origins* (Cape, 1987).

4. p.49.

5. *Letters* p.280.

6. This list is taken from: Dumville, D. 'Essex, Middle Anglia and the Expansion of Mercia' in Bassett, S. (ed.) *The Origins of the Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms* (pp. 123-140) Leicester University Press 1989

7. *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle trans. Garmonsway, G.N. Dent, 1953.*

8. *Geoffrey of Monmouth The History of the Kings of Britain*, trans. Thorpe, L. Penguin, 1966. pp.131-132

9. Opie, I. and P. (eds.) *The Oxford Dictionary of Nursery Rhymes* Oxford University Press, 1951.

10. Blair, J. 'Frithuwold's Kingdom and the Origins of Surrey' in Bassett, *op. cit.*

11. 'Bede, the *Bretwaldas* and the origin of the *Gens Anglorum*', in *Ideal and Reality in Frankish and Anglo-Saxon Society*, ed. Wormald, P.

12. Jackson, K. *Language and History in Early Britain* Edinburgh University Press, 1953.

13. Leeds, T. *The Archaeology of the Anglo-Saxon Settlements* Oxford University Press, 1913.

14. Baugh, A. *A History of the English Language* Routledge, 1959.

15. *Op. cit.* p.127. It is interesting to note Dumville's use of the term "sub-Roman". Although one would imagine that this would mean "below" the Roman, Iron Age in archaeological strata, in fact it means "following" the Roman. The term is relatively recent - Tolkien would not have heard it when he was writing *Farmer Giles*; *Encyclopedia Britannica* XXXI, 57 records the first use of "sub-Mycenaean" in 1902, and "sub-Roman" first occured in 1962 (Loyn, H.R. *Anglo-Saxon England* i 39).

16. *Letters* p.130.

17. *Ibid.*

18. Doughan, D. *Letter* in *Mythlore* Vol. XL, Autumn 1984.

19. *Farmer Giles of Ham*, 1949, p.8.

20. *Ibid.* p.76.

21. *Letters* p.133.

22. *Ibid.* p.137.

23. *Farmer Giles of Ham*, 1949, p.19.

24. Shippey, T. *The Road to Middle-Earth* George Allen and Unwin, 1982.

25. Blair, *op.cit.* p.100.

26. *Ibid.* p.107.

27. Dumville, *op.cit.* p.131-132.

28. Shippey, *op.cit.* p.54.

29. *Letters* no. 205 (p. 265).

The Tree

by Howard Shilton

Gnarled roots above the ground,
Twisted trunk no longer round.

Boughs destined for the clouds
Hang limp; nowhere bound.

Knobbled face once so proud,
Wizened now into a frown.

Barren and leafless upon a mound
It stood; fungi as a mock-crown.

Moribund now within a weed-shroud
In the wild wood dun and brown.

Woodpeckers peck with frenetic pound
And pummel; eerie is the sound.

Wood-spirits watch and slowly surround
Old Man Oak falling to the ground.

The Quest for Imladris

by Madawc Williams

He heard the Orc-voices from far away - truly they were what the ancient Eldar had named them, a 'din-horde'. And though he had no idea who or what they might be fighting, he had no doubt as to what he should do.

Though he was a big man, he had learned how to travel quietly. The five orcs had no warning of his approach. Not that they were very much on the lookout, so intent were they on some live quarry who defended a narrow cave-mouth. These were middle-sized goblins; not as dangerous as the huge Uruks of Mordor, yet strong for their size and fearless even in daylight. Their swords were curved and dirty, and on their shields was painted the Eye of the Enemy.

Carefully, he placed his sword and shield on a convenient rock, and then selected a pair of throwing-knives. One of these he also laid on the rock. The second, his favourite, he grasped by the blade. Hoping that fortune might favour him, he cast it at the unprotected back of the largest orc.

He missed. Skill with missiles had never been his strong point, and this cast was particularly bad, missing its target by at least a foot. Even worse, one of the other orcs noticed, turned and saw him.

With a loud battle-cry, he snatched up sword and shield and rushed at them. Three orcs turned and came at him all together. One held back, guarding the cave-mouth. The fifth, a small orc with bruises on its face, took the opportunity to flee.

By good fortune, the largest orc was on the right-hand side of the line of three. With his sword raised, and holding his shield out in front of him, he crashed into that orc, knocking it off its feet. Keeping his balance, he feinted a high slashing blow at the next orc. As the foe raised his own blade, he switched to a simple thrust that went right through the orc's scrawny neck. It fell dead. The third orc fell back in fear; which was as well, since the largest orc was getting on its feet again. Instinctively he rushed at the third orc, which fell back further, but did not turn or flee. He then turned and rushed again at the largest orc, hoping for a quick kill before the other could stab him in the back. This time his foe surprised him, dropping to the ground and slashing dangerously at his legs. But he had met such tricks before; he leapt over the blade, then spun back and cut down even as the orc tried to rise. His blade struck across the bridge of the nose, took off the whole top and back of the head.

The third orc, which had been rushing at him, now turned and fled with even greater speed. So too did the orc who had been guarding the cave-mouth. But from the cave emerged a strange figure, small and slight, hooded and cloaked in grey, who drew a bow and shot at one of the fleeing orcs. It was a difficult shot - and yet the arrow struck true. Even more remarkably, the orc's intended victim then turned and with a second arrow felled the other fleeing orc. Both lay stone dead.

Four dead, one fled - and he had not suffered the least wound. Truly, a tale worth telling when he was next in noble company. But who was this whom he had rescued? Orcs frequently fought their own kind. Still more often, they fought evil men, or evil beings who wore a human shape.

"Sir, I thank you. I owe my life to you." The stranger's words were strangely-spoken, an odd archaic accent such as he had never heard before. Under the hood, the face was fair but slightly frightening. There was a softness of feature that seemed unsuitable for such a deadly archer.

"Men must help each other," he answered. But was this a man, or some creature of the enemy, or was it ...

"You are an elf?" he asked.

"Indeed I am. Have you not met our kind before? You have the look of one of our human allies."

"I come from the south, where elves no longer dwell. I seek Rivendell, Imladris. Do you know how to find it?"

"Indeed - it has been my home all

the days of my life. But, though I owe my life to you, I may not lightly bring a stranger to the hidden valley."

"Why not? I am no servant of evil! You yourself saw me slay those orcs!"

"Men may hate orcs, and yet not love the elves!"

"By the Valar, I swear I mean you no harm. It's true I have never wanted any dealings with elves. The two kindreds have separate dooms, as I see it. But I come out of deep necessity, to seek such aid as only the lord of Imladris may give."

"Your words seem truthful. Yet the enemy has servants who could seem as honest as you appear to be."

"An elf cannot tell?"

"I am of minor kindred - twelve parts wood-elf, and three parts grey-elf, and one part Noldo. I doubt that you would have heard of any of my kindred; yet my great-great-grandfather was among those who fled from the fall of Gondolin, and knew Earendil when he was but a small child."

The elf looked at a patch of sky, that seemed no different from any other patch of sky. Yet it was a fair guess that Earendil's Star shone there, invisible in the daylight to his own weak human eyes.

"If you would let me test you, I could confirm that you are what you seem to be, and lead you to Imladris."

"You would lay some enchantment on me?"

"Indeed not. I have no power strong enough to bind you, even if I wished to do something so treacherous and ungrateful. But by the unmingled light of Earendil's star, I can make an infallible judgement upon you."

* * *

Night had fallen. The stars were bright, and there was no moon. Nervously, he waited for whatever magic the elf might choose to summon. He feared enchantment, as he feared no physical enemy. Yet how else could he fulfil his quest? It was said that Rivendell was hard to find even for those who had been there many times. And he had no more than a general knowledge of where it must lie.

The elf had said nothing for more than an hour; simply sat motionless holding a clear crystal the size of a man's thumb. More than ever, he was uncertain. Was this really an elf? Had he in some way been deceived? Was he being entrapped by some subtle servant of the enemy? The stranger's face seemed somehow too fair; somewhat unmanly.

Suddenly the crystal began to glow with light - the light of the Silmaril that Earendil still guarded, up among the stars. Briefly, it was as bright as day; bright with the light that had come from the Two Trees of Valinor. Then all grew dark again.

"Will you now test me?" he asked.

"That was the testing. Any servant of the Enemy would have fled in terror at that light - or else fallen down dead! You are indeed what you appear to be. Not perfect, and not beyond corruption. But you mean well, and would not knowingly serve the Enemy. I will take you to Imladris.

"But first I must beg your pardon. In one small matter I deceived you - I am not quite what you took me to be!" And she removed her hood, and let her long dark hair flow freely - for this was an elf-maid.

"I did not see - I must have been blind!"

"You were not intended to see. Dealing with mortals is troublesome enough, without revealing my sex and having foolish men fall in love with me. But for you, I am willing to be seen as I am." She smiled at him, reminding him of a warmth and softness that had long ago gone out of his life.

* * *

For several days they travelled, through obscure pathways, among hills that looked very similar but were never quite the same. He could imagine himself wandering for months among such hills, no matter how close he came.

Yet it was not just as a guide that he valued her. Fair she was, and brave and boldly spoken when there was a need. At other times she was quite different - as merry and light-minded as a child. For,

as she had told him, she was an elf-maid of minor kindred, a light-hearted wood-elf with only a touch of the high-elf about her. And that also attracted him, whereas the superior wisdom and powers of a full-blooded high-elf would have been too awesome. This woodland sprite with just an echo of Valinor moved him as no human woman had ever moved him.

At length she pointed out to him a distant group of buildings, a place that could only be Rivendell of the ancient legends. "There is your goal. There I can lead you, and introduce you as a man of worth. But there also, in the company of my kin, certain things cannot be spoken of."

He blushed slightly. Clearly she knew how he felt about her.

"You are no fool, nor any common man. To you I owe my life - yet I would not have revealed my nature, had I not felt more than simple gratitude. And you too value me as more than a guide. You find me fair, do you not?"

"Perilously fair, as elf-maids are said to be. Perhaps we have been more than chance-met travellers. But beyond that, there can be nothing. Beyond that is a thing forbidden!"

"Not always. It has been allowed, from time to time - and not only for those of whom the songs speak. Indeed, there is an elf-maid of vastly higher lineage than mine, who even now would be wed to a mortal. But first he must... no, that is not a matter I have any right to speak of. Enough to know that it *may* be allowed, even for her. So why not for me?

"In any case, it can do no harm to speak privately to the lord of Imladris. I shall do this, if it is your will that I should do so!"

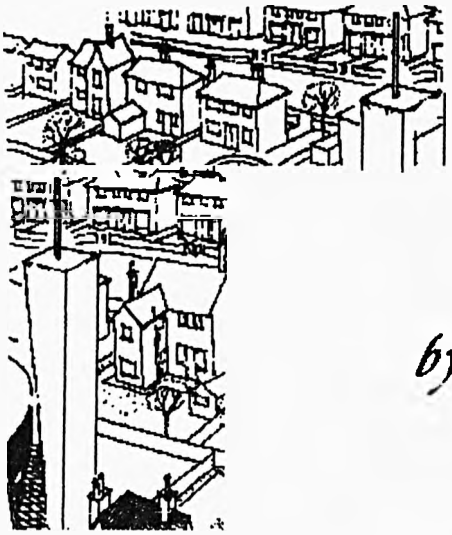
"I do not reject you - yet I do fear to love you. The war grows ever more dangerous. A dreadful doom hangs over my city - it is indeed on this matter that I seek the wisdom of Imladris. In a few years, or perhaps even a few months, I may be dead. In a few years, you and your kind may have to flee across the sundering seas, or else perish. I would not hold you back to the doom of men, in a world that is growing ever more full of darkness and evil."

"So be it. I will take you to Imladris, but my feelings for you shall be our own secret. Yet if you do not fall in battle, and if the doom passes... "

"Then we shall speak again of this matter. But it does not only concern the master of Imladris. I would at the least need the permission of my father."

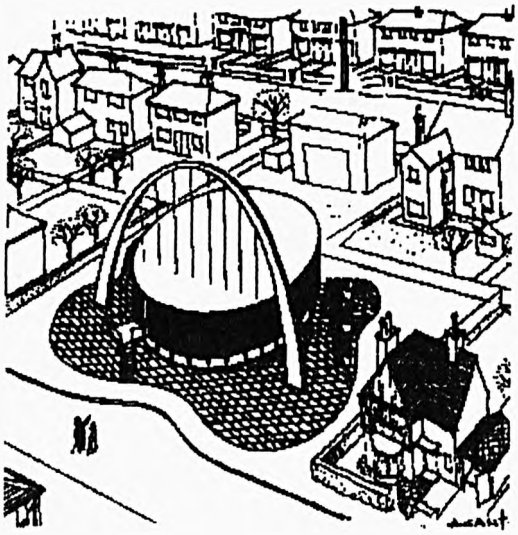
"Of course. What is your origin, in truth? I know little of the South, but perhaps I have heard of your city and your kindred."

"I trust that you have. For I am Boromir son of Denethor, who is Steward of the land of Gondor!"



Sordid Suburbia

by Alex Lewis



In Carpenter's biography of Tolkien, there are two whole chapters devoted to trying to reconcile the ordinariness of the man with the great works he produced. In chapters 1 and 2 of Part 4, Carpenter described the places and dwellings that Tolkien lived in as unremarkable and middle class English. They were a "man-made suburbia" that seemed to clash with Tolkien's own deeply held sensibilities and love for unspoilt countryside. Carpenter rightly asks the question why, and then goes on to suggest that it was mainly that the inner man who was at work on the mythopoeic writings was essentially unaffected by his surroundings and also his own financial circumstances.

I am somewhat at odds with the emphasis in this approach, especially being from Oxford myself. I have lived for my formative teenage years (during which I discovered Tolkien) within a mile of where Tolkien spent a good part of his adult life and where he wrote *The Hobbit*, much of The *Silmarillion*, and most of *The Lord of the Rings* - 22 years, from 1925 to 1947 - and the descriptions furnished by Carpenter of the district made me wonder if he was seeing the same places as I had lived in and experienced.

There are some truly sordid parts of Oxford; the "sordid suburbia" of faceless, nameless little houses that are only distinguished one from the other by their numbers, built for the workers in their tens of thousands who came from all over the Kingdom and beyond to work in the car factories to the east in Cowley. I could take a hypothetical visitor on a "tour" of such areas and expose the ugly underbelly of Oxford: Cowley, parts of the Abingdon Road, Jericho and what used to be the slums around Paradise Street (now long since demolished to make way for hideous concrete shopping precincts, car parks and magistrates' buildings! - do things never improve?) and the "new slums", such as parts of Kidlington and Blackbird Leys which were mostly developed / degraded in Tolkien's last years and after his death.

But there are also parts of the city which are far from sordid. And there is the passage of time that Carpenter's thesis does not allow for; if one was to tour the parts of Oxford he described *now*, one would probably come to the same conclusion as he did, but the Oxford I am speaking of is one that existed up until the last years of the 1960s. Up until those times, and most definitely in the times when Tolkien lived there, it was far from the "sordid suburbia" that Carpenter visualises for us.

I hold that the North of Oxford, with Northmoor Road and the "city end" of the Banbury and

Woodstock Roads, before South Parade, reaching in to North Parade and then to St. Giles, was a place where one's imagination could fly unfettered, and from where it was the matter of a very short journey to arrive in the midst of unspoilt countryside. It is of course not the same today, sadly.

My own belief is that circumstance alone dictated Tolkien's choices, but that within the restriction of his earnings and circumstances he chose as mentally stimulating and spiritually acceptable a place to live as he could find and that during the years he wrote his most important fictional works, his surroundings cannot be described as being entirely at odds with his inner spiritual yearnings.

