Mallorn

The Journal of the Tolkien Society

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submissions

Abbreviations:

A&I	*The Lay of Aotrou and Itroun*, ed. by Verlyn Flieger
Arthur	*The Fall of Arthur*, ed. by Christopher Tolkien
AW	*Ancrene Wisse*
B&L	*Beren and Lúthien*
Beowulf	*Beowulf: A Translation and Commentary, together with Sellic Spell*
Bombadil	*The Adventures of Tom Bombadil and other verses from the Red Book*
CoH	*The Children of Húrin*, ed. by Christopher Tolkien
Exodus	*The Old English Exodus*
Father Christmas	*Letters from Father Christmas*, ed. by Baillie Tolkien
FoG	*The Fall of Gondolin*, ed. by Christopher Tolkien
FR	*The Fellowship of the Ring*
Hobbit	*The Hobbit*
Jewels	*The War of the Jewels*, ed. by Christopher Tolkien
Kullervo	*The Story of Kullervo*, ed. by Verlyn Flieger
Lays	*The Lays of Beleriand*, ed. by Christopher Tolkien
Letters	*The Letters of J.R.R. Tolkien*, ed. by Humphrey Carpenter with the assistance of Christopher Tolkien
Lost Road	*The Lost Road and Other Writings*, ed. by Christopher Tolkien
Lost Tales I	*The Book of Lost Tales, Part One*, ed. by Christopher Tolkien
Lost Tales II	*The Book of Lost Tales, Part Two*, ed. by Christopher Tolkien
Monsters	*The Monsters and the Critics and Other Essays*
Morgoth	*Morgoth's Ring*, ed. by Christopher Tolkien
OFS	*Tolkien On Fairy-stories*, ed. by Verlyn Flieger and Douglas A. Anderson
P&S	*Poems and Stories*
Peoples	*The Peoples of Middle-earth*, ed. by Christopher Tolkien
Perilous Realm	*Tales from the Perilous Realm*
RK	*The Return of the King*
Silmarillion	*The Silmarillion*, ed. by Christopher Tolkien
Sauron	*Sauron Defeated*, ed. by Christopher Tolkien
Secret Vice	*A Secret Vice: Tolkien on Invented Languages*, ed. by Dimitra Fimi and Andrew Higgins
Shadow	*The Return of the Shadow*, ed. by Christopher Tolkien
Shaping	*The Shaping of Middle-earth*, ed. by Christopher Tolkien
S&G	*The Legend of Sigurd and Gudrún*, ed. by Christopher Tolkien
TL	*Tree and Leaf*
TT	*The Two Towers*
Treason	*The Treason of Isengard*, ed. by Christopher Tolkien
UT	*Unfinished Tales of Númenor and Middle-earth*, ed. by Christopher Tolkien
War	*The War of the Ring*, ed. by Christopher Tolkien

With this issue, we are happy to resume the normal publishing schedule of *Mallorn*. There have been many exciting changes for the journal over the past year. The most exciting news is that the board of the Tolkien Society voted to make past content of the journal available Open Access, with a two-year rolling embargo. This means that I will be working with my team to make all Mallorn content available online (at journals.tolkiensociety.org/mallorn/) with the exception of the two most recent issues. The site will be updated regularly, so please add it to your Tolkien resources. Another important update is that Live Knudsen has stepped down as a copy editor. We wish her the best as she devotes more time to her studies, and we are very happy to welcome Diana Simion, who served as a copy editor on this issue, and Taryn Walls, who also worked on this issue and will stay on staff for future issues. As a final matter of housekeeping, I would like to thank the members of our editorial review board, as well as Timothy Boyd, Melissa Ridley Elmes, and Laura Martin-Gomez, for providing reviews for the articles of this issue.

The articles in *Mallorn* 62 offer exciting work from scholars across the academic spectrum. I am happy to see a blend of articles from independent scholars, students, and established academics and I hope that the journal will continue to be a place where the quality of ideas, not authors' accolades, is the common link between pieces.

The first article, 'A Song of Greater Power: Tolkien's Construction of Lúthien Tinúviel' by Clare Moore, is an extensive look at the development of Lúthien's character through Tolkien's successive drafts of her story. The investigation demonstrates Lúthien's development as a character, especially the ways in which Tolkien shifts more control and agency to her. In my estimation, this article will quickly become a cornerstone of scholarship on the story of Beren and Lúthien, and has broader implications for research into Tolkien's character development and portrayal of women more generally.

Sarah Shahan's article 'The Service of Samwise: Heroism, Imagination, and Restoration' is also a character study. To use linguistics terminology: while Moore's article is a diachronic look at Lúthien, concerned with how her character changes over time, Shahan's article is a synchronic examination of Sam. She is focused on discussing the type of heroism that the gardener hobbit exhibits in *The Lord of the Rings*. She argues that Sam is a heroic figure, though of a different type than the other characters in the story.

The final article is 'The Red Book and Tolkien's The Lord of the Rings: A Fantastic Uncertainty' by Vincent Ferré. This article was originally published in French, and Vincent has agreed to let us translate an expanded version of it for *Mallorn*. I want to thank Pauline Laquin for translating the article for us. This article is an influential examination of the frame narrative of *The Lord of the Rings* and it asks several intriguing questions. This is the first article in an initiative that I have undertaken to seek out Tolkien scholarship in other languages to translate into English for *Mallorn*.

Of the three notes for this issue, one examines a historical connection and two focus on textual analysis. Douglas A. Anderson's 'Tolkien's Friend Selby' examines published and unpublished letters to see what can be ascertained about Tolkien's relationship with Geoffrey Edmond Selby. In 'Hyphens as Sub-Lexical Morphemes in The Hobbit', Sparrow Alden examines the potential role that hyphenated words play in *The Hobbit*. Finally, Kristine Larsen looks for evidence of the Milky Way in Tolkien's writings, both in and out of the Middle-earth legendarium, in her note 'Can You Tell Me How to Get, How to Get to Watling Street?'

The reviewed books this issue are: Michael Fox's *Following the Formula in Beowulf, Örvar-Odds Saga, Middle-earth, or There and Back Again* edited by Łukasz Neubauer, Holly Ordway's *Tolkien's Modern Reading: Middle-earth Beyond the Middle Ages*, and *Tolkien and the Classical World* edited by Hamish Williams. My thanks to our readers for their reviews.

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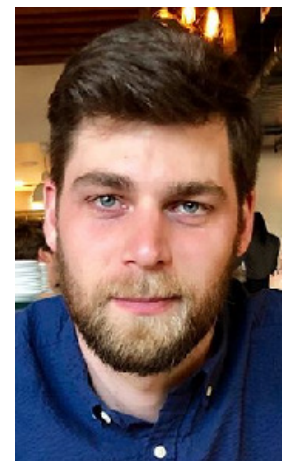
A Song of Greater Power: Tolkien's Construction of Lúthien Tinúviel

CLARE MOORE

In 1954, J.R.R. Tolkien first shared his 'great tale' of Beren and Lúthien with readers through a song Aragorn sings to the hobbits in the wilderness on the way to Rivendell in *The Fellowship of the Ring* (*FR*, I, xi).[1] This song was a mere hint at a fuller story J.R.R. Tolkien had been working on since 1917, but readers did not see an expanded narrative until the posthumous publication of *The Silmarillion* by Christopher Tolkien in 1977. Since then, many readers have viewed *The Silmarillion* as a finished work and believe it to be solely the work of J.R.R. Tolkien, even if the book was edited and published by his son. Douglas Kane, however, points out that both of these premises are false (pp. 23-24). Faced with unfinished and varying manuscripts for each story, C. Tolkien made his own decisions about what to include, what to omit, and how to arrange the text, so that the resulting published book is as much the work of his own hands as that of his father's.

