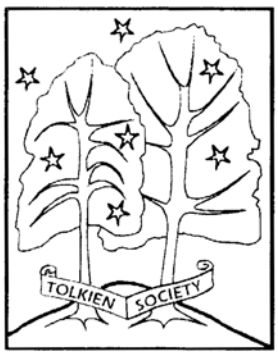
Issue 51 • Spring 2011

Mallorn

The Journal of the Tolkien Society



Mallorn

The Journal of the Tolkien Society

Issue 51 • Spring 2011

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Inside: Phyllis Berka: *Smaug* (p. 2), *Beorn's Hall* (p. 8); Becky Hitchin: *Dwarf Knotwork* (p. 12); Glendon Mellow: *Slate Fragments* (p. 13),*Forever Painting study* (p. 36); Jef Murray: *The Grey Company* (p. 15), *Chetwood* (p. 24), *Hobbiton* (p. 29), *Théoden Fallen sketch* (p. 34), *Helm's Deep* (p. 45), *Standard Bearer sketch* (50); Colin Sullivan: *Hardknott Fort* (p. 20); Bernadette Barnes: *Wyoming* (pp. 33, 51); Henry Gee (pp. 35, 38); Alan Hyde (p. 43); Teresa Kirkpatrick: *Yavanna Kementári* (p. 52);

Mallorn is the Journal of the Tolkien Society, and appears twice a year, in the Spring (copy deadline 25 December) and Autumn (21 June). It considers reviews, comment, scholarly articles, original poetry, artwork and fiction (excluding fan fiction). Unsolicited material is welcome, but contributors should decide prior to submission to which category their manuscript belongs, and electronic submission is strongly encouraged. Full details on the preparation and submission to **Mallorn** are available on request from the Editor by email (mallorn@tolkiensociety.org) or by mail to 89 Connaught Road, Cromer, Norfolk NR27 0DB, UK, on receipt of a stamped addressed envelope (if in UK) or two International Reply Coupons (if outside the UK).

The Tolkien Society Founded in London in 1969 the Tolkien Society is an international organization registered in the UK as a charity (No. 273809) dedicated to furthering interest in the life and works of Professor J. R. R. Tolkien, CBE (1892–1973) who remains its President in perpetuo. His daughter, Miss Priscilla Tolkien, became its honorary Vice-President in 1986. As well as **Mallorn**, the society publishes a bimonthly bulletin, Amon Hen. In addition to local gatherings ('Smials') there are annual national meetings: the AGM and Dinner in the spring, Summermoot and the Seminar in the summer, and Oxonmoot, a celebratory weekend held in Oxford in late September. For further information about the society please contact Sally Kennett, 210 Prestbury Road, Cheltenham, Glos GL52 3ER or visit http://www.tolkiensociety.org.

Ents and sources


John Gilbey

Henry Gee

The Ents are among Tolkien's most original creations. But even the most original ideas have roots in the various experiences and materials to which an author is exposed. This essay looks at several possible roots for Tolkien's treeherders, but ends with a cautionary note — it is all too easy to go fishing for possible sources, but in so doing we create a kind of author in our own image, who never perhaps existed. If this concept seems weird — well, let's not worry about that right now. First, let's look at the Ents and where Tolkien might have found inspiration for their creation.

Anyone reading this will already know what the Ents are, or were. The Ents feature in *The Lord of the Rings* as the distinctive denizens of Fangorn Forest, the giant "Shepherds of the Trees". The term 'Ent' is Old English for giant, and these creatures are indeed huge. But each Ent seems to resemble a tree of a particular species, more or less, in their build, bark-like skin and foliage-like hair and beards (all the Ents we meet are male). A distinctive feature of Ents, though, is that some Ents become more rooted and tree-like with age, just as some of the trees they herd are actively mobile, so there seems to be a continuum between Ent and tree.

Tolkien was frank in his ignorance of the origin of the Ents. They emerged, he said, from the compost of sources and influences that accumulates in the mind of any author. "I did not consciously invent them at all," he wrote in 1955 to W. H. Auden (*Letters of J. R. R. Tolkien* 163), suggesting that they emerged on the page more or less fully formed, as if Tolkien were reporting rather than composing. Later in the same letter Tolkien, in more analytical mood, suggests that their inception might have been connected with Old English, and Tolkien's dissatisfaction with *Macbeth*. How wonderful, Tolkien thought, if Birnam Wood really did march on Dunsinane: the trees themselves, rather than the conceit of men disguised as such.

However, we can look at a number of other things that could well have activated this particular mental compost heap, and in this essay I choose three, in decreasing order of likelihood: a Middle-English poem that was well-known to Tolkien; the works of his near-contemporary, the science-fiction writer Olaf Stapledon, which we also know Tolkien knew about; and a Biblical verse that Tolkien would (certainly) have known and (entirely speculatively) might have triggered stories in his mind: speculatively, because no documentary evidence is known to me that Tolkien remarked on this verse in particular.

Gawain and the Green Knight

One can go much further than saying that Tolkien was familiar with the Middle English epic poem *Sir Gawain and The Green Knight* — he was an authority on it, and produced a translation (available in the posthumous publication *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, Pearl and Sir Orfeo*). On the surface the poem is a cautionary tale of courtly manners, but rougher and stranger themes lie not far beneath, mainly in the character of the Green Knight.

For those unfamiliar with the tale, the story starts when Court of King Arthur is gathered at Camelot at Christmas, but matters cannot proceed unless a tale of adventure is produced. At that moment the Green Knight rides into the hall, distinguished first by his size ("that half a troll upon earth I trow that he was; but the largest man alive at least I declare him") and, second, by the colour of his clothes, and himself ("All of green were they made, both garments and man"). He rides a vast horse, and holds in one hand a bough of holly, in the other an axe. To cut a long story short, the Green Knight challenges anyone to behead him with his own axe. Sir Gawain rises to the task, but having beheaded

the visitor, is surprised to see the Green Knight pick up his own head and challenge Gawain to receive a blow in return a year's hence. It is not hard to see traces of the old 'Green Man' or 'Jack In The Green' story in here, entwined with rituals of sacrifice and fertility, especially at the winter solstice. But for now, one can only be struck with the giant size of the Green Knight, together with his colour, and its explicit association with woodland and foliage.

However, it is perhaps pertinent (and salutary) to note that in his own introductory remarks, Tolkien explicitly does *not* discuss the legends and myths that might have contributed to the various episodes in the story, concerning "ancient rituals, nor of pagan divinities of the Sun, nor of Fertility" and so on, sources of such things being almost entirely lost. Tolkien was more concerned with the literary style of the author and how it related to the context of his time — the English Midlands of the fourteenth century.

Olaf Stapledon

Turning from the fourteenth century to the twentieth, and from the minutiae of medieval court life to the grandest cosmogonic fantasy, we meet Olaf Stapledon (1886–1950), a philosopher and author of some of the most epic science fiction ever attempted. It is unlikely that Tolkien and Stapledon ever met, but if they did, they would have disagreed about everything. Tolkien, the somewhat conservative and pessimistic Catholic, against Stapledon, a markedly left-wing, utopian and agnostic Quaker. And whereas Tolkien in later life rarely strayed beyond Oxford, Stapledon hardly ever ventured beyond Liverpool. Both, however, served in the Great War — Stapledon as an ambulance driver in the Friends' Ambulance Unit. It has been remarked (by Tom Shippey, in *J. R. R. Tolkien, Author of the Century*), that many literary war veterans turned to fantastic literature as a way of exorcizing the traumas of combat. Shippey mentions George Orwell, Kurt Vonnegut and William Golding in this context. He could also have added Olaf Stapledon.

The scale of Stapledon's work makes Tolkien's Middle-earth look almost kitchen-sink. His book *Last and First Men* (1930) is nothing less than an entire history of mankind, right up to the umpteenth human race living on Neptune in some remote future. *Last Men in London* (1932) is an accessory bauble, a brief intake of breath before *Star Maker*, a complete history of the cosmos in which the entire action of *Last and First Men* occupies a couple of paragraphs. *Star Maker* was published in 1937, the same year as *The Hobbit*. It is known that C. S. Lewis admired Stapledon's work (without necessarily approving of it) — but what of Tolkien, and the Ents? Tolkien certainly knew (presumably through Lewis) of Stapledon's work — a casual reference to *Last Men In London* in *The Notion Club Papers* is evidence enough for that (*The History of Middle-Earth IX: Sauron Defeated*). However, one cannot help be drawn to a curious passage in *Star Maker*, in which the protagonist visits the planet of the 'Plant Men', described as "gigantic and mobile herbs":

> To say that they looked like herbs is perhaps misleading, for they looked equally like animals. They had a definite number of limbs and a definite form of body; but all the skin was green, or streaked with green, and they bore here or there, according to their species, great masses of foliage … In general those that were mobile were less generously equipped with leaves than those that were more or less sedentary.

Source-hunting warps history, creating precursors where perhaps none existed.

This passage is not only a fair description of an Ent, but also of the continuum between more active (and animal-like) and more passive (and tree-like) individuals in the Ent population. Leaving aside possibly earlier and more allusive mentions of the Ents in the Silmarillion tradition, could this passage have influenced Tolkien's detailed depiction of Treebeard and his kin in *The Lord of the Rings*? It is certainly possible,

given that *Star Maker* appeared well before Tolkien started composing *The Lord of the Rings* — references to Treebeard appear as sketches as early as August 1939, in which he is described simply as a hostile entity (*The History of Middle-earth VII: The Treason of Isengard*), his more arborescent character emerging somewhat later.

I see men as trees, walking

There is a curious verse in St Mark (Chapter 8, verse 24) in which Jesus restores the sight of a blind man. Jesus spits on the man's eyes and lays his hands on him, and asks him if he can see anything. The man replies "I see men as trees, walking" (just to show that this translation is not fanciful, the Vulgate has it as *Et aspiciens, ait: Video homines velut arbores ambulantes*).

A conventional interpretation might be that the man is as yet unused to sight and his vision is still blurry. However, one might imagine that a mind such as Tolkien's would have taken such a curious line and run with it, imagining a world in which there might have been trees that walked like men — his own fancies as regards Birnam Wood and Dunsinane have already been mentioned. In general, Tolkien had a habit of taking such curious scraps of texts as vestiges of greater stories that are now lost: most notably his encounter with the line in the Old English poem *Crist; Éala Éarendel, engla beorhtast, ofer middangeard monnum sended* (*Letters* 297) The word '*Éarendel*' is usually glossed as a bright star or planet such as Venus, but Tolkien's imagination found this unsatisfactory. It is no exaggeration to say that the source of the entire Silmarillion tradition grew from this one poetic fragment. It is conceivable, therefore, that the Ents might have germinated from this single verse of St Mark.

Gawain, Stapledon, St Mark

I have discussed three very different sources — and this brings us to our cautionary tale. In general, one should beware of fishing expeditions for sources which, distilled selectively, are ranged in support of our own thesis about possible influences on an author. Such exercises tell us more about our own prejudices — and, no doubt, limitations — than those of the author we seek to understand.
The Argentine essayist Jorge Luis Borges (1899–1986) went further, showing that such source-hunting doesn't only give one a selective view of the author, but warps history, creating precursors where perhaps none existed.

In his essay 'Kafka and his Precursors' (most easily accessible in the anthology *Labyrinths*) Borges examines (in a cod-literary style) the work of Kafka, and how his works might have been influenced by a motley selection of sources from Zeno and Kierkegaard to Lord Dunsany, and Han Yu, an obscure Chinese writer of the ninth century (by 'obscure' one might also say 'mythical' or even 'invented' — it's hard to tell with Borges, who, like Tolkien, delighted in arcane literary games). After discussing the possible influence of these writers on Kafka, Borges delivers the killer blow (here translated by J. E. Irby).

> If I am not mistaken, the heterogeneous pieces I have enumerated resemble Kafka; if I am not mistaken, not all of them resemble each other. This second fact is the more significant. In each of these texts we find Kafka's idiosyncrasy to a greater or lesser degree, but if Kafka had never written a line, we would not perceive this quality; in other words, it would not exist … *The fact is that every writer creates his own precursors.* [my emphasis].

Had Tolkien never written a line, we would probably never have had cause to discuss Gawain, Stapledon and St Mark in the same context. But once we have made the connection, whether or not each is spurious, we cannot help but read these sources as if through the eyes of Tolkien — whether Tolkien read them or not.

When Tolkien said that he could not rightly point to any concrete sources for the Ents, he was not being falsely modest, absent-minded or disingenuous. He was being wise.

This piece originally appeared on the LOTR Plaza Fanatics' forum (http://www.lotrplaza.com/forum/forum_posts.asp?TID=238516) and is reproduced by kind permission.

Guide to authors

Intending authors are asked to scrutinize the guidelines below before submitting material to Mallorn *at mallorn@tolkiensociety.org.*

Submission

This is overwhelmingly electronic. Although printouts are occasionally considered, prospective authors should be aware that the editorial staff of *Mallorn*, such as it is, consists of volunteers — retyping and scanning printouts takes a great deal of time we don't have. If you do not have access to a computer yourself, please persuade a friend or colleague to submit on your behalf as we cannot be relied on to do this work for you.

Categories of article

Please decide on the category of article you have before you send it. In all cases, please supply a short autobiographical note to append to a contribution if it is published, as well as full contact details (especially if you are not a member of the Tolkien Society and should like to receive a contributor's copy after publication).

Letters to the Editor

These may discuss material previously aired in *Mallorn*, or elsewhere. If you have a balrog in your bonnet, you might wish to discuss it in this forum. Brevity is much admired.

Reviews

These are welcomed. They may be of books — whether fiction or nonfiction — films, theatre shows, art, neckties, samplers, stained-glass windows, TV, websites, radio, exhibitions, anything of possible interest to readers of *Mallorn* in the widest sense. It's a good idea to consult the Editor before submitting a piece. Reviews are typically around 1,000 words in length.

Commentary

This section includes scholarly articles on Tolkien, his life and times, his works, his influence, the works of his colleagues and so on. Unsolicited contributions are welcome. Contributors should pay special attention to the following instructions about references, and should not be surprised if contributions that do not adhere to these strictures are returned unread. If at all possible, references should be given in line, in the text itself — this should almost always apply to works of Tolkien commonly referenced such as *The Lord of the Rings*, *The Hobbit*, *Letters* and so on. References to all other material — bibliographies, citations, notes and anything else — should be given as a numbered superscript referring to a single set of numbered citations to be placed after the text. You can put what you like in such citations, but they should appear sequentially after the text. Repeated mentions of the same material should always refer to the same numbered citation (to avoid repeated usages of '*op. cit.*', '*ibid*' and so on, which uses a lot of space). There is no need for separate sections of notes, references and bibliographies. In our experience, copious citation generally correlates inversely with scholarship or insight. Preference is given to articles with as few citations as possible. It is noteworthy that the most important scholarly article of the twentieth century — Einstein's 1905 paper on special relativity — contained no references. Commentaries are typically around 3,000 words long, including references. Articles very much longer than this will not be considered for serialization.

Poetry

Mallorn welcomes poetry, although poems using proper metres are preferred over free verse. The Editor has a special fondness for alliterative verse and sonnets, but doesn't much like rhyming couplets. Tolkien's alliterative verse reading of the defiance of Húrin (in 'The Lays of Beleriand') is thrilling. His *Tale of Tinuviel* in rhyming couplets is for cissies.

Fiction

Mallorn welcomes fiction. This may be of any genre. Please note that fiction using Tolkien's characters and settings ('fanfic') is not considered. Fiction may be up to around 5,000 or 6,000 words.

Well, I'm Back, He Said

This is a back-page item of short non-fiction intended to amuse or inform. Although usually commissioned, unsolicited contributions are welcome. As the item must fit on a page, it will be no longer than 500 words or so and contain few or no references.

Artwork

Mallorn gratefully receives all artwork, whether paintings, drawings or photographs. Black-and-white images are especially welcome. Although *Mallorn* can and does consider images directly related to Tolkien's Middle-earth, this is neither mandatory nor necessary. It is advisable to send the Editor low-resolution images (jpeg preferred) in the first instance. Note that an image that runs on a full page must be a minimum of 213 mm wide and 303 mm tall — for such bleed images, at least 3 mm on each edge of the image will be lost in the trimming process. An image for inclusion on the cover should be 213 mm wide and 241 mm tall, again noting that at least 3 mm on the bottom and right-hand edges will be trimmed away during printing.

Modern life

FRANK WILSON

Restoring Beauty: The Good, the True, and the Beautiful in the Writings of C. S. Lewis
Louis Markos
Biblica. 215 pp. $19.99, £12.99
ISBN: 978-1606570982

Louis Markos's *Restoring Beauty: The Good, the True, and the Beautiful in the Writings of C. S. Lewis* is a problematic work, but no less interesting for that. The subtitle would lead one to think that the focus here is on what is known in aesthetics as 'the sublime'. But such is not the case — although elements of the sublime certainly figure. There is also some terminological vagueness that Markos would have done well to clear up at the outset. He uses the terms modern, modernist and postmodern often enough, but never really hunkers down and defines them.

Modernism in art covers a lot of territory and can hardly be placed in opposition to faith. T. S. Eliot was one of the founders of modernism, but *Four Quartets* is one of the great works of faith of the twentieth century. Georges Rouault may not have been a modernist in the strict sense, but his paintings are modern enough — and suffused with religious passion. Then there's the Catholic high modernist poet and painter David Jones. When Markos uses the term modern or modernist, what he means is "Post-Enlightenment". As for postmodern, it is well to remember what the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* points out: "That postmodernism is indefinable is a truism." Whatever postmodernism may be, it is not a continuation or an extension of modernism. It is, rather, a reaction against both modernism and the Enlightenment. It is hard to imagine Kant and Michel Foucault agreeing on much.

Markos's focus is on "an unnatural and arbitrary separation of the sacred from the secular, the Christian from the humanist". Lewis, he says, "would insist (in his apologetics, in his fantasy novels, and his scholarly works) that the integrated Christian worldview that reigned in Europe for a millennium and a half was not only rationally and logically sound but also deserved a voice in the public (and especially academic) arena."

Restoring Beauty, in other words, is a strictly Christian — or, more precisely, an Evangelical Christian — view of Lewis and his work. Not only is this nothing to object to; it has distinct advantages. Lewis is a Christian writer. To divorce his writing from his faith is like reading the *Bhagavad Gita* as if it had no connection to Vedanta. But failing to distinguish sufficiently between his faith and his work can quite incorrectly make Lewis and his work seem more parochial than they are. The magic of Lewis's work, after all, has to do with precisely how it can be read and appreciated even if one is not a Christian and knows little of the Christian references. Markos knows this, and knows that Lewis did too:

> Aslan, Lewis tells us, is not so much an allegory of Christ as he is the Christ of Narnia: he is what the second person of the Trinity might have been had he incarnated himself in a world of talking beasts and living trees. The key word here is incarnation … the Chronicles move us so profoundly because they incarnate (embody, give form to) all our deepest visions and secret yearnings for the good, the true and the beautiful.

But Markos's book is unabashedly didactic. The second part of *Restoring Beauty*, titled 'The Good Guys and the Bad Guys', is about how parents can instruct their children regarding the Christian message underlying — or embodied — in *The Chronicles of Narnia*.

Put simply, this means teaching them not only why the good guys are good and the bad guys are bad", but also helping them "to understand the true nature of goodness and evil". In other words, that vision depicted in the *Chronicles* is made to serve as an antidote to "our modern world of growing ugliness, diluted truth, and tainted goodness", providing lessons that "can help lift us out of that lowest-common-denominator world".

A similar strategy is followed throughout the book. Part III, 'Men Without Chests', explores the implications of a "values-free" education." The title is taken from Lewis's *The Abolition of Man* and refers to what Lewis called "the Chest — Magnanimity — Sentiment … the indispensable liaison officers between cerebral man and visceral man". Part IV of the book , 'Aslan in the Academy', is a sort of primer for Christian educators.

Lewis himself avoided the sectarian differences that exist among Christians, so much so that there are probably plenty of non-Christians who take pleasure in reading, say, *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*.

The question to be asked regarding *Restoring Beauty* is this: how much does a study of Lewis's works from the viewpoint of an Evangelical Christian contribute to a general understanding of those works?

Actually, quite a lot.

To begin with, there is the aforementioned importance of understanding the works in terms of the author's faith, in which the works are unmistakably grounded. More importantly, though, it is useful to understand how those works

appear to those who share Lewis's faith.

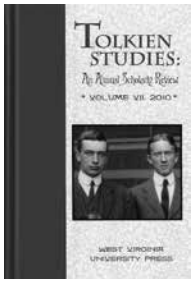
Evangelical Christians tend to be widely portrayed as caricatures. Readers of *Restoring Beauty* may be surprised to read Markos deploring what happened at Abu Ghraib, or counselling his fellow Protestants "to 'fess up,' once and for all, to the sad fact that the secular philosophes would never have been able to spread their propaganda over Europe had they not been assisted by anti-Catholic reformers eager to slander their spiritual competitors." (He also urges Catholic believers "to recapture the rich cultural, intellectual, and aesthetic heritage of the Latin Church".)

The fear, the rancour, the intolerance so blithely attributed to Evangelicals in the media is not in evidence in these pages. Markos might not approve of homosexual marriage, but he is no homophobe. His outlook — like Lewis's — is a peculiar blend of the sophisticated and the innocent. The pre-Enlightenment world may not have been anywhere near as nice as he sometimes seems to think — after all, no one has been broken on the wheel lately — but he is surely right to contend that certain notions of beauty, truth, and goodness are ripe for serious reconsideration.

Frank Wilson is the retired books editor of the *Philadelphia Inquirer*. Visit his blog, Books, Inq.-The Epilogue. E-mail him at presterfrank@gmail.com.

Scholarship collected

TROELS FORCHHAMMER



Tolkien Studies: An Annual Scholarly Review, Vol. VII
Eds Douglas A. Anderson, Michael D. C. Drout and Verlyn Flieger,
West Virginia University Press, $60
E-ISSN 1547-3155

For anyone on a limited budget, book reviews are crucial as a guide for selecting, and the reviews in *Tolkien Studies* are of high quality, with Bratman's annual survey being arguably the best available overview of Tolkien scholarship. This year further includes a review of Tolkien's *Sigurd and Gudrún* with extended commentary by Tom Shippey; two reviews by John D. Rateliff of Mark T. Hooker's *The Hobbitonian Anthology* and *Tolkien's View: Windows into His World* by J. S. Ryan. John Garth reviews material published in *Parma Eldalamberon XVIII*, and Arden R. Smith reviews *Languages, Myths and History: An Introduction to the Linguistic and Literary Background of J.R.R. Tolkien's Fiction* by Elizabeth Solopova. We get Douglas A. Anderson's 'Book Notes', and a bibliography in English for 2008 compiled by Rebecca Epstein, Michael D. C. Drout and David Bratman.