If one examines his circumstances at that time, they can be put into four categories: in no order of importance, we have:
1) Work: he was an Oxford Professor. He had to live within striking distance of his workplace, or the city centre. He detested driving, and so that meant being within cycling range of the colleges. This alone would have limited Tolkien to within the city boundaries.
2) The children's schooling: here, there was the excellent preparatory school known (fortuitously) as the Dragon School a short walking distance from where he lived and down safe back streets so that the young children did not have to brave main road traffic. Of other preparatory schools in Oxford city, none would have given the degree of preparation - especially in Latin and French - that the Dragon School gave to its pupils. This was what it was rightly respected for.
3) A large family: with four children, himself and his wife, he needed a house with enough space for them all, plus a study he could work in with the undergraduates that he had to instruct. This limited the choice of area for housing still further, since much of the housing to the east of the city, which was cheaper to buy and pay services for, would have been the standard three bedroom variety and not large enough for his purposes. He might however have lived in suitably large accommodation south of the city, and in a much less stimulating environment for far less cost, but he **chose** not to.
4) His means: the wages of a Professor were hardly substantial, and certainly not such that he might have considered going to the new upper class areas such as Boar's Hill and Shotover Hill, or some of the outlying villages. He had to take in examination papers to mark in the summer to earn himself more money in addition to his salary, so that indicates the circumstances he was in. Furthermore any of these alternative locations would have necessitated a car, which would have been an extra expense. In actual fact, North Oxford was the only logical choice, given his circumstances and his aversion to driving, if he wished live somewhere that combined the human needs of a family with as stimulating an environment as was possible within a city.

If I may divert for a moment, I shall examine where Tolkien chose to live - when he began to have any choice in the matter. Up until his marriage and then until the end of the First World War, he had no such choice. After that time, he and Edith lived at 1 Alfred Street, Oxford, in rented rooms with their child, while he worked at the Oxford English Dictionary. From 1921 to 1925 he lived in Leeds, in housing that was as reasonable as he might obtain in that city at that time. Indeed he changed house as soon as he was able to get out of a smoky industrial area into something a little more tolerable. By the time he returned to Oxford in 1925, he already had three children, aged 8, 5 and 1. He lived in Northmoor Road, and only moved once, when the next door house, No. 20, became available as Basil Blackwell was moving out. He lived in Northmoor Road from 1925 to 1947, and it was there that his creativity reached its peak. By this time, after the end of the Second World War, his children were 30, 27, 23 and 18 years of age.

The Victorian houses of North Oxford right up to

South Parade (otherwise known as Summertown) and even those in the side streets, were far from "sordid suburban dwellings". There were the palatial and unique dwellings with turrets and stained glass windows that Carpenter described them as being. In truth, *all* the houses in North Oxford had (and some still do) at least a quarter of an acre of gardens and the majority of them were detached. Tolkien had a tennis court in the back of No. 20 which he and the children dug up to put in more vegetables. How many people have a tennis court in their back gardens nowadays? It was no less a rarity in his time.

The streets were tranquil. I remember living on the main Banbury Road during the 1960s and cycling to school along that road from the age of 11 quite safely. I cycled to South Parks Road and cut down Holywell (where traffic would pick up) and then down Longwall Street, onto the High and across Magdalen Bridge to my school on The Plain, and my parents and I were not in the least concerned about it, summer or winter. It is no exaggeration to say that even during the busiest times of the day traffic was by today's standards very light.

The streets were lined with old tall trees: horse chestnuts and poplars and oaks and planes; they were oddly meditative streets to either cycle along or walk down. Birds sang, squirrels could be seen on the main road, crossing unconcerned by what occasional traffic there was. The houses were all well set back from the road, so that, walking along the pavement, one did not see much except the old dark and well-worn red brick walls with great hedges and growths, large trees and the tiled roofs and hydra-headed chimneys poking up beyond the boughs of the trees. In autumn, the leaves from the trees drifted down the streets and piled up in the gutters; they were a constant nuisance in the old iron pipework gutters of the houses - high up and easily blocked, and a long shaky climb up a ladder to remedy. Even in Tolkien's time, a house like the one I lived in would have already been 60 years old; these houses had character and age by the time he had come to Northmoor Road.

Countryside was within a short cycle ride or walk from Northmoor Road. The University Parks were just down a red-bricked alleyway (if I add "tree-shaded, dark" that would perhaps indicate the poetic effect the area had on me even in the 1960s and early 1970s) from Northmoor Road and once there, it was but a walk to the farmland on the other side of the Cherwell River that led to the village of Old Marston. At Tolkien's time, Old Marston was only a village with thatched cottages, an old 12th century church of St. Nicholas, a couple of pubs, and little else. Now of course it is a sprawling mass of houses dating back about thirty years, and hardly planned with any thought to the preservation of the countryside. But apart from the University Parks, there was the punt station and Marston Ferry, from where Tolkien and his family would take punting trips up-stream to Water Eaton and Islip villages and into butterfly-inhabited countryside quite unspoilt by development (as it now sadly is). Then also, a cycle ride up the Woodstock Road would bring one to Port Meadow and yet more countryside.

By my definition, Tolkien's surroundings were far less "suburban" than one is led to believe, and far more stimulating to the imagination too.

His later move to Merton Road was dictated by circumstance - a large house at Northmoor Road and children growing up and moving away. In 1950 he made the disastrous move to Holywell Street; one may forgive a mistake of this sort. I imagine that Tolkien was unprepared for the shock of what Oxford traffic had become by then in that narrow little place. Much of the city's north-to-east traffic would be diverted along that narrow stretch of road and since all the houses were right on the pavement, there was no escaping the traffic noise and fumes. In the event, in 1953 he moved on to Sandfield Road,

Headlington. By this time Tolkien was 61, and no doubt following the raising of his family of four, there were not large sums of money left to choose any house he might wish to. Furthermore, there was in the 1950s a chronic housing shortage, especially in Oxford as more and more people came to work for the ever-expanding car factories in the peak of the "you-never-had-it-so-good" era. My parents recalled the difficulty of finding a property in Oxford itself, and being obliged to live in the nearby town of Didcot for a year until a house in Oxford finally became available within their price range to buy. It would seem to me that Tolkien was forced by circumstance once more to buy the Sandfield Road house. He could not have opted for a quiet village near Oxford because he could not drive, and taking country buses in and out of the city would have been very tiring for them both. At first Sandfield Road must have been a fairly quiet neighbourhood, for the football ground was not all that popular - crowds of less than 4,000 were routine up until the early 1960s. The proliferation of traffic and use of his road as an unofficial by-pass must have come about in his last years at Sandfield Road, and so also must the "Beatle Group" be amusingly described as practising in a house nearby, as the Beatles themselves were not climbing to the height of their popularity until, say, 1965.

Circumstances dictated Tolkien's move to Lakeside Road, Bournemouth in 1968 - there were reasons of age and the health of his wife. Prices of houses were much higher in Bournemouth than in Oxford - still a city outside the preferred scope of most London commuters in 1968. Tolkien himself mentioned his astonishment at the prices of properties in Bournemouth in one of his last letters. After Edith's death, Merton offered him a place to stay and be looked after, and once again circumstances of health and age dictated his acceptance of this accommodation.

So I shall conclude by observing that the term "suburban" can encompass a wide range of conditions, and if where Tolkien lived can be described as "suburban", then it was certainly not sordid by any definition, and was one of the more pleasant examples of that term that one could wish for. It was hardly an obstacle for letting the imagination rise and go to far distant places, and certainly no hindrance to Tolkien's creation of Middle-earth, as some might hold or ponder over with perplexity.

Alex Lewis

The Hobbit *and* A Midsummer Night's Dream

by Lisa Hopkins

One of the distinguishing features of *The Hobbit* is its distinctive and strongly marked quality of Englishness. This is obviously due partly to the names of people and places who make up the Shire - Bilbo Baggins and Hobbiton, for instance - but it may also be reinforced in the minds of the book's readers by its sustained pattern of reference to one of the most famous plays in the English dramatic tradition, Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, a work which, like *The Hobbit*, is nominally set in distant lands (the action of the play is supposed to take place in Athens), but which nevertheless owes its atmosphere and inspiration very clearly to the spirit of an English wood, with its Robin Goodfellow playing tricks on country housewives and the references it seems to contain to the famous festivities at Kenilworth in 1575, when Queen Elizabeth was entertained by the Earl of Leicester.[1]

A Midsummer Night's Dream is evoked at a very early stage in the story, when Bilbo reminisces to Gandalf about those 'peculiarly excellent fireworks' which Old Took used to have on Midsummer's Eve, which 'used to go up like great lilies and snapdragons and laburnums of fire and hang in the twilight all evening!'[2] This is quite an important passage for creating the character of Bilbo and for making credible the adventures which he is later to have - as the narrator comments,'You will notice already that Mr. Baggins was not quite so prosy as he liked to believe, also that he was very fond of flowers' - and it also serves a third purpose, that of establishing the mood of the story. For however difficult and dangerous Bilbo's position may at times appear to him, and despite the elegiac note sounded at the end of the book by the deaths of Thorin, Fili and Kili, this is predominantly a safe, happy tale, where the characters are neither playing for such great stakes as in *The Lord of the Rings* nor are in such deadly peril. For much of the time Bilbo and his dwarvish companions are being watched over by benevolent, magical figures like Beorn and Gandalf, just as the young Athenian lovers in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, however confused they may feel, are actually under the benign and powerful guardianship of Oberon. It is appropriate, then, that Bilbo should at such an early stage of his adventures evoke the world of benevolent fairytale, with his memories of Gandalf as 'the fellow who used to tell such wonderful tales at parties, about dragons and goblins and giants and the rescue of princesses and the luck of widows' sons', and with his reference to the magical time of midsummer.[3]

The exciting but ultimately safe and controlled world of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is further evoked by the Hobbit's and the dwarves' encounter with the trolls. This is potentially a very unpleasant situation; Gandalf has disappeared, apparently leaving them in the lurch, and trolls are by no means renowned for the pleasantness of their habits. Just when things appear most difficult, however, and all the dwarves are packed up in sacks waiting to be killed and eaten, they are saved in the nick of time by the unexpected return and timely intervention of Gandalf. The plan which Gandalf adopts for their release is both simple and ingenious: by imitating the voices of the trolls, he will stir up a quarrel amongst them, and then prolong the argument until dawn arrives to turn them to stone. The trolls fall for it completely and the plan is a complete success. But however laudable Gandalf's scheme may be, it is not an original one. It is, in fact, the same scheme adopted by Puck, in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, to mislead and confuse the quarrelling lovers, as can be seen in the following extract from the play:

LYSANDER
Where art thou, proud Demetrius? Speak thou now.
PUCK (in Demetrius' voice)
Here, villain, drawn and ready! Where art thou?
LYSANDER
I will be with thee straight.
PUCK (in Demetrius' voice)
Follow me then
To plainer ground.
(Exit Lysander. Enter Demetrius)
DEMETRIUS
Lysander, speak again.
Thou runaway, thou coward, art thou fled?
Speak. In some bush? Where dost thou hide thy head?
PUCK (in Lysander's voice)
Thou coward, art thou bragging to the stars,
Telling the bushes that thou lookst for wars,
And wilt not come? Come, recreant. Come, thou child,
I'll whip thee with a rod. He is defiled
That draws a sword on thee.
DEMETRIUS
Yea, art thou there?
PUCK (in Lysander's voice)
Follow my voice. We'll try no manhood here.
(Exeunt Puck and Demetrius)
(III.2.401-412)

Although Puck's purpose here is actually rather different from Gandalf's - he is in fact trying to prevent the two from quarrelling by misleading each of them about the whereabouts of the other - his technique is exactly similar. Once again, therefore, a passage in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* informs a passage in *The Hobbit*, adding resonance and force.

Perhaps the spirit of the play becomes strongest of all, however, after the Hobbit and the dwarves have encountered Beorn and begin to turn their faces towards the terrible prospect of Mirkwood. The young lovers of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* all flee from the ordered, rational city-state of Athens, where law, personified by the patriarchal Theseus and Egeus, reigns supreme, and take refuge in the wood, where the logical daylit world they have so far inhabited gives place to something very different, darkness, magic, and emotional and physical transformations: Demetrius falls out of love with Hermia and back in love with Helena; Bottom acquires an ass's head instead of his own; and even the cool, logical Theseus - he who later in the play says that he does not believe in 'antique fables, nor these fairy toys' (V.1.3) - undergoes a kind of transformation, for the limited number of actors in Shakespeare's own day, and directorial choice since, has created a strong theatrical tradition of the same actor playing Theseus and Oberon, while the same actress doubles Hippolyta and Titania.

There are transformations too in *The Hobbit* - literal in the case of the shape-shifting Beorn, who, like the world of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is one thing by day and quite another by night; and less outwardly obvious, but quite as marked, in the character of Bilbo, who enters Mirkwood as a frightened follower and emerges from it as a decisive and resourceful leader. If the wood in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* can be read as a potent symbol of the irrational and subconscious, the dream-world where problems are resolved and the deepest levels of the personality come into play, then surely Mirkwood, too, functions on such a symbolic level. And just as the wood in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* positions its aristocratic lovers in the middle of three levels of characters - the lowly mechanicals, who are beneath them, and the powerful fairies, who are above them - so too Bilbo finds himself surrounded by creatures of a lower order of intelligence and morality, the spiders, and by the elves, who, like the fairies of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, are certainly prone to some very human-seeming failings, but are also possessed of powers and strength considerably exceeding his own.[4] Thus in both works the glamour of contact with the more-than-natural is briefly allowed to touch on ordinary life, but the value and attraction of ordinariness are also powerfully felt.

That ordinariness is powerfully reasserted when, at the end of the story, Bilbo returns to his hobbit-hole just in time to abort the auction of his possessions which is about to take place. Before the final close of his adventures, however, he has had one more peep at the fairytale world of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* when, on his arrival in Rivendell, the elves sing him a lullaby:

...Lullaby! Lullaby! Alder and Willow!
Sigh no more Pine, till the wind of the morn!

Fall Moon! Dark be the land!
Hush! Hush! Oak, Ash and Thorn!
Hushed be all water, till dawn is at hand!
(p.273)

In something of the same way, the fairies in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* sing to their mistress Titania 'So good night, with lullaby'(II.2.19), and, at the end of the play, sing prophecies of a happy future to the sleeping mortal couples - another small similarity to pull still closer together these two works which bring into such close conjunction the world of the magical with the world of the normal.[5]

NOTES

1. At II.I.148-154 of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Oberon tells Puck:
Thou rememberest
Since once I sat upon a promontory
And heard a mermaid on a dolphin's back
Uttering such dulcet and harmonious breath
That the rude sea grew civil at her song,
And certain stars shot madly from their spheres
To hear the sea-maid's music?
[*A Midsummer Night's Dream*, ed. Stanley Wells (Penguin, 1967), from which all future quotations from this play will be taken].