While a monumental effort on C. Tolkien's part, the published *Silmarillion* and its version of Beren and Lúthien are not without their flaws, which he acknowledges himself (*Lost Tales II*, p. 333). Kane notes that one of the results of C. Tolkien's editing choices is the weakening of the roles that female characters play in the *Silmarillion* stories (p. 26). This pattern is unfortunate in the many examples Kane provides, but it is particularly problematic for a story such as Beren and Lúthien's because the tale revolves around one of J.R.R. Tolkien's most prominent and important female characters. To get to the heart of J.R.R. Tolkien's characterisation of Lúthien, then, it becomes necessary to sort through J.R.R. Tolkien's own drafts of the story, rather than relying on the version in *The Silmarillion*.

Through the publication of *The History of Middle-earth* series (1983-1996) and the dedicated volume *Beren and Lúthien* (2017), readers and scholars have gained access to the multiple versions of the story J.R.R. Tolkien wrote over his lifetime – compiled and annotated but not revised by his son. Tom Shippey specifies at least nine different drafts of the story, all of which vary in length, form, and completeness:

1. 'The Tale of Tinúviel'
2. 'The Lay of Leithian'
3. Chapter 19 of *The Silmarillion*
4. 'The Earliest Silmarillion'
5. 'The Quenta Silmarillion'
6. 'The Earliest Annals of Beleriand'
7. 'The Later Annals of Beleriand'
8. Aragorn's Song
9. 'The Grey Annals' (pp. 313-314)

C. Tolkien uses the five major narrative versions to compile the single volume *Beren and Lúthien*. These versions are *The Tale of Tinúviel*, *The Lay of Leithian*, *Sketch of the mythology* (what Shippey calls 'The Earliest Silmarillion'), *Quenta Noldorinwa* (Shippey: 'The Quenta Silmarillion'), and *Quenta Silmarillion* (Shippey: the published chapter in *The Silmarillion*). Both Shippey and C. Tolkien's lists are consolidations due to the complexity of the textual history, since there are at times multiple versions of a particular draft and evidence that J.R.R. Tolkien made edits to a draft at a much later date without creating a new, separate version.

For my analysis of J.R.R. Tolkien's development of Lúthien, I follow C. Tolkien's example in *Beren and Lúthien* and compare the five major narrative drafts of the story. The changes that emerge between the narrative drafts reveal the patterns in J.R.R. Tolkien's revision process as he shapes the story. I leave out Aragorn's song as a short and incomplete excerpt, and I will reference chapter nineteen of *The Silmarillion* only as part of the *Quenta Silmarillion* manuscript when no changes by C. Tolkien are apparent. I will also leave out the various 'Annals', which by the nature of their form are less narrative than other versions of the story. Due to their summary format, the annals have no major changes that do not manifest in other narrative drafts.[2]

The first surviving record (*The Tale of Tinúviel*) is from the Lost Tales, a version of the legendarium that still incorporated the original framework connecting our world with the history of Middle-earth, written between 1917 and 1925.[3] J.R.R. Tolkien's next attempt at the story was to put it into verse, a project he worked on from about 1925-1931, entitled *The Lay of Leithian*. In 1926, he also wrote a prose summary, *Sketch of the mythology with especial reference to The Children of Hurin*, to send to his former teacher R.W. Reynolds. In 1930, he wrote the *Quenta Noldorinwa*, a typed manuscript longer than the extremely brief *Sketch*. After the *Quenta Noldorinwa*, J.R.R. Tolkien wrote the *Quenta Silmarillion*, which was still a work in progress in 1937 when *The Hobbit* was published and his focus shifted to a sequel about hobbits. As C. Tolkien notes in *B&L*, from the two drafts of the *Quenta Silmarillion* he derived the version in the published *Silmarillion*, with some editorial changes (p. 219).[4]

This essay compares changes J.R.R. Tolkien made between *The Tale of Tinúviel* (*Tale*), *The Lay of Leithian* (*Lay*), *Sketch of the mythology* (*Sketch*), *Quenta Noldorinwa* (*QN*), and *Quenta Silmarillion* (*QS*). This comparison reveals significant differences between the various versions of J.R.R. Tolkien's stories, which Verlyn Flieger describes as both intentional and unintentional ('Matter of Britain', p. 55). Intentionally, J.R.R. Tolkien was attempting to place his 'Matter of Middle-earth'

in the same manuscript tradition as other mythologies, such as the Arthurian legends and classical myths of antiquity. Unintentionally, the differences are the result of the 'vagaries of his own creative process' (Flieger, 'Matter of Britain', p. 55). Though the internal workings of J.R.R. Tolkien's creative process are unknowable, the results of his many revisions reveal a clear direction for the story of Beren and Lúthien, particularly for the character of Lúthien.

While almost all scholars agree that Lúthien is an active character (Agan; Beach; Rawls, 'Shadow Bride'), and central to the legendarium (J.R.R. Tolkien himself acknowledged this in later letters), my analysis shows that Lúthien did not embody either of these attributes in J.R.R. Tolkien's early drafts of the story. I argue that J.R.R. Tolkien's multiple revisions create the powerful, active, and independent character readers recognise in *The Silmarillion*, and shape Lúthien into the undeniable protagonist of the story and of the history of Middle-earth.

J.R.R. Tolkien shapes Lúthien into a more powerful and central character in her own story and in the broader context of Middle-earth. He increasingly presents her song/voice as her influence over others, creating a universal form of power that is not gender-specific, and he establishes Lúthien as a figure of power apart from her identity as a female. J.R.R. Tolkien also progressively shifts actions and decisions to Lúthien's character, increasing her agency and autonomy, in order to enhance her power over herself – with one important exception, which I discuss in the course of this essay. In addition, by developing this story in the broader context of the history of Middle-earth, J.R.R. Tolkien not only places Lúthien in the centre of her own tale, but also presents her as the foremost figure of his entire legendarium by establishing her influence over the history that comes after her.

Much of the scholarship on the story of Beren and Lúthien focuses on its potential influences: Celtic, romance, Arthurian, medieval, classical, and Victorian (Bear; Downs; Tuthill; Flieger, 'Tolkien's Mythology for England'; Honegger; Beal; Librán-Moreno; Colvin). Inspiration from J.R.R. Tolkien's own life is well-noted by scholars, readers, and J.R.R. Tolkien himself, in regard to his wife Edith (see Beal; West; Shippey). Scholarship that does focus on the tale itself often highlights Lúthien's song, but her singing is often presented as magic or contextualised alongside other aspects of her character in a way that diminishes its overall significance as an art form. Most scholars emphasise her song as a connection to the divine (Benvenuto; Coutras; Crowe; Enright; Rawls; Slack; Vink; Whitaker), rather than presenting the art form as power itself. Even when Klag writes that the story of Beren and Lúthien can be interpreted as a story about the power of music, she focuses on its power as an expression of love and traces the presence of song through Beren and Lúthien's relationship.