The original Tolkien material in volume VII is his English retelling of the story of Kullervo from the Kalevala along with two versions of a paper Tolkien gave while he was working on the story — given in November 1914 and again in February 1915. The material is transcribed and edited and by Verlyn Flieger with a minimum of commentary. Tolkien's retelling of the story of Kullervo has long been known to exist and Tolkien's description of how this attempt "to reorganize some of the Kalevala, especially the tale of Kullervo the hapless, into a form of my own" (letter to W. H. Auden from June 1955, *Letters* 214) formed the germ of his legendarium — in particular in its later reincarnation as 'The Children of Húrin' — has left us with an intriguing hint at unpublished material at the very beginning of Tolkien's mythopoeic writings. Now this material is published together with Tolkien's essay on the Kalevala, which provides a further basis for understanding the attraction the Kalevala had on Tolkien. Tolkien retells runos 31–36 of the Kalevala (the original is available on the Internet from Project Gutenberg both in Finnish and in two English translations). One noteworthy deviation from the story in the Kalevala is that Tolkien lets Kullervo and his sister, Wānōna (unnamed in the original, Tolkien chose this name meaning 'weeping') be twins and know each other from childhood, whereas in the original Kullervo had never met his sister when he seduced her; interestingly, in the Narn i Chîn Húrin, Tolkien eventually reverted to something that is closer to the original in this respect.

John Garth explains that R. Q. Gilson's younger half-brother, Hugh Cary Gilson was the boy Tolkien spoke of in an anecdote in his drafts for 'On Fairy-Stories', and in 'J. R. R. Tolkien and the Boy Who Didn't Believe in Fairies' Garth gives both the evidence and some further information.

The largest part of the volume is made up of a number of papers and essays offering critical, interpretative or contextualizing scholarship on Tolkien's work. The variation in topic and approach is great, but fortunately the variation in quality is smaller.

In 'The Books of Lost Tales: Tolkien as Metafictionist', Vladimir Brljak argues that the metafictional layers in *The Lord of the Rings* should receive more attention: a position that he successfully convinces me is correct, even if I do not agree with his ultimate conclusion that Tolkien intended the book written by Bilbo, Frodo and Sam to be substantially different in other than language from the published book.

I am not entirely sure what Péter Kristóf Makai intends with his article, 'Faërian Cyberdrama: When Fantasy becomes Virtual Reality'. He convinces me that Tolkien's essay 'On Fairy-Stories' can inform modern game theory, and I can also accept

that modern computer games, to many people, is the closest we can get to Tolkien's idea of 'Faërian Drama', but in the end, I am left wondering what this can tell me about Tolkien's work. Michael Milburn does not suffer from that problem in his essay, 'Coleridge's Definition of Imagination and Tolkien's Definition(s) of Faery' in which he discusses the relations between Coleridge's definition of 'imagination' and Tolkien's ideas of Faërie as expounded in 'On Fairy-Stories'.

Two well-written interpretative essays follow: '"Strange and free" — On Some Aspects of the Nature of Elves and Men', by Thomas Fornet-Ponse is a response to Verlyn Flieger's writings on the nature of the free will of the elves and men. Fornet-Ponse argues that Tolkien's elves do possess the ability to do otherwise, arguing against Flieger on this point. 'Refining the Gold: Tolkien, The Battle of Maldon, and the Northern Theory of Courage' Mary R. Bowman, using Tolkien's commentary to the Battle of Maldon as her starting point, argues that rather than the 'act of parricide' suggested by Shippey, Tolkien reinterpreted the idea of northern courage. Bowman also fleshes out this reinterpretation using examples from *The Lord of the Rings*.

Thomas Honegger argues that the Middle English poem *Sir Orfeo* is a likely source of inspiration for a number of the defining characteristics of Faërie as Tolkien describes them in 'On Fairy-Stories'. Honegger's paper, 'Fantasy, Escape, Recovery, and Consolation in Sir Orfeo: The Medieval Foundations of Tolkienian Fantasy', argues its case convincingly and also suggests ways in which *Sir Orfeo* may deepen our understanding of Tolkien's concept of Faërie. This latter aspect is lacking in Sherrylyn Branchaw's paper, 'Elladan and Elrohir: The Dioscuri in *The Lord of the Rings*', in which she argues that Elrond's sons are inspired by the classical dioscuri, but fails to suggest how this may inform our reading of Tolkien's work.

Having seen the list of contents, Yoko Hemmi's paper, 'Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* and His Concept of Native Language: Sindarin and British-Welsh', was one that I looked very much forward to reading. Hemmi takes Tolkien's idea of native language from his essay 'English and Welsh' and relates it to the Sindarin tongue and uses them to explicate each other as well as 'Tolkien's personal sense of home'. Margeret Sinex provides a valuable input to the often exasperating discussion on the allegations of racism in *The Lord of the Rings* in her essay '"Monsterized Saracens," Tolkien's Haradrim, and Other Medieval "Fantasy Products"'. Sinex shows how Tolkien adopted European medieval images of aliens in his portrayal of Easterlings and Southrons in *The Lord of the Rings* as an integral aspect of the overall medievalism of the work.

Finally Kristine Larsen with accustomed insight argues her identification of a couple of constellations in 'Myth, Milky Way, and the Mysteries of Tolkien's Morwinyon, Telumendil, and Anarríma'.

Troels Forchhammer is a Danish physicist working for a major mobile phone manufacturer. In 2008 he presented his paper, 'Voices of a Music: Models of Free Will in Tolkien's Middle-earth' at the annual Tolkien Society Seminar.

Keeping the faith

CHAD CHISHOLM

Toy Story 3
Directed by Lee Unkrich
Disney/Pixar, 103 mins (2010).
Starring Tom Hanks, Tim Allen and Joan Cusack.

The Book of Eli
Directed by Albert Hughes and Allen Hughes.
Warner Bros, 118 mins (2010).
Starring Denzel Washington

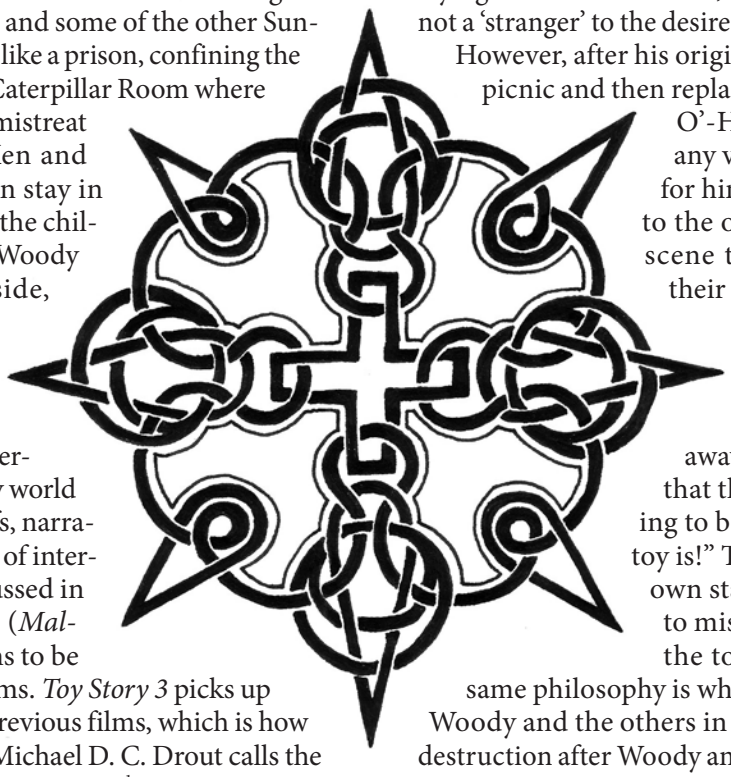
Toy Story 3 is the third instalment of Pixar Animation Studio's computer-animated trilogy about the toys in Andy's room: Woody, Buzz Lightyear, Rex, Slink, Hamm, the Potato Heads and the Pizza Planet aliens. Distributed again by Walt Disney Pictures, the film is directed by Lee Unkrich, who edited the earlier films and co-directed *Toy Story 2*, and co-written and co-produced by John Lasseter who directed the first films. The movie features the talents of Tom Hanks, Tim Allen and others who returned for their old roles, except Blake Clark who replaced Jim Varney (1949–2000) as the voice of Slink, the only voice actor not returning to his original role. In addition to the old voices, several new voice actors joined the *Toy Story* cast, including Michael Keaton as Ken, Ned Beatty as Lotso (Lots-O'-Huggin' Bear), and Timothy Dalton as Mr Pricklepants. The budget for Woody and Buzz's finale, released 12 years after *Toy Story 2*, came to about $200 million and earned an estimated gross revenue of $1.06 billion.

In the movie, the toys are feeling neglected and forsaken as Andy hasn't played with them in years. Woody tries to encourage them to keep their sense of purpose by reminding them that their true nature as toys "isn't about being played with" but "being there for Andy", but after years of disuse the toys are wary of Woody's advice. Andy is now

17 and cleaning out his room before going to university in three days, when his mum tells him to do something about his childhood toys. Andy decides to take Woody, his longtime favourite, with him and places the other toys in a plastic garbage bag meaning to put them in the attic, but because of a mix-up, Andy's mother thinks the toys are rubbish and puts them on the kerbside on garbage day. The toys escape and get to the carport, but are convinced that Andy doesn't want them, so they get into another box of toys in the trunk of mum's car that is being donated to Sunnyside Daycare. While Woody tries unsuccessfully to convince the others to disregard the mistake because Andy still wants them, all of the toys become trapped because Andy's mum closes the trunk and takes them to Sunnyside.

Even a happy ending can be the right ending when the narrative we are following needs it and requires it.

Once at Sunnyside, with the exception of Woody, the toys began to fall in love with their new home, which Lotso (a pink, strawberry-scented bear) and Ken (from the Barbie collection) display for them like a Boca Raton resort, after which all of Andy's toys decide to stay. Woody, however, leaves and attempts to find his way to Andy, is instead taken home by Bonnie, a little girl whose mother works at Sunnyside. Once at Bonnie's home, the imaginative little girl plays with Woody for the first time in years, and Woody is momentarily happy. After Bonnie is asleep, however, Woody learns from her toys that his friends are in great trouble because Lotso, Ken and some of the other Sunnyside toys run the Daycare like a prison, confining the newly donated toys to the Caterpillar Room where all the toddlers abuse and mistreat them. This way, Lotso, Ken and the other gangster toys can stay in the Butterfly Room where the children are older and gentler. Woody sneaks back into Sunnyside, determined to save Buzz and his other friends.



A world apart

All of the *Toy Story* films operate within a solid secondary world with consistent rules, motifs, narrative symmetry, and a sense of internal ethos, which, as I discussed in my previous review of *Up* (*Mallorn* 50, 11–13; 2010) seems to be a strength of most Pixar films. *Toy Story 3* picks up with an element from the previous films, which is how despair — similar to what Michael D. C. Drout calls the "sin of pale hope" of medieval theology[1] — can transform a decent character into a villain. In each of the three films, the role of despair evolves, from Buzz's deep depression that momentarily incapacitates him in the first film, to Stinky Pete's extreme hatred for his own natural purpose (which is to be a child's toy) after years go by and no one purchases him in the second film. However, with Lotso in the third film, the Pixar producers travel further than Buzz's depression or Stinky Pete's despair, but in a modern sense touch the roots of evil.

Throughout the trilogy, one of the philosophical questions we are asked is, although there are pragmatic reasons (for toys and humans) to isolate themselves from the pain and anguish that comes with life, what happens if people divorce themselves from all that is familiarly human? Indeed, the critic Wayne C. Booth, writing about Albert Camus' narrator of *The Stranger*, describes Meursault as someone who "goes through the motions of life … a stranger to all normal human emotions and experiences" until he is condemned to death for the murder of an Arab when he "discovers … that he has not been a lost man after all"; that in his indifferent isolation he has figured a truth about the indifference of the whole universe; and that he has been happy all along, "and that I was happy still" (ref. 2, p. 296). The *Toy Story* trilogy examines what happens when such a character — not safely under prison watch and awaiting execution — goes as far as the nihilistic Meursault and is allowed to continue to influence and affect the relationships of other characters.

In the case of Lotso in *Toy Story 3*, the result can be terrifying. Unlike Meursault, we hear that Lotso once was not a 'stranger' to the desires or feelings of a normal toy. However, after his original owner loses him after a picnic and then replaces him with another Lots-O'-Huggin' Bear, Lotso rejects any value there is in being a toy, for himself and others, declaring to the other toys at the dumpster scene that no child really loves their toys, and worse yet, asking Woody, "You think you're special, cowboy? You're a piece of plastic! You were made to be thrown away", and saying to all the toys that they are "all just trash waiting to be thrown away! That's all a toy is!" This self-devaluation of his own status as a toy enables Lotso to mistreat, abuse and subjugate the toys at Sunnyside, and this same philosophy is what permits him to abandon Woody and the others in the dump scene to certain destruction after Woody and Buzz had saved him from the shredder. Far from incapacitating him (as it did temporarily with Buzz in the first film), Lotso turns his despair into a safeguard that shields him from the shared values of others, and it enables him to project his vision of personal hopelessness onto all who surround him, and

this serves as a self-enforced justification for his cruelty to them.

In the end, all of the toys reject Lotso's self-serving nihilism by embracing the value they place in their individual relationships with others. For example, when Ken turns against Lotso and begs him to not throw Barbie into the dumpster, Lotso predictably replies, "She's a Barbie doll. There's a hundred million just like her," to which Ken proclaims, "Not to me there's not." Indeed, the values that each of the toys place in their friendships with the others is a powerful, seemingly transcendent force in all the film. And yet, although we as viewers are hard on Lotso and rejoice that Ken has come to learn the same truth as Woody and Buzz, the problem of despair remains as in the end Lotso seems to be right. John Lasseter seems to confirm this in one of his statements about the film: "When you're broken, you can be fixed; when you're lost, you can be found; when you're stolen you can be recovered. But there's no way to fix being outgrown by the child." All of the films, especially the second and third, spend a great deal of time on the probable fate of toys: once children no longer play with their toys, they are lost, donated away, broken and, eventually, all of them are tossed out and destroyed. And although Andy's toys are rescued and able to return to their owner, after all their struggle and resilience, *Toy Story 3* ends with Andy giving his once cherished toys away. Defeat for toys seems to be an ineluctable fate. Therefore, the question remains at the end of the final film: despite his inconvenient actions in the plot of the movie, isn't Lotso's analysis essentially correct? Either way, Lassiter and Unkrich have left us, as viewers, with a problem to consider.

This is a problem Tolkien also dealt with in his scholarly essay 'Beowulf: The Monsters in the Critics'. Tolkien tries to relate both a little of the rhetorical situation and the collective imagination that the Beowulf poet might have faced as he set himself to the task of compiling this long, narrative saga:

> Nonetheless we may still, against his great scene, hung with tapestries woven of ancient tales of ruin, see the hæleð walk. When we have read [the Beowulf poet's] poem, as a poem, rather than as a collection of episodes, we perceive that he who wrote hæleð under heofenum may have meant in dictionary terms 'heroes under heaven', or 'mighty men upon earth', but he and his hearers were thinking of the eormengrund, the great earth, ringed with garsecg, the shoreless sea, beneath the sky's inaccessible roof; whereon, as in a little circle of light about their halls, men with courage as their stay went forward to that battle with the hostile world and the offspring of the dark which ends for all, even the kings and champions, in defeat.

This ultimate scheme where men and all their accomplishments shall perish, or, as Drout puts it, this "idea of a long defeat", is an idea Tolkien ferrets out of old mythologies, and it contrasts sharply with much of our modern fashions of thought, such as the seductive 'success narratives' found in some conservative commentaries that usually maintain that if all of us study hard, pay our 'dues', and make the most of our opportunities, we will see good times evermore, or the dogma of some liberal, most socialist, or all Marxist ideologies that claim that a completely equal and egalitarian society, fundamentally different than our own, can be achieved though an increase of social programmes. Instead, Tolkien indicates that no matter how prosperous we might become as individuals, or how perfect the socialist state we construct on Earth, in the long term, they will all fail and chaos and misery will once again ensue.

This idea is at the centre of much of Tolkien's scholarly and literary work, and in 'The Monsters and the Critics', Tolkien does not want us to forget that however inspiring Beowulf

might be, however comforting the fire, food and fellowship inside King Hrothgar's hall might seem, no matter how joyous we might be at the deaths of Grendel or his mother, in the end the monsters will win and civilization is doomed. The fate of Andy's toys, it is suggested, is exactly the same. However, despite my gloomy descriptions, Tolkien was not a fatalist, but in his critical and literary work he had developed a concept of 'consolation' which works well for *Toy Story 3* as it, despite its hovering uncertainty, is also not fatalistic.

After the dumpster scene and Lotso's final act of betrayal, the toys are taken to the dump, placed on a conveyor belt, and tossed into a gigantic furnace with no hope of escape. Facing certain destruction, all the toys join hands as they inch closer to the incinerator and their doom. Suddenly from above a crane comes (lowered by the Pizza Planet alien toys) and lifts them out to safety. Woody, Buzz and all the other toys are saved from certain destruction.

On the DVD commentary, the Pixar directors (rather humbly) refer to their rescue of the toys as deus ex machina, which is sometimes translated as 'God from the machine', which implies that although they dearly wanted to save their beloved toy characters, the directors feel as though they have weakened the story's value by interrupting (entering their story like God from behind the sunset) the natural course of events. However, when I view *Toy Story 3*, I do not believe, as the term deus ex machina implies, that Lassiter and Unkrich have disrupted their narrative by saving their characters, nor weakened it, because they have done something quite altogether different. Tolkien's term eucatastrophe might be better suited for what actually happens at the end of *Toy Story 3*. In his essay 'On Fairy Stories', Tolkien claims that the "eucatastrophic tale is the true form of fairy-tale, and its highest function", and therefore elements that set up the eucatastrophe, "however wild its events, however fantastic or terrible the adventures", are naturally woven into every fantastic tale:

> The consolation of fairy-stories, the joy of the happy ending: or more correctly of the good catastrophe, the sudden joyous "turn" (for there is no true end to any fairy-tale) this joy, which is one of the things which fairy-stories can produce supremely well, is not essentially "escapist," nor "fugitive." In its fairy-tale — or otherworld — setting, it is a sudden and miraculous grace: never to be counted on to recur. It does not deny the existence of dyscatastrophe, of sorrow and failure: the possibility of these is necessary to the joy of deliverance; it denies (in the face of much evidence, if you will) universal final defeat and in so far is evangelium, giving a fleeting glimpse of Joy, Joy beyond the walls of the world, poignant as grief.

Indeed, the 'joy' we as viewers vicariously experience through Woody, Buzz and the other toys does indeed seem to come "beyond the walls of the world". However, because from the beginning the Pixar producers are not only drawing on elements that were presented earlier in the film and the two earlier movies (such as 'the claw' and Potatohead's rescue of the toy aliens in *Toy Story 2*), but have also infused their story with an ethos that also "denies … universal final defeat" because their characters, in one way or another, refused to accept despair (as Lotso did), this makes the escape at the end seem cathartic, or enlarging, rather than a cheap trick by the producers to 'save the day.' Instead, this is the ending we have come to anticipate, and when we get it, we realize that there could have been no other. This is why the false ending of Lotso saving the toys by pressing the button to stop the conveyor belt would have seemed 'tacked on' and would not have worked.

Another film that uses a similar scheme to *Toy Story 3* is the Hughes brothers' *The Book of Eli*, a postapocalyptic movie that also lends itself to Tolkien's criticism. Although I unfortunately won't be able to discuss what is, in its own right, a remarkable film, at the end of *The Book of Eli* the main character Eli (Denzel Washington) offers his dying prayer to God, the transcendent force that has helped him make an impossible journey:

> Dear Lord, thank you for giving me the strength and the conviction to complete the task you entrusted to me. Thank you for guiding me straight and true through the many obstacles in my path, and for keeping me resolute when all around seemed lost. Thank you for your protection and your many signs along the way. Thank you for any good that I may have done, I'm so sorry about the bad. Thank you for the friend I made. Please watch over her as you watched over me. Thank you for finally allowing me to rest. I'm so very tired, but I go now to my rest at peace knowing that I have done right with my time on this earth. I fought the good fight; I finished the race; I kept the faith.

In a sense, Eli's final prayer echoes a similar, although more nuanced, dialogue between the toys and the film directors. Woody, Buzz and the others have 'fought the good fight' even though the odds were impossible, they have 'finished the race' despite at times there was no hope of winning, and they have 'kept the faith' in the ideas that the film-makers had planted into their secondary world — an ethos or transcendent character that structures the imaginative universe they created, governs our interpretations as viewers, and presses onto all the characters who live within this World and the decisions they make.

Even a happy ending can be the right ending when the narrative we are following needs it and requires it. Andy's toys have done all that was asked of them, by the film-makers and us, their viewers: they struggled to the end, and therefore, the only natural conclusion to the narrative, or any narrative such as this, is a eucatastrophe.

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1. Drout, M. D. C. *On Sorcerers and Men: Tolkien and the Roots of Modern Fantasy Literature* (Barnes and Nobel Audio. Portable Professor: Arts and Literature; Compact Discs; 2006).
2. Booth, W. C. *The Rhetoric of Fiction* (2nd edition), (Univ. Chicago Press, 1983).

J. R. R. Tolkien and the Spanish civil war

JOSÉ MANUEL FERRÁNDEZ BRU

When historical events are analysed from a distance and evaluated according to contemporary parameters rather than to the circumstances in which they developed, it is easy to reach the wrong conclusions — or, at least, to get a distorted view of the different attitudes of the participants and witnesses of those events.

A clear example is the matter of J. R. R. Tolkien's stance during the Spanish civil war, culminating in his discreet moral support for the nationalist side, the insurgents led by General Francisco Franco who toppled the republican regime after three years of fratricidal struggle between 1936 and 1939.

A simplistic view of the matter might inspire a perverted syllogism: this support, combined with the character and nature of Franco's movement, implies that, in the political arena, Tolkien was a fascist. Such reasoning is baseless. In this paper, I shall concentrate on the question of why Tolkien's position was not inspired by political motives, nor by affinities with extreme right-wing ideas. Priscilla Tolkien, the author's daughter, born in 1929, commented that the "whole period of the civil war cast a great shadow over my father's life and is a powerful and lasting memory from my childhood"[1].

Surely an essential aspect in these feelings was his sentimental link with Spain formed by his personal ties with his guardian, Father Francis Morgan. Priscilla Tolkien recalls her father "saying how terrible it would have been for Father Francis if he had been alive after the onset of the Spanish civil war". Father Morgan died in 1935, 13 months before the war broke out.

It is important to remember that Tolkien was received into the Catholic Church when he was a child, and his mother, instrumental to this conversion, died shortly after, leaving Father Morgan as his guardian. Father Morgan thus became Tolkien's main adult reference until he began his studies at Oxford and, after his coming of age, Morgan remained as an important figure in his life. He was a frequent visitor of the Tolkien family in Leeds (where Tolkien got his first job as professor) as well as in Oxford.

Morgan was born in Spain in 1857 in El Puerto de Santa Maria, Andalusia. His Spanish ancestry came from his mother's side. His mother, Maria Manuela Osborne, was born into the Osborne Sherry dynasty. Francis was sent to study in England at the Birmingham Oratory School led by the future Cardinal John Henry Newman. After leaving school, he briefly attended the Catholic University of Louvain, and then returned to the Oratory where he was ordained in 1883. He met the Tolkien family around 1902, some months after they had been received into the Roman Catholic Church.