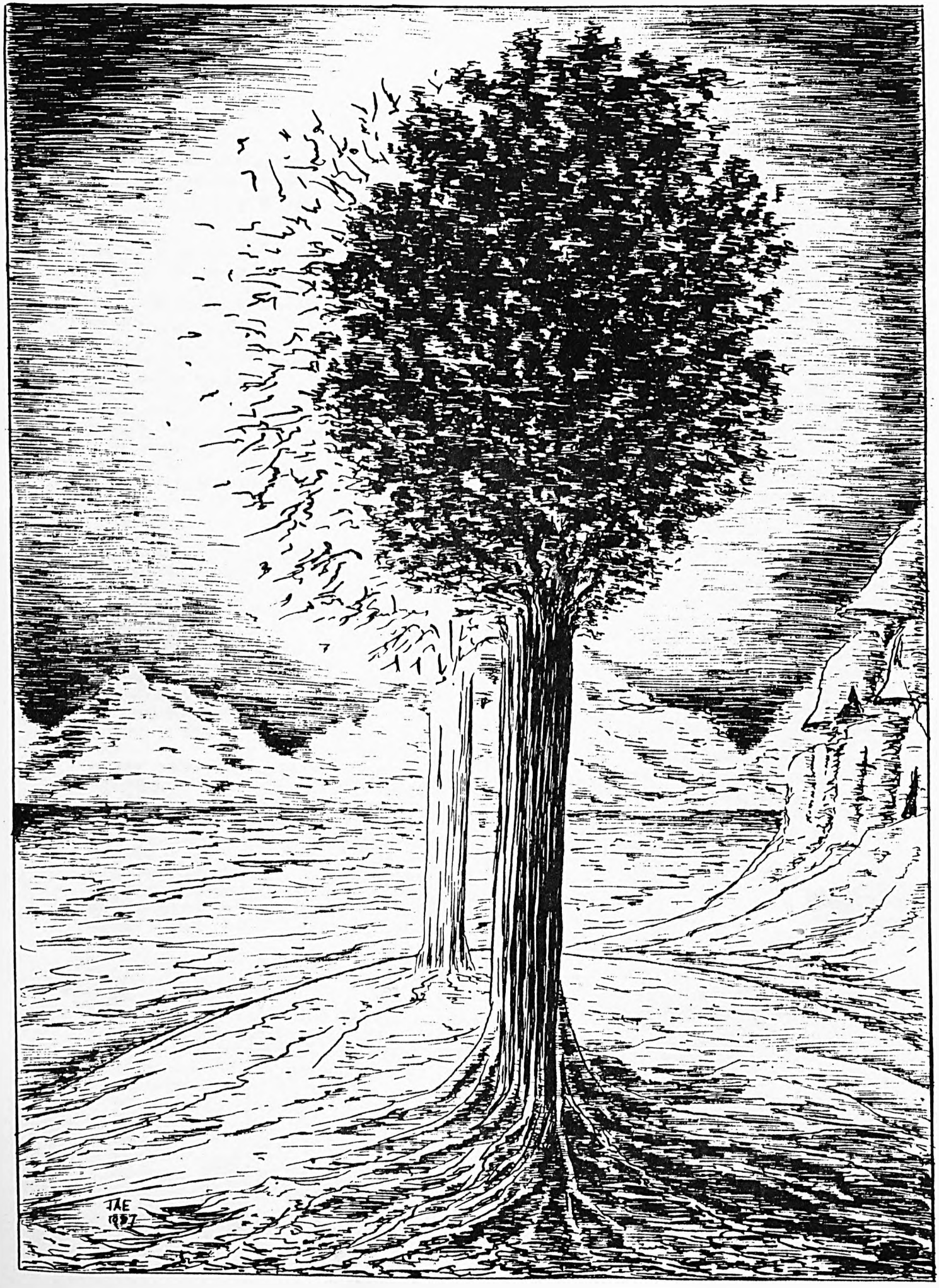
This is taken by scholars to be a description of certain features of the Kenilworth entertainments, and a compliment to Queen Elizabeth is therefore seen in the lines with which Oberon continues:
That very time I saw - but thou couldst not -
Flying between the cold moon and the earth
Cupid all armed. A certain aim he took
At a fair vestal throned by the west,
And loosed his loveshaft smartly from his bow
As it should pierce a hundred thousand hearts:
But I might see young Cupid's fiery shaft
Quenched in the chaste beams of the watery moon,
And the imperial votaress passed on
In maiden meditation, fancy-free.
(II.I.156-164)

2. *J.R.R.Tolkien, The Hobbit* (Allen & Unwin, 1937; 2nd ed. reprinted 1968),p.5. All future quotations from *The Hobbit* will be from this edition.

3. As well as the time of year - Midsummer's Eve, a time of high magic in Celtic and other religious traditions - this reference of Bilbo's to Old Took's parties might also call up for those acquainted with the details of the Kenilworth festivities thoughts of the splendid firework displays which formed an integral part of them, and thus serve further to strengthen the association between this passage and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

4. Another link between the worlds of the two woods is also provided by the fact that the mortals in one, and the elves in the other, both hunt (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*, IV.I.102-128; *The Hobbit*, p.134). It may also be relevant here to remember that in C.S.Lewis's *The Magician's Nephew* it is a wood that gives access to different worlds and experiences; and if Beorn's shape-shifting seems faintly reminiscent of Bottom's transformation, there is a much stronger and more definite parallel in Lewis's *A Horse and His Boy*, where Rabadash too finds himself turned into a donkey as a punishment for his ridiculousness. Thus references to *A Midsummer Night's Dream* can be detected in the work of more than one of the Inklings.

5. There are also occasional reminiscences in *The Hobbit* of another Shakespeare play, *The Tempest*. Certainly Bilbo's reflection on the dwarves' introduction to Beorn, that 'the interruptions had really made Beorn more interested in the story' (p.114), is strongly reminiscent of Shakespeare's technique in having Prospero's long narrative explanation to Miranda repeatedly interrupted in order to sharpen the audience's interest, while Gandalf himself is not unlike Prospero in powers of illusion, and there is also a strong similarity between Caliban's famous 'when I waked / I cried to dream again' (III.2.143-4) and Bombur weeping from his disappointment at waking from the beautiful dream he was having after he fell into the enchanted stream in Mirkwood (p.138). Ariel, too, manifests himself as an invisible voice to various of the visitors to the island, just as Bilbo is experienced by the spiders in Mirkwood as a disembodied voice. These references to another of Shakespeare's plays further enhance the atmosphere of magic and illusion.



THE TWO TREES OF VALINOR

QUENTA SILMARILLION I

Sublime scenes *and* Horrid Novels

Milestones along the Road to Middle-earth

by John E. Ellison

Habitual theatregoers or operagoers will already be familiar with the fashionable practice of the "update". *Hamlet*, for instance, is seen to be all the better for being set, say, in a biscuit factory just off the M25. The "relevance for our time" of *Macbeth* is thought to be improved if the witches set their cauldron up as the reactor of a nuclear power station sited in the midst of the blasted heath (planning permission having, of course, been given). Lovers of literature, on the other hand, do not normally have to face this kind of disorientation. I propose to begin by indulging in a little of it now. The subject of this rather impertinent escapade is *Northanger Abbey*; I hope that the spirit of Jane Austen is in a forgiving mood. Here, then, are Catherine Morland and her friend Isabella Thorpe discussing the pleasures of literature:

"Do you know, I saw the prettiest hat you can imagine, in a shop window in Milsom-street just now, next door to Forbidden Planet. *I quite longed for it. But my dearest Catherine, what have you been doing with yourself all this morning? Have you gone on with* The Lord of the Rings *?"*

"Yes, I have been reading it since I woke, and am got to the Morgul-Vale."

"Are you indeed? How delightful! Oh, I would not tell you what is beyond Morgul-Vale for the world! Are you not wild to know?"

"Oh! Yes, quite, what can it be? But do not tell me, I would not be told on any account. I know it must be a dragon, I am sure it is a winged dragon. Oh, I am delighted with the book! I should like to spend my whole life reading it. I assure you, if it had not been to meet you, I would not have come away from it for the world!"

"Dear creature! How much I am obliged to you; and when you have finished The Lord of the Rings, *we will read* The Silmarillion *together; and I have made out a list of ten or twelve more of the same kind for you."*

"Have you indeed? How glad I am! What are they all?"

"I will read you their names directly; here they are in my pocket-book. The Belgariad, The Malloreon, The Fionavar Tapestry, the Discworld series *and* The Chronicles of Thomas Covenant. *These will last us some time."*

"Yes, pretty well, but are they all horrid, are you sure they are all horrid?"

"Yes, quite sure, especially Thomas Covenant, for a particular friend of mine, a Miss Andrews, one of the sweetest creatures in the world, has read every one of them."

History, or Jane Austen, does not relate what was the nature of Catherine's feelings on reaching Cirith Ungol and discovering the true nature of "the monstrous guardian of the pass". However, she appears to have survived the experience with her sensibilities intact, for we find her going for a walk around the environs of Bath, several chapters farther on, and while doing so, carrying on a discussion on the subject of fantasy literature with Henry Tilney and his sister.

They determined on walking round Beechen Cliff, that noble hill, whose beautiful verdure and hanging coppice render it so striking an object from almost every opening in Bath.

"I never look at it," said Catherine, as they walked along the side of the river, "without thinking of Rivendell."

"You have been there, then?" said Henry, a little surprized.

"Oh! no, I only mean what I have read about. It always puts me in mind of the country that Bilbo and the Dwarves travelled through in The Hobbit. *But you never read science fiction or fantasy, I dare say."*

"Why not?"

"Because they are not clever enough for you – gentlemen read better books."

"The person, be it gentleman or lady, who has not pleasure in a good fantasy, must be intolerably stupid. I have read all Mr. Tolkien's works, and most of them with great pleasure. The Lord of the Rings, *when I had once*

begun it, I could not lay down again; – I remember finishing it in two days – my hair standing on end the whole time."

"I am very glad to hear it indeed, and now I shall never be ashamed of liking The Lord of the Rings *myself. But I really thought before, young men despised science fiction and fantasy amazingly."*

"It is amazingly, *it may very well suggest* amazement *if they do – for they read nearly as many as women. I myself have read hundreds and hundreds. Do not imagine that you can cope with me in a knowledge of Elves and Hobbits. If we proceed to particulars, and engage in the never-ceasing inquiry of 'Have you read this?' and 'Have you read that?' I shall soon leave you as far behind me as – what shall I say – I want an appropriate simile, – as far as Frodo himself left the others of the Company when he went with Samwise into Mordor."*

The author to whom Jane Austen does actually refer, in the passages just misquoted and mishandled, is, as "Janeites" will know, Mrs. Anne Radcliffe (1764-1823); the book mainly concerned is her most famous novel *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (1794). This represents, in literary history, the "type" for the "Gothick" novel of fantasy, mystery, horror and suspense. The genre of "horrid novels", as Jane Austen describes them (using the word in the now obsolete sense of "hair-raising"), reached the height of its vogue just at the time when she began to write her own masterpieces. I have indulged in the above passages of parody as a light-hearted way of likening certain fashions current at the end of the eighteenth century to their successors of our own time. This is not to pretend that Mrs. Radcliffe qualifies, or deserves, to be thought of as the J.R.R.Tolkien of her day; one might perhaps be somewhat closer to the mark if one thought of her as the Agatha Christie of it. The comparison, besides having its picturesque and entertaining aspects, does however have a more serious side to it. It throws some valuable light on the way certain long-standing traditions, both literary and visual, left their mark on Tolkien's imaginative writings, most notably on *The Lord of the Rings*. This of course happened at a great many removes, and no doubt without his being consciously aware of their having done so.

There is one direction in which a direct parallel can be drawn between the two authors. They both stand in the same kind of historical relationship with the respective genres with which each of them is associated. Tolkien has indelibly stamped his identity on the fantasy genre which has become associated with his name, but he did not originate it. The "Gothick" novel, similarly, is usually held to have started with Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* (published in 1764). The novels of Mrs. Radcliffe, beginning with *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne* (1789), attained, in the last decade of the eighteenth century, the status of a "cult" or "craze" (the effects of which can be seen in *Northanger Abbey*), a cult which in the next couple of decades was to produce a crop of followers and imitators. The "campus cult" following of *The Lord of the Rings* in the 1960s – "my deplorable cultus", as Tolkien himself referred to it – had similar after-effects, presenting the spectacle of a kind of parasitic growth invading the true and appreciative readership of the books. Similarly, quite an amusing comparison can be drawn between the legends that accumulated about Mrs. Radcliffe during her lifetime, and the cannibalisation of her literary reputation then and after her death, and the vicissitudes of Tolkien publishing history in the years that followed the publication of *The Lord of the Rings*, particularly the "cult years" of the 1960s. The reality, as far as Mrs. Radcliffe was concerned, was comfortably prosaic. She grew up in Bath, married at the age of 25, and spent the rest of her life in respectable and uneventful domesticity. Her romances were written as a means of diversion through long evenings at her fireside; at the end of her life she died of nothing more sensational than a severe attack of asthma. She had, however, ceased to publish for a considerable number of years before her death, and while still at the height of her popularity.[1] Fictitious reports of her death had become widely circulated long before the event actually happened. Other tales, equally fictitious, but more picturesque, had preceded them. One such had it that the inspiration for her "horrid novels" was derived from nightmares deliberately induced by the authoress herself with the aid of a late-night diet of underdone pork chops (one

might, or might not, like to speculate on the dietary practices of certain present-day authors of "fantasy epics" on such a basis). Hack writers were encouraged by reports of the authoress's death to pass off their own productions under her name. A delightful, if decidedly incredible, tale has it that one such, a certain Robert Will, provoked her into taking direct counter-measures. She dressed herself in flowing draperies and, so disguised, made her appearance at Will's rooms. Here she found him at work in a room heavily draped in black, decorated with skulls, daggers and similar emblems, and lit only by one guttering candle. Uttering only the words, "Robert Will, what are you doing here?" she took his manuscript, held it in the candle flame, and reduced it to ashes, subsequently making her exit as mysteriously as she had entered. The terrified scribe rushed round to his publisher on the following day and reported that the ghost of Mrs. Radcliffe had appeared to him, and burned his masterpiece. *Se non e vero ...* One may, perhaps, regret that it never occurred to Tolkien to take a similar line with regard to the unauthorised edition of his work circulated by Ace Books ....

Mrs. Radcliffe's own works, "horrid" though they may be, preserve a highly moral tone and refrain from allusions or suggestions which might shame the cheek of maiden modesty. This was very far from being the case with the best-known of her immediate successors, Matthew Lewis, who, in *The Monk* (1795), went well "over the top" in his defiance of contemporary sensibilities. This lurid (or lewd, as contemporaries saw it) tale of the career and eventual damnation of its eponymous hero had to be withdrawn almost immediately after its publication, to re-appear only in a heavily bowdlerised form. Nowadays there are hardly, it seems, any such sensibilities left to defy, and the crop of camp followers, would-be imitators and other successors of Tolkien, writers of "fantasy","sword-and sorcery", or however one likes to describe it, have been free to develop his example in ways which would have disconcerted him, or worse. But Mrs. Radcliffe's popular success and immense following, to pursue the comparison with "The Tolkien phenomenon" a stage further, was similarly not just a passing "craze" confined to a large but unsophisticated reading public. (This does, of course, occur, how many people, one wonders, recall even the name of Marie Corelli?) She was widely admired and envied in serious literary circles. Coleridge called *The Mysteries of Udolpho* "the most interesting novel in the English language". Keats paid homage to her example in *The Eve of St.Agnes*, while Walter Scott called her "the first poetess of romantic fiction". Hazlitt's remarks about her make it plain how pervasive and innovatory her influence was in relation to a great body of Victorian and later authors of "tales of mystery and imagination". "In harrowing the soul", he wrote, "with imaginary horrors, and making the flesh creep and the nerves thrill with fond hopes and fears, she is unrivalled." It hardly needs emphasising how extensive and widely scattered the literary after-effects have been ever since her time in the work both of "popular" and of more "serious" writers; though if there is a "direct line" of succession following her, it reaches its conclusion not with Tolkien and *The Lord of the Rings* but with the *Gormenghast* fantasies of Mervyn Peake.

It was Mrs. Radcliffe's promotion of descriptive atmosphere to a leading role in her narratives that represented her truly distinctive, innovatory attribute and contributed most to her immense popularity. The "scenery" almost acts the characters off the stage. It is in this respect that one can see her work reflected, even if distantly, in Tolkien's, and particularly, of course, in *The Lord of the Rings*. In her case the atmosphere is compounded of a rich brew of enticing imagery. mountain peaks frowning above remote and secluded valleys; grim and sinister castles perched on forbidding precipices; faint moonlight filtering through "Gothick" casements into tapestried galleries (a window is never just a window, always a "casement"); dank and gloomy subterranean vaults full of the bones of coffined ancestors; ruined monasteries through whose cloisters glide spectral processions of cowled monks; "all that sort of rot", as one Wooster, B., would express it. "Childe Roland to the dark tower came, sir," says Jeeves to Bertie when, under a name not his own, he arrives to stay at a stately home where he expects to have to face a frosty reception and a difficult and testing time. It is just the same with the much put-upon heroine of *The Mysteries of Udolpho* when she arrives at the fortress so

named. The passage that describes her first sight of it is worth quoting nearly in full, as it conveys the flavour of a great deal of the author's writing.