Other scholars interpret the source of Lúthien's power as love (Brückner), purity (Downs), or the body (Agan). Many analyses of power, both as Lúthien embodies it and how it functions in J.R.R. Tolkien's world at large, present power through a gendered or spiritual lens, which is often inherently gendered. Rawls classifies power as a masculine attribute,

though females can embody masculine characteristics and vice versa ('The Feminine Principle', p. 100). This leads to a delineation of gendered expressions of creativity, song being a feminine form of art. Crowe accepts Rawls' interpretation of the masculine and feminine divide and classifies the main types of power in Arda as temporal (physical or political) or spiritual, female characters leaning heavily towards spiritual power, though they can embody physical courage and political dominion. Crowe classifies Lúthien's power as spiritual. Coutras also accepts Rawl's gendered delineation of power and interprets Lúthien's power as theological. Enright also takes a spiritual approach by arguing that, in J.R.R. Tolkien, female power usually manifests as the Christian inversion of traditional worldly power through the choice of love over pride.

J.R.R. Tolkien presents Lúthien as a figure of power by giving her influence over others. Her influence, however, is not the kind of political power held by a ruler such as Galadriel, or the kind of physical strength demonstrated by the many warriors of Middle-earth. Lúthien's power is direct, personal, and comes through song. Song as a mode of influence over others is not clearly evident in the earliest version of the story, but emerges progressively through the different drafts. In the *Tale*, Lúthien is dancing when Beren first sees her, and he falls in love with her dancing, which Lúthien herself recognises (*Lost Tales II*, pp. 9-10). Though J.R.R. Tolkien always keeps dancing as an integral part of her character, perhaps because of the famous connection to his wife Edith, in the *Lay* he adds Lúthien's voice: 'Then clearly thrilled her voice and rang; / with sudden ecstasy she sang / a song of nightingales she learned' (*Lays*, p. 212). Now Beren's first encounter with Lúthien is the sound of her voice, and her song is what affects him. In the *Tale*, Lúthien uses a combination of dancing, singing, and an enchanted cloak to induce her guards to sleep (*Lost Tales II*, p. 18). In the *Lay*, J.R.R. Tolkien revises this: her guards 'listened to her voice and fell / suddenly beneath a binding spell' (*Lays*, p. 249). Her hair, cloak, and dancing are still present, but her song is how Lúthien puts the guards to sleep. J.R.R. Tolkien specifically frames song as Lúthien's method of influence and magic over other people.

J.R.R. Tolkien's shift from dance to song in this scene reveals more than a focal shift from one art form to another. Vink analyses the change from dance to song by examining the shift in J.R.R. Tolkien's language, noting that the ratio between song-related words and dance-related words shifts dramatically between versions, with a 4:1 song: dance ratio in the *Lay* compared to a 16:1 ratio in chapter nineteen of *The Silmarillion* (p. 261). J.R.R. Tolkien dramatically begins to prioritise song over dance. Vink's analysis leads her to conclude that these changes mark not merely a rewriting of the story, but a reconceptualizing of this story as part of the larger legendarium based on J.R.R. Tolkien's evolving conception of the music of the Ainur (p. 267). This is undoubtedly true on a macro level, but J.R.R. Tolkien is also accomplishing something very specific in the text itself. The change from Lúthien's dancing to her singing is not only a reconceptualization of J.R.R. Tolkien's cosmogony, but a

reconceptualization of how power functions in the story. The text does not merely replace the word 'dance' with 'song' but is explicit about what song is *doing* in these scenes. It is how Lúthien influences other people, from the mortal Beren to her elven guards, and – later in the story – even Valar themselves.

J.R.R. Tolkien also revises Lúthien's plea before Mandos in order to change her mode of influence over the Vala to song. At first J.R.R. Tolkien describes this plea as a prayer, her 'beauty' and 'tender loveliness' moving Mandos to pity (*Lost Tales II*, p. 39). In this scene, her looks grant Lúthien her heart's desire, making her beauty her most influential attribute. Beauty, however, is not an active assertion of power. Her beauty can inspire others to action, primarily males and usually for nefarious reasons as Lynn Whitaker notes (p. 63), but this action originates in those who behold her beauty and not in Lúthien herself. She does not instigate this influence over others and cannot manipulate it towards her own ends. In this sense, her beauty is not an active form of power because it is not *Lúthien* actively exerting influence over anyone. Song, on the other hand, is something Lúthien creates within herself through her own volition and something she can actively manipulate towards her own ends. J.R.R. Tolkien demonstrates this in *QN*'s version of the scene before Mandos – the *Lay* never reaches this point – by adding song into the text: 'she came to the halls of Mandos, and she sang to him a tale of moving love so fair that he was moved to pity, as never has befallen since' (*Shaping*, p. 138). Lúthien's song moves Mandos to pity and not her appearance. In his revision of *QS*, J.R.R. Tolkien even made 'The Song of Lúthien in Mandos' its own chapter title (*Lost Road*, p. 332), separating this moment from the rest of the story to highlight the singularity and significance of this song.

J.R.R. Tolkien demonstrates the active nature of Lúthien's song in her confrontation with Arda's greatest enemy. Similar to her first meeting with Beren in the *Tale*, Lúthien's scene with Morgoth mentions her singing but focuses on her ability to dance (*Lost Tales II*, p. 31). In the *Lay*, however, J.R.R. Tolkien changes this scene to lead with her voice: 'while sheer, heart-piercing silver, rang / her voice, as those long trumpets keen / thrilling' (*Lays*, p. 346). In *QS*, J.R.R. Tolkien describes her song as one of 'surpassing loveliness, and of such blinding power, that he listened perforce; and a blindness came upon him' (*Silmarillion*, p. 180). Not only does J.R.R. Tolkien reframe song as her mode of influence over Morgoth, but he also strengthens the language in *QS* to be more authoritative and aggressive. Her song is not merely lovely and 'silver' but forceful. It *exerts* a form of control on the listener and produces a physical change in them – dumbness in the case of Beren, blindness in the case of Morgoth.

Lúthien's song over Morgoth is so powerful, in fact, that it drains her own strength. In the *Tale*, Lúthien has energy after her encounter with Morgoth, demonstrated by the lack of fatigue in her escape with Beren. When they pass Karkaras – the earliest spelling of Carcaroth – Beren puts himself between the wolf and Lúthien. According to J.R.R. Tolkien, this is a poor choice by Beren because it prevents Lúthien

from performing any magic to protect them (*Lost Tales II*, p. 33). J.R.R. Tolkien's judgment of Beren's action as ill suggests that Lúthien is capable of expending more energy. He changes this in the *Lay* and following drafts, writing that Lúthien is too fatigued to put forth any more magic. She is 'dimmed' and 'spent' (*Lays*, p. 358). Though she is not physically strong in this moment, the contrast highlights the strength she expends against Morgoth while singing. Her fatigue demonstrates that her song was an active assertion of power that originated within her, as she bore the cost of that energy expenditure.

J.R.R. Tolkien's revisions not only establish song as a mode of power for Lúthien, but his changes to the text also reveal how this portrayal of power is gender-neutral rather than an essential feminine type of power. J.R.R. Tolkien expands the idea of song as power beyond Lúthien's individual character and into Middle-earth as a whole. The primary example of this is his revision of the Tevildo episode. In the *Tale*, Morgoth captures Beren and sends him as a prisoner to Tevildo, prince of cats. Lúthien pursues Beren, but in her confrontation with this villain she does not sing (*Lost Tales II*, p. 21-28). In the *Lay*, J.R.R. Tolkien replaces Tevildo with Thú, a necromancer and early version of Sauron. First, having inserted the character of Felagund into the poem – Finrod Felagund in later drafts – J.R.R. Tolkien describes a confrontation between Felagund and Thú (*Lays*, p. 276). Rather than the contest of riddles that J.R.R. Tolkien had initially planned for Felagund and Thú in his notes, these two powerful enchanters sing to each other in a fight for domination. The confrontation between Felagund and Thú establishes the general principle of singing as a mode of power in this secondary world by showing two male figures utilising song as a form of power.