Morgan travelled to Spain almost every year until he became too old to do so. His last remaining brother, Augustus, died in late 1932, after which his nephews from Osborne branch became his closest family in Spain and he kept up a fluent correspondence with one of them, Antonio Osborne. In addition to discussing matters related to the legacy of Augustus, Antonio kept him up to date with the increasingly turbulent events in Spain (many of the letters are preserved in Osborne Archive).

After the proclamation of the Second Republic in April 1931, Spain had been unable to maintain any political stability: strikes, riots and episodes of violence against the Catholic Church were frequent. On 1 October 1931, the newspaper *El Socialista* summarized the position of the left-wing parties: "The Roman Church … has added to our history the stigma of a tradition of bigotry, intransigence and barbarity, and must be destroyed."

A reflection of this situation is seen in a letter from Antonio Osborne dated 10 January 1933, written not long after a spate of arson attacks on churches and convents all over the country.

> Now, more than ever, I would visit you, but things are not easy in poor Spain. The situation is getting worse! Thank God, we can not complain as neither the burnings of temples nor the great revolutionary strikes have been noticed in El Puerto de Santa Maria. (ref. 2)

Morgan's reply shows that the worsening news from his homeland marked his last years with sadness.

> I think a lot of poor Spain: I pray for her daily, incessantly. I know the poor Queen came to London for a short time. You are quite right that the elections were very poorly conducted, as I read in a book called *The Fall of a Throne*. (ref. 3)

In brief, he mentions the visit to London of the exiled Spanish Queen, Victoria Eugenie, and his opinions regarding *The Fall of a Throne*. His affinity with this book, written by Alvaro Alcala Galiano, brings significant (indirect) information about his personal ideology and his intimate belief about how differently municipal elections (whose result implied the departure of King Alfonso XIII and the proclamation of the republic) could have been managed.

Morgan was strongly affected by events in his home

country, and surely shared his thoughts with Tolkien — which might explain, at least in part, Tolkien's grief on the outbreak of the civil war. Tolkien's found few supporters of the nationalist cause in Oxford. Even his close friend C. S. Lewis (despite his indifference to political life[4]) was opposed to the uprising. In fact, Tolkien reproached him years later for his staunch opposition to Franco (*Letters* 83).

> C.S.L.'s reactions were odd. Nothing is a greater tribute to Red propaganda than the fact that he (who knows they are in all other subjects liars and traducers) believes all that is said against Franco, and nothing that is said for him. Even Churchill's open speech in Parliament[5] left him unshaken.

In Britain, support for the republican side was widespread. It was a widely shared (and maybe rather simplistic) thought that the republic represented the legal government in a struggle against the obscurantism of the 'traditional' Spain represented by landowners, the army and the Catholic Church. But the republican regime was overshadowed by the chaotic social situation in Spain, with a drift in its policies towards the extreme left and with a meagre response to violence against these traditional interests, especially the Catholic Church.

Tolkien's support for the Franco movement rested precisely on his perception of him as the champion of the Catholic Church against the communist menace. Hence, Tolkien's position was a consequence of his Catholicism. Indeed, Catholics thought the insurgents vindicated traditional values and defended the Catholic Church against the dangers of communism and secularism — in Britain, only Catholics supported Franco's movement en masse[6].

Catholic religious leaders approached the issue in a similar way. In Oxford, for example, the distinguished Jesuit Martin D'Arcy, and Ronald Knox, Chaplain to the University of Oxford, publicly supported the nationalist cause. However, the clearest evidence of the official position of the British Catholic Church come from the statements of the highest Catholic authority in Great Britain at that time, the Archbishop of Westminster, Arthur Hinsley[7], who in 1939 — with the Spanish war about to end — wrote in a letter to Franco[8]: "I look upon you as the great defender of the true Spain, the country of Catholic principles where Catholic social justice and charity will be applied for the common good under a firm peace-loving government."

The tone of this letter might easily give a false impression of its author. Arthur Hinsley, was called the 'hammer of dictators' in the Second World War because of his criticisms of Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany. He was admired by Winston Churchill, who appreciated his ability to connect with British society during the most difficult moments of the Second World War.

These opinions reflected not only a philosophical issue about what principles should prevail in Spain but also the painful reality of a bloody religious persecution. Neutral British historians such as Hugh Thomas or Stanley Payne pointed out this period as the historical era of greater hatred against the religion and described the persecution of the Catholic Church as the greatest that ever happened in Europe.

British Catholics, harassed for centuries, considered the attitudes of their compatriots almost as outrageous as the attacks on the Church in Spain. Tolkien was quite explicit in this regard (*Letters* 83):

> But hatred of our church is after all the real only final foundation of the C of E — so deep laid that it remains even when all the superstructure seems removed (C.S.L. for instance reveres the Blessed Sacrament, and admires nuns!). Yet if a Lutheran is put in jail he is up in arms; but if Catholic priests are slaughtered — he disbelieves it (and I daresay really thinks they asked for it).

The support of British Catholics for the 'rebels' in Spain was hard for others to understand, given that it was all too easy to link political alliance with Franco — and thus fascism — with religious concerns and the fear of communism. Catholics, however, were quite clear on the distinction. As Evelyn Waugh (an Anglo-Catholic) wrote[9]: "If I were a Spaniard I should be fighting for General Franco … I am not a fascist nor shall I become one unless it were the only alternative to Marxism."

However, support for Franco meant rejection from the intellectual community, as happened to Francis de Zulueta, regius professor of law at All Souls College between 1919 and 1948 — and Priscilla Tolkien's godfather. Zulueta was born in 1878 of Spanish and Irish ancestry. He was a naturalized British subject and lived in Oxford for most of his life. His father, Pedro de Zulueta, was son of the second Earl of Torre-Diaz, also called Pedro, a Basque businessman who settled in London. His mother was Laura Sheil, daughter of the late governor of Persia, Justin Sheil, and sister of Father Denis Sheil a priest of the Birmingham Oratory, whom Tolkien knew.

The only sister of Pedro de Zulueta (Francis's father) married Rafael Merry del Val, a nobleman and a diplomatic supporter of Alfonso XIII. They had four children (cousins, therefore, of Francis de Zulueta). The eldest son, Alfonso, was Spanish ambassador to London between 1913 and 1931 (until the Second Republic was established in Spain). His brother Rafael chose an ecclesiastical career and became the Cardinal Merry del Val, a Vatican official during the papacy of Pius X. The Cardinal died in 1930, but his brother Alfonso and especially his eldest son, Pablo, were very much involved in Franco's uprising.

At Oxford, meanwhile, Francis de Zulueta's prestige suffered from his colleagues' general disapproval of his support for the nationalist side (and, after the war, his support for the Franco regime). The rumour spread that de Zulueta was a fascist aristocrat who considered his Oxford colleagues as plebeians. The truth was rather different, exemplified by his help for several German Jewish professors persecuted by the nazi regime, such as Fritz Schulz and especially David Daube, who developed a deep friendship with Zulueta.

But the rejection and disdain of Zulueta were undoubtedly

smaller than those suffered by other intellectuals such as the poet Roy Campbell, whom Tolkien met in 1944, as described in a letter to his son Christopher (*Letters* 83).

Specifically Tolkien cites *The Flaming Terrapin*, published in 1924, which got Campbell immediate recognition in the British poetry scene, and *Flowering Rifle*, published in 1939, which received a very different reception among critics. Campbell's support for Franco was certainly detrimental to this book's reception, and Campbell's own image was seriously damaged[10].

Campbell was born in 1901 in South Africa where he lived before going to the University of Oxford in 1919. There he met people like T. S. Eliot, Aldous Huxley, Robert Graves and, after the success of *The Flaming Terrapin*, the Bloomsbury group led by Virginia Woolf. However, after a painful dispute with them he left England, going first to France and later to Spain, where he arrived several months before the onset of the civil war.

In the letter (*Letters* 83), Tolkien confuses some information about him, saying for example that he became Catholic in Barcelona. Campbell did indeed live in Barcelona, but settled in Altea, a small town on the coast near Alicante. There he was received into the Catholic Church. In mid-1935 he moved to Toledo and Campbell established a cordial relationship with the Carmelite monks of that town.

When the civil war began, the monks secretly confided to Campbell several manuscripts from St John of the Cross kept in the library of the convent, probably thinking his status as foreigner gave him some immunity. It was a justified fear because only a month later all the members of the community were killed and the library was burned.

The impact of these assassinations, added to his own ideas, led Campbell to support the cause of the insurgents and he tried to enlist in the army of Franco. However, he never fought, nor belonged to any armed unit, although he toured Spain during the war. Pablo Merry del Val[11] persuaded him to remain civilian because he was more valuable as a propagandist figure than as a combatant: the nationalist cause needed 'pens, not swords'.

His explicit support for Franco movement aroused suspicion, and the was often labelled a 'fascist'. In fact, Tolkien seems compelled to explain the loyalty of the poet based on his later actions arguing (*Letters* 83) "he is a patriotic man, and has fought for the B. Army since".

Both Tolkien and Campbell had a declared animosity towards supporters of leftist ideas, and Tolkien's sketch of Campbell concludes by drawing a comparison with the red intellectuals, which clearly reveals his dislike towards communism (*Letters* 83): "How unlike the Left — the 'corduroy panzers' who fled to America (Auden among them who with his friends[12] got R.C.'s works 'banned' by the Birmingham T. Council!)."

Tolkien's own political opinions were, however, more metaphysical than orthodox. Tolkien sought to explain them to his son Christopher in a letter written during the Second World War (*Letters* 52): "My political opinions lean more and more to Anarchy (philosophically understood, meaning abolition of control not whiskered men with bombs) — or to 'unconstitutional' Monarchy. I would arrest anybody who uses the word State."

His aversion to state control (and also the fact that communism was violently opposed to all religions, but particularly to the Catholic Church) led Tolkien to consider the communism as a terrible and harmful approach, and even during the Second World War he described the Soviet leader Josef Stalin, at the time allied with Britain, as (*Letters* 53) "a bloodthirsty old murderer". Moreover he declared (*Letters* 181) "I am not a 'socialist' in any sense — being averse to 'planning' (as must be plain) most of all because the 'planners', when they acquire power, become so bad."

If not in the field of political theory, some could reductively argue that his imaginary world is connected with the 'Nordic' basis of nazi model because Tolkien recreates typical elements taken from North European traditional culture. Tolkien explicitly denied it and he scorned the nazi *Nordic nonsense* and its attitude (*Letters* 49) "ruining, perverting, misapplying, and making for ever accursed, that noble northern spirit, a supreme contribution to Europe, which I have ever loved, and tried to present in its true light".

However, critics of the second half of the twentieth century censured Tolkien, either directly or indirectly, as did the socialist critic Fred Inglis, who wrote[13]: "Tolkien is no Fascist, but that his great myth may be said, as Wagner's was, to prefigure the genuine ideals and nobilities of which Fascism is the dark negation."

Regarding such arguments we can only appeal to the many examples present in the cosmogony of Tolkien contradicting similar criticisms, because the archetypes in Tolkien's works differ from these parameters[14]. At the same time, analysing them closely we can arrive at the opposite conclusion:

Tolkien always denied that Mordor was intended as a representation of Nazi Germany or Soviet Russia, but was quite aware of its "applicability" to the death camps and the gulags, to fascism and communism — as well as to other, more subtle or fragmentary manifestations of the same spirit[15].

Perhaps in the balance could lay the most appropriate view to define the genuine 'political Tolkien':

> So Tolkien himself can be classed as an anarchist, libertarian, and/or conservative … In a consistently pre-modern way, Tolkien was neither liberal nor socialist, nor even necessarily democrat; but neither is there even a whiff of 'blood and soil' fascism.
>
> (ref. 16)

Thus anarchist, libertarian or conservative (but not fascist), Tolkien was undoubtedly a man committed to his ideas, particularly with the religious beliefs he had acquired in his childhood, and obviously this background contributed to the establishment of Tolkien's own ideology.

Even more, although Tolkien had strong individualistic ideas and opinions that were antithetical with totalitarism, the religious persecution in Spain was crucial to his support to Franco movement. Maybe, at first sight, his attitude after

the outbreak of the Spanish war may produce disagreement but, in his historical and social context, it denotes coherence.

On the other hand, discussing a situation as complex as that in Spain during the 1930s pays no regard to current ideas of political correctness and we have to take into account that it was not simply an issue of good and evil. Privately, the Spanish civil war greatly affected Tolkien and the way he behaved agreed with his own convictions. This should suffice.

José Manuel Ferrández Bru is founder member and former president of the Spanish Tolkien Society, he has published numerous articles about Tolkien but always in Spanish. He has an special interest on the author's connection with Spain through Fr Morgan and other people.

1. From the author's correspondence with Priscilla Tolkien.
2. Antonio Osborne's letter to Francis Morgan (original in Spanish), 10 January 1933; Osborne Archive.
3. Francis Morgan's letter to Antonio Osborne (original in Spanish), 10 May 1933; Osborne Archive.
4. Related with the Spanish war, a student asked him for a donation to support the republican cause and Lewis told him that he never donated money "to anything that had a directly political implication". West, J. G. Politics from the Shadowlands: C. S. Lewis on Earthly Government in *Policy Review* 68, 68–70 (1994).
5. On 24 May 1944, Churchill gave a speech in the House of Commons supporting the Franco regime, showing his gratitude for its neutrality in the Second World War, which he considered a great service to the allies.
6. Curiously the British fascist groups never were strong sympathizers of Franco's cause. Oswald Mosley, leader of the British Union of Fascists, stated arrogantly: "No British blood should be shed on behalf Spain." Buchanan, T. *Britain and the Spanish Civil War* 90 (Cambridge University Press, 1997). p 90
7. Tolkien had an additional link with Archbishop Hinsley. Hinsley appointed to David Mathew as Auxiliary Bishop, who was the brother of Tolkien's good friend Fr Gervase Mathew, a Dominican scholar who lived in Oxford working in Blackfriars College. Both, Gervase and David had spent his childhood in Lyme Regis. In this town, Tolkien knew them from a visit with Fr Morgan, who was a friend of the family, when all they were children.
8. Aspden, K. *Fortress Church: The English Roman Catholic Bishops and Politics, 1903–63* 89 (Gracewing, 2002).
9. Pearce, J. *Unafraid of Virginia Woolf: The Friends and Enemies of Roy Campbell* 257, 271 (ISI Books 2004).
10. C. S. Lewis was a merciless critic of Campbell (although Tolkien points to extraliterary arguments in order to justify the severity of his criticism such as "there is a good deal of Ulster still left in C.S.L. if hidden from himself" (*Letters* 83).
11. Pablo Merry del Val, quoted above, was the son of Alfonso Merry del Val, cousin of Francis de Zulueta. In the Spanish war he served as head of press of the insurgents' government.
12. Tolkien refers to a group of poets that flourished in the context of the University of Oxford in the early 1930s, known as the Auden generation. This group of young poets led by W. H. Auden and made up by Cecil Day Lewis, Stephen Spender and Louis MacNiece belonged to the first generation of British attracted to Marxism. Interestingly despite their different attitude towards Spanish war and considering the fact that Tolkien criticized the Auden's departure to America during the Second World War, they developed a cordial friendship several years later. On the other hand, their relationship breaks up with the myth of the Tolkien's intolerance because Auden was a leftist sympathizer and a declared homosexual.
13. Inglis, F. Gentility and powerlessness: Tolkien and the new class in *This Far Land: J. R. R. Tolkien* (ed. Giddings, R.) 24–45 (Barnes and Noble, 1983).
14. Although several critics insist on a supposed apology of racial superiority in Tolkien (for example, because of his portraits of the elves or the men of Númenor) there is an unquestionable sample closely linked to the background of this work: the civil war in Gondor, in which a desire of racial purity leads to despotism and destruction.
15. Caldecott, S. *Secret Fire: The Spiritual Vision of J. R. R. Tolkien* 2 (Darton, Longman & Todd, 2003).
16. Curry, P. *Defending Middle-Earth: Tolkien: Myth and Modernity* 38 (Houghton Mifflin, 2004).

There and Back Again and other travel books of the 1930s

DALE NELSON

Often overlooked by Tolkien's admirers is the fact that the interwar years were the golden age of the British travel book, when civilians could still cross frontiers relatively freely and "Mr. Peter Fleming went to the Gobi Desert, Mr. Graham Greene to the Liberian hinterland; Robert Byron … to the ruins of Persia"[1]. It paid publishers to print travel books. Sometimes readers forget that Tolkien gave his 1937 classic *The Hobbit* the subtitle *There and Back Again*, and that 'There and Back Again' is the main title chosen by Bilbo for his reminiscences — his subtitle being 'A Hobbit's Holiday'. *The Hobbit* has been discussed as a quest story indebted to medieval sagas and poetry, as a parable of maturation and, of course, as a children's adventure tale, but it also uses characteristics of the contemporary popular travel writing.

Restricting our attention just to the 1930s, we find evocative titles that could have been applied to Bilbo's eventful journey: *Remote People* (Evelyn Waugh, 1931), *Strange Wonders: Tales of Travel* (Christopher Sykes, 1937) and *The Lawless Roads* (Graham Greene, 1939), a title that Tolkien could have used for Chapter 2, referring to the Lone-lands that Bilbo and his companions enter when the Shire is long left behind. Just missing the interwar period was *Far Away and Long Ago* (W. H. Hudson, 1918). Those titles are romantic enough. However, in keeping with the somewhat deflationary tone of much interwar travel writing are titles such as *One's Company: A Journey to China* (Peter Fleming, 1934), *Ninety-Two Days: The Account of a Tropical Journey through British Guiana and Part of Brazil* (Waugh, 1934) and *Hindoo Holiday: An Indian Journal* (J. R. Ackerley, 1932). Like these titles, Bilbo's own modest titles for his proposed memoirs, *There and Back Again: A Hobbit's Holiday*, would

have promised no great discoveries or bloodcurdling adventures to his readers — although readers of Tolkien's narrative, having arrived at the book's end, know that those are exactly what Bilbo did experience. The ironic or self-deprecating tone of the British travel book was so well established as a convention by 1933 that Robert Byron could begin one of his contributions to the genre thus:

> It has been the boast of some travel books to contain nothing that can either instruct or improve their readers. The boast is one I should like to make. (ref. 2)

The travel-book titles typically imply that there will be much inconvenience and even some serious discomfort, but nothing truly tragic will occur.* Such titles suggest a fundamentally inconsequential but interesting journey undertaken by an ordinary person sojourning, although it be for a relatively brief time, among extraordinary scenes and peoples. The traveller is (like Bilbo) a person of some means and is likeable, cultured but probably not erudite, usually unattached romantically or domestically, does not see himself as heroic, and is often not the best-informed member of the (usually all-male) travelling group. He is not trying to escape some serious problem at home, but might be feeling a little stale. The object of the journey may be romantic, but incidents of the journey are often treated ironically. The traveller is not profoundly changed by his travels (see the concluding exchange between Gandalf and Bilbo). That is the formula for the typical British interwar travel book, and it is a formula that Tolkien seems to have adapted for his children's book.

It is not part of my purpose, by the way, to insist that Tolkien must have been a devoted reader of travel books, let alone that he deliberately imitated (or parodied) any particular one. I will be content to argue that *The Hobbit*, as well as showing the children's book qualities, the echoes of medieval literature, and other features that others have discussed already, is pervasively marked by characteristics of a type of writing very much in the air during the specific decade in which Tolkien wrote his book. This was a time, Evelyn Waugh remembered, when, as a reviewer, he used to receive travel books "in batches of four or five a week"[1]. Like book publishers, editors of newspapers and magazines (such as Wide World) also loaded up their pages with travel writing. Tolkien couldn't miss it. Many of my examples of this writing will be taken from Peter Fleming's *Brazilian Adventure* (1933), which Paul Fussell says was "perhaps the most popular travel book written between the wars"[3]. It seems likely that Tolkien had been working on *The Hobbit* for many months by the time *Brazilian Adventure* was

*Of course, *The Hobbit* contains important departures from the travel book formula. Bilbo's journey is profoundly consequential for the history of Middle-earth because he brings back Sauron's Ring. But Bilbo doesn't realize that the Ring is of enormous importance, and neither did Tolkien when he wrote the book. The tone of *The Hobbit* becomes more heroic round about Chapters 14–17, as has often been noted. Here the travel book flavour is, indeed, nearly absent. Bilbo's involvement in the Battle of the Five Armies at the book's climax is important, but it was never foreseen by him and he never sees himself as a true hero. As for the typical travel book's lack of a 'tragic' dimension — it may be objected that there's Thorin's death. One suspects that Bilbo found this subject a bit above him when he wrote that part of his memoir. His own subtitle, 'A Hobbit's Holiday', obviously shies away from the elegiac as well as other aspects of the heroic. Bilbo's book was to be a precursor of the 1930s travel books that were thousands of years in the future relative to Bilbo's late-Third Age milieu!

published. I don't know whether he ever read it. But it is a good exemplar of a kind of writing that finds many echoes in *The Hobbit*.

The travel-book journey might start with an advertisement leading to face-to-face negotiations:

> Exploring and sporting expedition, under experienced guidance, leaving England June, to explore rivers Central Brazil, if possible ascertain fate Colonel Fawcett; abundance game, big and small; exceptional fishing; ROOM TWO MORE GUNS; highest references expected and given. — Write Box X, The Times, E. C. 4
>
> (ref. 4)

Gandalf set up Bilbo for adventures that he did not desire, by leaving a mark that the dwarf Gloin interprets as an advertisement (5):

> "Burglar wants good job, plenty of Excitement and reasonable Reward, that's how it is usually read. You can say Expert treasure-hunter instead of Burglar if you like. Some of them do. It's all the same to us. Gandalf told us that there was a man of the sort in these parts looking for a Job at once, and that he had arranged for a meeting here this Wednesday tea-time."

Patrick Balfour's Asian journey began when he happened to see a London 'sandwichman' bearing a sign:

> TO INDIA
> BY ROLLS-ROYCE CAR
> FOR £34
> LEAVING OCTOBER 18

Whimsically, he answers the advertisement "and thought no more about it" until his telephone rings in the middle of the night[6]. In each case — Fleming's, Balfour's, Bilbo's — the journey does not begin with the traveller making travel plans on his own initiative. Somehow, he gets caught up in someone else's agenda.

The impetus for the journey may, to be sure, include an element of romantic legend. In *The Hobbit* it is a tale of exile and lost treasure. In *Brazilian Adventure* it is an attempt to find, or find news of, the vanished explorer Fawcett (whose story is told in the recently published *Lost City of Z* by David Grann). But the tone is relatively lighthearted.