The sun ... streamed in full splendour upon the towers and battlements of a castle that spread its extensive ramparts along the brow of a precipice above. The splendour of these illumined objects was heightened by the contrasted shade, which involved the valley below.

"There," said Montoni, speaking for the first time in several hours, "is Udolpho."

Emily gazed with melancholy awe upon the castle, which she understood to be Montoni's, for though it was now lighted by the setting sun, the gothic greatness of its features, and its mouldering walls of dark grey stone, rendered it a gloomy and sublime object. As she gazed, the light died away on its walls, leaving a melancholy purple tint, which spread deeper and deeper, as the thin vapour crept up the mountain, while the battlements above were still tipped with splendour. From these, too, the rays soon faded, and the whole edifice was invested with the solemn duskiness of evening. Silent, lonely and sublime, it seemed to stand the sovereign of the scene, and to frown defiance on all, who dared to invade its solitary reign. As the twilight deepened, its features became more awful in obscurity, and Emily continued to gaze, till its clustering towers were alone seen, rising over the tops of the woods, beneath whose thick shade the carriages soon after began to ascend.

The Tolkien cult may well feel a sense of kinship with such a passage as this, familiar as he is with the emotions aroused by Barad-Dur with its towers, battlements and "gaping gates of steel and adamant", or by the grinning walls of Minas Morgul with their windows "like black holes looking inward into emptiness". But Mrs. Radcliffe herself was doing no more than exploiting, or cashing in on, ideas which, at the time she was writing, had been current in art and literature for nearly a century. The passage just quoted is typical of her writing in its use of magniloquent phrases; "gazed with melancholy awe", "a gloomy and sublime object", and the like. The background of the style is the concept, widely popular throughout much of the eighteenth century, of a hierarchy of literary and artistic modes, with, at its summit, that of "The Sublime", ranking slightly, but definitely, above that of "The Beautiful". The former mode was associated with the emotions of fear and terror experienced in a positive, quasi-religious sense, "awe-inspiring", as we still say. Edmund Burke, in his *Inquiry into the Origins of the Sublime* (1755), established it on a philosophical basis; Sir Joshua Reynolds, in the series of Discourses he delivered as the first President of the Royal Academy, placed the depiction on the grand scale of biblical, historical or legendary subjects at the highest "rank" to which the painter could aspire, that of the "sublime", represented most plainly of all by the art of Michelangelo, as that of the "beautiful" was represented by that of Raphael. In so far as landscape painting was concerned, the representatives of each "rank" were, quite clearly, the heroic subjects depicted in the landscapes of Nicolas Poussin (1594-1655) and the dramatic "wild and rocky" landscapes of Salvator Rosa (1615-1673), of the first rank, and of the second, the Arcadian pastoral scenes depicted by Claude Lorrain (1600-1682). Both Claude and Salvator Rosa are frequently mentioned by Anne Radcliffe in her novels, and acknowledged as a source of inspiration. Shortly before her time the English artist Richard Wilson (1712/4-1782) had taken over the "Claudean" type of landscape, and combined it with subject matter taken from myth or legend in a way that encouraged some contemporaries to see him as having improved on Claude by having taken him into the realm of "the sublime".

The art of Claude Lorrain has a certain significance in relation to Tolkien, for the reason that his pictures have inspired and influenced generations of Englishmen in the way they have looked at and thought about the landscape of their own country. The middle and late eighteenth century saw the actual importation into England of works by Claude in considerable quantity, brought back by those who had visited Italy on the "Grand Tour". It likewise saw the flowering of the art of "picturesque" landscaping and landscape gardening at the hands of William Kent, and associated later with the name of Capability Brown, who continued the task of converting the visions of Claude the artist into physical reality. (Even a "Claude glass" was invented, through which those who

used it could see the landscapes before them overlaid with a patina which converted them into "Claudean views"). From our point of view it is interesting that there seems to be a decidedly "Tolkienian" quality about a number of the landscapes of Claude, and this is even more noticeable in his drawings than in his large-scale oil-paintings and classical set-pieces. One or two of his drawings may even bring some of Tolkien's own drawings to mind, even though the latter may be classified as "naive art", and not be comparable in any technical sense. Everyone who knows one of Claude's landscapes (in England we have a good many) will remember his enormous distances, often bathed in evening sunlight and always backed by distant, inviting ranges of hills. Their equivalents frequently appear in *The Lord of the Rings*, stretching out into illimitable distances, with Mindolluin, say, or the Misty Mountains, quivering on the edge of sight. Equally, the landscape of Ithilien, as Tolkien presents it, in its "dishevelled dryad loveliness", has a decidedly "Claudean" feeling about it.

The impression made by the art of Claude Lorrain on the English visual sensibility is seen at its plainest in the work of J.M.W.Turner, and all admirers of Turner will know how constantly he returns to Claude as a source of inspiration and matter for re-interpretation. The concept of "the sublime", as manifested in the feeling of awe inspired by the grandest of scenery, affected him profoundly, and was likewise evident in his recurring preoccupation with the spectacles presented by storm, tempest and shipwreck. The concept of weather, particularly in its more hostile and savage aspects, as a source of "the sublime" goes back to James Thomson's long four-part pastoral poem *The Seasons* (1725-6), another key text for eighteenth century ideas in this sphere; it provided an important source of reference for Turner, who frequently annotated his paintings with verses of his own in a similar manner and metre; it is also quoted from time to time by Anne Radcliffe in chapter headings and elsewhere. Turner's "Alpine" drawings and watercolours are particularly rich in "Tolkienian" scenes; the famous snowstorm in *Hannibal Crossing the Alps* 2 could easily be the one that engulfs the Company below Caradhras. Sometimes, as one reads *The Lord of the Rings*, a like comparison, but in the opposite direction, may suggest itself. There is a decidedly "Turneresque" quality about the storm which passes over Edoras at the point where Theoden, at Gandalf's insistence, emerges into the sunlight which follows it.

In Mrs. Radcliffe's writing these categories of "the sublime" and "the beautiful" are presented in what seems like a deliberately calculated contrast. Her lengthy and elaborate descriptions of Alpine or Pyrenean mountain scenery make use over and over again of suitable epithets: "sublime", "awe-inspiring grandeur", and so on. In her equally extensive and flowery descriptions of smiling pastoral countrysides she does not characterise the peasants inhabiting them without making them perform rustic dances in the manner of Claude Lorrain; an account of a party or a ball at some noble house is liable to turn into a fête champêtre à la Watteau. It is interesting to note how something of the same dichotomy survives in Tolkien, notably in *The Lord of the Rings*. One side of it is inhabited by the landscape of the Shire, a sort of evocation or distillation of the English landscape as it was about the period of Turner and Constable, and also, in another way, by the "classical" landscape of Ithilien. The other side is represented by the "sublime" scenery of the Misty Mountains, Caradhras or the Redhorn Gate, or by the forbidding gloomy range of the Ephel Duath and the feelings of terror inspired in general by the approaches to Mordor. The first sight at close quarters of the high peaks of the Misty Mountains strikes Bilbo or the hobbit members of the Company of the Ring with the same sort of emotions as those that must have been experienced by English travellers of two centuries ago on their first encounter with the Alps.

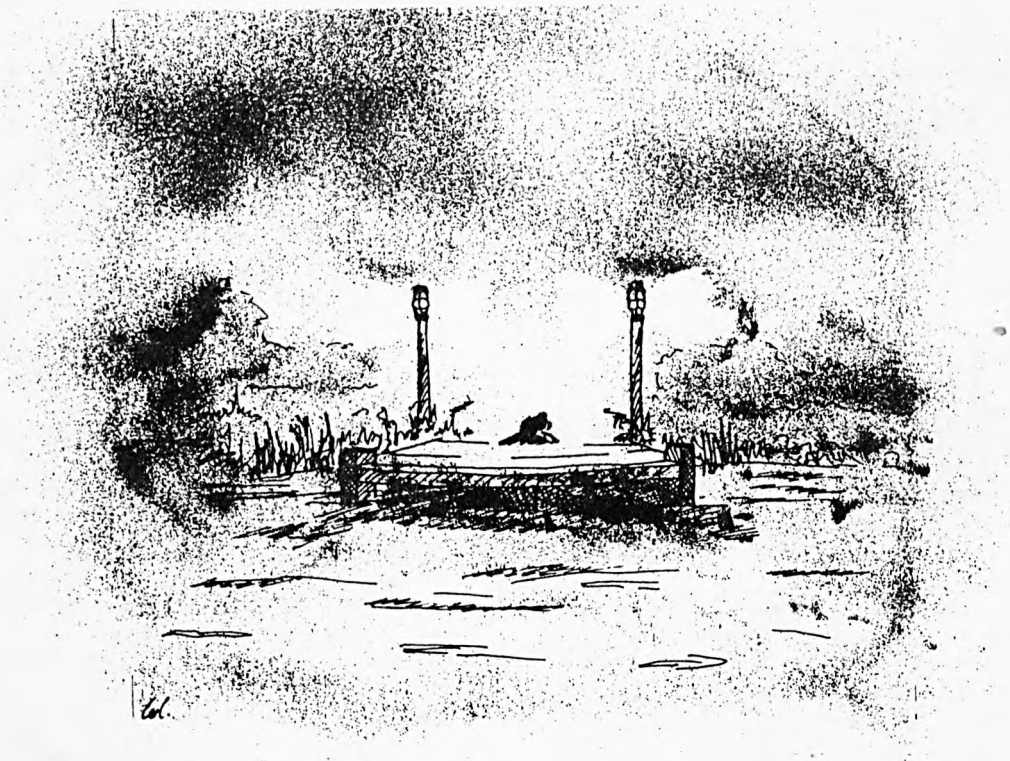
There may be similarity in the roles respectively played by the "scenic" element in Tolkien and in the novels of Anne Radcliffe, but there is much less similarity about the respective ways they are played. So many of Tolkien's scenic descriptions, of Weathertop, for instance, as of the lands on each side of the Anduin as the Company travel down it, before they reach the Argonath, convince not by emphatic literary imagery, but in a straightforwardly circumstantial way, as though Tolkien had been a reporter armed with camera and notebook, briefed to accompany the travellers on

all their journeys. He can call on plenty of evocative imagery of his own when he needs it, for scenes like that of the slag-mounds of the Morannon, which makes a startling impression just by contrast with the tone of so much of the descriptive writing that has come earlier. Such emphasis naturally becomes more frequent in the later stages of *The Lord of the Rings* as the story's progress, and Frodo and Sam's towards Mount Doom, move towards their joint climax.

Little enough of all this, no doubt, occurred to Tolkien himself. Probably he was "sublimely unconscious" of it, to use the word in a present-day sense. There is the tale, familiar from Tolkien's letters3, of the visitor who brought him reproductions of "old pictures" which he felt "to have been designed to illustrate *The Lord of the Rings* long before its time", and Tolkien's disclaimer of any knowledge of them. (It may be a little strange that, bearing in mind his own talent, still insufficiently evaluated, as evident in his drawings and paintings of Middle-earth, Tolkien was, as he said, "not well acquainted with pictorial Art".) Still, he implicitly agreed with his visitor's conclusion that, "you don't suppose, do you, that you wrote all that book yourself?" He was exercising the faculty of re-interpreting past traditions whose existence he took for granted, as artists generally do. And without the existence of the English tradition of observation and scenic representation, of which the novels of Anne Radcliffe are an earlier manifestation, the whole world of Middle-earth, its lands, topography and scenery, would have worn quite a different shape from the one we all know.

NOTES

1. Her last novel, *Gaston de Blondeville*, written in 1802, remained in manuscript until her death and was published posthumously.
2. In the Tate Gallery; first exhibited in 1812. The storm was said to have been based on one actually observed by Turner on a visit to Yorkshire. For examples of "Tolkienian" views in the work of Turner generally, see especially: Wilton, Andrew *Turner and the Sublime* British Museum Publications, 1980.
3. *Letters* pp. 412-414



Look back Mr. Frodo!

VALAQUANTA

OF THE ENERGY OF THE VALAR

by Jenny Coombs and Marc Read

This paper expounds the theory that Conservation of Energy seems to be inherent in Tolkien's world. This fundamental principle states that energy can be neither created nor destroyed, only converted into other forms of energy or mass (which, by relativity, is 'merely' a form of energy). Within practical experience, of course, we "lose" energy all the time, due to air resistance, friction and so on; this is why it took Newton to realise that force is required to *alter* motion, rather than to maintain it. This principle can be applied to the Valar.

Energy is lost by everyone (i.e. transferred to their surroundings) all the time, simply in keeping alive and moving around. So, energy must be taken from our environment, and ultimately from the sun. Whence do the Valar derive their energy? Lest it should be objected that the concept of energy cannot legitimately be applied to spiritual beings, it should be pointed out that the Valar perform physical work on a massive scale, raising mountains and rearranging continents, which necessitates the 'expenditure' of tremendous amounts of energy. The hypothesis is proposed by the current authors that the Valar, like us, draw energy from the environment. There was probably enough energy in the earth as it was made to finance the Valar's work, but unfortunately the Second Law of Thermodynamics forbids the efficient conversion of disordered energy into ordered forms, which was what the Valar wanted to do, to transform the "unshaped" chaos (*Ainulindalë* p.21) into a planet with a lower level of entropy. It is therefore suggested that the Valar drew energy from an extraterrestrial source. The Valar existed before the sun, thus this cannot be the source. It cannot reasonably be doubted that the Sun was created during the period of recorded history, since as late as the War of the Ring there are beings such as Galadriel (seemingly a reliable source) who *remember* the presolar ages.

It is clear that the Sun is not a star, the stars existed before the Valar entered Arda, indeed before Arda was made by Eru. "And amid all the splendours of the World, its vast halls and spaces, and its wheeling fires, Ilúvatar chose a place for *[his Children's]* habitation in the Deeps of Time and in the midst of the innumerable stars." (*Ainulindalë* p.19) The Universe, then, was already a vast and practically inexhaustible source of energy, as it is today, and the Ainur who entered into Arda (*sc.* this planet) must have drawn energy from the Universe around it. It may be objected that the Ainur are capable of creating stars with their energy, and therefore it is not possible that they derive this energy from the stars. But the stars of Varda are fundamentally different from the pre-Valar celestial bodies. Varda's stars are made of "the silver dews from the vats of Telperion" (*Quenta Silmarillion* ch.3 p.55), and they are much closer to Earth, located within its atmosphere. "...in the mists above the borders of the world" (*ibid* p.56). The primaeval stars, on the other hand, are "faint and far", their light intensity is less by the inverse-square law, but their power is far greater. This distinction between Eru-created and Valar-wrought luminaries goes back to the *Book of Lost Tales.*

However, it must not be assumed that the Valar need to transfer energy to their surroundings merely in order to keep alive and remain still. That qualification is required because the Valar must expend energy when they move; they have precise locations in space, and therefore to move around they must transfer this location, even if it is a point-mass. When a Vala is moving he possesses kinetic energy, so in order to move he must convert energy into kinetic energy, either by drawing energy from his surroundings, so that his net energy increases, or by temporarily converting some of his own energy into kinetic energy.

By "his own energy" is meant to be understood the Rest Energy of a Vala: that quantity of energy associated with him when he is at rest. By the equivalence of mass and energy, this implies a Valarin rest mass. If the Valar had no rest mass, they would have to behave like photons, i.e. move at light-speed in order to exist. This surely cannot be the case, thus our assumption above is justified RAA.

The current authors propose that the Valar can convert their "potential" energy to kinetic energy and back again with 100 per cent efficiency . This means that when a Vala is moving he has less energy available for other purposes, but that he recovers his original energy when he stops. The Vala's total energy is therefore conserved unless he performs work on his environment, or loses it in some other way.