The creation of song is not tied to any attribute (physical or otherwise) that is specifically masculine or feminine. It is often classified as feminine by scholars, but this classification seems to be *assigned* to J.R.R. Tolkien, rather than his own portrayal, and based on the version of the story available at the time (C. Tolkien's chapter in *The Silmarillion*). Melanie Rawls writes that song is a feminine mode of creativity and power, even when males embody it ('The Feminine Principle', p. 105), but J.R.R. Tolkien's presentation of Lúthien's, Sauron's, and Finrod's use of song does not require a gendered reading to interpret. Song functions the same way for all three characters, regardless of gender or even race. Sauron is a Maiar, Finrod an elf, and Lúthien is a mix of both. Indeed, there is an echo of the power of song embodied in an entirely different and humbler race when Samwise Gamgee sings in Cirith Ungol in *The Return of the King* (*RK*, VI, i). Nowhere does J.R.R. Tolkien seem to suggest that this art belongs to a specific gender or race. Nor does he seem to suggest that a particular gender has a greater aptitude for it. J.R.R. Tolkien certainly did not deny the existence of gender, and perhaps portrayed Lúthien's beauty as her most gendered attribute, but it is therefore all the more important to note J.R.R. Tolkien's shift away from beauty as Lúthien's method of influence over other people. By altering the story to present song as Lúthien's active mode of influence over other people, J. R. R. Tolkien moves away from a gendered interpretation of power. Lúthien's power is not

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feminine power, but simply power – power through art.

Most spiritual interpretations of power in Middle-earth rely on a gendered reading as well. For example, Nancy Enright writes that J.R.R. Tolkien's female characters embody a Christian type of power (pp. 118, 134), and Coutras writes that 'woman, by her spiritual nature, relates to the divine Being in a way unique to her being' in her explanation of female power in J.R.R. Tolkien (p. 227). Spiritual interpretations of power offer an alternative to Théoden's charge at Pelennor, to Glorfindel's battle against the balrog, and are almost always applied to female characters. When ascribed to male characters, spiritual power is still often characterised as feminine – such as Rawls explains in 'The Feminine Principle'. In this way, interpretations of spiritual power rely on an implicitly gendered interpretation of power. Coutras exemplifies this in her conclusion that 'the theological aesthetics present in Tolkien's fictive world finds its culmination in feminine displays of power' (p. 230). In regards to Lúthien, the spiritual-feminine interpretation of her power primarily revolves around her song (see Coutras p. 109 as an example). This focus on song as a spiritual power, however, often overshadows the art form itself and how J.R.R. Tolkien uses art in this story. Lúthien's song contains beauty, healing, and power apart from the divine or theological. Song exists as a physical thing in Arda, with its own form. J.R.R. Tolkien's portrayal of art in this story is one of deep love and respect, and it would be a mistake to let the spiritual interpretations of song overshadow the art itself when J.R.R. Tolkien was at pains to illustrate its inherent power.

J.R.R. Tolkien's revisions not only show the development of Lúthien's power over others, but his changes also reveal the development of her power over herself. Lúthien is a passive figure in the earliest drafts of the story, especially when compared to other characters (Huan, for example). Though always one of the main characters in the narrative, she is hardly the protagonist of the *Tale*. The terms 'main character' and 'protagonist' are in their simple understandings synonyms for each other, but there is a subtle and useful distinction between the connotations of the terms. A protagonist is 'the leading character' but also an 'advocate or champion of a particular cause of idea' ('Protagonist'). The connotation behind the term implies that a character not only appears more often than others, but is a propellant of action. In the earliest drafts of this story, Lúthien is one of the narrative's main characters, but her passivity prevents her from propelling the story forward. She is not the champion of the plot.

In order to establish Lúthien as the *protagonist*, J.R.R. Tolkien increases both her agency and her autonomy. Agency, in this context, I define as 'action or intervention, *especially such as to produce a particular effect*' ('Agency', my emphasis). J.R.R. Tolkien increasingly shifts actions in the narrative to Lúthien, and the pattern of her actions producing a particular effect is clear. As Agan notes, Lúthien 'affects her own future and enacts or makes possible *the choices she in fact desires*' (p. 168, my emphasis). The self-determined direction of Lúthien's actions establish her autonomy, or her 'freedom from external control or influence' ('Autonomy'). By developing Lúthien's

agency and autonomy, J.R.R. Tolkien transforms Lúthien from a main character – whose prominence in the story is due to her frequent presence in the narrative – into a protagonist whose actions and decisions drive the plot of the story.

The first way J.R.R. Tolkien increases Lúthien's agency is by giving her a more active role to play in the beginning of the story. In the *Tale*, Beren and Lúthien are not yet lovers when Beren appears in Menegroth, and Beren follows her without her knowledge (*Lost Tales II*, p. 10). In the *Lay*, however, Lúthien and Beren have time to fall in love before coming to Menegroth, which means that Beren is no longer a stranger to Lúthien but someone of significance to her. The new status of Beren and Lúthien's relationship raises the stakes and adds weight to what happens next. Dairon – Daeron in later spellings – once Lúthien's brother and now an elf in love with her, betrays their meetings to Thingol. When she finds out, Lúthien makes her father promise not to harm Beren before leading him before the court (*Lays*, pp. 226-27). In *QS*, Thingol sends his guards to imprison Beren, but Lúthien outsmarts them to bring Beren before her father as an honoured guest and not a prisoner (*Silmarillion*, p. 166).

In each draft Lúthien plays a more active role. By *QS*, she ensures Beren's safety by extracting a promise from her father, leads Beren herself, and then outsmarts her father and his guards. Not only is Lúthien proactive in securing Beren's safety and leading him before the court, but in *QS* she takes control of the situation to create the circumstances she desires: presenting Beren as an honoured guest. J. R. R. Tolkien also shifts more action to Lúthien's character in the defeat of Sauron. When Huan defeats Tevildo in the *Tale*, he names the terms of surrender and Lúthien plays no role in the scene. In the *Lay*, however, Lúthien participates through song and then decides what Thú will surrender – the 'words of opening' to his fortress. She also strips him of his physical form, defeating his spirit (*Lays*, p. 303). She is now an active, essential player in the scene.

Similarly, J.R.R. Tolkien revises Lúthien's confrontation with Morgoth to shift action to Lúthien by changing the details of her approach to Angband – the use of disguises – and by altering how she identifies herself before Morgoth. In the *Tale*, Lúthien appears in Angband undisguised, but J.R.R. Tolkien adds the element of disguise in the *Lay* and subsequent drafts. Lúthien creates the disguise of a wolf for Beren and a bat for herself – by singing (*Lays*, p. 334). Not only do these disguises give Lúthien something to do, but her disguise also plays a key role in her appearance before Morgoth. In the *Tale*, Lúthien identifies herself (*Lost Tales II*, p. 31), but in the *Lay* Morgoth sees through her disguise and names her true name after she claims to be Thúringwethil (*Lays*, p. 352). Morgoth's power to name her is short lived, though, as in *QN* J.R.R. Tolkien gives Lúthien's naming back to her (*Shaping*, p. 136). In *QS*, not only does Lúthien name herself, but J.R.R. Tolkien also writes that 'she alone of all things in Middle-earth could not be daunted by [Morgoth's] eyes' (*Lost Road*, p. 331). By *QS*, J.R.R. Tolkien ensures that Lúthien's active role is consistent throughout the defeat of all of her opponents – Thingol, Sauron, and Morgoth.