Travel books such as *Brazilian Adventure* are first-person real-world narratives, whereas Tolkien has cast Bilbo's fantasy-world journey over the Misty Mountains, through Mirkwood and to the Lonely Mountain in the third person. A third-person narrator has advantages over a first-person one for a story set in an invented world. Still, Tolkien uses a version of the deflationary tone characteristic of the travel book as written by Fleming, Waugh and others. For example, here's Waugh:

> I do not think I shall ever forget the sight of [the volcanic Mt] Etna at sunset; the mountain almost invisible in a blur of pastel grey, glowing on the top and then repeating its shape, as though reflected, in a wisp of grey smoke, with the whole horizon behind radiant with pink light, fading gently into a grey pastel sky. Nothing I have ever seen in Art or Nature was quite so revolting.
>
> (ref. 7)

And here's Tolkien:

> The lands opened wide about him, filled with the waters of the river which broke up and wandered in a hundred winding courses, or halted in marshes and pools dotted with isles on every side; but still a strong water flowed steadily through the midst. And far away, its dark head in a torn cloud, there loomed the Mountain! Its nearest neighbours to the North-East and the tumbled land that joined it to them could not be seen. All alone it rose and looked across the marshes to the forest. The Lonely Mountain! Bilbo had come far and through many adventures to see it, and now he did not like the look of it in the least.
>
> (ref. 5)

In each passage, the description of an impressive, even formidable, landscape is followed by an ironic, deflating comment.

Tolkien's way of writing about food is very close to that of Peter Fleming. Here's Tolkien:

> '… there they rested for a while and had such a breakfast as they could, chiefly cram and water. (If you want to know what cram is, I can only say that I don't know the recipe; but it is biscuitish, keeps good indefinitely, is supposed to be sustaining, and is certainly not entertaining, being in fact very uninteresting except as a chewing exercise. It was made by the Lake-men for long journeys). (ref. 5)

Here's Fleming:

> I had better explain about farinha, which is important stuff in Central Brazil. Farinha is made from the mandioca or cassava, a root of which the chief peculiarity is that, while its juice is a rapidly destructive poison, the flour is a nutritious though insipid food. After the juice has been extracted the mandioca is dried, ground, and baked. The result looks like a pale and rather knobbly form of sawdust, a substance to which it is not noticeably superior in flavour. (ref. 4)

Here's Fleming on the way the travellers' imaginations circled around food:

> ….the earlier hours of the afternoon [on their arduous return journey by row-boat] would be devoted to a discussion of the meals we would have when we got home, and to dietetic reminiscences: Brie cheese — alligator pears — the pint-pots at the Trout — cherry jam in the Pyrenees — a woodcock pie in Roger's room at Eton — sausages and mash. (ref. 4)

When Bilbo's hand closes over Gollum's Ring for the first time, the hobbit doesn't suddenly feel a sense of menace

or of imminent power. No; at the beginning of Chapter 5, exhausted from his adventures inside the Misty Mountains, Bilbo is wrapped up in a reverie of food:

> He thought of himself frying bacon and eggs in his own kitchen at home — for he could feel inside that it was high time for some meal or other; but that only made him miserabler. (ref. 5)

Just before the Mirkwood spiders begin to try to trap weary, hungry Bilbo in Chapter 8, he is resting:

> So he sat himself down with his back to a tree, and not for the last time fell to thinking of his far-distant hobbit hole with its beautiful pantries. He was deep in thoughts of bacon and eggs and toast and butter when he felt something touch him. (ref. 5)

Travellers in these 1930s books are on long, long walks. They are apt to find themselves at cross-purposes with people they meet along the way. Sometimes the atmosphere may be tense; but it is sometimes farcical. In Chapter 7 of *The Hobbit* Gandalf directs the group members to arrive in pairs at Beorn's dwelling; the wizard wants to make it easier for Beorn to accept so many guests, and he succeeds, but not before the bear-man comes near being exasperated. The dialogue is delightfully amusing for the reader. What one person, Beorn, expects is quite different from how the incident develops. A similar source of humour appears when Waugh describes a troop of boy scouts in Aden. A Somali boy is tested on the scout law:

> "First scoot law a scoot's honour iss to be trust second scoot law…" et cetera, in one breath.
> "Very good, Abdul. Now tell me what does 'thrifty' mean?"
> "Trifty min?"
> "Yes, what do you mean, when you say a scout is thrifty?"
> "I min a scoot hass no money."
> "Well, that's more or less right. What does 'clean' mean?"
> "Clin min?"
> "You said just now a scout is clean in thought, word, and deed."
> "Yis, scott iss clin."
> "Well, what do you mean by that?"
> "I min tought, worden deed." (ref. 7)

Both parties in this dialogue seemed to be losing confidence in the other's intelligence.'

Incidentally, people who haven't read travel books of the 1920s and 1930s might expect that they relate adventures with dangerous animals — lions, tigers, elephants gone musth. In my experience of reading them, these books don't contain such episodes. Similarly, there are no dangerous brutes in *The Hobbit*. To be sure, wolves (Wargs) and spiders appear. But these are rational creatures. Gandalf knows the language of the wolves, and the spiders and Bilbo speak the same language. Beorn and some bears apparently talk to each other in bear language at night. Clearly, Bilbo and the dwarves are never threatened by simple animals during their long journeys, and, from what I have seen, Fleming, Waugh, Greene, Byron and others never have to defend themselves against poisonous reptiles or ravenous mammals. L. Sprague de Camp once asked Tolkien why there seem to be no large mammals roaming Middle-earth, and Tolkien replied that his imagination was formed by England[8], where animals such as wild bears and boars disappeared long ago. In any event, if Tolkien read 1930s travel books with accounts of scenes far from England, he still would not have run across (melo)dramatic scenes with threatening brutes that might have suggested episodes for *The Hobbit*.

Travellers may be attracted by older, aesthetically superior cultures that they seek or encounter. Robert Byron[9] enthuses over "the perfection of architecture" in Isfahan, Persia. (Interestingly, Byron discerns in the Friday Mosque "a hint of William Morris" in the design of a rose-tree, and we remember the importance of Morris as a writer for Tolkien.) Elvish culture, as represented in Chapter 3 By Rivendell, is older than, and superior to, the Shire. Elrond represents the greatest of Middle-earth cultures. He is "an elf-friend" and "as noble and as fair in face as an elf-lord", and his "house was perfect," a living repository of lore and a place where evil things do not come.

Conversely, travellers are disgusted by some of the things they see. Greene[10] loathed "The Horrible Village" of Duogobmai: its diseased inhabitants, dust, "skinny chickens everywhere", bat-eared puppies nosing in the food Greene will eat, rats rustling. Lying in a wretched hut, he can't stop brooding over fears of "leprosy, yaws, smallpox". The spiders who capture the dwarves in Chapter 8 are "huge and horrible", with voices described as a "thin creaking and hissing". They make the dwarves "sick and weary" from their venom and the discomfort of being trussed up in sticky webs. When struck, "a noise like the kicking of a flabby football" is produced. Bilbo and the dwarves at last drive them back to their "dark colony" — a "horrible village" indeed.

The travel-book qualities of *The Hobbit* are not sustained through all of its episodes; at least, I would not want to argue that the climactic material with Smaug, Bard and the Battle of the Five Armies, have any definite affinities with travel books. But we should deal with one more parallel between Tolkien's classic and the typical interwar travel books. When Waugh mentioned[1] the batches of travel books that reviewers used to receive, he mentioned that they were typically "cram-full of charm and enlarged Leica snapshots". Obviously, children's books often contain illustrations. But note that Tolkien's illustrations in the hardcover editions of *The Hobbit* are not depictions of the adventures. The published book doesn't show the goblins' attack, the spiders' raid, or the elves capturing the dwarves; there is no picture of Gollum, nor of the burning of Lake-town. The majority of the pictures are landscapes or interiors: the frontispiece of The Hill; the full-page picture of the stormy Mountain-path; the end-of-chapter drawing of the Misty Mountains "looking West"; a picture of Beorn's (empty) hall; a full-page drawing of Lake-town; a picture of the inside of Bag End. Perhaps people who have thought about the matter have supposed that many of Tolkien's pictures have small or no figures because the artist

was shy of rendering them. Perhaps; but these drawings are equivalents of travel-book photographs; when exciting things are happening, the traveller is not going to manage a camera; it is when things are quiet that he will be able to compose a photograph. Whether Tolkien had travel-book photos in mind when he designed many of the pictures for *The Hobbit*, he might as well have had: in all cases, the pictures don't depict the most exciting sequences. The trolls are just sitting there, as if an artist drew them unobserved. Even the colour picture of Smaug is still, almost like a carefully composed travel-book picture of some Asian dragon sculpture. And, just as the typical travel book enticed readers with endpaper maps, so too do hardcover editions of *The Hobbit*.

The golden age of British literary travel ended with the beginnings (or resumption) of European war and then world war. The 'New Hobbit', the sequel to Bilbo's adventures, is, to be sure, a story of long journeys, but those journeys lack the open-air excursion feeling of the 1937 book, and *The Lord of the Rings* remains fantastic literature's greatest tale of war. The Hobbit is a classic for the generations and is also a book belonging to the interwar high-water mark of the travel book.

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1. Waugh, E. *When the Going Was Good* (Little, Brown, 1947). In this 314-page book, Waugh included "all that I wish to reprint of the four travel books I wrote between the years 1929 and 1935", that is, the 1930, 1931, 1934 and 1936 titles included in *Waugh Abroad* (see ref. 7).
2. Byron, R. *First Russia, Then Tibet* (Penguin, 1985). Originally published 1933.
3. Fussell, P. *Abroad: British Literary Traveling Between the Wars* (Oxford Univ. Press, 1982).
4. Fleming, P. *Brazilian Adventure* (Penguin, 1957). Originally published 1933; reprinted in the Penguin Travel Library *ca* 1985. Another good Fleming travel book, not cited here, is *News from Tartary* (Abacus, 1995), originally published 1936.
5. Tolkien, J. R. R. *The Hobbit, or There and Back Again* (Ballantine, 1982). The text is that of the revised edition, but having drafted this article, I compared my citations to this text with that of a 1938 Houghton Mifflin printing in the collection of Mayville State University in North Dakota (acquisition date 24 October 1938). There are no differences.
6. Balfour, P. *Grand Tour: Diary of an Eastward Journey. Illustrated with Photographs Taken by the Author, Many of Which Are Unique* (Harcourt, Brace, 1935).
7. Waugh, E. *Waugh Abroad: Collected Travel Writing* (Everyman's Library, 2003).
8. Nelson, D. Where Are the Large Animals in Middle-earth? *Beyond Bree* (April 2010).
9. Greene, G. *Journey Without Maps* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1978). Originally published 1936.
10. Byron, R. *The Road to Oxiana* (Oxford Univ. Press, 1983). Originally published 1937.

The 'divine passive' in *The Lord of the Rings*

KUSUMITA PEDERSEN

In the narrative of *The Lord of the Rings*[1], God is never mentioned directly[2]. At the same time, it is often observed that in this work, Tolkien does at times seem to refer to God, but in indirect ways. Tolkien acknowledges this. In a 1956 letter he appropriates the phrase of a critic who speaks of "that one ever-present Person who is never absent and never named" (*Letters* 192). In a slightly earlier letter to Father Robert Murray, Tolkien discusses in detail certain theological matters arising from "the mythology", but comments that in the book itself, "I have purposely kept all allusions to the highest matters down to mere hints, perceptible only by the most attentive, or kept them under unexplained symbolic forms" (*Letters* 156)[3]. This essay is concerned with these 'hints' and in particular with one very specific kind of 'hint' pointing to the divine presence. There is evidence that strongly suggests that Tolkien mentions God indirectly but deliberately by using what in biblical interpretation is called the 'divine passive'.

The subject of religion can be a sensitive one for those who care about Tolkien, so it is may be best to emphasize at the outset that, although references to the Bible unavoidably occur in what follows, I have no intention of trying to prove that if Tolkien uses the divine passive he is referring to specifically Christian ideas. Nor am I seeking to advance an agenda about Tolkien as a 'Christian author' or some other kind of religious agenda. I am in agreement with Brian Rosebury, who states (referring to the text of *The Lord of the Rings* in itself): "Not only is Christianity not literally present, there is no surrogate for it or allegorical structure suggestive of it"[4]. This non-presence, however, does not rule out the use of a biblical rhetorical device. As the divine passive has been the subject of analysis and discussion by scholars of Scripture for more than a hundred years, Tolkien's employment of it may be a detail, but it is a significant one.

The divine passive is the use in the Bible of the passive voice to indicate that God, who is not named, is the doer of the action[5]. The divine passive is not only a technical matter debated by scholars, but is also well known as part of the toolbox of exegesis used by Christian clergy and others involved in Bible study. The English term 'divine passive' was coined by Joachim Jeremias, whose 1971 *New Testament Theology: The Proclamation of Jesus* is the study most often cited; the device is also called the *divinum passivum* and the 'theological passive', especially by European scholars.

Not all agree on its distinctive nature or the degree of its importance, but Jeremias and others contend that the divine passive occurs frequently in the New Testament. It is also found in the Hebrew Bible. Some scholars believe that the divine passive derives from a Jewish reticence concerning mention of the divine name YHWH, a reticence that continues down to the present. To avoid misuse of God's name, the custom arose of often referring to God by means of circumlocutions[6].

There are a number of such circumlocutions, of which the divine passive is only one, and of course not every use of a passive verb with an unnamed subject is a divine passive. There are three requirements for a genuine occurrence of the divine passive: the verb must be in the passive voice, it must be a transitive verb, and the context must indicate that God is the agent of the action. It is the third requirement that naturally gives rise most often to argument about identification. Jeremias holds that in the Gospels Jesus uses the divine passive about 100 times. Analysis by Jeremias and other scholars is highly specific and detailed. Here just a few examples will serve as illustrations (those not interested in biblical texts may wish to skip the next paragraph).

There are some instances in which, given the context, there seems to be no doubt that God is the 'implied agent' of an action. The 'basic term for forgiveness' in the Hebrew Bible is *salah*; when this verb is used God is invariably the agent who effects forgiveness and its passive "functions as a divine passive", according to John S. Kselman[7]. In the New Testament, the Gospel of John says, "The law was given through Moses" (*John* 1:17)[8]. In Matthew's Gospel an angel tells the women at the tomb of Jesus "He is not here; for he has been raised" (28:6), and when Paul refers to the resurrection he also may use the divine passive (*1 Cor.* 15:4, 12, 16)[9]. The Beatitudes are very often mentioned as examples of the divine passive — "they will be comforted", "they will be filled", "they will receive mercy" (*Matt*. 5:4, 6-7). Scholars argue variously that the divine passive is used in accordance with the general reticence regarding the divine name, as an implicit but theologically charged reference to the Tetragrammaton or YHWH, as a veiled mention of God's action found especially in an apocalyptic context, or because of a wish to focus the reader's attention on the event itself or the object of the action, rather than the doer (ref. 5, Jeremias pp. 13-14, Reiser pp. 266-273; ref. 6, Soulen pp. 250-253).

None of the reasons the writers of the books of the Bible may have for using the divine passive need be attributed to Tolkien. Tolkien's reasons for keeping allusions to the highest matters confined to hints and symbolic forms" and for thus omitting from *The Lord of the Rings* "practically all references to anything like 'religion,' to cults and practices" (*Letters* 142) are his own. They are complex, ambivalent and multi-layered and call for a separate and in-depth treatment beyond the scope of this essay. Here let it just be said briefly that some, including Rosebury (ref. 4, p. 153), believe one reason for this concealment is that overt mention of religion could alienate unbelieving readers. Tolkien himself says, "Myth and fairy-story, as all art, reflect and contain in solution elements of moral and religious truth (or error), but not explicit, not in the known form of the

primary 'real' world" (*Letters* 131). He elaborates on why this is so in his essay *On Fairy-Stories*, where he states that to be seen clearly, things need to be "freed from the drab blur of triteness or familiarity — from possessiveness". There are additional reasons that Tolkien prefers implicit modes of expression, including a wish to keep his distance from professional theology and philosophy as well as a reticence which was part of his character[10]. Given that he wishes to be indirect about religious matters in *The Lord of the Rings*, the device of the divine passive is well suited to his approach.

Those familiar with *The Lord of the Rings* can now readily provide relevant passages. In the first two examples given here, Tolkien's hint is a broad one. For the first, Tolkien actually confirms (although glancingly) in the first letter mentioned above[11] that the implied agent is God when Gandalf says, "There was more than one power at work, Frodo …there was something else at work, beyond any design of the Ring-maker. I can put it no plainer than by saying Bilbo was *meant* to find the Ring, and *not* by its maker. In which case you also were *meant* to have it" (emphasis in the original), and when Frodo cries, "Why was I chosen?" Gandalf affirms, "you have been chosen." A second example: as the Council of Elrond assembles Elrond says, "That is the purpose for which you are called hither. *Called, I say, though I have not called you to me*, strangers from distant lands. You have come and are here met, in this very nick of time, by chance as it may seem. Yet it is not so. Believe rather that *it is so ordered* that we, who sit here, and none others, must now find counsel for the peril of the world" (emphasis added). Additional examples: Elrond adds later, "I think that this task is appointed for you, Frodo;" in the same vein, "'It does not belong to either of us,' said Aragorn, 'but it has been ordained that you should hold it for a while;'" and Galadriel, "Maybe the paths that you each shall tread are already laid before your feet, though you do not see them." In each of these passages the utterance is by one of 'the Wise", who know of the existence of the One (*Letters* 297). If these statements are divine passives, then God is implied as the agent who means, chooses, calls, orders, appoints, ordains and lays before their feet the paths of persons in the narrative.

It is thus not surprising that a great many of the apparent divine passives in *The Lord of the Rings* are spoken by Gandalf. An important example, as it is confirmed by Tolkien, is Gandalf's statement "Naked I was sent back — for a brief time, until my task is done." In the letter to Robert Murray already cited, Tolkien says, "He was sent by a mere prudent plan of the angelic Valar or governors; but Authority had taken up this plan and enlarged it, at the moment of its failure. 'Naked I was sent back — for a brief time, until my task is done'. Sent back by whom, and whence? Not by the 'gods' whose business is only with this embodied world and its time; for he passed 'out of thought and time'" (*Letters* 156). Other statements by Gandalf that strongly suggest an unnamed divine agent are his words to the Lord of the Nazgûl, "Go back to the abyss prepared for you!" and to Denethor, "Authority is not given to you, Steward of Gondor, to order the hour of your death." To these passages may be added his references to "the time that is given us" and to "the succour of those years wherein we are set"; possibly his statement, "Also it is given to me to see many things far off"[12]. Other examples could be given, but space does not permit an exhaustive inventory[13].

These passages and others have been noticed by authors concerned with the religious dimensions of Tolkien's works. In *The Battle for Middle-earth*, Fleming Rutledge provides a reading of *The Lord of the Rings* drawing out Tolkien's biblical resonances and what she calls his "deep theological narrative". She emphasizes the role of passive constructions and also discusses other locutions that seem to displace agency or will away from the characters to other, invisible entities. Rutledge avers that Tolkien's story resembles the "tripartite drama" of the New Testament in that there are three sets of actors: characters like ourselves in need of redemption; active agents of evil, and God along with God's instruments. Thus in *The Lord of the Rings*, in addition to the Free Peoples and the Enemy, there is an unseen, transcendent Power which works for the good and is referred to obliquely. Rutledge says: "Just as in Scripture, the passive voice denotes the working of another agency" and "The use of the passive voice … in the Bible is the model for Tolkien's writing in the numerous places where he wants to suggest divine activity." She mentions such use of the passive about 20 times, but never refers to it as the divine passive. In most cases she interprets the implied agency not as God, but in a more general manner which may also include the Valar as Ilúvatar's intermediaries, and even Gandalf as their emissary. She uses such inclusive phrases as "providential, veiled Powers" or "unseen forces of good". Matthew Dickerson, on the other hand, focuses on God's agency as such in "The Hand of Ilúvatar," the chapter in *Following Gandalf* in which he provides a fine summary of these aspects of the narrative (ref. 1, Rutledge, pp. 57, 63, 288, 106, 98; ref. 2, Dickerson Ch. 9).

We now turn to the question, did Tolkien in fact know of the divine passive so that he uses it consciously? To begin with the obvious, Tolkien had an expert knowledge of Greek and was well acquainted with the Bible[14]. To what extent did he know the biblical text in a technical sense, especially the New Testament, which is the main source for the divine passive? At King Edward's School in Birmingham where Greek and Latin were central to the curriculum, the headmaster, Robert Carey Gilson, "encouraged his pupils to make a detailed study of classical linguistics", Carpenter tells us[15]. In July 1910 one of the five examinations Tolkien took for the Oxford and Cambridge Higher Certificate was Scripture Knowledge: Greek Text[16]. It cannot be ascertained with certainty what Greek grammars Tolkien used to learn the Greek of the New Testament, nor what books on this subject were in Tolkien's library later in his life, but the classic *Grammatik des Neutestamentlichen Griechisch* of Friedrich Blass, first published in 1896, was translated into English by H. St John Thackeray in 1898

with a second English edition in 1905. This grammar, still in print, does mention the divine passive[17]. There is as well another work that may well have influenced Tolkien directly or indirectly even when he was at King Edward's School, possibly through Gilson or another of his teachers. This is Gustav Dalman's *The Words of Jesus*, first published in German in 1898 and translated into English in 1902 (Blass refers to it), so seminal that it is still available in a 1996 reprint. In it Dalman does point out the use of the passive to refer to God as the implied agent of an action and he is cited down to the present in discussions of the divine passive[18]. There is every likelihood that Tolkien even at this early stage was aware of this special use of the passive voice in the New Testament.

At this point the reader may be thinking, as I have myself, but did Tolkien really have any need of Greek grammars or the findings of scholars to know about the divine passive? He knew and cared more about language than most people. The Bible was important to him all his life. With the wealth of examples in the New Testament, would not the divine passive have become obvious to him even unaided? Indeed, that he did not know of it seems extremely unlikely. The evidence that Tolkien deliberately uses the divine passive is circumstantial in the sense that there is no 'smoking gun', that is, Tolkien does not seem to have stated plainly anywhere, "I use the passive voice as it is used in Scripture — to point to God as the unnamed Doer." That he consciously makes use of the divine passive thus cannot be demonstrated beyond all possible doubt, but its attested frequency in the Bible together with the many biblical resonances in *The Lord of the Rings* point to the probability that he does. This probability is strengthened both by the fact that Tolkien almost certainly was well aware of this device and by the comments already cited that he makes in his letters; these comments come close to a definite confirmation, at least in the case of the passages under discussion.

The evidence taken as a whole strongly suggests that when Tolkien uses the passive to indicate an unnamed agent, in some instances he is placing in words usually spoken by the Wise a reference not to unspecified agents and forces in an unseen world or even to the Valar, but to the One — Eru Ilúvatar. How does this affect our interpretation of *The Lord of the Rings*, if it does? First, as the references are indirect, the reader can pass them by, an occasion of 'applicability' and 'the freedom of the reader'. Also, as noted previously, the use of a biblical device does not in itself necessarily imply (contra Rutledge and others) a specifically biblical worldview or permit a uniquely Christian meaning to be injected into the text. Rather, if we accept that Tolkien is using the divine passive, this has the effect of validating a sense that some readers already have, a sense that the presence and action of the One is being intimated or tacitly recognized. It must still be remembered that a single supreme deity is not an idea limited to any particular religious tradition. Finally, this intentional although indirect manner of referring to God or Ilúvatar is one more of the many ways that Tolkien meshes *The Lord of the Rings* with *The Silmarillion*. Tolkien held that *The Lord of the Rings* requires *The Silmarillion* "to be fully intelligible" (*Letters* 124). Should we wish to reflect on possible theological ramifications of the divine passive, whatever we think these might be, we must look for our sources not only in The Lord of the Rings but also in the whole body of myth and legend of all the ages of Middle-earth.