FANAR AND FLAT PHOTONS

For example, when a Vala appears in a fána he is expending some of his net energy in some way. There are two alternative explanations of what it is that is happening during this process. (A) The Vala is spontaneously creating photons, giving the impression of light being reflected from a solid object. (B) The Valar manipulate the brains of their observers so that the observers experience a signal from the optic nerve identical to that which would be produced by light reflected from an existent body and incident upon the retina, although no response would be registered by a photon-detector in the vicinity. Similarly a Vala could simulate the experience of hearing or touching his "body" by (A) using some of his energy to set the air molecules in oscillation and to produce the particles which cause the sensation of touch on the pressure-sensors in the skin of the observer, or (B) causing these sensations directly in the observer's brain.

The alternative idea that in order to produce the sensation of sight, the Valar do not actually *produce* photons, but use their energy to alter the path of existent photons, is unfeasible. This theory suggests that the photons would ordinarily have continued on their path, since there is no material body to deflect them, the Vala adjusts them, sending them in the directions and with the frequencies which would have been produced had they really been reflected from a material body of the shape, colour etc. of the fána. (The process is analogous to a mirror, which alters the paths of photons incident upon it in such a way as to give the impression that the photons have been reflected from a real body behind the mirror.) However, the Vala would have to produce his own photons in situations where the photon density was insufficient, i.e. it was too dark, and so the principle of Occam's Razor may be used to assert that the Valar create new photons whenever they manifest themselves in fánar. This has a further advantage. The fánar of the Valar are consistently described as "bright", "radiant". (There appears, doubtless because of this effect, to be some confusion between the stem SPAN- "white", which yields Quenya *fána* "cloud", thus "the 'veil' of a Vala", and stem PHAY- "radiate, send out rays of light", whence Quenya *fairë* "to emit light" (*Lost Road and Other Writings* p.381,387).) This must be due to the way the Valar manifest themselves. Incident upon the observer's retina are the photons which the Vala has created to trick the observer into thinking he is looking at a material body, but incident also are the photons from behind the Vala's fána. There is no material object in the way to bar their progress, so they continue as before to the observer's eye. However, the Vala must scatter them, so as not to allow the background to be visible through his fána. More photons therefore appear to emanate from the fana than from the surrounding material objects, so the fána appears to be suffused with light. Doubtless the Valar could have suppressed this effect had they wished, by reversing the direction of the extra photons, but the radiant effect was probably regarded as not undesirable.

Alternatively, this effect could be explained in a similar manner under the theory that the perception of fánar is not the result of actual photons at all, but of manipulation of electric impulses in the observer's brain. Then the radiance is caused by the real photons incident on the retina, with their effect on the optic nerve suitably altered to produce only enhanced light intensity rather than overlapping images.

One remarkable point is that the most gifted of the Eldar are also able to create fánar, for others as well as for themselves. Lúthien is exceptional,

but even Finrod is able to change the forms and faces of his eleven companions into the likenesses of Orcs, which must include absorbing the previously existing photons in order to avoid making rather conspicuous luminous Orcs. This must be the same process as that by which "the Elf-minstrels...can make the things of which they sing appear before the eyes of those that listen" (*Return of the King* App.A vi). It may be objected that it would be a complex process to produce the impression of a whole scene by creating and manipulating particles so that they produce a certain effect on the five senses of the spectator. the calculations would be complex because of the sheer number of quanta involved. However, it must be remembered that the everyday processes of the human body – running, writing, the workings of the brain – are similarly complicated when viewed mechanically. It is possible that the gifted among the Quendi could carry out the quantum mechanics outlined above with the concentration of, say, a violin player engaged in a complicated, but possible, piece of music.

The Quendi, as well as the Valar, also have the ability to distinguish such manufactured experiences from *real matter*, in the same way as Sauron is not taken in by Finrod's orc-disguise. "*The Elves*, at any rate are not themselves deluded. This is for them a form of Art.[2] Enchantment produces a Secondary World into which both designer and spectator can enter, to the satisfaction of their senses while they are inside." (*Tree and Leaf: On Fairy Stories*, "Fantasy" p.54). Orcs, apparently, have not this ability, since Finrod produces the fánar to deceive them.

It is debatable how the Quendi distinguish the primary and secondary worlds. Under the theory that fánar and all secondary[3] sub-creations are produced by the actual production of "artificial" photons, gravitons etc., there must be some way in which those photons differ from "natural" photons. A difference in spin is a faint possibility – or is there a fifth quantum number? One rather appealing idea is that the artificial photons are only three-dimensional, whereas the natural photons exist in all dimensions. Valar, and perhaps Quendi as well, are able to perceive all dimensions and hence see the artificial photons as "flat"; Men can only perceive three spatial dimensions anyway, so are not aware of the difference.

Under the theory that fánar are produced directly in the observer's brains, then there must be some way that Quendi can perceive a difference between electric impulses (from the optic nerve, sensory nerves etc.) Doubt is cast on this in the *Valaquenta* ("Of the Maiar"). "And *[the Elder]* did not know whence came the fair visions or the promptings of wisdom that *[Olorin]* put into their hearts." This provides evidence for favouring the "flat photon" theory.

It is hard to imagine how the Valar could have been able to recover the energy they expended in producing visible, tangible and audible fánar. Compared to the energy they might expend in shaping galaxies this energy is in any case negligible.

INCARNATING THE DISCARNATE

The Valar (and Maiar) are capable of incarnating themselves in bodies identical to those of Eldar and of adapting the forms of elvar (e.g. Ents). Manifestation in fánar seemed complicated enough, but incarnation is clearly regarded as a more significant step.

The current authors propose that the process of incarnation involves knitting together molecules and atoms to form a working physical body. Once again, the molecules might come from the surroundings; the Vala would then combine them suitably to build up the body. He might rearrange the atomic numbers of available atoms to make up those in short supply: taking a proton off here, adding an electron there. Or the Vala might use energy to bring the fundamental particles into existence – perhaps from the cloud of virtual particles which fill the "vacuum". Either way, the task would be one of considerable complexity and difficulty, even for a Vala – though the greater Maiar are capable of it too, indeed, with the exception of Melkor, the only recorded examples of incarnation are such (the Istari, Melian, Sauron etc.). In this section, references to "the Valar" apply equally to the Maiar.

A tremendous amount of energy must have been expended on the completed organism. However, it appears that the Vala suffers no

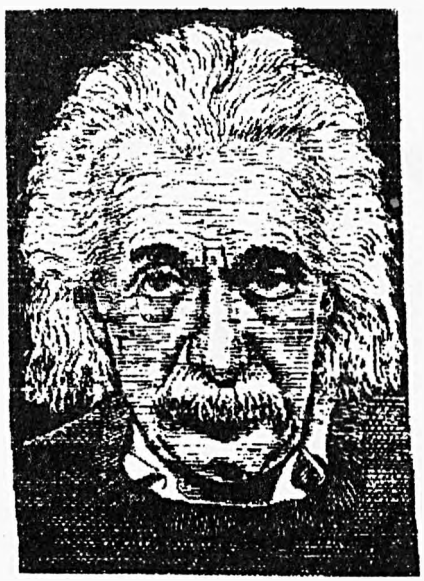
diminution because of this; his net energy remains constant, as it does when he moves discarnate. However, while kinetic energy can be completely and easily reconverted by a Vala, the evidence suggests that the reconversion of so-called "somatic energy" is a slow and difficult process, though essential if the Vala is not to lose a large amount of energy.

It appears that there is a limit to the amount of energy a Vala can draw from his environment. If a sufficiently large amount of energy is dissipated, the Vala is permanently diminished, his capacity to perform work is seriously reduced. Hence when Sauron loses his first body in the Akallabêth he is "diminished", when his second is destroyed by Gil-galad, Elendil and Isildur he suffers a further loss. There is therefore always the danger for an incarnate Vala that he will be killed, as an Eruhin can be killed, and will thereby lose a considerable amount of energy (though it is possible for the somatic energy to be recovered from the cadaver, before it is dissipated by decomposition. Sauron did not get the chance to do this.)

Incarnation places severe restrictions on the activities available to the Valar. However, they are not entirely limited to the range of Eruhini: for example, they can rearrange their physiognomy. Sauron is incarnate in roughly Eldarin form when Finrod *et al.* encounter him, but nevertheless "took upon himself the form of a werewolf" to challenge Húan, and once overcome "shifted shape, from wolf to serpent, and from monster to his own accustomed form" (*Quenta Silmarillion* ch.19 p.210). He also created photons ("and his flaming eyes he on them bent" (*Lay of Leithian* l.2168)) in order to intimidate prisoners and thralls (although to the Quendi, though not to the Ores et Seron, these photons would appear flat).

When he heard that Húan was in the vicinity, he rearranged his "own accustomed form" into that of a werewolf. This would be a complicated operation, though not to be compared with the work of creating the Eldarin form itself.

Vanquished by Húan, Sauron then produced a rapid succession of fánar in a vain attempt to confuse him into loosening his grip on Sauron's throat. "*[Sauron]* could not elude the grip of Húan without forsaking his body utterly. Ere his foul spirit left its dark house, Lúthien came to him, and said that he should be stripped of his raiment of flesh...'unless thou yield to me'". This passages raises the question: why did Sauron not "forsake his body utterly" and make his escape? The answer must be that if he had left his body suddenly, he would have lost all the somatic energy bound up in it. This would have been a disaster for Sauron, probably greater than the loss of both his later Eruhinic bodies put together: those were of roughly human size, and cannot have had as much somatic energy as the huge wolf-form. However, the process of reclaiming that somatic energy, by the gradual disintegration of the body, would have taken a few minutes — and it is likely that, had Húan perceived what Sauron was doing, he would have ripped his throat out. Forcibly excarnated, Sauron would then have lost all of his somatic energy, and would in addition have experienced great pain, the physical pain of being killed, and the "spiritual pain" of being thus torn from his raiment of flesh. So "lest he be forced from the body unwillingly, which is a dire pain to such spirits, he yielded himself" (*Lost Road and Other Writings* p.300), i.e. converted his somatic energy back into potential energy, assumed the fána of a vampire and flitted off.



$A = mc^2$?

The Valar seem to have enjoyed assuming fänar. It is possible that this was due to a sentimental attachment to spacetime. Incarnation, though, is a very different matter. For a start, biological organisms must seem inefficient to these beings of pure energy. They constantly dribble energy, radiating heat to their surroundings, and have to make good this haemorrhage by eating food and converting it eventually, after a tedious chain of molecular reactions, back to energy.

Furthermore, the process of building an organic body consumes large quantities of energy. That energy can be recovered in time, but until this has been achieved the Vala would be left with much less "potential to perform work", as energy is defined. Note that the Quendi can keep their bodies in good working order, continually renewing their continually dying cells, so that senescing and dying are avoided. Their immune systems can be completely effective, unlike the Engwaron. However, it is impossible altogether to avoid the perils and dangers of the world, as long as a being is incarnate it is susceptible to the risk of serious injury or death, and with it the loss of large quantities of somatic energy. It must be assumed that this last consideration also concerns the Valar.

"*Incarnation*" would imperil them, dimming their wisdom and knowledge, and confusing them with fears, cares and weaknesses coming from the flesh" (*Unfinished Tales*, "The Istari", p.393). This brings to mind the fact that being subject to physical pain, hunger, thirst, fatigue and the weight of gravity will be all the more bitter to those who have been free of them.

It is not surprising that when Manwë calls a council and brightly announces that he wants three volunteers to clothe themselves in flesh, and go to Middle-earth where irrational Noldor and Men behave in a socially unacceptable manner, in order that they may persuade everyone to be considerate, there is not an appreciably favourable reaction. Advised by Orome, Aiatar allows his name to be proposed; Aulë chooses Kurumo, who is less unwilling. Upon being questioned, Olórin states that he is too weak and he is afraid.

WIZARDS AND THE GLORFINDEL QUESTION

There is a clear reason for the incarnation of the Istari. they are not to come as supermen from the West, but are to "forego might, and clothe themselves in flesh so as to treat on equality and win the trust of Elves and Men" (*ibid*). Additional restrictions appear to be placed on their activities. For instance, they may not influence matter so as to prevent an Eruhin from exercising his free will, except by purely physical means available to any Eruhin. Thus Gandalf kindles fire (by concentrating energy so as to raise a piece of wood to its ignition temperature, and then letting it burn naturally), he uses his staff as a low intensity light-source, he makes fireworks for the hobbits' amusement. He does not exercise any Maiarin powers against an Eruhin until after the destruction of his first body and his return in a second. This can be explained by the hypothesis that the Valar have supplied him with somatic energy to build his second form (a sort of energy transfusion, collectively the Valar could replenish the energy from the stars, and it would not involve a major loss for any individual. In contrast Sauron in the Second Age is without peers to help him, the energy he loses cannot be replaced). Thus Gandalf is not diminished by his experience (though he has undergone the pain of forcible excarnation, over and above that of being killed rather unpleasantly: this adds a new element to his self-sacrifice at Khazad Dûm), on the contrary, he appears to have been invested with, or authorized to use, more power. Gandalf the White is much more self-confident and in control than Gandalf the Grey, and much more masterful. One cannot imagine the old Gandalf, for instance, disarming Denethor by wrenching the sword from his hand at a distance of twenty feet (*Return of the King* 5 viii); that would have been using unfair force against an Eruhin. Such limitations were imposed upon the Istari partly to achieve parity with Eruhini, and partly to restrict the damage the Istari could do; the Valar must have been aware of the dangers of unleashing five powerful Maiar on Middle-earth, subject to earthly temptations, and all too likely to follow the devices and desires of their organic hearts. They evidently considered that Olórin had proved himself worthy; he therefore returns

wielding new powers, and under orders to dislodge the rebel Kurumo. Having the White Rider to pit against the Nazgûl is doubtless an advantage for the West; and yet there are drawbacks. Denethor's death is very convenient for Aragorn and everyone else, but on the level of personal morality Gandalf does not conduct himself in a manner becoming to a gentleman.

There seem to be two main factors governing the amount of somatic energy inherent in an incarnate form, and the latter one seems also to apply to fanar. The first is obvious: the mass, complexity, entropy, etc. of the body. A large body requires more energy than a small. Probably also it would take a Vala less energy to build a lump of iron (an element readily available and very stable) than a lump of neptunium-239.[4] An amoeba takes less energy than a dolphin, etc.

In addition, the somatic energy depends on the closeness of the incarnate form to the Valo image in the Unseen. This vague sentence can be clarified with an example: Gandalf: "*[T]he lords*[*]* do not fear the Ringwraiths, for those who have dwelt in the Blessed Realm live at once in both worlds, and against both the Seen and the Unseen they have great power." Frodo: "I thought I saw a white figure that shone and did not grow dim like the others. Was that Glorfindel then?" Gandalf: "Yes, you saw him for a moment as he is upon the other side: one of the mighty of the Firstborn." (*Fellowship of the Ring* 2 i.)

Such shifts of vision occur at various places in the *Lord of the Rings*, associated always with the Ring. For example: "Then suddenly, as before under the eaves of the Emyn Muil, Sam saw these two rivals with other vision. A crouching shape, scarcely more than the shadow of a living thing...and before it...untouchable now by pity, a figure robed in white, but at its breast it held a wheel of fire... Then the vision passed, and Sam saw Frodo standing, hand on breast, his breath coming in great gasps, and Gollum at his feet" (*Return of the King* 6 iii).

These passages are attempts to represent, in comprehensible, metaphorical language, experiences for which the Westron and English have no words. It appears reasonable to consider the Unseen as the world of the mind, of the spirit, familiar to the Elder, who can communicate directly mind to mind, and accessible to mortals via devices such as the Ring. Frodo describes Glorfindel as a "white figure that shone" because the effect that experiencing Glorfindel's mind in contact with his own produced on Frodo was nearest to that which would have been produced had Frodo actually seen a shining white figure. Clearly Frodo did not perceive Glorfindel and the Nazgûl with sight, but, having no other words, he translates the experience in visual terms in order to describe it.