The oscillation of who names Lúthien – herself or Morgoth

– reveals that J.R.R. Tolkien's development of Lúthien's agency is not always a steady progression. J.R.R. Tolkien's changes to Lúthien's agency in her confrontation with Thú/Sauron also fluctuate. In *QN*, J.R.R. Tolkien writes that Huan won the keys and words to the fortress, and that 'the stronghold was broken' but the text does not specify by whom (*Shaping*, p. 134). This revision is a regression for Lúthien's character, taking away the action J.R.R. Tolkien gave her in the *Lay*. However, he returns her active role in *QS*. Lúthien demands 'mastery of thy tower' and takes command of 'all that was there' (*Silmarillion*, p. 175). In this scene and in the instance of Lúthien's naming before Morgoth, J.R.R. Tolkien eventually settles on the circumstances that allow Lúthien the most agency, but that is not always the case. There is one instance where his revisions diminish Lúthien's agency and where this regression remains in the last of J.R.R. Tolkien's drafts.

J.R.R. Tolkien's revision of how Lúthien comes to Mandos weakens her agency and regresses her to a passive figure in this scene. In all forms of the narrative, Beren dies fighting Carcaroth, the great wolf of Angband. In the *Tale*, Lúthien dies of grief (*Lost Tales II*, p. 39). J.R.R. Tolkien never reached this point of the story when composing the *Lay*, but in the *Sketch* he presents two other possibilities: Lúthien either travels over the Grinding Ice or Mandos releases Beren after hearing his story, implying that Lúthien was never in the Halls of Mandos (*Shaping*, p. 28). The 'some say' language certainly hearkens back to the manuscript tradition, but the introduction of the possibility that Lúthien travels over the Grinding Ice to reach Beren is dramatic. The only other crossings of this region are by Melkor and Ungoliant after the theft of the Silmarils, and by Fingolfin and his people after Fëanor and his sons abandon them to sail to Middle-earth. Left behind with no way to cross the sea, Fingolfin and his people cross the arctic region and many people die (*Silmarillion*, p. 90). Traveling across the Grinding Ice is a difficult and dangerous task. Introducing this possibility gives Lúthien the potential for a great physical accomplishment, but J.R.R. Tolkien never carries this thread any further. In *QN*, he writes that Lúthien either dies or an eagle carries her to Valinor (*Shaping*, p. 138). In *QS*, he seems to settle on Lúthien dying of grief (*Silmarillion*, p. 186). Though perhaps a testament to the depth of her affection for Beren, dying of grief is a passive way for Lúthien to come to Mandos after all of the initiative she demonstrates during her lifetime. J.R.R. Tolkien's narrative progression here is not a clear path forward but a circling back to a less engaging version of the story, a rare case in his thoughtful revision process.

Lúthien's role as the protagonist might seem obvious considering how J.R.R. Tolkien references Lúthien as the 'chief story' of his legendarium in his letter to Waldman in 1951 (*Letters*, p. 149), but I think this point bears repeating because of how consistently scholars, and even occasionally J.R.R. Tolkien, treat Beren as the protagonist of the story. Indeed, in his same letter to Waldman, J.R.R. Tolkien writes, 'It is Beren the outlawed mortal who succeeds (with the help of Lúthien, a mere maiden even if an elf of royalty) where all the armies and warriors have failed' (*Letters*, p. 149). The use of parentheses

to include Lúthien seems to diminish her role in retrieving the Silmaril from Morgoth's crown, the 'success' to which J.R.R. Tolkien is referring to in this letter. In the section title for his discussion of the story, Shippey refers to the narrative as 'The Tale of Beren' (p. 257), leaving out Lúthien entirely. In Coutras' index, Lúthien is also missing, even though she is a part of one of Coutras' main arguments, while only Beren is indexed. In the narrative, however, J.R.R. Tolkien clearly demonstrates Lúthien's active, and indeed primary, role in the achievement of every great task in the narrative (except perhaps Finrod's slaying of the werewolf in Tol Sirion). Beren is the parenthetical character in the story. In comparing Beren to Turin, Flieger notes that Beren's characterisation is not very memorable ('Mythology for England', p. 24). Lúthien is the interesting, active character who drives the plot of the story forward. It is only because of her that a Silmaril is rescued from Morgoth's iron crown, and yet she often seems to receive credit only after Beren, despite her much more prominent role in the narrative.

Having (mostly) given Lúthien more to do, J.R.R. Tolkien develops Lúthien's autonomy by demonstrating her freedom from external controls. One of the main ways he accomplishes this is by adding the sons of Fëanor to the story. Curufin and Celegorm trick Lúthien into going with them to Nargothrond, Finrod Felagund's kingdom, and imprison her there (*Lays*, p. 285). Imprisonment, of course, is the exact opposite of freedom from external controls, but that is precisely the point. Lúthien escapes from prison, with help, and removes herself from the control of Curufin and Celegorm, just as she removed herself from her father's control in Doriath. The contrast of her imprisonments with her autonomy creates a tension that J.R.R. Tolkien resolves with Lúthien's escapes. Her autonomy prevails. In fact, her autonomy increases so much during the course of the narrative that it becomes impossible for Curufin and Celegorm to imprison her again. The brothers come across her after she has rescued Beren, but they are unable to recapture her. Lúthien is free to decide where she goes and what she does.

Thingol, the sons of Fëanor, Sauron, Morgoth, and even Beren all represent external threats to Lúthien's autonomy, but J.R.R. Tolkien also revises the text to create an internal and emotional state that reflects Lúthien's power over herself. In the *Tale*, Lúthien 'had at first much pleasure' in her imprisonment in the treehouse following Beren's departure on his quest (*Lost Tales II*, p. 17). Lúthien's contentment is hardly surprising considering that in the *Tale* she and Beren were not yet in love, but her pleasure contradicts the emotional state that imprisonment would cause in an active character. J.R.R. Tolkien changes her emotional state immediately in the next draft, describing her as forlorn from the very beginning of her imprisonment, writing in the *Lay* that she also sang and spoke no more (*Lays*, p. 244). Given the vital nature of Lúthien's song and voice to her identity, her silence is a sharp contrast to finding pleasure in her confinement. Now her emotional state is consistent with her imprisonment by her father. She is depressed when she is not free to pursue her heart's desire, and she is only satisfied when she is reunited with Beren. This

emotional consistency demonstrates her resolve, and her desire to determine for herself where she goes and what she does.

J.R.R. Tolkien unifies Lúthien's emotional state again in his revision of her scene with Beren after she rescues him. In the *Tale* after rescuing Beren from Tevildo, Lúthien is torn between following Beren into further danger or returning home (*Lost Tales II*, p. 30). She later resolves to follow him everywhere, noting that 'now is my heart changed' (p. 35). In the *Lay*, however, she never wavers in her resolve to stay by Beren's side (*Lays*, p. 312). In *QS*, J.R.R. Tolkien makes her decision to follow Beren even more resolute by giving her a decisive speech that encapsulates her autonomy:

> You must choose, Beren, between these two: to relinquish the quest and your oath and seek a life of wandering upon the face of the earth; or to hold to your word and challenge the power of darkness upon its throne. But on either road I shall go with you, and our doom shall be alike. (*Silmarillion*, p. 177).