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1. I would like to thank Konrad Raiser and Hans Ucko for first acquainting me with the divine passive and also to acknowledge my indebtedness to the work of Fleming Rutledge in *The Battle for Middle-earth: Tolkien's Divine Design in The Lord of the Rings*, Cambridge: William B. Eerdmans (2004).
2. "The One" is mentioned in Appendix A: "But when Ar-Pharazôn set foot upon the shores of Aman the Blessed, the Valar laid down their guardianship and called upon the One, and the world was changed." In addition, when Gandalf on the bridge of Khazad-Dûm says, "I am a servant of the Secret Fire," both Birzer (Birzer, Bradley. J. R. R. Tolkien's Sanctifying Myth: Understanding Middle-earth. Wilmington, Delaware: ISI Books [2003], p. 77) and Dickerson (Dickerson, Matthew T. Following Gandalf: Epic Battles and Moral Victory in The Lord of the Rings, Grand Rapids, Michigan: Brazos Press [2003], p. 190) recognize his words as referring to the Holy Spirit. This cannot be counted, however, as a direct reference to God; it is an indirect one, one of Tolkien's "unexplained symbolic forms." To construe Gandalf's words as a reference to God, the reader must at least know that fire is a symbol of the Holy Spirit (see Acts 2:1-4), perhaps have read "Ainulindalë," possibly also be aware that Tolkien told Clyde Kilby that "the Secret Fire," or "Imperishable Flame," is indeed the Holy Spirit (Kilby, Clyde S. Tolkien and The Silmarillion, Wheaton, Illinois: Harold Shaw Publishers, [1976], p. 59) and maybe even know that the early Quenya lexicon states that the word for "fire" (Sa) "is also a mystic name identified with the Holy Ghost" (as cited in Garth, John. Tolkien and the Great War, New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2003, p. 255). This information is thought-provoking but does not spell out the nature of the Holy Spirit or its role in the narrative, which can be construed and problematized in various ways. (All references to the Bible are to the New Revised Standard Version, hereafter NRSV.)
3. The letter continues, "So God and the 'angelic' gods, the Lords or Powers of the West, only peep through in such places as Gandalf's conversation with Frodo: 'behind that there was something else at work, beyond any design of the Ring-maker's'; or Faramir's Númenórean grace at dinner" (Letter 156).
4. Rosebury, Brian. Tolkien: A Cultural Phenomenon, New York: Palgrave MacMillan (2003), p. 153.
5. The following account is drawn chiefly from Jeremias, Joachim. New Testament Theology: The Proclamation of Jesus, tr. John Bowden. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons (1971), Reiser, Marius. Jesus and Judgement: The Eschatological Proclamation in Its Jewish Context. tr. Linda M. Maloney. Minneapolis: Fortress Press (1997 [1990]), and Mowery, Robert L. "What Does God Do? Divine Actives and Passives in the Gospel of Matthew." Paper delivered at the Annual Meeting of The Society of Biblical Literature (SBL), November 2002. A concise summary partly challenging Jeremias can be found in Reiser, pp. 266-273.
6. In the Second Temple period, following the Babylonian exile, Jews began to make a practice of not mentioning the Tetragrammaton or YHWH, "the personal proper name of the God of Israel" (Soulen, R. Kendall. "The Name of the Holy Trinity: A Triune Name." Theology Today 59 [2002]: 244-261, see p. 248) so as to avoid any possibility of its wrong use. Concerning the language used by Jesus, Jeremias says: "Even in the pre-Christian period, there was a prohibition against uttering the Tetragrammaton, to ensure that the second commandment [Ex. 20:7; Deut. 5:11] was followed as scrupulously as possible and to exclude any misuse of the divine name. Later on, but still in the pre-Christian period, there arose the custom of speaking of God's actions and feelings in periphrases. Jesus certainly had no hesitation in using the word 'God,' but to a large extent he followed the custom of the time and spoke of the action of God by means of circumlocutions" (p. 9).
7. Kselman, John S. "Forgiveness (Old Testament)" in The Anchor Bible

Dictionary, Volume 2, edited by David Noel Freedman. New York: Doubleday, 1992: 831-833.
8. See Hans Ucko. "Full of Grace and Truth: Bible Study on John 1:14-18," Ecumenical Review 56 (2004): 342-347.
9. In the same chapter in verses 42-45 Paul says that the body "is sown" and "is raised"; the chapter also includes explicit mention of God as agent; see also 2 Timothy 2:8.
10. I have explored this topic more fully in "Concealing 'Religion,' Revealing Truth," a paper presented to the Tolkien 2006 Conference, University of Vermont at Burlington, April 2006.
11. After mentioning "the Other Power" who is "the Writer of the Story" and "that one ever-present Person who is never absent and never named," Tolkien tells his correspondent to "See Vol. I, p. 65," which Carpenter notes is in fact this same passage (Letter 192), and see Tolkien's mention of "Gandalf's conversation with Frodo" (Letter 156), already referred to in Note 3 above.
12. See also the narrator's description, shortly before this, of Gandalf looking out from the walls of Minas Tirith after the Battle of the Pelennor Fields: "And he beheld with the sight that was given to him all that was befallen."
13. As in the Bible, not all of Tolkien's uses in The Lord of the Rings of the passive voice with an implied agent necessarily point to God as the doer. In Appendix A, Thorin says to Gandalf, "Master Gandalf, I know you only by sight, but now I should be glad to speak with you. You have often come into my thoughts of late, as if I were bidden to seek you." Gandalf's answer, "I have thought of you also," indicates that it is likely that Thorin's experience results from Gandalf's thinking of him and not from divine action. Another interesting example of ambiguity occurs when Eowyn says of Aragorn, "Fey I thought him, like one whom the dead call," and Theoden replies, "Maybe he was called," shifting the "call" away from "the dead" but leaving the caller unnamed.
14. See Walton, Christina Ganong. "Bible," in J. R. R. Tolkien Encyclopedia: Scholarship and Critical Assessment, edited by Michael D. C. Drout, New York: Routledge, 2007: 62-64.
15. Carpenter, Humphrey. J. R. R. Tolkien: A Biography, New York: Houghton Mifflin (2000 [1977]), p. 42.
16. Scull, Christina and Wayne G. Hammond. The J. R. R. Tolkien Companion and Guide. Volume One, Chronology. New York: Houghton Mifflin. 2006, see p. 19. Scull and Hammond also note that when Tolkien was at Oxford, University students had to take a compulsory examination in Holy Scripture which included the text of two of the Gospels. They surmise, "We have found no record of Tolkien having taken this examination; it may be that his passing mark in Scripture Knowledge…in 1910 fulfilled the requirement" (p. 777).
17. Blass, F. and A. Debrunner, A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature. A Translation and Revision of the ninth-tenth German edition incorporating supplementary notes of A. Debrunner, by Robert W. Funk. Chicago: University of Chicago Press (1961). See Sections 130.1, 313, 342.1.
18. Dalman, Gustaf. The Words of Jesus, Considered in the Light of Post-biblical Jewish Writings and the Aramaic Language. Eugene, Oregon: Wipf and Stock Publishers (1997), [Die Worte Jesu I, 1898, trans. D. M. Kay, 1902], pp. 224-226. As already noted, this particular term for such use of the passive did not come into use until seven decades later, when it was created by Jeremias.

Ending the dualism of nature and industry in *The Lord of the Rings*

SARAH J SPROUSE

Tolkien's world relies upon the intertwining threads of nature and industry, although they cannot function merely as two opposing forces. A Buddhist reading of the text demonstrates the balancing act inherent in *The Lord of the Rings* as well as the importance of stewardship over dominion. It is clear in the text that overwhelming attachment to industrial power leads to suffering, not just for the individual but for the whole of Middle-earth. Here I attempt to demonstrate through a close reading that *The Lord of the Rings* contains major tenets of Buddhist philosophy through its contemporary and relevant examination of industrial power and its effects on Middle-earth as a whole. Previous scholarship has examined Buddhist figures in the text, but I have not seen any articles that specifically examine the sweep of *samsāra* and suffering as it relates to the imbalance of nature and industry.

A simplistic reading of *The Lord of the Rings* might entail a study of the binaries good and evil or the dualism between nature and industry. However, these perspectives cast the text into basic black-and-white terms. Rather than seeing nature and industry as dual and opposing threads, they need to be perceived as a careful balancing act. Saruman disturbs this balance by means of his ongoing search for power through heavy industry. The disruptive characters of the novel attempt to dominate their environments, and in this act of seeking extreme power they alienate themselves and further instigate dualities.

"Sauron and Saruman, like Gollum," write Loy and Goodhew[1], "no longer have any goal but power itself — the power that is the Ring. With them Tolkien shows the suffering that results from a quest for power lacking a moral dimension."

The two major ideologies in conjunction with nature in Middle-earth are the advocacies of stewardship and, conversely, dominion. Michael Brisbois writes:

> Tolkien advocates stewardship over dominion in LotR. The tree-herd Ents, the Elves, and the Hobbits all live in a relationship of stewardship with nature. (ref. 2)

In arguing that the evils of Middle-earth cling to power, Tolkien wrote an epic Zen novel. Zen, a form of Buddhism derived from the Indian Dhyana tradition, is practised in accordance with nature by attempting to let go of attachments and prevent harm. Attachment causes harm because all things are impermanent and changing.

> Zen stone gardens seem very simple — just a few stones and raked gravel. But … the more we explore and sit with them, watching the light change, the more we see how all the elements are constantly changing. (ref. 3)

If one attaches to an object, one will be harmed when it changes.

This continuously changing nature of the world can be expressed by the Zen aesthetic term *yūgen*. *Yūgen* means 'mystery' or 'cloudy impenetrability' in Japanese[3]. This term in Zen art is meant to demonstrate the difficulty in grasping at an impermanent object. Curiously[4], "Ent is an Old English word for … 'mysterious being'. Roman ruins in the landscape were described as *eald enta geweorc* 'old works of the Ents'". Tolkien's Ents reflect the age of Middle-earth because, like Tom Bombadil, they have lived so long and seen so much. This sense of archaism reminds the reader that the war of the Second Age is being repeated. Although these 'mysterious beings' are representative of change in Middle-earth, their attachments to those around them blinded them to the evils at Isengard. Treebeard explains this attachment as "growing sleepy, going treeish" (*The Two Towers*: Treebeard).

Tolkien wrote to Fr Douglas Carter about the hope in Middle-earth that "they were not bound for ever to the circles of the world" (*Letters* 338). This concept is reminiscent of the Buddhist understanding of *samsāra* or reincarnation. It could also refer to a cyclic quality of history: the war of Middle-earth's Second Age is returning. Tom Bombadil, the elves, and ents such as Treebeard seem to be ageless and separate from the circular motions of the world. Treebeard describes the Elvish land of Lothlórien as "fading" or simply "not growing" (*The Two Towers*: Treebeard).

There is something exceedingly otherworldly about Lothlórien. Boromir insisted that "few come out who once go in; and of that few none have escaped unscathed" (*The Fellowship of the Ring*: Lothlórien). However, Aragorn corrects the word "unscathed" with "unchanged." Whether or not Tolkien intended Lothlórien to be a symbol of heaven or nirvana, it is implied that not even Lothlórien is exempt from change. This realm of golden woods is simply another community of Middle-earth and has a part in its future. "The Whole exists within each significant fragment … because every significant fragment reproduces the Whole."[5] Each community has a stake in Middle-earth's sustainability because the entirety of the world is built upon these interconnected realms.

When asked about symbolism in *The Lord of the Rings*, Tolkien responded in a letter to Herbert Schiro that "the tale is not really about Power and Dominion: that only sets the wheels going; it is about Death and the desire for deathlessness" (*Letters* 203). Elves are plagued with "limitless serial longevity" rather than simplistic immortality (*Letters* 208). The fate of the world is also their fate; so protecting nature from the destruction of domineering industry becomes a necessity. Unaffected by the delusions of the Ring, elves can perceive the balance between nature and industry rather than concede to pressing oppositions. Seeking an end to strife for the sake of all living creatures (even the trees, rocks and animals seem to have sentience in Middle-earth) is the very definition of a *bodhisattva*. This Buddhist is usually a monk who meditates on enlightenment, dedicating every action of their day to the welfare of all beings in all worlds.

As first explained by Loy and Goodhew[1], the best examples of *bodhisattvas* in Middle-earth are Frodo and Sam: "The task of socially engaged bodhisattvas is not to unravel the mystery that is our world, but to do what we can to succor its sufferings in this time of crisis." These two hobbits are struggling to let go of the Ring for the salvation of all the creatures of Middle-earth, which by the very definition makes them *bodhisattvas*. When the power of the Ring overcomes Sam in a moment of delusion, his vision is of filling the vale of Gorgoroth with gardens and trees. Sam realizes the difference between the illusion and reality more quickly than most who encounter the Ring and understands that the vision is a "mere cheat to betray him" (*The Return of the King*: The Tower of Cirith Ungol). He chooses reality because "one small garden of a free gardener was all his need and due, not a garden swollen to a realm; his own hands to use, not the hands of others to command". This becomes one of the most important choices in the novel because it is the decision to leave delusions behind and continue on the quest to let go. "The goal is not another world but another way of living in this one, even as nirvana is not another place but a liberated way of experiencing this one."[1] Sam is able to penetrate the Ring's delusions in order to seek access to a better path of living for all beings in Middle-earth. On the other hand, Frodo becomes blinded by these delusions.

Industry does not have to equate dominion over nature, which most of the races of Middle-earth understand. The hobbits understand this and work in accordance with nature. "By advocating stewardship rather than dominion, Tolkien puts his villains on the other side of the coin."[2] The Shire is perverted towards the end of the novel when Saruman introduces heavy industry to their previously green and sustainable realm. In 'Concerning Hobbits', Tolkien describes hobbits as "unobtrusive" (*The Lord of the Rings*: Prologue). Hobbits are not particularly interested in machines that are "more complicated than a forge-bellows, a water-mill, or a hand-loom" and have a "close friendship with the earth". This love of nature keeps the hobbits from willingly leaving major imprints upon it through destruction.

Elves and men live in accordance with nature rather than separating themselves from it, like the hobbits. "They feel no need to dominate or commodify Middle-earth. It is enough to be a part of it, because it is home to all of them."[1] This is the expression of *pratītya samutpāda*, a Sanskrit term for inter-connectedness or inter-relatedness. All beings are part of the whole that is Middle-earth. "If we look at the universe, we find that everything in it exists only in relation to something else."[6] By believing in stewardship rather than dominion, these races of Middle-earth refute separation from their environment. The elves are as much a part of the environment as are the trees.

In an interview[7], Bill Moyers asked Joseph Campbell (regarding a pygmy legend about a little boy and a bird), "Isn't that a story about what happens when human beings destroy their environment? Destroy their world? Destroy

nature and the revelations of nature?" Campbell responded by saying "They destroy their own nature, too." The evils of Middle-earth exploit the natural resources to perpetuate a web of delusions that have already ensnared them. This dominion over nature not only destroys the environment, but could also in the long run lead to the destruction of all the creatures in Middle-earth. It is an act of denying interconnectedness because a sentient being would not work to destroy something to which they are connected or dependent upon. That goes against the psychology of survival. According to Buddhist philosophy, this kind of ignorance is not simply not knowing, but actively believing in that which is not true. In other words, delusions are at play.

Sauron's rise to power began "slowly, beginning with fair motives: the reorganizing and rehabilitation of the ruin of Middle-earth, 'neglected by the gods', he becomes a reincarnation of evil" and is "thus 'Lord of magic and machines', who favours 'machinery' — with destructive and evil effects."[8] Saruman too favours machinery in the pursuit of absolute power. "The Old English *isen geard* 'iron yard' [is a] place where metalworking takes place."[4] He develops a "mind of metal and wheels" (*The Two Towers*: Treebeard). When Saruman escapes to the Shire and again dominates those that are around him, destruction ensues. "Even Sam's vision in the Mirror had not prepared him for what they saw" (*The Return of the King*: The Scouring of the Shire). The Shire had been completely polluted with trees uprooted and huts erected.

After Saruman's downfall at Isengard, he is delusional and dangerous. All of the toil put into industry at the expense of neighbouring Fangorn would have been for nothing if he was to be locked up in Orthanc and prevented from obtaining the one thing he truly desired. It is at this point that the reader can see similarities to Gollum. Saruman feels betrayed by others and his own delusions, "for 'disenchanted' people will fall for the first rationalization for exploiting and destroying, and a disenchanted world doesn't feel worth defending"[5]. Even as he has lost, Saruman is still trying to wheedle himself out of captivity to seek the Ring in vain. He tries desperately to convince Gandalf of his good intentions:

> "Our friendship would profit us both alike. Much we could still accomplish together, to heal the disorders of the world. Let us understand one another, and dismiss from thought these lesser folk! Let them wait on our decisions! For the common good I am willing to redress the past, and to receive you. Will you not consult with me? Will you not come up?"
>
> (*The Two Towers*: The Voice of Saruman)

The Ring has so corrupted Saruman's mind that he seems to almost believe his own false words. He would again seek to dominate his environment for the sake of his own selfish gains. Rather than abandoning his tower, "Saruman remains to nurse his hatred and weave again such webs as he can" (*The Two Towers*: The Voice of Saruman).

According to Tolkien, *nazg* means 'ring' in the Black Speech (*Letters* 297). The Nazgûl are extreme examples of attachment to the Ring. These creatures are the walking dead and ancient kings of Middle-earth. The Ring took

such a strong hold over their minds that, like the elves, they walk forever though they are not necessarily immortal. They are agents of evil and leave pollution in their wake. Early in the novel at the River Bruinen, the Nazgûl "defile its pure waters with Sauron's essence"[9]. Attachment again leads to perceiving nature and industry as dualistic rather than inter-connected. These creatures were caught in the clutches of the Ring's delusional power long ago and it still holds its sway. Aragorn said that "their power is in terror" and "in dark and loneliness they are strongest" (*The Fellowship of the Ring*: Strider). The Nazgûl are akin to shadows in the world; their power of terror is stronger than their own physical bodies.

Bilbo fell prey to the same phenomenon that allowed the Nazgûl to live through the Ages. It is the power of the Ring that extends mortality. However, this extension is not one of life, but rather a stretching of time. Bilbo describes the feeling as "sort of stretched, … like butter that has been scraped over too much bread" and he realizes that that "can't be right", acknowledging that he "need[s] a change" (*The Fellowship of the Ring*: A Long Expected Party). Like the Nazgûl, Bilbo has grown attached to the delusional power of the Ring despite the consequences of suffering that follow along with it. The other lesser rings have a similar power. "It is the three rings the elves possess that preserve their enchanted enclaves of peace, where time seems to stand still — which is why the destruction of the ruling Ring marks the end of their world."[1] It is a poisoned taste of immortality that gives the impression of preventing change. This is akin to the major Buddhist pitfall of believing that one has achieved enlightenment when in fact they have not.

When faced with a Zen reading of Tom Bombadil, it rapidly becomes apparent that he is a Buddha figure. The Ring has no effect on him; Tom does not desire or attach to it. He is amused by it, although he has no particular interest in this potential for extreme power. Instead, he tells Frodo: "Tom must teach the right road, and keep your feet from wandering" (*The Fellowship of the Ring*: In the House of Tom Bombadil). His compassionate instruction echoes the buddhist goal of helping others achieve enlightenment. After all, the hobbits are on their way to let go of the Ring, although they do not yet know how far they will have to go to do this. Tolkien describes this in a letter to Naomi Mitchison as a "natural pacifist view" and goes on to say "only the victory of the West will allow Bombadil to continue, or even to survive. Nothing would be left for him in the world of Sauron" (*Letters* 144). He is an enigma who has no real impact on Middle-earth except through the guidance he gives to others. Tom understands the impermanence of this world and does not see a dualism between nature and industry because he is so much a part of nature while using rudimentary industrial tools such as lamps and cooking fires. The hobbits' time spent in Bombadil's house is explained further in the chapter as a span that could have been "one day or of many days". Time had no control over them while with Bombadil, which again is indicative of his Buddha-nature.

Sauron's Ring is the ultimate temptation that works against the beings of Middle-earth and threatens, not Buddha figures like Tom Bombadil, but those that Tom seeks to commune with (nature) and aid (the hobbits). Saruman is caught up in this poisonous desire and "there comes a time when the machine begins to dictate to you"[7]. The 'machine' in this case is that temptation of power. Saruman wants to use the Ring or attempt to create his own, but that very desire controls him through delusion. Gandalf recognizes the difference of being in control and being controlled when he says that he does not "wish for mastery" (*The Two Towers*: The Voice of Saruman). One cannot master the Ring. It has a life or will of it's own. At Mount Doom, it seems to speak through Frodo in the last attempt to save itself.

Saruman's delusion is that he can control the Ring and through it control the entirety of Middle-earth. His wisdom is dulled under the power of this illusion and he can no longer appreciate the natural environment around him. Saruman's industrial revolution in the Shire threatens the same wasteland that he has inflicted upon Isengard. Tolkien asked in a letter to Stanley Unwin, "Do you think Tom Bombadil, the spirit of the (vanishing) Oxford and Berkshire countryside, could be made into the hero of a story?" (*Letters* 19). If Tom is a hero of Middle-earth, it is because of his peaceful interactions with the environment and his Buddha-like guidance of the other heroes of *The Lord of the Rings*. He understands what many races have understood and that some have forgotten: seeing nature and industry as binaries rather than two parts of a whole can have devastating effects. In separating himself from his environment, Saruman destroys the nature around him.

The Men of Gondor might have forgotten this for a time too. Denethor, like Saruman, was under the spell of a Palantir. He allowed delusions to carry his mind away from reality. Similar to stewardship or dominion over nature, Denethor confused his own role as a Steward: "and the rule of Gondor, my lord, is mine and no other man's, unless the king should come again" (*The Return of the King*: Minas Tirith). Gandalf tells him that the king has indeed returned, which greatly angers Denethor. He fell under the delusion of his own power and sees himself as kingly. It is further explained that in his control, Minas Tirith was "falling year by year into decay" and the white tree had all but died in his care. After he becomes king, Aragorn replaces the dead tree with a sapling that is a "scion of the Eldest of Trees" (*The Return of the King*: The Steward and the King). Therein begins the healing process of all that Denethor had damaged.

Evil is not so easily categorized in black-and-white terms. However, it is spread in Middle-earth through extreme attachment to the desire for power. All of the races experience the temptation in one way or another, but those who fail the test separate themselves from all others. By rejecting the notion that all beings are connected and are all related parts of a single whole, they bring destruction down upon Middle-earth and ultimately destroy themselves. In this way,

Tolkien advocated the stewardship of nature and not the domination of it. "Tolkien meant to convey a harmonious relationship between humankind and nature" by writing it as an "inseparable relationship"[8]. The beings of Middle-earth must eliminate the perception of nature and industry as a duality in order to preserve it.