Whatever the Unseen is, then, Valar have forms in it that can be roughly translated into visual terms. The lowest-energy fana or body that a Vala can manufacture is the visual/audial/tactile equivalent of this form. To move away from this form requires more somatic energy. Thus Sauron is able originally, as Annatar, to appear beautiful, but after Annatar's body is destroyed, Sauron cannot afford to expend such a large amount of somatic energy again. He becomes incarnate as a demon-creature, which has its own advantages in terms of intimidation (Sauron pays close attention to appearances, with a view to the fear they will cause to his enemies. Consider how much less effective the Nazgûl would have been had they been mounted on a motley band of bay, chestnut, piebald, dun and roan horses.)

This factor in determining somatic energy may sometimes enhance the effect of the first factor; for example, Sauron's wolf-form must have needed a very great deal of somatic energy, since not only was it of great mass, it was also different from his basic "Unseen" form, to which presumably his "own accustomed form" approximated. Sometimes the two factors have opposite effect, for example, an amoeba has very small mass, but diverges greatly from the base-form.

SPLINTERED LIGHT AND FLAGGING ENERGY

The present authors have assumed that the Valar are sustained by energy derived from cosmic radiation: those that favour poetic and vague imagery might conceivably say that they eat starlight. Perhaps they return from time to time to the upper

atmosphere to absorb high-energy, high-frequency photons, before the ozone layer and the rest of the atmosphere filter out the ultra-violet rays. This could explain passages like the following: "But...Tulkas [was] weary,for...the strength of Tulkas had been at the service of all without ceasing in the days of their labour... Then Tulkas slept, being weary" (*Quenta Silmarillion* 1 p.40). This could be interpreted: "But Tulkas's energy state was low, for he had maintained a high power output for a considerable time in order to perform work upon the planet. Then Tulkas withdrew to the stratosphere, in order to absorb valaquanta until he had again achieved optimum energy."

However, an alternative assumption, which might fit some aspects of the facts better, is that the Valar *cannot* replenish their energy from any source, and that therefore any work they do causes them permanent loss. This would explain the "splintered light, splintered darkness" effect, whereby the influence of precosmic beings decreases as a function of time. This would explain the fact that when Earth is young the Valar are of crucial importance to the planet, their wars determining its topography, their protection enabling the development of intelligent organic life, but by the Fourth Age there are virtually *no* Ainur at large on the planet, and certainly none who will have a significant influence upon its future development. Freed from contact with either devils or angels, Man is left to work out his own destiny.

NOTES

1. There are problems in interpreting the necessarily highly metaphorical language of the *Ainulindalë*. For example, Melkor "had gone often alone into the void places" (*Ainulindalë* p.16), which might imply that he ventured deep into interstellar space. However, the term "the Void" seems to be used to describe whatever is outside space-time.

2. "Art" in Quenya is *Karme* (*Unfinished Tales* p.396). The word comes from KAR- "to make, do", and means "building, structure". It occurs in the compound *sundokarmë* (*Lost Road and Other Writings* p.343), "base-structure", the name Tolkien gave to the system in the Eldarin languages of constructing words from the primitive stems by adding appropriate morphemes. There is thus, as often, a linguistic representation of Tolkien's philosophical ideas: his sub-creation of the Eldarin languages (*sundokarmë*) aspires to the supreme Eldarin art (*karmë*) of sub-creating a sensible secondary world.

3. Sc. secondary to the Quendi and Valar, etc.; it would be tertiary to us humans.

4. This isotope is unstable, having a half-life of 2.3 days, so the Vala would undergo the unpleasant experience of having its incarnate form gradually decay. However, just as the Vala renews cells in a human form, so he would be perfectly capable of preventing the decay of the neptunium atoms. The Vala simply looks at all the atoms all the time (after all, he doesn't have much else to fill his time; there is a limit to the wild partying in which one can indulge when one is a lump of radioactive metal). He is thus the perfect observer, collapsing the wave functions for all his component atoms, so that, by the Quantum Zeno effect, they never decay. Then when he tires of life as a trans-uranium element, he simply shuts his metaphysical eyes and allows his body to start decaying. But now comes the clever bit - he catches each alpha-particle as it is ejected, and converts its kinetic energy and mass to Valarin potential energy (v.p.e.). Thus he avoids any net loss of energy.

AFTERNOTES

Both of the authors delight in bad puns and it was with a heavy heart that these were removed from the article for the sake of a more accurate parody of the Scientific Style.

This paper was first delivered to Taruithorn Smial in an extended version sometime during Michaelmas Term 1991.

Any similar papers would be welcomed by The Michel Delving Journal of Pseudoscience, c/o MBA Read, Balliol College, Oxford OX1 3BJ

How to Learn Elvish

by Nancy Martsch

I have sometimes been asked how I learned Elvish. Are there any books on the subject? Did Christopher Tolkien provide assistance? The answer is, I taught myself with help from other Middle-earth enthusiasts. You, too, can teach yourself.

Go through *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Silmarillion*, and note down all the foreign words (often they will be in italics). Note also any explanations or content which might provide a clue as to the meaning of the word or the language to which it belongs. Often -- but not always! -- the English version will be a translation or paraphrase of the Elvish. In *The Lord of the Rings* Quenya is referred to as the high tongue or the noble tongue, Sindarin as Grey Elven or Elvish. The language of the Dwarves is usually labelled as such, as are Orkish and the Black Speech. Note, also, the page number - so you can refer to it again!

Be sure to study the Appendices, because they give a lot of linguistic information. The indices, from *The Silmarillion* on (the index to *The Lord of the Rings* isn't very helpful) contain translations not found in the text. Translations are given in the Appendix in *The Silmarillion* and the "Etymologies" in *The Lost Road and Other Writings*. *The Road Goes Ever On : A Song Cycle* (Tolkien's poems set to music by Donald Swann) is invaluable for its analysis of grammar.

Compare words for which you have meanings. If "Amon Hen" means "Hill of Sight" or "Hill of the Eye", and "Amon Lhaw" means "Hill of Hearing", it is likely that "Amon" means "hill", as in "Amon Sûl", Weathertop (*The Silmarillion* confirms this). Pay attention to word order: in Sindarin place names, the geographical element comes first, followed by the name; there are no words for "of" or "of the". Note the part of speech: "amon" is a noun. And it is singular.

Look for plurals. "Emyn Beraid" means "Tower Hills", so "emyn" is probably the plural of "amon". A similar pattern can be found in "Dúnadan", plural "Dúnedain", "Man of the West", "Men of the West". Evidently, like the English "man", "men", Sindarin can form the plural by changing the vowel. "Beraid" looks like it might be a plural too (cf. "Barad-dûr", "Dark Tower"), but it's rendered "Tower Hills" - why? A check of the text shows three towers at that location: probably the Elvish means "Hills of the Towers" - not exactly the same as in English.

Try to sort out the various languages. When you have words for the same thing in different languages, how do they differ? What features distinguish one language from another? You will notice that, whereas Sindarin nouns often form the plurals by changing the vowel, Quenya adds "-r" or "-i". Sindarin words frequently end in a consonant, Quenya in a vowel. Notice the letters that are used in each language, and where: "q" is never used in Sindarin, only in Quenya; "d" can begin a word in Sindarin, never in Quenya; "sh" is never used in Elvish. With practice, you will be able to deduce whether a word or phrase is Sindarin, Quenya, or something else.

Appendix D of *The Lord of the Rings (The Calendars)*, is indispensable because it gives day and month names in both Quenya and Sindarin. Other Quenya-Sindarin pairs can be found scattered through the text, such as "Feanáro" / "Fëanor" in The *Silmarillion*. Compare the sound of corresponding parts of the word pairs. Quenya and Sindarin are both descended from a common Elvish ancestor. Certain regular changes took place in the development of each language. These changes are patterned after sound changes that occurred in the development of the Indo-European languages. Some etymology is given in *The Silmarillion*, *Unfinished Tales*, and *The Letters of J.R.R.Tolkien* (especially nos. 144, 211, 297, 347). *The Lost Road* contains a tremendous amount of information. Common Elvish "MBAR" - "house" - gives "mar" in Quenya, "bar" in

Sindarin. Other words beginning in "ND-" in Common Elvish give "n" in Quenya, "d" in Sindarin. Once you have learned the patterns you can guess the Quenya equivalents of Sindarin words, and *vice versa*, and use this to deduce probable meanings for words.

Notice the endings of words. What do words with the same ending share in common? Might certain endings correspond to certain parts of grammar? Since "-ul" is found on many Sindarin adjectives, it is likely to be an adjective ending.

Pay attention to the elements which make up words, especially compound words. An element with the same or similar meaning may be spelled differently in different words. "Mor-", "mori-", "morna", "morn", "-vorn" all have the sense "black, dark, night". Is there any pattern to the different spellings? Might one be found in compounds, another alone? Do they vary according to grammar? Position in the word or sentence? Language?

Real languages can be instructive, too. Not all tongues express themselves the same way as English. French, Spanish and Italian all put the adjective after the noun, and the adjective agrees with the noun in gender and number. Elvish doesn't seem to possess gender, but Elvish adjectives can follow the noun, and they agree in number (plural nouns have plural adjectives). French places the object pronoun before the verb – so does Quenya. *Sí man i yulma NIN enquantuva?* "Now who the cup FOR ME will refill?"

How are the sentences put together? The analyses of "Galadriel's lament" (Quenya) and the "Hymn to Elbereth" (Sindarin) in *The Road Goes Ever On* are vital. You will notice that in Quenya what appear to be prepositions are added to the end of the noun. This use of suffixes is typical of *inflected* languages. The endings to the noun are actually *case* endings, expressing the relationship of the noun to the rest of the sentence. Similar usage can be found in Latin, Finnish and the Slavic languages. See if you can figure out the forms of nouns and verbs. This will enable you to understand sentences.

Humphrey Carpenter's *Tolkien : a biography* does not provide much linguistic information *per se*, but it does describe Tolkien's linguistic interests. The Professor knew Latin, Greek, French, German, Spanish, Old English, Gothic, Old Icelandic, Welsh, Finnish. Might any of these have influenced the languages of Middle-earth? Upon learning that Tolkien's Sindarin was inspired by Welsh, Quenya by Finnish, the truly dedicated will study grammars of these languages. Though of course such studies can be enlightening, it is not necessary for you to do so, since their findings have been published in Jim Allan's *Introduction to Elvish*. Many English speakers are not aware of Welsh lenition (changing the initial consonant in certain positions – such as the "G" in "Pinnath Gelin", "Gelin" is the lenited plural of "galen", "green"). This is a key to understanding Sindarin (Ruth Noel's *Languages of Middle earth* omits Sindarin lenition).

If you can do so, take a course in historical or comparative linguistics. This is easier to learn in school because there aren't many linguistic texts available for the layman. An academic course can give you the concepts and the technical terminology, which can be very useful later.

By now you should have some familiarity with Elvish and other languages of Middle-earth. You'll find *An Introduction to Elvish* and other "graduate-level" studies far more helpful if you do some homework first. And you'll learn a lot about real-world languages, too!

Elvish enthusiasts have an advantage today because so much of Tolkien's work has been published. It was not always so. And it still isn't so in non-English-speaking countries, where many of Tolkien's works have not yet been released. The serious foreign student should try to obtain copies of Tolkien's works in English, because foreign translations are not always accurate, even when available. (Readers of English language editions should

watch out for errors, too: Gildor's greeting to Frodo should be "Elen síla lúmenn' omentielvo", not "lummen omentilmo" as in the Ballantine paperback).

If you want to consult unpublished material, Tolkien's manuscripts for *The Lord of the Rings* and others are at the archives of Marquette University, Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Other material is in the Wade Center at Wheaton College, Wheaton, Illinois, and the Bodleian Library in Oxford. And no, Christopher Tolkien does not give out information. But Elvish scholars will help you.

Teaching yourself Elvish (and other Middle-earth languages) is like detective work: the clues are in the text, you hunt 'em down. The forensic lab (linguistic study) provides technical assistance. A lot of the fun is in the chase. Good luck, and good hunting!

[For Nancy's bibliography, see facing page]

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REVIEWS

THE WAR OF THE RING: THE HISTORY OF THE LORD OF THE RINGS ***PART THREE.*** Christopher Tolkien.
London: Unwin Hyman, 1990
by Charles Noad

The War of the Ring traces the development of the narrative of *The Lord of the Rings* from the battle at Helm's Deep to Frodo's capture at the Tower of Kirith Ungol and to the coming of the Host of the West to the Black Gate of Mordor. Tolkien worked on this from about 1942 to the late 1940s, with long halts between the end of 1942 and April 1944, and from October 1944 to the summer of 1946. Although much of the chronology of composition is irrecoverably lost, a great deal concerning the relative order of its development can be confidently deduced, as Christopher Tolkien does in this book in great detail. Tolkien's letters to Christopher, up to the latter's return from service in the R.A.F. in 1945, furnish a good deal of information helping to give absolute dating at various points.

Finishing *The Lord of the Rings* presented different problems from those involved in beginning it. At this stage, the subject of the book was well-established, the main threads of the plot were broadly understood, and the world in which the story took place was well-known to its creator. This had become more than simply the *Hobbit*-world: that had been made up from scraps of the already long-established mythology. But the world in which Frodo and his friends wandered was now the very world of that mythology, albeit much later in time, when the dying ashes of the ancient magic, although feeble, still glowed.

Now that Tolkien had written the bulk of the story (not that he didn't still continue to underestimate just how far he had to go), he had to finish it. He knew broadly how it would go on - in essence, a gathering-up of threads - but the detail had to be filled in. The trouble with the detail, however, was that it had a way of reflecting back on much that had already been written and causing it to be inconsistent with the newly-written parts, thereby entailing yet further labours in the pursuit of consistency. Tolkien found it hard going: hence perhaps the gaps noted above. Perhaps the stimulus of keeping Christopher (then in South Africa with the R.A.F.) informed of what was happening in the story, and of reading chapters to fellow Inklings C.S.Lewis and Charles Williams, may have helped him to the task. One may guess at the reasons for the pauses. Doubtless, for a great deal of the time Tolkien simply couldn't find the spare time to get down to serious writing amid all the demands of his other obligations; at other times, perhaps he was unable to summon up the reserves necessary to concentrate on the detailed invention he knew was necessary for his epic - the jaded muse could not be goaded more. Sometimes he had written himself into a corner and knew he would have to work very hard to get himself, or rather his characters, out of it, e.g. at Kirith Ungol he had got Frodo 'into such a fix that not even an author will be able to extricate him without labour and difficulty.'

Christopher Tolkien has masterfully disentangled the textual complexities he faced in discovering the order in which the chapters of the book were composed, and explains them about as lucidly as they can well be. The most immediate problem is Tolkien's handwriting. Christopher Tolkien cannot use 'illegible' *all* the time, so 'difficult', 'impossible', 'scrawled' and 'rough' are pressed into service. When Tolkien wrote like this it was most often because he was trying to record new ideas for the story before they vanished beyond recall - catching them 'on the wing'. This had the inevitable consequence that Tolkien himself could only guess at what he had written when he came to consult these notes and outlines afterwards. Perhaps the most poignant phrase in the book is where Christopher Tolkien comments: 'There was very evidently great need for a better text: my father himself would have had difficulty with this ...' Of course, other scripts, intended to represent more refined versions of a section, are much easier to read (even if far from straightforward for those unused to Tolkien's handwriting).

The handwriting is the first hurdle; the sheer complexity of the textual evidence is the second. Perhaps another quote is in order to illustrate this: 'The manuscript ... was originally entitled "The Parley at the Black Gate". It was a huge labour to achieve the final arrangement, entailing draft upon draft upon draft, with the most complicated re-use of existing pages, or parts of them, as (Tolkien) experimented with different solutions to the structural problem.' Indeed, Christopher Tolkien thought that his attempt to discern the sequence of writing would finally founder at that point - but it fortunately proved to be not so.