The changes in the different versions of the tale erase any doubts Lúthien has about acting on her desires. She demonstrates a consistent self-determination that aligns with the behaviour she exhibits throughout the story. Though self-determined, her decision to act on her desires is not selfish, but rather presents a positive narrative for a woman pursuing her desires.

J.R.R. Tolkien's strongest depiction of Lúthien's autonomy is at the climax of the story, Lúthien's Choice, another example of how he only achieves this autonomy through revisions of the scene. After dying from the wounds he received while fighting Carcaroth, Beren waits in the halls of Mandos. In the *Tale* Beren is a gnome, or elf (*Lost Tales II*, p. 9), whereas in the *Lay* he is human (*Lays*, p. 198), and this change in his characterisation is important because of the sundered fates of humans and elves. Humans are mortal, and when they die, they leave the world. Elves are immortal, living until the end of the world with their fate beyond that point unknown. When humans and elves die, they go to the halls of Mandos, where humans wait before passing on and elves wait until they are reincarnated (*Silmarillion*, p. 28). Another difference between humans and elves, according to Verlyn Flieger, is that elves are bound by the Music of the Ainur, their lives determined by fate of the Music. Humans, on the other hand, exist outside the Music, and shape their lives beyond predetermined fate (Flieger, 'Music and the Task', p. 15). Beren's existence as a human and Lúthien's as an elf are therefore essential to what happens in J.R.R. Tolkien's development of Lúthien's Choice.

In the *Tale*, Mandos allows Lúthien to lead Beren from the hall of the dead back to earth (*Lost Tales II*, p. 39). In this conclusion of the narrative, Mandos decides what Lúthien will do. She does not have a choice, even though he grants her wish to be reunited with Beren. And, since Beren is an elf, his and Lúthien's fate beyond the world is never in jeopardy. The *Lay* never reached this point and the *Sketch* does not elaborate on the details. In *QN*, however, Beren is mortal and Lúthien is immortal. Therefore, their fates are divided after death. In this version, Mandos allows Beren to return to Middle-earth with Lúthien, but he decrees that Lúthien will become mortal (*Shaping*, p. 138). He still does not present Lúthien with a choice, even though the cost of achieving her desire is higher. She must give up her immortality in order to be reunited with Beren.

Lúthien's sacrifice raises the stakes of the narrative, but J.R.R. Tolkien does not yet afford Lúthien any agency in the matter. In *QS*, he shifts the decision to Lúthien, and even within drafting *QS* J.R.R. Tolkien revises this choice. In the early draft of *QS*, Mandos presents this choice to Lúthien *and* Beren: they may live in Valinor until the ending of the world and then depart to their respective fates; or they may return to Middle-earth, but Lúthien must become mortal, and their fates beyond the world will be joined (*B&L*, p. 229-30). Beren and Lúthien make the decision together, though Lúthien must make the sacrifice if they are to be together after death. They choose the second option, and Lúthien becomes mortal. In this situation, Lúthien is an active participant in determining their future, but J.R.R. Tolkien continues to shift the freedom – and burden – of the decision solely to her. In revising *QS*, he alters the choice again. Mandos presents the decision to Lúthien alone. She may go to Valinor without Beren – and they will be separated forever because of their fates – or she may return with Beren to Middle-earth and relinquish her immortality (p. 230). Lúthien chooses her own desire, Beren, and they return to Middle-earth as mortals. If there is a moment of eucatastrophe in Lúthien's story, this is it. It is the conquering – even momentarily – of death, a turn towards a (relatively) happy ending, and an overturning of fate.

Beyond choosing where she goes after she dies, Lúthien's decision to become mortal alters her very existence and gives her the ability to transcend fate. She achieves this *by her own merit*. J.R.R. Tolkien makes this explicit in *QN* by writing that Lúthien had won the time she and Beren had together after returning from Mandos (*Shaping*, p. 160). This text lies outside the strict confines of Lúthien's narrative – J.R.R. Tolkien wrote it as part of his account of the fall of Doriath – but this language confirms that Lúthien's ability to choose her own fate is due to her own accomplishments in her lifetime.

Lúthien is the only person to earn the choice of her own fate through her own merit and achievements. Other characters – Elrond, Elros, and Arwen, for example – find themselves in that situation *because* they are descendants of Lúthien.[5] Indeed, the gravity of Arwen's choice is precisely because it mirrors the original choice of her foremother Lúthien. The only other person to experience a similar situation is potentially Tuor, a mortal who marries an elf and receives elven immortality (*Silmarillion*, p. 245). The circumstances of Tuor's changed fate are not elaborated, however, and it is unclear if he is given a choice or if this fate is simply bestowed upon him. J.R.R. Tolkien himself wrote in 1954 that '"it is supposed" (not stated) that [Tuor] as an unique exception receives the Elvish limited "immortality"' (*Letters*, p. 193). Regardless of Tuor's participation in the changing of his fate, his situation is the reverse of Lúthien's because Tuor enters into the constraints of the Music rather than leaving it.

In Lúthien's choice, J.R.R. Tolkien brings together his development of Lúthien's song, agency, and autonomy to create the most powerful moment of the narrative. Lúthien's song holds power over Mandos, and her courageous actions in rescuing Beren and retrieving one of the Silmarils place her in a position to determine her own fate beyond every external control save Iluvatar's. All of these things are the result of the many changes J.R.R. Tolkien made to the text, and shape Lúthien into a powerful protagonist. In Lúthien, however, J.R.R. Tolkien creates not only an important character for this story, but an essential figure for his entire legendarium.

J.R.R. Tolkien's revision process integrates Lúthien's narrative into the wider legendarium in a way that makes her, arguably, the most important figure in the history of Middle-earth. J.R.R. Tolkien himself referred to this tale as a 'fundamental link' in the wider *Silmarillion*, 'deprived of its full significance out of its place therein' in his letter to Milton Waldman, but this was in 1951 – a decade after his last major reworking of the story (*Letters*, p. 149). When J.R.R. Tolkien began Lúthien's story in 1917, it was primarily a stand-alone tale with no significance outside its own narrative. As he revises the story in conjunction with the development of his legendarium, however, J.R.R. Tolkien elevates Lúthien's role in the history of Middle-earth. He accomplishes this by changing the nature of the Silmarils and creating a legacy for Lúthien through her descendants, a legacy that is influential in both the First and Third Ages.

The most important change J.R.R. Tolkien makes in order to place Lúthien's narrative in the centre of Middle-earth's history is the development of the Silmarils. In the *Tale*, the Silmarils are famous throughout Middle-earth and possess some kind of holy power, but 'the fate of the world is not bound up with them' (*Lost Tales II*, p. 52). J.R.R. Tolkien lays out the history of the gems in Lúthien's story for the first time in the *Lay* (*Lays*, p. 231-32). The Silmarils are now the last remnant of the light of the Two Trees, created by Fëanor and stolen by Morgoth. The recovery of these three gems becomes the primary plotline of the *Silmarillion* and the overarching story of the First Age, driven by the Oath of the sons of Fëanor – the promise of his seven sons to recover the gems from anyone who holds them. In conjunction with the development of the Silmarils, J.R.R. Tolkien brings the Oath into Lúthien's story for the first time in the *Lay*, sometime in between the years 1925 and 1931 (p. 232). The actual language of the Oath is not present in Lúthien's narrative, since it occurs much sooner in the First Age, though it is not in the published *Silmarillion* at all. *The Silmarillion* only contains a summary of the Oath. This is unfortunate, as Kane writes, because 'the actual words of the oath ooze power and dread' (p. 111). The precise language of the Oath is found in the *Annals of Aman*, which C. Tolkien tentatively dates to 1958.