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Tolkien's use of free will versus predestination in *The Lord of the Rings*

BUD SCOTT

Tolkien's use of free will versus predestination is the cornerstone of *The Lord of the Rings*. Without it, would there be a story at all? Or would it be much like a tapestry on a wall with a single loose thread? Apparently at first glance this thread is a flaw, a mistake of the weaver but the greater mistake still is to try to resolve this flaw. In doing so you will find, for all of your good intentions, a pile of thread on the floor where once had hung a tapestry. Even though the pile of thread is the same material as the tapestry it no longer forms a coherent picture. Much the same thing happens to *The Lord of the Rings* if you 'pull' out the free will. You are left with two-dimensional characters doing their parts out of obedience to some unknown power.

The concepts of good and evil also suffer from the removal of free will. Until Eve bit from the apple there was no concept of evil or wrong. If you have no evil, how can good be compared to a nonexistent idea? Therefore if you remove free will, you also remove good and evil.

Most examples of free will have a counterpart of predestination. It is a double-edged sword. Tolkien throughout *The Lord of the Rings* makes his characters choose one thing or another. This is always backed up with the idea that the choice they make is somehow tied into the big scheme of things. Also, had they made a choice other than the appropriate ones, disastrous things would occur. For example, about Bilbo finding the Ring, Gandalf says: "Bilbo's arrival just at that time and putting his hand on it, blindly, in the dark", which leads us to believe no choice was made here. On the contrary, the choice was made by Bilbo to pick up this 'thing'; he could have let it lie. Also, it is out of ignorance that he picks it up, as Tolkien points out by his use of the words "blindly" and "in the dark". Had Bilbo the least inkling of what the Ring was about and all the trouble it would cause he would never have picked it up. Was it fate that put Bilbo there at that time or was it Tolkien? Aren't they one and the same within the context of *The Lord of the Rings*? The fact that Tolkien worked on these books for 17 years[1] means there was nothing left to chance, but he skilfully manoeuvres the reader to think that there is a choice. He also leaves some issues unresolved to make the reader ponder.

If *The Lord of the Rings* is read, as it was supposedly written, a narrative history of Middle-earth prior to, during and just after the War of the Ring, the reader is caught up in questions such as: had Bilbo killed Gollum would Frodo have had the resolve to cast the Ring into the Cracks of Doom? Or if Bilbo had started his ownership of the Ring with an act of violence instead of mercy, wouldn't the Ring have gained control of him? And wouldn't this have made the first question academic? The variety of questions is endless.

Most readers also find themselves relating to the hero (Frodo), and asking themselves whether or not they would have made the same decisions under the same circumstances. This is where Tolkien's true ability shines through. He draws on real life and the fine line between fate and free will, whereby people say 'if I had my life to live over I would do things differently'. They think this may change events. In the context of *The Lord of the Rings* this would not hold true, because the events would be carried out only with different characters.

Some characters no longer have any free will because a stronger will has been exerted on them. This is the case with Saruman, his will has been consumed by Sauron. Here I must take the opposite view from James Robinson, who says of Saruman "he is the only character who, when faced with the choice of good and evil, consciously chooses evil. He was under no compulsion to make such a choice"[2]. From the time Saruman took up residence in Orthanc, and began to use its palantír, he gave up his free will. Had Sauron not had another palantír the one Saruman used would have been relatively harmless. But because Sauron did have one,

Saruman was soon trapped and had to do Sauron's bidding.

Another example is Gollum; by the time we encounter him he has been in hiding for almost 500 years. During this time he has possessed the Ring (a great deal of Sauron's will and power), but the reader realizes that, in fact, the Ring possesses him. He cannot do anything unless he knows his "precious" is near at hand.

It was then that Bilbo Baggins, a hobbit from the Shire, came along and by 'chance' found the Ring. I say 'chance', because it is more than that; it is destined that he and nobody else finds the Ring.

As Gandalf says:

> "A Ring of Power looks after itself, Frodo. It may slip off treacherously, but its keeper never abandons it. At most he plays with the idea of handing it over to someone else's care and that only in the early stage, when it first begins to grip. But as far as I know Bilbo alone in history has ever gone beyond playing, and really done it. He needed all my help, too. And even so he would not have just forsaken it, or cast it aside. It was not Gollum, Frodo, but the Ring itself that decided things. The Ring left him."
>
> "What, just in time to meet Bilbo?" said Frodo "Wouldn't an Orc have suited it better?"
>
> "It's no laughing matter, not for you. It was the strangest event in the whole history of the Ring so far: Bilbo's arrival just at that time, and putting his hand on it, blindly, in the dark!
>
> … Only to be picked up by the most unlikely person imaginable: Bilbo from the Shire! Behind that there was something else at work; beyond any design of the Ring-maker. I can put it no plainer than by saying Bilbo was meant to find the Ring, and not by its maker. In which case you also were meant to have it."
>
> (*The Fellowship of the Ring*: The Shadow of the Past)

At this point Frodo first understands why he was meant to have the Ring and that he must use whatever resources he has to make a dangerous journey. His saving grace is the fact that he is humble, wanting only the safety of the Shire over his own. But as his journey continues he learns of the rest of Middle-earth from which he had previously been isolated. This knowledge comes with a great price, he is no longer responsible for the Shire alone, but to the entire of Middle-earth.

It is here that his resolve stiffens and he says: "I will take the Ring, though I do not know the way." Elrond replies to this by saying: " If I understand all that I have heard, I think this task is appointed for you Frodo and that if you do not find a way, no one will." (No pressure here, it's only the fate of all the free peoples of Middle-earth!) Elrond then adds: "But it is a heavy burden. So heavy that none could lay it on another. I do not lay it on you. But if you take it freely, I will say your choice is right."

Here again Tolkien juxtaposes free will and predestination, after Frodo says he will take it then Elrond need not give his speech, but Tolkien uses this to set up a conflict. Although Frodo will take the Ring freely, Elrond seems to be giving Frodo a way out on the one hand, while giving him a 'guilt trip' on the other. Here Tolkien makes us think, did Frodo have a real choice or was his path already laid out far him?

In the same way, Tolkien uses Gandalf, Aragorn and Galadriel as the Three Fates of classic mythology, or Noras, of the Germanic peoples, to determine Frodo's fate. To rid himself of the Quest, Frodo tries three times to give the Ring away; first to Gandalf, second to Aragorn and last to Galadriel. Only after the third has turned him down does he fully realize that the responsibility is on his shoulders. It is now Galadriel tells Frodo: "In the morning you must depart, for now we have chosen, and the tides of fate are flowing."

Clearly Galadriel has chosen not to take the Ring. Frodo on the other hand, has only chosen by default.

There are many times that Frodo chooses by default and these must fall into the realm of fate. For example, Frodo being given the Ring in the first place; he didn't necessarily want it or not want it. It was just one of the things passed down to him from Bilbo.

To say he didn't want it, however, may not be entirely true. As he lived so long with Bilbo and in close proximity to the Ring it may have had its influence on him. Did Frodo have a secret desire to possess the Ring, so secret that he himself did not dare think about? And didn't this desire become manifest at the Cracks of Doom? Here Frodo says: "I have come. But I do not choose now to do what I came to do. I will not do this deed. The Ring is mine!"

He didn't have this desire at all. Having carried the Ring for so many miles and through so many perils he used the Ring only four times before claiming it for his own — once each at the house of Tom Bombadil; in Bree at The Prancing Pony (where he used it — or should it be, it used him to reveal its whereabouts); then again at Weathertop where Black Riders were closing in on them (and here again the Ring tricked him and led the riders straight to him); and finally when the Fellowship broke up and he and Sam went west towards Mordor. In two of these cases, the Ring and not Frodo was the force behind the decision. This is the point I want to make, when Frodo claimed the Ring for his own he had no free will left, it was the Ring (incarnation of evil) that was speaking through him.

> "Frodo spoke with a clear voice, indeed with a voice clear and more powerful than Sam had heard before."
>
> (*The Return of the King*: Mount Doom)

It was Frodo's choice to keep the Ring, and then again it was not, because the being we knew as Frodo had at that moment become an instrument of the Ring. The Ring, sensing its own impending doom, was making one last effort to save itself. Immediately after Gollum bites Frodo's finger off, Frodo reverts to his own self.

Gollum/Sméagol was in his Gollum form at this point, and totally corrupted by the Ring. In his Sméagol form he was more polite and eager to be of help. These two personalities test each other's will throughout the novel. In the end, Gollum's side wins out. He cannot bear the thought of Frodo destroying 'his precious'. When he sees that Frodo is taking

the Ring for his own, something inside him snaps. Whereas he couldn't bear the thought of someone destroying it, worse yet would be someone else possessing it.

From the beginning Gandalf alluded to Gollum being tied up in the fate of the Ring.

> "For even the wise cannot see all ends. I have not much hope that Gollum can be cured before he dies, but there is a chance of it. And he is bound up with the fate of the Ring. My heart tells me that he has some part to play yet, for good or ill, before the end; and when that comes, the pity of Bilbo may rule the fate of many."
>
> (*The Fellowship of the Ring*: The Shadow of the Past)

Indeed the pity of Bilbo, at the very beginning — and the pity of Sam, at the very end, were both signs of fate. Sam saw almost immediately the part he played by not killing Gollum, whereas it was many years before Bilbo could see the end results. Had Sam killed Gollum on Mount Doom, Frodo "could not have destroyed the Ring. The Quest would have been in vain".

If Tolkien had tried to write *The Lord of the Rings* without the interplay of fate and free will he might have achieved a marginal success through his knowledge of languages, and his story line of good versus evil. It is inconceivable that the success he achieved, in the 1960s through to the present, could have been done without free will versus predestination.

Without the twin pillars, free will and predestination, reading *The Lord of the Rings* would have been much like looking through only one eyepiece of a stereoscope. You would see an image in only two dimensions. But if you use both eyepieces you would see a scene in the illusion of three dimensions. This three-dimensional world is what Tolkien has attempted to create through his use of the dichotomy of free will versus predestination.

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THE PATHS OF THE DEAD

Tuilinde

Tall stand the stones stark is their warning —
Deep darkness, dread and doom they promise.
Only one has entered this silent realm
Of the oathbreaking King and his cursèd kin,
Where terror brought trembling to the foolhardy trespasser.
Still buried in blackness no barrow hides his bones
For down the long years none else dared the darkness!

But at last a great leader the heir who was longed for
Entered the darkness the anger daring.
Desperate the danger which drove on the Dúnadan,
Ships from the South sailing swiftly to war.

Wise were the words which were brought to him then,
  "If thou art in haste take the Paths of the Dead."
Fear filled the faces of friends and of allies,
The parting was painful from bold battle friends.
Wondering the words which Théoden spoke then:
  "These are the paths where all others may perish,
Alone you may dare them if it be your doom."
  "True Heir of Isildur, the son of Elendil,
This road I will take as my right and my task.
Through dark ways, doubtless, now I will dare them.
Thou, King of Rohan, ride to endless renown,
Fare forward, fearless, fulfilling our friendship!"

Now great-hearted Gimli in the grim, grey morning
First felt what fear was when the fell name he heard:
  "Will the living pass, will we not all perish?"
  "Nay, the road was foreseen in the words of the Seer,
Our need points the way — the oathbreakers will know me.
Oaths of allegiance taken at Erech's Stone
They failed, then broke, fleeing to the barren hills.
Though war has been waged for long years uncounted
Once again 'ere the end they will be summoned."

The silver-starred Dúnedain depart from the Deep.
Onward they swiftly passed with Elf and with Dwarf,
With Elrond's tall sons Elladan and Elrohir.
They came to Dunharrow, the camp before Dimholt,
Their errand most urgent in the early evening.
Éowyn of Rohan with eager greeting
Bade them be rested brought them refreshment,
But horror filled, heard the way of their haste.
She stared, stricken silent, in fear of the Sleepless Dead.
  "The Dead do not suffer the living to pass.
Remain here and rest now, then ride with the Rohirrim!"
  "Long years led me here, and lead me to go now,
I must adventure this road appointed!"

Light was the sky but the sun not yet risen
When folk hid in fear till these doomed ones were gone.
Desperate, the White Lady came to the leave-taking,
Grieving the loss of those saddled and ready,
Yet longing to join them whatever their fate.
  "Great deeds I desire, danger and high renown
With those who go with thee, those others, who love thee!"
  "Daring is not enough, our duty we cannot choose.
Your deeds must be done defending these humble homes,
Mine 'neath the Dwimorberg, on the Paths of the Dead."

Between standing stones stark before the mountain,
He led his liegemen, his kin and his friends,
To the stone at the door the tall finger of doom,
Right at the root in a wall of the rock.

There they dismounted on the dark, dank needles
Facing carved figures where fear flowed like a vapour.
Halbarad, Dúnadan, quietly courageous, said:
"This door is evil, my death lies beyond it."
Yet none of them faltered, their chieftain they followed,
Though horses stood sweating, trembling and troubled.
"Long leagues lie beyond, lead them in gently."
Only Arod of Rohan refused now to enter.
So soft Elven words were sung to his spirit
As Legolas calmed him, and lo, he was led.
Outside, now alone, the Dwarf faced the Door:
"They all went in there, and I, a Dwarf, dare not!"
Shame drove him in stumbling in fearfulness,
In darkness so deadly his Dwarf eyes were blinded.

Dim were their torches their flames seemed to fail
Blown by the blast of a ghostly chill breath.
Out of silence came whispers, shadow sounds in the stillness.
Unseen in the endless ways a great host was gathering.
Slow time passed unmeasured (no return in this place),
Till gold they saw glittering, garnets gleaming like blood
On a hauberk and harness lying fallen by a door.
For bold Baldor the boastful only death in the darkness,
No hoards and no secrets — for the Dead kept the Way.
His bones, never buried, they left as they found them,
As Aragorn answered the threat in the silence:
"One thing I ask for, not treasures nor weapons —
Great speed you may grant us, now come! You are summoned!"

Mumbling and murmuring the rumour of many feet
Filled all the long leagues 'til a grey light grew slowly.
The waters of Morthond flowed out from the mountain,
By the Blackroot they trod in a cliff-shadowed chasm.
Then onward they rode the ravine to the uplands,
The Dead followed close to the dreadful day's ending.
As house light went out in each hamlet and homestead
And bells rang below for the King of the Dead,
They rode like wild hunters to the Black Stone of Erech!

Elessar stood tall and his silver horn sounded;
Then horns from the hills they heard like long echoes.
"Why have you come, ye ancient Oathbreakers?"
"We owe our faith, our Oath and our duty."
"The hour long foretold out of long years is here —
The Heir of Isildur calls for your fealty.
I pass on to Pelargir you must promise to follow.
If you fight for the light, scour this land for all evil,
Fulfil your Oath truly, you will find freedom.
You will have peace and the curse will be lifted!"

No sigh and no whisper, no sound in the night
As Elessar's standard was swiftly unfurled —
Silver stars, silver crown and the white Tree of Gondor —
Through all the long leagues it led them to battle,
Four days and nights and on into the fifth
The steeds of the Dúnedain drummed the summons to war.
Through Lamedon, Lebennin, to the shores of the Anduin,
To the strands of Pelargir and the Black Ships of Umbar!

Though most fled in fear firm stood Lord Angbor.
When the Shadow Host passed his own host came after
To wharves on wide water and the wailing of gulls.
Then the Host of the Dead their Oath fulfilled faithfully —
No weapons they needed for none would withstand them.
When all was accomplished their King stood before them,
Raised his spear in salute, then snapped it asunder.
Aragorn answered, affirming his promise:
"You may depart from this world to the rest you have longed for!"
Like a mist in the sunlight the Dead faded away
No more to be seen in the Circles of Arda.

The Mountain lies empty, all evil departed,
No shadows or whispers, no shapes in the darkness.
But still no man ventures, still Baldor lies lonely,
No living feet tread on the Paths of the Dead!

How many beans make five?

ELIZABETH COUNIHAN

It was a dark and stormy night and the brigands were seated around the fire. The rest of the company shivered and grumbled and called for the landlord.

The landlord plucked up his courage and six pints of ale.

"On the house," he muttered nervously to the Chief of the Brigands. "Erm, would you mind moving back a little? It's a cold night and the other customers …"

"Dread Chief," growled the largest of the brigands, who sat next to his leader.

"Yes, sorry. Dread Chief, would your um … gentlemen be kind enough … to allow some warmth to …?"

The Chief sat nearest the fire. A diamond hat-pin, catching the firelight as he turned to the landlord, was brilliant in the shadow of his clothing.

"Well now," the Chief said, "if we were good Christian folk we would give way to these chilly people. But we are brigands are we not? And we must live up to our reputation." A ringed hand snatched a pint from the landlord. "But," he added, "this is good ale, so I am in a good mood. I have an idea. Let any member of the company who wishes to sit nearer to the fire tell a tale to amuse us. If I decide it's good enough we will admit the storyteller to our circle. What do you think of that, men?"

"Great idea, Dread Chief," rumbled the big fellow next to him. The rest displayed a gamut of rotting teeth and unwholesome gums as they grinned their assent.

"What if the story ain't no good?" asked the youngest brigand, who sat farthest from the fire and thought himself most in danger of displacement.

"Oh, don't worry, Antonio, we'll think of something," said the leader cheerfully. His own excellent teeth twinkled like fairy lights in the black forest of his beard. "Any volunteers?"

The wind howled outside, pushed against the cowhide awning that covered the inn door and lifted the few remaining hairs on the pate of a middle-aged farmer who was sitting just inside the entrance. It was enough to make up his mind. He rose from his bench and cleared his throat.

"I have a story to entertain you gents. A true tale it is, that happened to me a few years back." The chieftain beckoned with a flash of diamond ring and the man shuffled forward to stand awkwardly before the brigands, but at least out of the draught. He began: "I was a young man then with a narrow waist and a fine head of hair …"

"Get on with it," muttered the Chief.

"One day; it was a Thursday, I was on my way to market, thinking only of my darling Annie, or was it Rosy at that time? Anyway … as I walked down the road I came upon a fool going the same way."

"How did you know he was a fool?" asked the youngest brigand.

"That will come out in the telling. He was a young fool, not much more than a boy. He was leading a cow to market.

"'Good day, young master,' I said. 'Where are you going with that fine-looking beast?'

"'To market,' says he. 'My mother is a poor widow-woman and we are hard-pressed for money, so must sell our dear Daisy.' Now, I had need of a cow and thought maybe I could save myself a trip to town and spend the day with Annie, so I praised the cow again and said I could give him a very good price. He asked for five silver pennies.

"'For that fine beast,' I said, 'I can offer you something much better.' He looked at me vacant-like.

"I said, 'Why only yesterday I came into possession of some wonderful new beans that have been produced by the finest agricultural scientists in the world. They will give such a fine crop that you will never want for food again, for what you cannot eat you can sell for a handsome profit.' I did not tell him that a peddler had exchanged the seeds for my leather belt, which I was beginning to think was not such a good bargain.

"I fished in my pocket and drew out the peddler's five beans. To be sure they were unusual, very large and shiny as a beetle's wing. He gawped at them.

"'They are beautiful!' he said. 'I never saw anything so fine. My mother will be very proud of me. She always thinks I lack enterprise. But to give away my dear Daisy …'

"'Think of all those rows, acres, hectares of beans,' I said. He saw the vision I painted and readily agreed. I handed him the beans and put my hand out for the cow's halter.

"'Wait!' says he. 'I did not agree to sell the halter. Use that piece of string you have around your waist.' Quick as could be he removed the halter, exchanged it for the string and ran off in the opposite direction, the beans in one hand and the halter in the other. I was left holding Daisy and my breeches but well satisfied with the way I had tricked the young fool to exchange a cow for five beans."

The farmer bowed. One or two of the inn's customers clapped. The Chief yawned loudly.

"And did the cow serve you well?" he asked. The farmer's cheeks were ruddy.

"I cannot tell a lie, sir. The cow was dry and old and did not live long. But even so, for five beans …"

"It was you that was made a fool of, I'd say," the youngest brigand said. "I'm not giving up my seat by the fire for such a tale." He pulled out a knife.

"Peace, Antonio," said the Chief. "No indeed. Far from winning a seat by the fire you must pay a penalty."

"I'm a poor man, Dread Chief …" quavered the farmer.

"I'm not surprised. They say a fool and his money are soon parted, but I like the look of that leather belt around your middle — a wider belt than you gave to the peddler, I dare

say. Antonio?" The Chief gestured towards the youngest brigand.

Antonio flourished his knife. The farmer gave up his belt and retreated to his seat by the door, holding on to his trousers.

"Any more stories?" asked the Chief, his voice cutting through the laughter of his companions.

A tall, angular woman rose from a bench at one of the tables. She had the weather-beaten features of a farmer's wife but her dress was of fine dark wool and the kerchief on her iron-grey hair was of red silk.

"Farmer Brown is certainly a fool, particularly to repeat his silly tale in my hearing. It is true that I was a poor widow at the time he spoke of, but my fortunes have improved since then, thanks to the enterprise and good sense of my son, Jack."

She leant half-seated against a table. The Chief gestured to the landlord to give her a drink. The woman drank deeply and started her tale.

"After his father's death Jack helped me run our small holding as best he could. He was too young to do the heavy work of a man and we were poor. But he was a clever lad, always reading the newspapers, trying to find new ways to make money. When our last cow became too old for milking I told Jack to take her to the knacker's for catsmeat, although I knew we should get precious little for her. Even so when he came home with only five beans I was disappointed.

"'Don't worry, Mother,' he said. 'These are no ordinary beans. See! I recognized them from this description.' He fetched a copy of *Crop Growers Weekly* and showed me a recent report of the theft of some valuable seeds from the GEM Life Enhancement research laboratory. We both thought we would get a handsome reward for their return. Jack contacted GEM anonymously from a public phone but

the scientist he spoke to was very cagey. He wanted Jack to bring the beans to a secret location and hand them over in person. Jack feared a trap. So, in the end, we planted them ourselves and what a good decision it was!

"After only a day they had grown a foot. They climbed up the chalk cliff behind our land and soon it was covered in a forest of green tendrils. The flowers were all colours of the rainbow and I soon found they made wonderful dyes that were fit for a queen's robes." She indicated her brilliant head scarf.

"The stems could be drawn out into a fibre that could make the strongest rope or the finest cloth. The beans themselves had a very curious property, which we discovered when we gave some to our old dog to bulk out his Doggy Chunks. No sooner had he eaten his dinner than he raced around the yard and tore down the road. Our telephone soon rang with complaints from all the neighbours. Rover had ravished every bitch for miles around. We tried the beans on our billy-goat. Soon we were able to charge top prices for his services as a stud. The local rabbit population burgeoned. The buck rabbits were so exhausted by their pleasures that Rover and our cat, Tibbles, had no trouble in carrying them to our house where we feasted as often as we pleased on prime rabbit pie.

"Jack experimented with various fermentations and came up with a new health drink. We called it Fullabeenz. It was very popular as was our therapeutic herbal pipeweed, made from dried bean leaves. We were in the money!

"Then one day Jack decided to go farther afield. He had heard of powerful giant living high above the chalk cliff.

"'Most likely he has a captive princess to impress,' he said. 'Think how much Fullabeenz a giant would need!' So he set off, climbing up the beanstalk, higher and higher, until he disappeared into the cloud that always hung around the clifftop.

"I didn't see him again for a long time …"

The woman sat down again.