The point about the textual complexity of the manuscripts and typescripts used in the composition of the epic is that it seems to me to be an indication of Tolkien's growing mastery as a writer, as evidenced by the apparent confidence with which he made such complicated textual uses and rearrangements. Doubtless a good deal of the complexity lies in the later editorial working-out of what was done rather than in the original doing, but the latter was certainly involved enough. Tolkien was now in the depths of the narrative; and he was prepared to launch out into different possible sequences of the story to find the best continuation. This reflects a growing confidence in his own powers.

It is here, in the successive detailed textual revisions, that we find proof of the unwearying attention to consistency whose result was to give the tale such reality for its readers. Names are revised again and again, and then sometimes reassigned to different characters. Geography and the distances travelled by characters within that geography are subject to repeated revision. The maps and drawings of scenes, too, which illustrate this and themselves help to bring about such consistency, were subject to heavy reworking. But, above all, Tolkien had wanted to make the chronology consistent. Now, in tracing these changes, Christopher Tolkien is about as lucid as anyone can be in explaining such complex matter. Certainly such explanations require a good deal of attention on the reader's part, but such attention bears fruit. But the matter of the shifting and much revised chronology of the events of the story, bearing as it does on the synchronisation of the movements of the various characters and the key events in which they take part - each separate strand of narrative itself undergoing much revision in the course of writing - is of such peculiar and intense entangledness that discussion of the matter has largely been shifted into separate 'Notes on the Chronology' appended to some of the chapters. Again, these are about as lucid as they well can be, but they require the full attention of the reader to follow them and to appreciate their significance.

All this trouble was taken in order to make a coherent whole of the story. More particularly, this coherence depends on the multiple connections between its different parts, thus giving strength to the fabric with which the tale was woven. And, as readers know, this was something wherein Tolkien succeeded magnificently. (True, he wasn't one hundred per cent successful in achieving absolute consistency: Christopher Tolkien points out a few instances in the published text where Tolkien failed to make the story consistent with the finalised chronology - but even Homer nodded.) One of the distinctive effects this achieves is that of other, quite important, things seeming to take place offstage: this is a living world we enter into in imagination, 'true to its own inner laws', in C.S.Lewis's phrase.

Much of the revision went into giving the narrative a consistent tone. The initial drafts reflected basic ideas, layouts, speeches, etc. But then they had to be rewritten not least to match the fairly elevated tone into which the tale had slipped: '... the whole thing has become much longer and loftier'. As an example, Saruman's plea to Gandalf to talk things over in Isengard runs in the original: 'If in my eagerness and disappointment I said anything unfriendly to yourself, consider it withdrawn. I should probably have put matters right long ago ... I bore you no ill-will personally; and even now, when your - your associates have done me so much injury, I should be ready to forgive you, if you would dissociate yourself from such people ... We are after all both members of an ancient and noble profession: we should understand one another ....' This is hardly very 'lofty', rather, very dry and 'professional'-sounding. Perhaps such a speech echoed the kind of talk Tolkien had heard in more than one corridor or common-room in Oxford. But the final version was more in keeping with the tone of the work, e.g., 'Are we not both members of a high and ancient order, most excellent in Middle-earth?'

The 'elevated' style Tolkien adopted was not simply a matter of putting in a few period-sounding thees and thous: there are some things that can be said only in such a style and other things that cannot be said at all: in a way, the *kind* of language that Tolkien used acts as a lens to bring into proper focus the experience behind the narrative.

As with the previous volumes on the writing of *The Lord of the Rings*, we learn of some things that were written out of the final version even though there seems (at least to this reader) to be very little to object to in them. Thus, this time we lose some detail on how Elias Tobiasson ('Old Toby') came by the pipeweed: "We never knew where (he found the pipeweed), for he was no good at geography and never could remember names, but from the tale of leagues that he reckoned on his fingers people calculated that it was far South, 1200 miles or more

from Manor Hall.' - *the tale of leagues that he reckoned on his fingers:* there is a whole world of hobbitry in that quintessentially Tolkienian phrase; it is good to have it recovered.

It may also be noted here that the great Spider encountered in Kirith Ungol was first called 'Ungoliant'. Was this actually meant to be the Great Spider of Beleriand herself, or was this name selected simply for its appropriateness for any great spider-creature? If it really were the former, then that would be in keeping with the relatively short historical period between the Elder days and that of the present tale which Tolkien had adopted in the initial stages of writing. But in any case, the Spider's name was shortly changed to 'Shelob'.

The organisation of *The War of the Ring* is as in previous volumes in the series, with each chapter consisting of extracts of Tolkien's texts in various stages of development, introduced by and interspersed with detailed comments, notes to the text, and, with some chapters, appended notes on particular subjects, principally chronology. Finally, there is a detailed 37-page index. Apart from the coloured pictures in the frontispiece, the book has a liberal selection of reproductions from the manuscripts. Together with manuscript pages showing what Christopher Tolkien was up against in deciphering his father's handwriting, there are many drawings of particular places (such as Isengard and Minas Tirith), and diagrams and maps, including the Second Map, covering Gondor and Mordor, which served as the basis for the large map in *The Return of the King*. This Second Map is described as 'limp, torn, wrinkled, stained and rubbed', so we can see that when Tolkien drew such a map it really was meant for use, not just for decoration.

It scarcely needs repeating from previous reviews that anyone with a serious interest in Tolkien's writings will be indebted to Christopher Tolkien for performing so ably a task for which he is uniquely well qualified. The labour must have been enormous, and it is difficult to see how the result could have been bettered. But mention should also be made here of somebody else who has played an invaluable role in the preparation of those books in 'The History of Middle-earth' to do with *The Lord of the Rings*. This is Taum Santoski, of Milwaukee, Wisconsin. As readers may know, a large part of the manuscripts and typescripts of *The Lord of the Rings* was sold by Tolkien to Marquette University. Since it would hardly have been practicable to bring Christopher Tolkien and the manuscripts at Marquette together in one place for the prolonged period needed for their proper examination, what was needed was someone who had access to the manuscripts at Marquette and could (i) provide reproductions of all the relevant material for Christopher, and (ii) could intelligently scrutinise the original manuscript pages in order to settle specific points (especially regarding the many places where Tolkien overwrote a pencilled original in ink). These tasks Taum Santoski was admirably well able to do, and Christopher Tolkien pays him handsome - and deserved - tribute in the Foreword. Without this work, it is doubtful if the history of the writing of *The Lord of the Rings* could have been so well accomplished by Christopher Tolkien - if it could have been accomplished at all.

A small point to note in regard to the present volume concerns misprints and other errata. While re-reading *The War of the Ring* for this review, I found getting on for forty misprints of various sorts without even trying to find any. Some were of course extremely trivial, but others, such as '*Two Two Towers*' on p.152, not so. Now I am quite sure I spotted and noted at least some of these (certainly the last mentioned) on the proofs I was given to read, and I have no reason to doubt that they were in turn among those submitted by Christopher Tolkien to the publishers; yet they were left out, from which I can only conclude that certain aspects of the in-house transmission and correction of errata may have gone awry.

C.S.LEWIS : A BIOGRAPHY, by A.N.Wilson. London: Collins; New York: W.W.Norton, 1990. £15.00/$22.50

by Wayne Hammond

There cannot be a serious reader of J.R.R.Tolkien who has not also read something by, or at least about, C.S.Lewis. Lewis is given a chapter in Humphrey Carpenter's biography of Tolkien, and he is the chief figure in Carpenter's *The Inklings*. He appears together with Tolkien in many works of criticism. And he is mentioned often, in Tolkien's published letters, which is the best measure we have of Tolkien's importance in his life. When Lewis and Tolkien met on 11 May 1926, it was as two members of the Oxford English Faculty. At first they were on opposite sides of Tolkien's proposed revision of the English School syllabus; but they soon warmed to each other, and when, eventually, Tolkien's revised syllabus was accepted, it was with Lewis's support. They found that they had many interests in common, and despite differences in background and religion, and in style and taste, they enjoyed a mutually beneficial, richly intellectual and even spiritual relationship. Lewis acknowledged Tolkien's influence, no only in his writings but in his conversion to Christianity. Both men - playing with semantics - denied that Lewis influenced Tolkien, but rather encouraged him, especially in his "private hobby": his Silmarillion mythology and tales of Middle-earth. "We owed each a great debt to the other," Tolkien wrote, "and that tie with the deep affection that it begot"(*Letters* no. 252) remained even after their friendship cooled, and after Lewis died.

The student of Tolkien thus inevitably meets C.S.Lewis - if he has not, *vice versa*, read Lewis first - and is in a minority, if he does not seek to know Lewis better. Lewis is in fact an insistent figure: the exuberant personality that comes through his books and letters commands our attention. He was not merely Tolkien's friend, but himself a renowned teacher, scholar and author, and is worth knowing for his own merits. He was born in 1898, the son of a Belfast solicitor and of a mother who held an honours degree in mathematics. She herself taught Lewis French and Latin. When he was nine, his mother died, and within a fortnight was sent to a loathsome school in England which his brother, Warren, already attended. It was a dual trauma from which he never fully recovered. When the school, Wynyard, collapsed, Lewis returned to Belfast for one term of schooling, the went back to England, to Malvern. During his school years he was not always happy or healthy, but he proved, as his biographer A.N.Wilson remarks, "an intelligent and gifted boy, whose range of reading and whose capacity to appreciate literature (and, to a lesser extent, music) were uncommonly advanced." It was at this time that he discovered Norse and Teutonic and Celtic literature, the love of which he later shared so fruitfully with Tolkien. After Malvern, Lewis was taught privately by the rigorous W.T.Kirkpatrick - a model for the Professor, later surnamed Kirke, in Lewis's *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. From Kirkpatrick Lewis learned, above all, how to argue logically, and in later years was a formidable debater. In 1917 he went up to University College, Oxford; but Europe was at war, and by the end of the year Lieutenant Lewis was in France, where he was wounded in April 1918, in the battle of Arras. His wounds were not threatening, but severe enough to keep him out of action until the Armistice. A more lasting consequence of his military service was the perplexing relationship he formed then with Janie Moore, the mother of a friend killed in the war. Lewis "adopted" Mrs. Moore as a surrogate mother - also as a lover, A.N.Wilson believes - and lived with her until her death in 1951.

Lewis completed his degree work at Oxford, and in 1925 became a Fellow and Tutor at Magdalen College. He remained at that post for nearly thirty years. During that time he published scholarly works which still hold value - *The Allegory of Love, A Preface to "Paradise Lost", English Literature in the Sixteenth Century excluding Drama* - as well as the space travel story *Out of the Silent Planet* and its sequels *Perelandra* and *That Hideous Strength*, and the widely popular fantasy tales of Narnia. He also achieved fame as a Christian apologist on radio and in books such as *The Screwtape Letters* and *Miracles*. (Lewis had become a Christian only in 1931, after years of professing atheism and then theism.) He left Oxford, who failed to offer him promotion, for Cambridge in 1954, though he kept his house outside Oxford, The Kilns. By now Lewis had formed another important relationship, with Joy Davidman Gresham, an American admirer with two sons, an abusive husband (whom she divorced), and, as was eventually discovered, terminal cancer. Lewis, the apparently confirmed bachelor, astonished his friends by marrying. But he and his wife had tragically few years together: Joy died in 1960, and Lewis followed in November 1963.

These are just a few bare facts about C.S.Lewis, and told in this way are perhaps like the "cold-blooded obituaries" of which Tolkien complained in a letter of late 1963 (no. 252), which "only scraped the surface, in places with injustice." In contrast, we now have *C.S. Lewis: A Biography* by A.N.Wilson, whose blood is anything but cold, and who delves deep into its subject. It is an impressive book, literate, lively, erudite but very readable. It joins three previous major biographies of Lewis - four, if we include *The Inklings* - yet it stands out from

its predecessors. It rises above the identically titled 1966 biography by Roger Lancelyn Green and Walter Hooper, which is somewhat stodgy and which consistently shows Lewis in the most pleasing light. It is also superior to William Griffin's *Clive Staples Lewis: A Dramatic Life* (1986), a thick but uncritical work not much concerned with Lewis before 1925. It does not come up to the level of George Sayer's *Jack: C.S.Lewis and his times* (1988), a thorough, balanced, very sensitive account by one who, unlike Wilson, knew his subject personally, as pupil and friend. However, Wilson covers nearly as much ground as Sayer - perhaps a little more in some directions, in others less - and expresses himself more dramatically. This is Wilson's strength: he writes with an infectious enthusiasm that reminds one of the verve with which Lewis himself wrote. He makes Lewis and his contemporaries live, as Virginia Woolf said of Strachey's Eminent Victorians, as they have not lived since they were actually in the flesh. And by and large it is a convincing portrayal.

Although it is strange to conceive, Wilson convinces least when he argues most strongly. Then he becomes enamoured of his views, and the carry him away. He pursues one line of argument especially. He is concerned by a class of Lewis devotees which "are so uplifted by the sublimity of Lewis at his best as a writer that they assume that he himself was a sublime being, devoid of blemishes. Readers of this kind either ignore Lewis's faults altogether, and attribute any mention of them to some ulterior motive (possibly anti-religious) on behalf of the speaker, or ... they acknowledge the faults, but wish to make them into virtues." Wilson describes such readers more than once, and the more he does, the more he seems to be exaggerating. He protests too much. If there are close-minded C.S.Lewis idolaters, I have never met one, either in person or in the literature, in twenty years of following Lewis studies, and I doubt that there can be too many in the world. In fact, Lewis's "blemishes" were well documented before Wilson's book. It is no secret that Lewis smoked and drank - Barbara Reynolds made a splendid joke about it at a Wheaton College conference in 1979 - or that he could be argumentative and bullying and coarse, even that he had sex with his wife. His admirers do not deny that Lewis was, as he himself said, a sinful man; but neither do they dwell on it. Still, Wilson perseveres. The record, he feels, should be set straight. His book is "not intended to be iconoclastic," he says, "but I will try to be realistic, not only because reality is more interesting than fantasy, but also because we do C.S.Lewis no honour to make him into a plaster saint." Very well; but whose reality do we choose?

We cannot, for example, learn the real nature of Lewis's relationship with Janie Moore from his 1955 autobiography, *Surprised by Joy*; the matter is deliberately not discussed. "Even were I free to tell the story, I doubt if it has much to do with the subject of the book," Lewis says, though only a few lines earlier he calls the episode "huge and complex." Green and Hooper deal with Mrs. Moore reluctantly, and for the most part keep her in the background. They describe Lewis's feelings for her as "affection" and "infatuation," and Mrs. Moore as a mother-substitute and "in many ways a father-substitute also." This is a tactful account, but reasonable. I have already mentioned Wilson's more extreme view. It would be amazing, he writes, "though no evidence is forthcoming either way, if Lewis's thirty-year relationship with Mrs. Moore was entirely asexual." Later, with even more confidence, he says: "While nothing will ever be proved on either side, the burden of proof is on those who believe that Lewis and Mrs. Moore were *not* lovers." He notes that Mrs. Moore's daughter, Maureen, was accustomed to attend church on Sunday alone, while her mother and Lewis, with whom she lived, stayed at home. One week she refused to go, and Lewis and Mrs. Moore had such a "vehement" response that Maureen was forced out of the house. Of this Wilson writes suggestively: "In later years, when Lewis himself had become a regular churchgoer, Maureen wistfully looked back on this apparent over-reaction and wondered if it was the beginning of his return to Christianity. As a child, it did not occur to her to ask why a young man might wish sometimes to be left alone with her mother." The incident is indeed suggestive, but circumstantial. We might as well infer a sexual relationship from the single fact that Lewis and Janie Moore shared a home for some thirty years, and be as wrong - or right. Lewis's good friend Owen Barfield thought the odds that the two were lovers were fifty-fifty. George Sayer is even less convinced. Wilson is correct that we will never know the whole truth; they why choose a side and challenge those who disagree with A.N.Wilson to prove him wrong? For that matter, why bother to conclude that a sexual affair occurred when Wilson discusses no effects on Lewis as a result of a sexual affair?