Written after the major drafts of Lúthien's story, the specific language of the Oath is helpful in understanding how the Oath functions in Lúthien's story and elevates her position in the legendarium. The language of the Oath reads as follows:

> Be he foe or friend, be he foul or clean,
> brood of Morgoth or bright Vala,
> Elda or Maia or Aftercoming,
> Man yet unborn upon Middle-earth,

neither law, nor love, nor league of swords,
dread nor danger, not Doom itself,
shall defend him from Fëanor, and Fëanor's kin,
whoso hideth or hoardeth, or in hand taketh,
finding keepeth or afar casteth
a Silmaril. This swear we all:
death we will deal him ere Day's ending,
woe unto world's end! Our word hear thou,
Eru Allfather! To the everlasting
Darkness doom us if our deed faileth.
On the holy mountain hear in witness
and our vow remember, Manwë and Varda! (*Morgoth*, p. 112)

The Oath should, and usually does, drive the plot of *The Silmarillion* forward, as the sons of Fëanor pursue the Silmarils. This Oath drives Fëanor and his sons into exile, fuels the Kinslaying, and ignites a war with Morgoth. It ultimately leads to Fëanor's death, whereafter his sons are at a standstill and little pressed to retrieve the gems from the crown of Morgoth, despite their promise to do so. They have lost the hope that they could succeed against such a powerful enemy. While they stall, however, Lúthien faces Morgoth and becomes the only child of Iluvatar to directly retrieve a Silmaril from Morgoth. The other two are recovered from Morgoth by Ëonwë, the Maiar herald of Manwë, and later stolen by Maedhros and Maglor. Lúthien is successful when Fëanor and all his sons fail, and this contrast elevates her over many of her contemporaries and places her among the most prominent heroes of Arda.

The driving power of the Oath seems to pause when the sons of Fëanor are afraid to move against Morgoth, but it also brings the brothers to a standstill one other time in the First Age – when Lúthien possesses the Silmaril. Considering how the Oath drives Maedhros and Maglor to steal the Silmarils from the Maiar Ëonwë, the unwillingness of the sons of Fëanor to move against Lúthien is a testament to their knowledge of her power. They fear her more than the consequences of neglecting their oath. The specific language of the Oath also introduces the possibility of another interpretation of Lúthien's relationship with the Oath. Considering that J.R.R. Tolkien belongs to the literary and historical tradition of using masculine terminology to refer to all people, such as his use of the word 'Man' to refer to human men and women, it might be insignificant that the specific pronouns used in the Oath are masculine, and the person primarily removed from their effect – Lúthien – is female.

It is, in the end, Lúthien's victory against Morgoth and her recovery of a Silmaril that reignites the resolve of Fëanor's son Maedhros to resume the war against Morgoth. J.R.R. Tolkien writes that Lúthien's deed reassured Maedhros that Morgoth is not unassailable and inspires him to form the Union of Maedhros (*Shaping*, p. 139). The sons of Fëanor resume their pursuit of the remaining two Silmarils in Morgoth's crown, but only after Lúthien's passing from the world do they take up again the mantle of their oath and pursue Lúthien's Silmaril once it has passed to her son.

J.R.R. Tolkien's development of the Silmarils and the Oath

primarily affects Lúthien's descendants. However, he uses the interplay of the Silmarils and Lúthien's descendants to create a legacy for her that actively participates in the defeat of Morgoth in the First Age and the defeat of Sauron in the Third Age. Much of the development of Lúthien's legacy lies outside all versions of the story, occurring in other sections of the legendarium, but the traces of this development are present in Lúthien's narrative in a subtle way. In the *Tale*, J.R.R. Tolkien writes nothing of Beren and Lúthien's life after they return to Middle-earth, except that they were occasionally seen dancing and 'their names became heard far and wide' (*Lost Tales II*, p. 39). As he never finished the *Lay*, the poem does not reveal or even hint at Lúthien's impact on what unfolds after the main events of her life, and neither the *Sketch* nor *QN* explicitly mention any details within the sections on Beren and Lúthien (*Shaping* 28, 139). J.R.R. Tolkien first hints at these events in *QS*, writing that 'in her choice the Two Kindreds have been joined; and she is the forerunner of many' (*Silmarillion*, p. 187). 'Forerunner of many' hints at Dior, and more importantly Elwing, who plays a role in securing the help of the Valar to defeat Morgoth, and eventually Aragorn and Arwen in the Third Age.

This paper does not have the space to delve into the entire history of the 'Ruin of Doriath', which, as it appears in the published *Silmarillion*, is heavily affected by C. Tolkien's editorial hand (see Kane, pp. 207-218). The last version J.R.R. Tolkien himself wrote is found in *QN* (p. 207). Without tracing its development through the various drafts, the important thing to note is that Lúthien's Silmaril passes to Dior, which brings about the downfall of Doriath and the deaths of Celegorm, Curufin, Caranthir, and Dior (*Shaping*, p. 161). After Dior's death, the Silmaril comes to Dior's daughter Elwing, who marries Eärendil, the son of Tuor and Idril. The rest of the story is well-known: Eärendil sets sail for Valinor to ask the Valar for help in defeating Morgoth, the remaining sons of Fëanor attack Elwing's home and Elwing casts herself into the sea with the Silmaril, turning into a swan. She finds Eärendil and together they sail to Valinor. They are successful in obtaining the Valar's help, and the Valar march to Middle-earth and defeat their great enemy, ending the First Age of Middle-earth (*Silmarillion*, pp. 246-55).

Eärendil's success is related to Lúthien in two ways. First, he is only able to come to Valinor *because* of Lúthien's Silmaril, for the 'wise have said that it was by reason of the power of that holy jewel that [Eärendil and Elwing] came in time to waters that no vessels save those of the Teleri had known' (*Silmarillion*, p. 248). In 1967, J.R.R. Tolkien writes that it is only the linking of Eärendil's story with the legend of Beren and Lúthien that makes Eärendil's voyage west successful (*Letters*, p. 386). Eärendil must possess Lúthien's Silmaril to find Valinor in the first place, but it is also important that Eärendil represents both men and elves as a descendent of the two elf-human marriages. His heritage makes him an effective ambassador to the Valar and is one of the reasons why the Valar listen to him and agree to help. Thus, not only does Lúthien's direct descendant play a role in the defeat of Morgoth, but Lúthien's retrieval of a Silmaril and her union

with Beren make it possible in the first place.

J.R.R. Tolkien's use of the phrase 'forerunner of many' in *QS* also foreshadows the story of Aragorn and Arwen, which brings Lúthien's legacy into the Third Age. Aragorn leads the defeat of Sauron – finishing what Lúthien started at Tol Sirion – and restores the kingdom of Gondor. Arwen repeats Lúthien's choice to give up her immortality and marry a mortal, hence the significance of Aragorn's song of Lúthien's tale in *The Fellowship of the Ring*. Aragorn and Arwen will bring that tale to a conclusion, reuniting the half-elven bloodlines. This is a well-known connection between these two romances, but it is still helpful in understanding J.R.R. Tolkien's development of Lúthien's character in conjunction with the development of the history of Middle-earth.