"Come on missus," said the big felon. "That ain't the end of the story."

"It isn't," agreed the woman. "But it's all I will tell." There was a murmur of disapproval from the rest of the gang.

"This is my judgement," said the Chief of the Brigands. "Ma'am, you will not be fined but neither shall you sit by the fire." He winked at her.

The woman nodded. "I'm content," she said. "I am warm enough here. Let another continue." She passed her beaker to the man next to her. He drank, then rose and stepped over the bench. He bowed elegantly, posed before the circle of brigands, a harp in his hand.

There was a ripple of applause from the landlord's customers and a shout of "Show 'em Harpo!"

He paused theatrically. In the silence everyone heard a tapping from outside.

"Only the wind," said Antonio, then, glancing round, "Hang on a minute. There's a horse looking in through the window!"

"I thought there might be," said the Chief mysteriously. "Carry on, harper."

Harpo played an arpeggio, then began in the tones of a practised performer:

"I will tell you a story of Jackanory
And now my story's begun.
I'll tell you another of Jack and his brother …"

"Not yet, harper," the Chief interrupted. "Just finish Jack's story. I'm sure we all want to hear the end."

Harpo smiled.

"I was a rogue as well as a musician until I met my dear lady there." He waved to Jack's mother who smiled back at him.

"It was Jack himself who put me on the path of righteousness. I was musician to the ogre who lived in the Black Castle far away above the hill. The giant didn't have a captive princess as young Jack surmised but he did have large amount of loot and a very great appetite for meat. We called him Jaws. So great was his hunger that his friends had difficulty in finding enough for him to eat. Sometimes he would threaten to eat us himself — joking of course. I spent many a weary hour catching game, tickling trout and so on. I left cattle-rustling and sheep-stealing to others more daring than I.

"One cold, windy day I was nearing the edge of the cliff, a fat pheasant in my sights, but half-observing a strange new vegetation that had crept up from the fields below, when I saw a head popping up and then a body. Soon the whole of Jack appeared, gasping somewhat. He looked like a nice innocent kind of fellow so I called to him:

"'Come not here! Know that ye be in the lands of a most fierce ogre who liketh nothing better than to drink the blood of Englishmen and grind their bones to make his bread.'

"'I'm Irish — Jack O'Lantern. Pleased to meet you,' Jack said.

"'The Irish he eats with potatoes,' said I but Jack was not perturbed in the least.

"'I wish to meet this ogre,' he said. 'I have a business proposition for him.'

"I shrugged and led him towards the Black Castle. We passed thorough many fields and woods, past rushing rivers, up hill and down dale; all, as I explained to Jack, the property of the ogre, Jaws. It was a clear day but felt cold enough to snow. The wind sang in the trees and stung my ears. By the time we reached the castle the sun was setting behind it, bringing it into black and dreadful relief — mountain of iron, gate of steel, tower of adamant etc. etc. A wild wind tore the high clouds into shreds. The ogre's emblem, a bloodshot eye, fluttered from a flagpole on the topmost turret.

"'He'll be in a bad mood,' I said. 'A north wind gives him migraine.'

At that moment there was a shriek from the highest battlement and we saw, silhouetted against the sky a huge, hunched form topped by a beetling brow and shaggy beard. Clinging one-handed to the flagpole like Joan of Arc in a rage, a slender maiden faced the angry ogre armed only with her banshee screams and the fruit with which she pelted him. Her flaming hair caught the last rays of the sun as it streamed out below the giant's pennant.

"'I knew it!' cried Jack. 'He has captured a princess. She needs my aid.' It was my opinion that it was Jaws that needed the help. His red-haired mistress was certainly no princess. As for Jack, he didn't stand a chance but I had taken a liking to the boy and was minded to keep him alive as long as was reasonable.

"'He will eat and then I will try to soothe him with a song or two. I will hide you. Don't come out until he is calm …'

"'Or he'll grind my bones … I know. Does Jaws like a pipe?'

I told Jack that the ogre preferred nothing better than a good smoke, that is except eating, slaying and enjoying the charms of the tempestuous Galatea.

"'Here, take this. It's a very special kind of herbal pipe weed. If your song doesn't work, this will,' Jack said with a wink.

"I had a chat with the porter while Jack crept through the gate. I could already hear Jaws bellowing from inside. We crossed the courtyard. The noise grew louder as we reached the great hall. I pushed Jack behind an arras before descending the steps into the hall itself. The ogre was sitting in his mighty chair, alternately bellowing and weeping. A side of mutton hissed in front of the huge log fire. One of his followers, weighed down under a big jug of beer, made to pour him a tankard, but Jaws snatched the jug and downed it all in a single gulp. Great tears rolled from his single eye. He held a shank of mutton in the other hand, which he chewed like a baby drawing comfort from a dummy. Galatea stood, hands on hips, her back to him. Her foot tapped impatiently. I coughed in the greasy atmosphere.

"Seeing me Jaws cried out, 'Oh, Harpo, sing something that will thaw her icy heart!' The lady tossed her red curls. 'I rage, I burn, I melt,' he added piteously.

I drew out my harp, strummed a few chords then sang one of his favourites:

"'O ruddier than the cherry
O sweeter than the berry
O nymph more bright than moonshine night …'

"The nymph herself continued to sulk. Jaws glared at me. 'Stop that noise,' he yelled. 'My head's killing me.' This kind of behaviour was by no means unusual and normally I, and probably half the household, would have taken off for a long walk lasting several days, until Gal had got whatever it was she wanted. But I was unwilling to abandon Jack. I whispered to one of the more nervous followers to fetch the ogre's pipe.

"'Enough of my song,' I said to the sorrowful behemoth. 'Behold, mighty master, today was revealed to me a new wonder that may distract you from you woe.' I took the pipe — big as a ladle — and filled it with the strange, greenish weed Jack had given me. It smelt like grass-mowings. A light was brought from the fire and Jaws sucked and blew between the manly sobs that shook his bosom. I spluttered as the pungent herb ignited. The stuff was vile, probably poisonous. I drew my dagger, ready to stab the traitorous intruder lurking behind the curtain.

"But lo! A beatific smile spread over the ogre's gnarled features. As the smoke percolated into the wider hall strong men in every direction smiled and giggled like schoolgirls. The cruel fair whirled on her toes, staggered and fell onto the gigantic lap, purring like a pussy-cat. 'Galatea, my golden lay,' crooned Jaws, smothering her in kisses. I stroked my harp lasciviously. Jack crept out from his hiding place. Even he looked somewhat befuddled and gazed longingly at the beauteous redhead. 'Princess,' he cooed, then more briskly, 'Let's get out of here.'

"Once in the open my head cleared. 'Never before have I heard that a powerful love potion may be wafted in the air. You are indeed a mighty wizard friend Jack,' I said, awe-struck.

"'This is not witchcraft but the appliance of science,' said he, 'the science of genetics. Given the chance I can show your master yet more wonders, such as the devastatingly powerful love potion Fullabeenz, which can arouse even the moribund to carnal activity.'

"And then he related his plan. I was to climb down the beanstalk, contact his widowed mother and then go to the Parlour of Madam Lola where I would persuade her and her professional ladies to accompany me to the castle.

"'For,' he said, 'it needs no physician to see that one female, however beautiful, among so many lusty men is by no means healthy. My mother will supply for you the potion Fullabeenz which is in her possession. Bring it and the town lovelies to the Black Castle and all your lives will be transformed.'

"Thus it was that I met …"

But just then there was a sudden commotion. The inn door was flung open admitting a powerful gust of wind and rain. Three people entered the room, one a slim masked figure, propelling two others. The first was a tall stick of a man, in an all-enveloping garment of shaggy, brown material. Only his melancholy face could be seen rising above it. His feet were encased in shiny, plastic hooves. A beribboned horse tail drooped from his backside. The second captive was a stocky figure, his features invisible beneath a horse's head complete with straw hat and floppy ears. The two prisoners fought manfully but in vain against the black gloved hands that had them collared.

There was a gasp and a titter from robbers and customers alike as the two halves of the pantomime horse were thrown to the floor where they lay side by side in a puddle of rainwater. With a black-booted foot on the taller man's neck, the masked man swiftly released the kerchief from his own face and used it to gag the first prisoner. A quick flash of a dagger and the horse's tail had been transformed into an effective ligature to tie his hands behind him. The shorter man's belt was swiftly removed and used to pinion his arms to his sides. His struggled furiously but his muffled cries were unintelligible under the horse's head.

"I followed this fine 'steed' from the stable where it was lurking among the real horses. I caught the pair of 'em peering through the window," scoffed their captor. "My Black Bess took a good bite out of this half." The short prisoner received a kick to his rear. "Look like foreign spies to me. Thought they might answer a question or two. But first, landlord, a glass of white wine, medium dry, well chilled."

"Right away sir er … madam," quavered the landlord, as

the unmasked man flung his dripping hat to the ground, revealing a cascade of shimmering red hair."

"Gal!" cried Harpo, blowing a kiss. "What a surprise! And beautiful as ever."

"Greetings Harpo," she said, depositing her sodden cloak on the floor.

A chair was brought and the wine. Galatea kicked the chair into the circle by the fire, elbowing Antonio aside, and sat down, her perfect profile haloed by the firelight. The Chief of the Brigands laughed.

"Delightful as it is for our circle to be graced by so fair a lady, nevertheless rules are rules and you must pay for your place with a story."

"What story shall I tell, Dread Chief?" she smiled.

Harpo called from the bench. "Why, Galatea, you arrived at an opportune moment. Finish the tale I had begun — that of Jack and the Beanstalk."

Galatea placed one foot across her thigh and again drew the ivory-handled dagger from her boot.

"Jack, aye, I knew him well … very well." She removed her gloves and started to clean her nails with the dagger tip.

"At the time I was the mistress of Polypheme the Mighty, known otherwise as Jaws, Lord of the Black Castle, but my inclination was beginning to wander. Jack appeared suddenly one night — a vision seen through a cloud of sweetly perfumed smoke — a handsome stripling with the look of a likely lad. Our eyes met across the crowded room. As I kissed Jaws that night I thought of Jack.

"Over the next few days Jack contrived to meet me in many a corridor, on many a battlement, in many a chamber, always melting into the shadows when we had dallied a while. Jaws was much occupied by the new pipe weed and listened eagerly to Jack's description of the wonderful beans and their many properties.

"At length Harpo returned bringing with him Jack's mother, a troupe of harlots and a barrel of Fullabeenz. The Black Castle had never resounded to such non-stop merriment! Fortified with Jack's marvellous liquor, Jaws forgot me entirely and set about vanquishing as many whores as possible in the shortest possible time. The rest of his men were moved to compete. Harpo constantly attended Jack's mother with whom he had become love-struck. Jack and I were left to our own devices and you may be sure we required no potion to enhance our passions. And really that is the end of the story. You could say we all lived happily ever after."

"Oh no you didn't!" objected one of the inn's customers, "Jack was chased down the beanstalk by the giant who fell to his death, leaving Jack to inherit his castle."

"Oh yes we did!" retorted Galatea. "That's just a fairy tale. Jaws shacked up with Madam Lola and they ran the vice racket together. Jack and I looked after the dope smuggling and health food side of things. When Jaws retired as boss Jack took over the whole business.

"But I didn't really come here to tell my life history. We have a pair of spies to deal with. Landlord, a round of drinks for all the storytellers and I'll have another Chardonnay."

She strolled over to the prisoners, still prone on the floor. She pulled the short one to his knees then snatched away the horse head. The man thus revealed was round faced and pale with anger. His eyes glared from under thick brows that matched his clipped black moustache.

"*Voleurs, malfaiteurs!* You will all be placed under arrest," he hissed. "Release me *toute de suite*!"

"Foreign spy, like I said," observed Galatea.

The man drew himself up as best he could and replied haughtily, "I am Inspecteur Javert of the European Bureau of Food Safety. And thees …" He indicated the back end of the horse, "is my loyal assistant Sergeant Dobbin of Scotland Yard. It is fifteen years I am on the trail of the illegal GM Beans. And tonight I find that it is as I thought, they are in the possession of the arch-criminal Jack the Giant Killer. Finally I have caught up with the miscreant. Release me, Madame, that I may do my duty."

"No chance, Mister," said Galatea, turning away. But the Chief of the Brigands had risen to his feet. He walked over to the policeman, dark as coal, his jewels jangling.

"I'm afraid you're on the wrong track, M'sieur. The beans were great while they lasted but you see they were sterile, built-in obsolescence by the manufacturer. Then McDollars bought the patent and put them into their veggie McFrankenburgers. I believe they are quite addictive if taken with Coca Cola. Go after McDollar if the beans are illegal. But I don't have any …"

"And he ain't killed no giants nor nobody," exclaimed Jaws rising to his colossal height and glaring out of his one eye. "Jack 'n' me are like that." He crossed two sausage-like fingers. "And if we ain't exactly legit we certainly don't operate in your department."

"Well ladies and gentlemen, thank you all for a most entertaining evening. We'd best be on our way. Coming Mother? Harpo? Thanks for your hospitality, landlord. Sorry about the story scam, but we Irish do love a joke …" Jack strolled towards the exit followed by the Widow O'Lantern and Harpo and then Jaws and the rest of the gang.

Jack paused in the act of opening the door and said as an afterthought, "Oh darling, undo the policemen, there's a good Gal." She did, handing over the horse tail and M Javert's belt as additional trophies for Antonio, who already brandished Farmer Brown's.

Soon the howl of the wind was mingled with the sound of laughter and the jingle of harness. Sergeant Dobbin, still clad as half a horse, crouched miserably in the doorway. Farmer Brown and Inspecteur Javert, clutching their trousers, were side by side on the bench. The cowhide curtain flapped in the gale.

"Shut the door," they shouted in two different languages, "behind you!"

Elizabeth Counihan is from a writing family. Her father was a BBC journalist and her grandfather a novelist. Elizabeth was a family doctor in the National Health Service for many years but is now concentrating on writing. Her stories have appeared in *Asimov's*, *Realms of Fantasy*, *Nature* and several other magazines and anthologies. She edited the British fantasy magazine *Scheherazade*.

The tale of Aud Sigurdsdottir

DIANE FOREST-HILL

"Give me your name," the Law-speaker intoned.

The supplicant put back dark hood from flaxen braids, and there were mutterings at the sight of a woman at the Law Rock.

"Who speaks for you?" the Law-speaker demanded, his gaze fierce upon her.

"I speak for myself, " the woman replied, coldly. "There is no one to speak for me. I am Aud Sigurdsdottir and I come from Seydisfjordr where those who would have spoken for me remain."

"What is your business here, woman?" the Law-Speaker asked.

"To find justice for my husband, our people and our children. To discover the names of those who took from me —" She drew herself up proudly "— and from whom I took back."

"Speak plainly, woman. Do you speak of a blood-feud?"

"None that I know of, or that my husband spoke of. He was a peaceful man, wishing to live quietly. I never knew him to argue with anyone. "

"What justice do you seek?"

"Compensation. For the death of every one of my husband's household. I was told to come here, to find a man of cursed name, whom I would know by a token of Odin." Aud looked around at the silent, listening crowd. At last she spoke again: "Those who came were strangers to us. They rode down out of the hills to the northwest of our valley. My husband sent men to greet them, to offer them the hospitality of his house." Her voice and body shook with rage. "Our men were cut down with sword and axe! The alarm was raised. I and my women took the children and hid in the back of the outhouses, behind the weaving rooms." Aud shuddered. " From there we heard the shouts of men, the screams of horses, iron on iron, and trampling hooves. Heavy shod feet came tramping into the sheds. Things were thrown around. They found us."

Aud became very still, her eyes glazed, staring into the past.

"They dragged us out, women and children. We fell over bodies on to blood-soaked grass; the bodies and blood of our men. Although I feared to see it, I couldn't help but look around for the body of my husband. I didn't see him, but all around me my women were starting to wail and weep as they saw their husbands among the dead. Then we were set upon. The little ones, the children —" Aud gasped and her anguished eyes flowed over with thick tears, "— they skewered on spears, or dashed out their brains. The mothers —" Aud covered her streaming eyes. She trembled and sobbed. From behind her hands her muffled voice wailed: "— the poor mothers! They screamed curses upon them and beat upon those animals with their bare hands, they bit and they tore! They were thrown to the ground, spat upon, laughed at, violated — "

Aud ceased to shake. She dropped her hands and her white face was hard and cold as the Law Rock. Still the blue eyes stared into the past.

"They used whatever came to hand. Some of the women were lucky. They died instantly."

Now the blue gaze came back to the present and looked straight into the eyes of the Law-Speaker.

"The screams of the tortured have rung in my head the twenty days of my journey to this place. They were left to scream, to bleed and to die where they were thrown. My son —" she moaned and closed her eyes in pain. The silent men around her waited. Her eyes opened, darkened, seeing such things that no man there cared to think on. "They said he was a sacrifice to Odin."

Out of the silence a growl of anger began to rise. Aud swayed and stumbled. One of the men caught her before she fell. There was a shout and another woman appeared, to hold Aud steady on her feet. Aud raised her head and the murmur fell.

"I awoke as the sun was going down behind the mountains. I remember thinking: 'A day, it has been a whole day.' I lay numb, wishing the sun would reach down pale hands and take my life down into the shadow, to forget. But I lived.

"Night came ablaze with the flames from the burning outhouses. Food stores, livestock, everything they had not slaughtered or plundered or thrown among the carcasses of men and women, the stockpiles of wood and charcoal for the Long Dark, all were ablaze. Everything but the house. Smoke rose out of the roof holes, along with the raucous shouts and boastful songs of that horde of drunken animals. If I could have put a torch to my heart my hate would have set it on fire. I was going to burn them. " She sighed and then a strange mirthless smile curved her lips. "It appears I was not so numb after all. My body felt torn inside. My chest and back ached from punches and kicks." She sighed again with her words, "When I tried to move I fell back to the ground. And at last I saw my husband."

Aud paused, staring once more through time. Her face puckered while her unknown companion held her close.

"They had hung him and several of his senior men, and my poor son —" she caught a sob and gasped, struggling to keep control to tell her tale. "All of them hung by the heels. I couldn't leave them there, hanging like horse-thieves! How did I reach them?" She looked around at the silent, waiting men. "I crawled. I remember the pain. I have been in constant pain from that day. But I did reach them and I did cut them down. I dragged the bodies of my husband and our son to the boat, raised for repairs, but I couldn't lift them

inside. So, I placed their bodies underneath, then turned and crawled to the burning logpile. As I seized a brand —" She licked her lips, suddenly she looked scared and glanced around at the men like a trapped thief. In a whisper she uttered: "I, among all women, was touched by — Odin, the god of men."

Voices rose in confusion and anger, crying out against her claim. Aud drew herself up and cried out: "I stood up and I bore that brand back to the boat and thus decently cremated my husband and son. I would have laid myself upon the pyre and burned with them but while I watched the smoke lifting their souls to Valhalla, a raven flew through the reek and I heard Odin speak to me."

All around the assembly voices rose still louder in disbelief and disapproval. The woman stepped away from her support and stood straight and proud and defiant, staring directly into the face of the Law-Speaker.

"How else could I have found the strength for my purpose?" she cried, and slowly the voices fell silent again. "The rest of them, men, women and children, deserved better than to be left as food for crows and foxes. I piled their bodies against the door and around the walls of the house. From among them I took the little children and burned them separately with prayers to Freya that she would receive them in her arms and comfort them. The rest I sent to Valhalla with their enemies trapped among them. I sent many prayers to

Odin that he might have the dirty souls of the enemy swallowed by Fenrir and spat out in the dark of Hel, there to suffer the torments of Loki for all eternity. I watched the house burn, listened to the screams of burning men, the thundering of their feet and hands. To the last cry I listened until only the roar and cracking of the flames remained. Again I waited for death and again, Odin spoke to me." This time not one dissenting voice was raised. "I found some herbs, a little roasted sheep flesh. After which I went to the stream to fill a waterskin. The water was so clear and cold and soothing to my skin that I waded into the stream and let it wash over me. As I knelt there, a horse came to the stream to drink. I called to it and by the blessing of Frey it came to me. Under Odin's never-failing protection I rode the long way around the southern edge of the great glacier to come here."

"What justice do you hope for, Aud Sigurdsdottir?" asked the Law-Speaker.

"Woman!" came a voice from the crowd and they parted to let through a tall one-eyed man with red braids and red-gold rings upon his arms and about his neck. "I bear the cursed name of Loki, given to me by a drunken father. I am Loki Ketilsson." He gestured to the great scar where his eye should have been. "I lost my eye in a fight with a man who tried to take my wife. A visiting sybil named it as a token of Odin and told me to seek here one who would need my protection. I came here with many men to ask for assistance against these vikings who seek to overrun our lands. Those men who murdered your people and whom you have executed were marauders, probably pirates from the south. We have many to come to our aid, you had none. Aud Sigurdsdottir, I say you are brave, and now you have no home. As Odin has brought both of us to this place, I offer you a home at my foster-father's homestead. We will seek to restore your land and house to you."

The Law-Speaker said: "You have made your own justice, Aud Sigurdsdottir."

Aud bowed her head to the Law-Speaker and turned to the red-haired man.

"Loki Ketilsson, your name is not accursed to me. I accept your protection and I thank you," she said.

Diane Forest-Hill lives in Southampton and works terrible hours.

Snicker-Snack and the Queen of Egypt

JEFF CROOK

High up on the seat of the tall black clarence sat a Confederate general, the tired ostrich plume of his hat brushing the limbs overhanging the road. His uniform was sweat stained and dusty with travel. Two men standing outside the smithy watched as he rolled by. One of the men was missing his left arm below the elbow. A redheaded girl about ten years old and dressed in a sooty flour sack stood behind them, her face gray and streaked with sweat, watching and blinking her bright green eyes.

A large shirtless man burst out of the doorway of the smithy, a cloud of smoke boiling out behind him. "Get back in there and work them bellows like I said!" he shouted at the girl. She darted under her father's arm and disappeared into the forge. The smith glared after her for a moment, then swung his fierce, green-eyed gaze upon the two slack-jawed men. He seemed about to say something until the passing carriage caught his attention.

The clarence's gilded wheels hissed through the dust. The horses' hooves thudded the dry earth as they turned through the open gate and into the fenced lot between the smithy and the Brogan Inn. It rolled to a stop with one wheel buried almost to the hub in the flower garden beside the porch steps. The general leaped down, dust billowing from his cape. He charged up the steps, jerked open the door and entered the inn.

He had no more gone inside than he was backing out again, with Lily Brogan, the innkeeper, nearly walking on his toes. He had removed his hat, loosing a mane of blond hair that spilled like golden foam over his shoulders. Long bushy moustaches hid his lips. Lily Brogan glared at him, then pointed at the barn.

The door of the black clarence swung open. The general hurried to it and assisted its occupant — a dusky-faced, willowy young woman dressed in maroon velvets and white lace — down the single step. She swept imperiously up the stairs and into the inn. The general climbed into the high seat of the clarence, backed the horses out of the flowers, then steered them around the corner toward the barn.

"I thought the war was over," Nub said while rubbing the stump of his left arm.

"War, nothing," John Salt said. "What about that woman."

"What woman?"

"Didn't you see her? In them frilly things?"