Of course it has an effect on the reader. Shamefully we respond to gossip. Although it is worthy neither of himself nor of his subject, Wilson is, here and elsewhere, provocative for the sake of provocation - or else exercises poor judgment in what to relate and how to use his evidence. I am particularly disturbed by Wilson's claim that "according to an oral memory of Joy's son Douglas (Gresham), transcribed in the Marion E. Wade collection at Wheaton College, Illinois," Lewis and his wife "were already lovers in 1955, " before they were married. "Douglas on one

occasion came into his mother's bedroom ... and found it occupied by Jack (i.e Lewis) and Joy in a compromising position." Since Wilson gives his source precisely, and I was visiting the Wade Center on other business, I read the transcript of Lyle Dorsett's interview with Douglas Gresham. I read it twice, yet could find no mention of the incident Wilson recounts. There is a passage in Douglas Gresham's memoir *Lenten Lands* in which he says that he "soon learnt to knock first" before entering the room his mother and Lewis shared after they were married. And Lyle Dorsett, in his *And God Came In*, writes of the pre-marital period of growing love between Lewis and Joy. But no "compromising position" here, either. Where did Wilson find it - and what, exactly, does he mean by the term?

This lapse, and the pugnacity of his position on Mrs. Moore, as well as many small errors, call Wilson's scholarship into question. Every biographer must speculate when documented fact runs out, but he must not present speculation as fact, nor should he ignore or suppress evidence because it does not support his personal view. An example of the latter is Wilson's claim that "*The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe* grew out of Lewis's experience of being stung back into childhood by his defeat at the hands of Elizabeth Anscombe at the Socratic Club" in 1948, and that "a nursery nightmare version" of that debate appears in Lewis's *The Silver Chair*, with Anscombe cast as the Queen of Underland. George Sayer tells the origin of the Narnia books much differently, and more credibly. The germ of *The Lion* was with Lewis since he was about sixteen - an image of a faun with an umbrella and parcels in a snowy wood - and the story developed when children evacuated from London during the 1939-1945 war stayed with Lewis at The Kilns. Wilson passes by this reality in order to put forth a psychological basis for the Narnia stories, not very successfully.

Wilson's controversial opinions, provocative manner, and imperfect scholarship unfortunately overshadow the good qualities of *C.S.Lewis: A Biography* and have made it a *cause celebre* in Lewis studies. Lewis enthusiasts will read the book if only to see what all the fuss is about, but they will find t to be, in spite of its faults, a very stimulating biography of a fascinating man. Readers of *Mallorn* will be interested especially in Wilson's many appreciative references to Tolkien and quotations from unpublished comments by Tolkien on C.S.Lewis. Wilson clearly has an interest in Tolkien, and perhaps will write his biography too, in time. If he does, one hopes that it will be written with as much vitality as he put into *C.S.Lewis*, but with rather more care.

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Research Report

OXONMOOT ECCENTRICITY SURVEY, by Sarah J. Sturch

Abstract

Until recently very little research had been done into eccentricity, but it was popularly supposed that societies interested in speculative fiction had a relatively high proportion of eccentrics. The E.P.D.S.T. was used to measure eccentricity, first in the Oxford Tolkien Society (Taruithorn) using the Christ Church Christian Union as a control, and in the Tolkien Society,using established population norms for comparison. The Tolkien Societies were found to have a relatively high level of eccentricity. This could be because both eccentricity and speculative fiction are associated with an exceptionally vivid imagination.

Introduction

Although a great deal of research has been done into normal personality and into mental disorder, far less is known about those perfectly healthy people with exceptional characters or who do unusual or outstanding things. Very little indeed has been done on those people known as eccentrics: to date the only major investigation was that conducted by Dr. David Weeks and Kate Wardl. After a nationwide appeal for volunteers, they found 130 eccentrics whom they interviewed extensively and tested with Cattell's 16PF, hoping to find common traits, demographic characteristics, activities and interests or style of thinking. It may at first glance seem strange, if not nonsensical, to look for common characteristics in a population who specialize in being different, but although eccentricity can be expressed in a multitude of ways, it could have its cause in similar ways of thinking,background or personality traits.

Weeks outlines seven criteria by which somebody could be regarded as exceptional. The first is extremity; the second rarity; possession of special attributes or unusual combinations of attributes; fifthly, doing perfectly ordinary things in extraordinary ways; next the violation of the normal "rules" of "normal personality"; and lastly abnormal or disordered personality. Eccentrics fit most of these. Many had extreme scores on the 16PF, with 46 getting extreme scores on more than one trait. They are very rare: possibly only one in ten thousand people in Great Britain are eccentric, and in other countries they may well be still rarer. They are extremely curious and many are highly imaginative. They also find many unorthodox ways of doing everyday things such as eating, sleeping or getting from one place to another: for instance living in a cave or driving a milk float.

It is popularly believed (particularly by critics who disapprove of the genre) that speculative fiction attracts a large number of eccentrics and that fantasy and science fiction fan clubs and appreciation societies are full of people with highly eccentric personalities. Indeed, some have gone still further and suggested that readers of speculative fiction are "out of touch with reality" or even "a bunch of costumed loonies". Clearly such pejorative language, backed up by nothing further than a cursory glance at some of these societies' more colourful activities, is unacceptable. However,it is possible that such societies do contain a small pool of eccentrics and people who to a lesser extent show eccentric characteristics. One society that may well do so is the Tolkien Society. The Oxford Tolkien society, Taruithorn, has a mainly student membership, so when testing for eccentricity levels it was necessary to find a suitable control group rather than using the standards found by Weeks and Ward when testing the normal population. Most societies involve people of similar tastes or subject which could have led to a bias creeping in, whereas giving questionnaires to friends would almost certainly have led to bias. In the end the Christ Church Christian Union was chosen as a suitable control, since its members cover a good range of subjects and interests, being united chiefly by common religious beliefs. Since eccentrics often have strong religious feelings, any bias would be on the side of caution, with weaker results than would be found with a perfect cross sample of Oxford undergraduates.

Method

Eccentricity was tested using the Eccentricity Predisposition Self-Test (E.P.D.S.T.) developed by Weeks and Ward as a result of their study of eccentrics. Subjects were asked to answer all the questions, marking whatever answer seemed more appropriate whenever neither fitted perfectly. Questionnaires were given out at meetings and subjects were asked to fill them and return them in there and then, thus ensuring a good return rate. They were then marked and the scores tested to see if there was a significant difference between the two means.

Subjects were members of The Oxford Tolkien Society (Taruithorn) and controls were the Christ Church Christian Union. Altogether 20 members of Taruithorn and 14 Christian Union members were tested.

Results

All the questionnaires given to Taruithorn members and 12 of the control group questionnaires were returned. Eight of the experimental group scored above the cut-off score for eccentricity of 66, whereas only one control appeared to be eccentric. The mean score overall for the experimental group was 60.8, with a standard deviation of 10.32. The mean score for the control group was 55.25, with a standard deviation of 7.09. This difference is just significant ($P<0.05$).

Discussion

These results suggest that members of Taruithorn and Christ Church Christian Union are not drawn from the same population. There are more eccentrics in Taruithorn. It was particularly interesting to find as many as eight eccentrics in such a small society, given the rarity of such people in the general population. Weeks suggests a figure of around one in ten thousand, although owing to the difficulty of getting accurate data about the proportion of eccentrics in this (or indeed any) country, this figure could have a margin of error as great as 50. The actual proportion of eccentrics could be anywhere between one in five thousand and one in fifteen thousand. Whatever the true figure is, however, it is clearly a long way from two in five.

The sample available was, however, very small, and the results, although significant, were not particularly strong. A larger sample, using a wider cross-section of the community than a student society, could yield interesting results. The national Tolkien Society has a large convention in Oxford every year. This covers what is probably the widest range of activities of any of the major meetings. It is certainly the one with the largest attendance. There are many people there who could be described as eccentric, as well as the more serious, academically-minded people. It therefore looked as though it might be profitable to give the E.P.D.S.T. to people attending Oxonmoot as well.

Method

The E.P.D.S.T. was given to all attendees at Oxonmoot. Altogether 132 people attended. The questionnaires were given to people with their registration packs on arrival. A large, clearly labelled box was placed prominently by the entrance to the hall in which the main activities took place, and people were alerted to its position, and asked to co-operate and fill it in, in an appeal over the tannoy as well as in person.

The results were compared to the population norms found by Weeks and Ward when they tested the E.P.D.S.T. They were tested for difference of two means.

Results

Many people did not hand back their questionnaires, some because of inability to read (two nine-month old babies and a nonagenarian with failing sight), some because

they were not fluent enough at English, and the remainder gave no reason. Altogether 65 (49) were returned. Of these, 20 (31) scored above the eccentricity cut-off point of 66, a far higher proportion than the 0.01 thought to be found in the general population. The average score was 61.8, with a standard deviation of 8.7. Weeks and Ward found an average of 52.5, with a standard deviation of 11.2,in their normal sample. The difference of the two means was tested, and the probability of getting the results found from the Tolkien Society from a random sample of the community was considerably less than 0.0001 (=7.165). This is highly significant.

Discussion

These results seem very decisive. There are indeed a very high number of eccentrics in speculative fiction groups such as the Tolkien Society. This is unlikely to be entirely due to demographic variables, although members of the Tolkien Society and the eccentrics studied by Weeks and Ward do share some characteristics in common. They both tend to be predominately "white-collar", with a wide age range, and well educated. All are literate and enjoy reading. 34 of eccentrics said they read "a lot" and 37 said they had an obsessional interest in reading, whereas only 2 said they never read books. No data is available on how widely read Tolkien Society members are, although presumably people who do not read will not be found in a literary society. However, since Weeks and Ward matched their normal sample for such demographic variables, it is unlikely that this could account for much of the higher proportion. It also seems improbable that reading speculative fiction could cause anybody to become eccentric. There is no obvious mechanism for this to happen.

More interesting is the possibility that some variable associated with eccentricity is also associated with a taste for fantasy and science fiction. One possible mediator could be the possession of a vivid imagination. Weeks and Ward report that many of their eccentric sample had powerful imaginations and scored highly on the "M" scale of the 16PF. 10 had a sten of 10,the highest score possible, and the sample as a whole scored significantly higher than the general population. A strong and vivid imagination is also necessary in order to fully appreciate fantasy or science fiction, which stimulate and stretch the imagination even more than the intellect.

Weeks and Ward did a multiple regression of their results on the 16PF and found that those eccentrics who scored highest on the "M" scale also tended to score highly on the "I" scale (emotionally sensitive and tender minded). Members of the Tolkien Society have a reputation for being very friendly and likeable: the B.B.C. Radio series "To keep the memory green" which looked at a variety of different literary societies including the Tolkien Society concluded that they were "by far the friendliest". It would be interesting to see if this could be established.

Another interesting factor is the large number of people from other countries who attended Oxonmoot and participated in the experiment. Although the British have a world-wide reputation for eccentricity,it is by no means a British monopoly. Arnold-Foster, reviewing the "To keep the memory green" series,comments "It isn't just another aspect of British eccentricity; it was American students who scrawled 'Frodo Lives' on the walls."2 It would be interesting to know if people with a strong interest in the works of Tolkien from other countries are particularly eccentric.

Whatever the reason,it seems as though speculative fiction does attract eccentric people. This is a far cry from the "costumed loonies" of the critics, and such irresponsible comments can of course only be condemned. However, we can safely conclude that societies such as the Tolkien Society include in their ranks a sizeable pool of eccentrics.

NOTES

1. Weeks, D. and Ward, K. : Eccentrics: The Scientific Investigation. Stirling University Press, 1988.
2. Arnold-Foster, V. : *Guardian Weekend* 21/1/89, quoted in *Anon Hen* 96.

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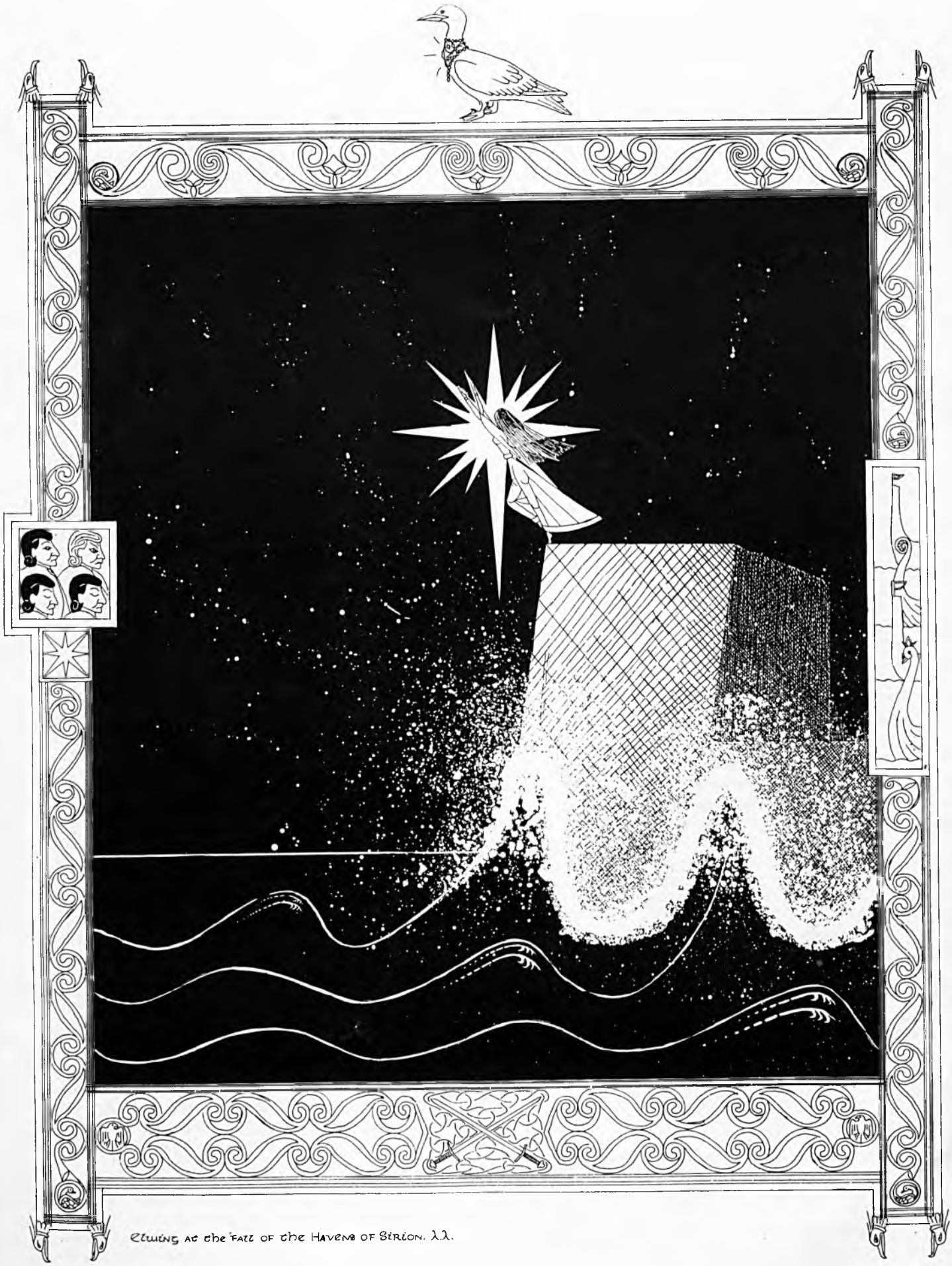
DAVID DOUGHAN used to edit *Quettar*, the linguistic bulletin of the T.S. He has rashly consented to edit issues 28 and 29 of *Mallorn*.



Elwing at the Fall of the Havens of Sirion. λ.λ.