"She weren't nothin' but a nigger," Nub said.

"What would a Confederate general be doing driving around a nigger woman in a fancy carriage? Why would he hold out his hand to her like she was the Queen of Siam?" John Salt asked.

"Men will do strange things for a certain kind of woman. She looked like some kind of coon ass to me, though," Nub said.

The blacksmith pushed between the two men and started across the lot. His daughter shot out of the dark doorway and clung to her father's huge leg as he walked. John Salt and Nub followed. They crossed the yard beneath the shade trees, then out into the sun again, blinking and shading their eyes. They stopped at the gate that let into the side lot.

The general appeared from the barn, stepping out into the glaring sun and mopping his forehead with an enormous red handkerchief. Tucking it into the gold-braided sleeve of his uniform, he swaggered across the lot towards the men, one hand resting lightly on the cavalry sabre hanging from his belt, the other gripping the handle of what appeared to be a large iron picnic box with small square holes punched in its sides. He shook the box vigorously as he walked, but as he neared the men, it looked more like the box was shaking itself. He stopped at the gate and set it on the ground. It flipped on its side and emitted a shrieking howl. The general smiled beneath his moustaches at the men. A gold tooth flashed between his lips like a coin in a magician's palm.

"Good afternoon, gentlemen," he said, his enormous smile broadening almost to his ears.

The smith's daughter tried to climb through the gate to get a closer look at the picnic box. "Careful now, little lady," the general said gently. "Don't stick your finger through the holes."

"What's in there, mister?"

The general smiled at the men ranged along the fence, his dark eyes flickering from face to face, as he set one boot on the box to stop it from scooting around in the dust. He spoke, addressing the girl but directing his attention to the men, "My dear girl, inside this box is the very latest marvel from darkest Africa."

"We got plenty of Africans around here already," Nub said. The blacksmith snorted and slapped the top rail of the fence.

The general smiled indulgently, laughing along with the others. "I obtained it from the queen of Egypt as ransom for her daughter, who, though the very living embodiment of beauty and grace, was not nearly so charming as her mother."

"Can we see it?" the girl asked.

"Hush," her father barked. "We ain't buying nothin'."

Smiling at them, the general tipped the box up on its end. He carefully opened a small latched door and plunged one leather-gauntled fist inside. The box jerked, howled and leaped in the air as the general fished around inside, tongue clamped firmly in the corner of his mouth. Presently, he yanked out a small whirligig of yellow fur that buzzed yowling and spitting around his fist. He fought the blurred yellow ball until he had it by the scruff of the neck. He held it out at arm's length, presenting a tiny bristling tawny kitten with nefarious green eyes. It hung from his fist, its tiny ivory claws extended, needle fangs bared in a mewling snarl.

"Why, it's only a cat," John Salt said.

"Only a cat!" the general grunted. "Some folks might make that mistake, but they'd only make it once. Another more educated feller might assume this here creature is a gen-you-wine lion cub. But he would be wrong as well. No-sir-ree, gentlemen. This here is a direct descendant of those ancient lions magically bound by old Amhotep himself to guard the tombs of the pharaohs throughout all eternity. This, gentlemen, is a baby sphinx."

"A baby what?" John Salt muttered.

"Sphinx. *Felis sphinxtris egyptica* in the Latin tongue."

"What's a sphinx?" Nub asked.

"A sphinx is a critter that sets at the edge of the desert guarding the pharaoh's tomb and riddles anybody who dares pass his way, and them that can't answer get et up, quick as that," the girl said, snapping her fingers. She edged back as the men stared at her, her face shading red, and said into her father's trouser leg. "Parson learnt us about them in Sunday school."

"The girl is correct on every point," the general said through clenched teeth.

The girl smiled again. "What's his name?" she asked.

"Snicker-Snack," the general grunted. "That's the Egyptian word old Amhotep used to imbue this creature with its, shall we say, unique magical powers."

The general's female companion suddenly appeared in the open second-storey window of the inn. She gazed out the window, not down at the men but straight ahead, her dark eyes outlined in kohl, brooding and thoughtful, absorbed perhaps in contemplation of the distant hills as she brushed her long silky black hair. Then she was gone, replaced by a billow of white sheets and the broad back and piled-up grey hair of Lily Brogan making up the bed.

A cord of twitching muscle danced along the general's jaw. "I am sure," he began, "you gentlemen will shortly come to appreciate the finer qualities of this …" a single grunted curse burst from him, like a slamming door. Staggering into the fence, he fought the yellow howling blur of fur and claws and teeth until he had it stretched from head to tail in both hands like a man holding a poisonous snake. He panted, his moustache bent in a fierce, jaw-quivering smile. The men had backed away from the fence. The blacksmith held the girl firmly by the collar of her dress.

The general carefully and slowly worked the head of the kitten into the open hatch of the iron picnic box, then violently shoved the remainder inside, flipped the latch and stood back. The box sat quietly ominous, a nefarious green eyes glaring out from one of its square air holes.

"Well," the general heaved a sigh as he removed his gauntlet. "I hear tell that your fine community has been having trouble with carpetbaggers and rabblerousers."

"And good-for-nothing drummers," Nub added.

The general smiled, his gold tooth flashing in the sunlight. "Then you can't go wrong with this sphinx. He makes a wonderful pet, a gentler animal with children you'll never find, but he's hell's own fiend with niggers and such. He's got an inbred hatred for graverobbers, Nubians, thieves and liars."

"Ha!" Nub laughed.

"Do you doubt my word, sir?" the general queried.

"We all seen how gentle he is," the blacksmith said.

"Ha!" Nub laughed again.

"I'll make you boys a deal. Y'all come back here tomorrow morning and I'll give you a demonstration. If you're not convinced this kitten will grant you peace of mind when you go off to the fields and leave your womenfolk and chaps alone at home, with marauding niggers just waiting to rape any white women they can catch, well then, I'll buy every man here a jug of whiskey."

"Sure," Nub snorted uncomfortably as he glanced at John Salt. "I'm just about out of whiskey, too." John Salt turned his head and glared at the barn, the flesh along his unshaved jaw twitching.

"I'll see you in the morning, then," the general said. He picked up the iron box and opened the gate. The men stepped back to let him pass. John Salt started to follow him, but Nub caught him by the arm.

"I'm sure he didn't mean nothing by it," he said.

"By what?"

"Raping white women. There ain't no way he could have known."

"Dammit, you just leave off my wife," John Salt spat. He jerked his arm free and hurried away.

He caught up to the general in front of the inn. "Pardon me, General Sir," he said. He saluted.

The general returned John's salute. "Have you already made up your mind?"

"No sir," John Salt said. "I was wondering if maybe you and your wife wouldn't like to have dinner with us. Me and my family, that is."

"My wife?"

"The young lady," John said.

"Oh, I see. Well. Much obliged, but our innkeeper has already charged us for dinner with the price of the room. I wouldn't want to offend her hospitality. Thank you, though. We'll see you in the morning," the general said. He mounted the steps and entered the inn. After staring at the door for a few moments, John Salt wandered away.

Nub and the smith remained at the fence, staring across the lot. As the sun slanted further and further towards evening, it threw its last rays into the open door of Lily Brogan's barn, glinting off the gilding on the clarence's black wheels. The blacksmith neglected the plough still lying in the embers of his forge, and the girl remained at his side, glad for the unexpected respite from the day's labour. The sun set on them, with dinner smells wafting through the open window reminding them of their own dinners waiting at home.

The grey of dawn found the two men lounging once more along the fence, if they had ever gone home. They wore the same clothes and didn't seem to have washed. John Salt hadn't returned, but two new men had come — a farmer from over in the next valley, and Odell Winston, who had seen the strange carriage pass his farm the day before. While they waited, a potter carrying a basket of freshly dug clay joined them at the fence. The smith's daughter slept curled up in a wooden chair beneath one of the trees in the yard. Her hands and face were washed if not her feet, proving that she at least had been home where a woman could get hold of her. As they waited, John Salt appeared, limping across the yard.

"What happened to you?" Nub asked.

"Fell out of a tree," he said.

"Fell out of a tree? Which tree?"

"I don't know. Just a tree."

"It was that elm over yonder by the window," the blacksmith said. "He fell out last night trying to get a look at that pretty little coon ass."

"Did he then?" Nub said, smiling. "And did he get an eyeful?"

John Salt didn't answer. He sulked away to a corner of the fence and stared sullenly into the barnyard while he rubbed his bruised thigh.

As the sun crept above the far hills, chickens began to flutter down from the surrounding trees, where they had spent the night. "Maybe a fox?" Nub wondered. The men hurried across the lot to where a small, rickety chicken coop leaned against the barn. They found the door tied shut with a leather thong, and something large and bulky snoring like a sow in its darkest corner.

"What the blazes is that?" the blacksmith wondered. He pulled his daughter away from the coop where she was trying to reach through the unpainted slats and touch the thing. It woke up and rolled over, staring at them from the darkness with huge round eyes like tea saucers.

"Hey, white folks. Fun's fun, and I can take a joke with the bess uddem, but can y'all let me outta here now?"

"Good morning," the general said behind the men. As he set the iron picnic box on the ground, it jerked once, alive and ominous. He cleared his throat and said, "I didn't get much sleep last night. Spent most of the evening chasing that there chicken-thieving son-of-Cain through your finer swamps and briar patches." He produced a half of a biscuit and poked it under his moustache, then chewed in silence while watching the men. The girl eyed him hungrily, and noticing the keenness of her green-eyed stare, the general unfolded a large linen napkin and produced another biscuit. He handed it to the girl.

Nub looked through the unpainted slats of the coop. "What're you aiming to do with him?"

The general swallowed a mouthful of dry biscuit, coughing slightly. "I am to provide you with a demonstration of this sphinx's considerable powers. When it comes to no-good lying thieving scoundrels, this kitten is one hundred per cent pure distilled hell fire, madder than a Baptist preacher in a dry river, more spiteful than a reformed whore in a house full of happy women. But she'll make the gentlest pet for your chaps." He unhooked the latch on the picnic box. "Now if you folks will kindly step back and give me a little room."

He dipped his gauntleted hand into the box and almost immediately withdrew the whirling, howling ball of tawny fur. He wrestled with it while it creeped up his arm, swearing in a continual stream of profanity like an auctioneer, until he had it by the scruff of the neck.

"Would one of you gentlemen mind opening the door?" he said through gritted teeth. The potter obliged and the general

flung the kitten into the coop. "Shut it quick," he said.

They gathered around, their faces pressed against its weathered grey slats. They saw the yellow kitten inside, legs spread and claws gripping the dirt. It glared into the dark corner where the black man crouched, his hand-me-down grey suit muddy and tattered, shoes hanging by their shoestrings around his neck. Slowly, with a glance at the faces of the men, he crept forwards. The kitten arched its back and spit like an angry snake. The man edged closer and reached out one hand. "Nice kitty," he said, glancing at the men peering at him through the slats. "I don't know what you white folks is up to, but …"

In a flash, the kitten vanished. The black man staggered into the creaking walls of the coop, clutching at his throat, then dropped like a felled tree. His head rolled free of his body and bumped against the door. The kitten leaped after it, swatting and hissing.

"Great God Almighty!" Nub shouted and leaped back.

"Oh Papa! Did you see it? Can we keep him?" the girl squealed, jumping and pulling frantically at the blacksmith's overalls.

"Christ Jesus, no!" the blacksmith shouted, trembling.

"But Papa!" the girl whined.

"Hush! Get on home. We got work to do."

"Aw, Papa," the girl whined and shuffled away.

John Salt still leaned against the wall of the coop, his face pressed against the slats. The other men stood nearby, kicking aimlessly at clods of dirt, trying not to look at the general, who was smiling like a minister passing a collection plate.

"Now that you have witnessed for yourselves the powers of this sphinx, which of you would like to open the bidding?" the general asked. "I think you'll agree he's everything I said and more. With this kitten, you'll never need a gun, except for hunting and such."

"I reckon I'll be heading home," the farmer said. He stuck his hands in his pockets and strolled away.

"How about you, John Salt?" the general asked.

John started away from the coop as though stung. "I don't know," he said quickly.

Nub mumbled something into his hand as he scrubbed his lips.

"Pardon?" the general asked.

"I said I'll take it," Nub said angrily. His face had gone splotchy white. He scratched at the raw stump of his left arm. "I want it. I'll trade you my dog for it."

"I have no need of a dog," the general said.

"He's a fine dog," Nub said. "Best dog I ever had. Trade you even for him."

"I have no need of a dog," the general repeated. He turned to Odell Winston, who bemusedly shook his old grey head and walked away. On the far side of the lot, Lily Brogan began to herd her chickens through the open gate towards the coop.

"What will you trade, then?" Nub asked.

"Gold if you got it, silver if you don't," the general said.

"I got five dollars in paper money," Nub said.

The general turned next to the smith. "How about a nice kitten for that pretty little gal?"

"No sir, I like her head right where it sits. I'd rather she played with a catamount," he said.

"I'll give you five paper dollars and five silver dollars, and you throw in that iron picnic box," Nub said. "You can do that for a fellow veteran. I lost my arm to a Yankee shell."

"Make it twenty and I'll give you the box and a leather glove to grab him with."

"Twenty?" Nub exclaimed, helplessly groping his flat pockets. "Twenty?"

"The glove alone would cost you that much. It was worn by General Robert E. Lee himself."

"I'll give you thirty dollars in silver if you'll hitch up that fancy wagon and ride out of here right now," John Salt said.

"Sold!" the general exclaimed. He removed the gauntlet and handed it to Nub, then started for the inn. John Salt grabbed him by the elbow, stopping him before he had taken a step.

"No sir, you ride out of here right now, just like you are," John Salt said.

"Pardon me?"

"You go on and leave her here. I'll take care of her," John Salt said.

"You'll take care of *her*?" the general said.

"Yes sir, I'll take care of her."

"God … damn it," Nub swore.

"I just ride out of here and you'll take care of her? Just like that?" the general asked.

"Yes sir, just like that." John Salt said. He reached into his pocket and removed a greasy tobacco pouch fat with coins. He held it out to the general. "It's all I have in the world."

"You took a liking to her from that tree last night," the general said.

"Maybe I did. It's no business of yours now," John Salt said, still pressing the pouch at the general. "All you got to do is take this money and ride away."

The general took the purse and weighed it in his hand. "You sure you're wife won't mind? She might not like competing for your affections with a gen-you-wine Queen of Egypt."

"You let me worry about that," John Salt said as the tide of white chickens began to sweep about their feet. The general shrugged, pocketed the money, and started for the barn

"Damn you, you Texas jackrabbit son-of-a-bitch," Nub swore at John. "You don't want that cat. Sell it to me."

"You can have it. I don't want it," John Salt said.

Nub worked his right hand into the glove while gripping it against his body with the stump of his arm. He faced the door of the coop, quietly panting. Then he said, "Who will help me catch it?"

John Salt limped away, angling through the flock of chickens on his way to the inn. The blacksmith followed in his wake. They reached the steps, mounted to the porch, and sat in the grey wooden chairs looking out across the lawn.

Soon, Lily Brogan strode around the corner of the porch, followed closely by Nub. He still wore the leather gauntlet on his right hand. She stopped at the steps and turned on him, her bony finger stabbing his chest. "You better get that hell cat out of my chicken coop before supper," she ordered. "And that other thing, too."

"Yes ma'am," Nub muttered and passed on, across the yard and out the gate.

Presently, the clarence rolled into the yard. The general sat in its high seat, his back stiff, ostrich plumes nodding. He reined the horses to a stop. Without looking at the men sitting on the porch, he said, "You won't be needing a bill of sale, I reckon." The general shook the reins and turned the horses through the gate and into the road.

The door behind the men opened and the general's companion stepped onto the porch. She wore a white silk blouse, broad leather belt, billowing violet pantaloons, and a wide-brimmed hat with a plume of yellow feathers spewing from the silver hatband. She walked to the edge of the porch, soft boots whispering across the wooden gallery, and stopped with one delicate hand curled into a fist at her side.

"Now just where does he think he is going?" she asked in a strangely accented contralto. Neither man had ever heard anything like it. She stepped down from the porch and crossed the yard. John Salt rose from his chair and approached her as though afraid she might spook and run away. Reaching out, he gingerly touched her elbow and she recoiled, glaring at him. His hand remained in the air, fingers still shaped around her withdrawn elbow. The clarence's wheels thundered over the bridge at the edge of the village. She turned and stared after it.

"Queen of Egypt, my ass," Lily Brogan said. The blacksmith hadn't heard the door open, and before he could turn in his chair, the door banged shut again. Lily's voice came through the door as though she still stood on the porch beside him, like the voice of a ghost. "For better or worse. That was his vow before God, and God will hold him to account for it."

The Queen of Egypt opened the gate and passed through into the road. John Salt followed with his hand still cupped around her withdrawn elbow. The blacksmith sat on the porch and watched them out of sight and then went on sitting though he had more work than he needed waiting for him at the forge. He smelled Lily Brogan's coffee pot burning. She came to the door again and stood there looking out, quietly swearing damnation on all men, until she finally noticed the blacksmith still sitting on her porch.

"What are you still doing here?" she said. And before he could answer, "Go get him. What's the matter with you? Fetch him back. My God, you just setting there and him your neighbour. Don't you know he don't aim to stop?"

The blacksmith stood, quivering like a mule under the lash. "I didn't …"

"Of course you didn't. You're a man. But you got a daughter so you better learn quick. They'll be setting on your porch in a couple of years." The door slammed.

The blacksmith left the porch and crossed the yard. In the road, he saw two sets of footprints in the dust — one set as small as the foot of a child, so light they barely made an impression in the dust at all. It would have taken an Indian to track her were it not for the trail ploughed up by John Salt's heavy boots dragging through the deep dry biscuit-coloured dust. Beside them ran the twin lines of the carriage wheels, straight as railroad tracks.

At the edge of the village he still had not caught up to them and he began to trot, passing John Salt's burned down cabin and the little lean-to he'd built in the woods over his wife, thinking *she must have seen them go by, her husband chasing after that pretty coon ass*. The blacksmith began to run, not even following the footprints now, just running through the dust still hanging in the still morning air. Over the bridge and on and then almost past the place where the carriage had pulled off and waited and went on again, almost past John Salt lying in the sunburned weeds a hundred yards the other side of the bridge.

He knelt beside John and saw where the carriage had gone back into the road, this time with only one set of footprints beside the tracks of the wheels, and a little further the footprints gone entirely and then just one or two spaced out like the stride of a giant and then the gap in the wheel track where the carriage wheel had rolled over his body and on out of sight with the woman inside, and the ploughed up dust where John Salt had crawled off into the weeds to die like a dog.

He bore a cut across his face neat as a razor blade. The woman had pulled a stiletto from her bodice as he clung to the door of the fleeing carriage and slashed John Salt once across the face from eyebrow to lip, like an exclamation point painted in raw flesh. He'd let go when she cut him and the back wheel of the carriage had crushed him so deep into the yielding dust that it left the print of his body like a ceramic mould in the road, from whence he'd crawled in the certainty of death to hide in the weeds like animal. Only he wasn't dead. He wasn't even injured. "John," the blacksmith said as he laid his hand over the mark of the wheel bisecting his chest.

"Lemme be. Don't touch me," John Salt said with his eyes still closed but his lips pulled back from his teeth, panting. "Take care of my wife for me," he whispered hoarsely.

"You can take care of her yourself," the blacksmith said.

"I cain't. I'm dying. I'm already dead inside. The rest is just ketching up."

"You ain't even hurt."

John Salt peered up at the blacksmith with his bloodshot eyes that hadn't closed at all last night, panted raw whiskey vapours through his gritted teeth, his face caked with dust fine and dry as talcum powder and punctuated by the crimson stroke of her delicate stiletto. He reached up from the weeds and grabbed the blacksmith by the strap his suspenders and pulled him down until their faces were close enough to kiss and screamed, "What the hell do you know about hurt? What do you know about pain?" and flung him bodily away as though he were no more than a scarecrow stuffed with straw. He stood up, rising up all at once almost without bending, and stepped over the blacksmith lying on his back in the road.

Jeff Crook is the author of numerous short stories and novels, including a series of paranormal mystery novels set in his hometown of Memphis. The first novel in the series will be published in 2012, from Minotaur Books.

Delving the horn-cry of Buckland

PAUL H. VIGOR

And so it came to pass that the final battle of the War of the Ring was brought to a bloody conclusion by a grim war-band of Shire Hobbits at Bywater field, in the year of Shire-reckoning 1419. The brave Hobbitry-in-arms who fought and died that day were 'stood-to' by the sounding of the stirring horn-cry of Buckland: "Awake! Awake! Fear, Fire, Foes! Awake! Fire, Foes! Awake!"

Whence might J. R. R. Tolkien have sought literary inspiration for this most Hobbit-esque call-to-arms?

The primary core element of the horn-cry is 'Fear, Fire, Foes!'. It presents an apparently unique, alliterated use of first consonants, and most distinctive, poetic rhythm. However, if we break these three words down, we may discover a more familiar, alliterated, poetic phrase: Fe[ar], Fi[re], Fo[es]. Thus Fe, Fi, Fo. These three, two-letter words have a long pedigree within English literature. In their more modern form, they may be encountered in nineteenth-century English chapbooks relating the fairytale *Jack the Giant-Killer*; and on the stage, in *Jack and the Beanstalk* pantomimes. The phrase represents the fearsome hunting cry of the giant, Thunderdell:

"Fe, Fi, Fo, Fum.
I smell the blood of an Englishman,
Be he living, or be he dead,
I'll grind his bones to mix my bread."

The secondary core element may boast an earlier, even more distinguished derivation. Fire, Foes!, similarly broken down, becomes Fi[re], Fo[es]. Thus Fi, Fo. This may relate to the play *King Lear* by William Shakespeare. We are told Shakespeare's character Edgar cries out:

"Fie, foh, and fum,/ I smell the blood of a British man."

According to Tom Shippey (in *The Road To Middle-earth*), Tolkien was familiar with, and made a number of passing references to *King Lear* in the text of *The Lord of the Rings*.

It is intriguing that Tolkien seems to have transformed phraseology attributed — by long English tradition — to a famous literary giant and a Shakespearean character, into a military alarm call used by the halfling Hobbits of the Buckland marches. Still more intriguing: in 1973, the BBC comedy trio *The Goodies* encountered a tiny 'giant' in the Christmas 'pantomime' episode entitled: The Goodies and the Beanstalk. And lo, a big-booted 'hobbit' — Alfie Bass — was observed stomping, stamping and Fe, Fi, Fo-ing his way around a giant castle located in the clouds somewhere above Mount Everest. As the 'giant' Alfie made clear at the time: "There is more to being a giant than size, you know." A sentiment that might be applied to the heroic, Shire Hobbits who trekked beyond the Edge of the Wild; and those who hurried to answer Meriadoc Brandybuck's clarion horn-call to raise the Shire in armed revolt against Sharkey and his most odious ruffians.

Paul H. Vigor is an independent scholar. He read history at the University of Exeter, and industrial archaeology at the Ironbridge Institute, University of Birmingham. He has been employing otherwise orthodox historical and archaeological landscape investigation methods to 'sieve' and 'flotate' J. R. R. Tolkien's sub-creative 'soup' since December 2005.


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