Lúthien's legacy in the Third Age extends even further, for the light of her Silmaril shines as the star Eärendil, which, captured in the Phial of Galadriel, aids Frodo and Sam on their journey to Mount Doom. Sam even recognises that he and Frodo are 'in the same tale still' (*RK*, II, viii). J.R.R. Tolkien corroborates this in the text of Lúthien's story in *QS*, writing that Lúthien's tale 'is not ended' (*Lost Road*, p. 325). Thus, Lúthien's rescue of the Silmaril from Morgoth's crown plays an active role in the defeat of evil in *The Lord of the Rings*. And, in the heavens, Lúthien's legacy shines ever on.

As one of the earliest stories J.R.R. Tolkien began writing in the 1910s and one he continued to revise until his death in 1973, the tale of Lúthien has one of the longest histories of all of his writings. If, as C. Tolkien claims, each draft marks a version of the tale nearer to the author's desire (*B&L*, p. 14), the focus of J.R.R. Tolkien's revisions can be read as his desire to create a character who is more powerful through her art, more active in her own story, and more important in the history of Middle-earth. And though he never reached a final draft of this story and was never able to publish it during his lifetime, J.R.R. Tolkien certainly left behind a masterful tale of Middle-earth's most legendary protagonist.

Notes

1   A multitude of thanks to Robin Ann Reid for her guidance during the revising of this paper.
2   Even in C. Tolkien's creation of the Beren and Lúthien chapter in the published *Silmarillion*, Kane notes that C. Tolkien primarily utilized the *Quenta Silmarillion*, drawing little from the annals (pp. 176-177)
3   The first surviving draft is already a second draft of the text. J.R.R. Tolkien wrote this draft over an erased first draft. (*B&L*, p. 30).
4   See Kane pp. 173-181 for his analysis of C. Tolkien's creation of this chapter in *The Silmarillion*.
5   Manwë gives Eärendil, Elwing, and their sons the choice to determine 'under which kindred they shall be judged' (*Silmarillion*, p. 249).

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The Service of Samwise: Heroism, Imagination, and Restoration

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The perceived heroism of Samwise Gamgee in J.R.R. Tolkien's mythology *The Lord of the Rings* (1955) has cultivated several strong opinions about the overall purpose of Sam's character in relation to Frodo and the events of the narrative. While there is thorough agreement within Tolkien scholarship that the narrative contains several heroes, and, as Romuald Ian Lakowski claims, 'there is no single "hero" in the story, not even Frodo' (p. 4), the types of heroes, nevertheless, are often debated. When it comes to Sam specifically, however, the idea of him being a hero at all was at first not entirely acknowledged or accepted.

Though he goes on to affirm his pro-Sam position later in his 1967 paper, Jan S. J. Wojcik notes the existence of 'nervous little men' who 'whisper' about their discontentment that Sam might be the 'real hero' of the mythology (p. 16). His description, given approximately thirteen years after Tolkien's publication, suggests that the Sam-as-hero theory was not a particularly popular one to begin with and took some time to develop. He indicates that pro-Frodo arguments chiefly revolve around etymology. Since the Old English 'Frōd' means 'wise', and the 'Old English sām-prefix…modifies adjectives with a sense of "half"', hence 'half-wise', it is suggested that Frodo is the 'obvious' hero, while Sam is simply Frodo's supporter (Wojcik, p. 16). These 'nervous little men,' as Wojcik puts it, also sustain their denial of Sam's heroism by stating that it is Frodo who is the 'Ring bearer, Aeneas, Hero, God. He is the literary quest hero, brother to Ulysses and Don Quixote' (Wojcik and his pro-Frodo scholars, p. 16). This spotlight on Frodo blinds them from any comprehensive analysis of Sam.

Though Wojcik's reference to readers who were unsure of Sam's character was presented over fifty years ago, more contemporary commentators, like Edwards, continue to share in these opinions. In his book, *British Children's Fiction in the Second World War*, Edwards states that 'Tolkien had not in fact intended much of a part for Sam' (p. 463). Though Edwards affirms that Sam is a necessary character, particularly when 'Frodo's [determination] fails', he nevertheless maintains that Sam's agency and overall character is determined by his class status rather than any kind of hero status (p. 464).

Such arguments against Sam as a hero, however, are few and far between compared to the ample scholarship that enthusiastically advocates for his heroism. Wojcik is certainly one of those scholars – perhaps one of the first – stating that Sam is a 'subtle' but significant hero of the tale, as he 'symbolizes the final victory of rich good over evil sterility' (p. 16). Furthermore, Nick Hubble's chapter discussing 'The Choices of Master Samwise' upholds that Sam is the one who 'shares most in common with Beren, the central hero of all Tolkien's mythology' (p. 23), and quotes John Garth's claim that it is Sam's 'immeasurable courage and love' which make

him similar to Beren (Garth in Hubble, p. 23). While Hubble does not directly state that Sam is the central hero, and instead grants Beren this position, his comparison nonetheless implies Sam's prominence and heroic posture.

Others, like Christine L. Chichester, are more direct in their arguments for Sam. Chichester writes that though 'Sam is a character that early readers [do not] expect to possess qualities of the classical archetypal hero', like those described in Joseph Campbells' *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, he nevertheless is the one who 'emerges as an unlikely hero', and 'steps up to lead when Frodo is weakened' (p. 10). George Clark, in his essay 'J.R.R. Tolkien and the True Hero', concurs, stating that Sam and 'not Frodo takes the hero's place of honor' (p. 50). Furthermore, when it comes to the type of hero Sam is, Gregory Bassham argues that Sam is the 'moral' hero, whose 'indomitable courage' stimulates truth (p. 4).

Lastly, and perhaps most meaningfully, Tolkien himself in his famous letter to Milton Waldman calls Sam 'the chief hero' of the story (*Letters*, p. 159), and later in 1956, he again affirms in a letter that the 'Sam Gamgee of [his] story is a most heroic character' (*Letters*, p. 268). Of course, the early commentators that Wojcik makes reference to would have had no access to these letters during their time, and therefore, their doubt about Sam as a hero is justified in their reading of the narrative. However, given the progression of scholarship and access to primary materials over the years, the debate on Sam has shifted from 'is he a hero?' to 'what *kind* of hero is he?' as seen by scholars like Hubble and Bassham.

I agree that Samwise is heroic in his own right, and in this paper I offer another perspective as to the kind of hero Sam is and why he earns such a title. Unlike the interpretations of critics like Edwards and the 'nervous little men' of Wojcik's generation, who view Sam's position as a servant and gardener as justifiable means for exclusion from the realm of heroism, I suggest that it is precisely his stature as these two things that position him as the central hero of the mythology. His genuine service to 'Mr. Frodo' and his dedication to the Gamgee family trade of horticulture both stem from an unwavering, steadfast love – a pure love for his master and a love for the Shire, or the natural world. Moreover, these qualities extend even further when it comes to three elements essential within the world of Tolkien: imagination, recovery, and restoration.

Before delving deeper into the heroism of Sam, it is necessary to note the implications of terms like *imagination* and *recovery* within Tolkien's structure of fantasy sustaining *The Lord of the Rings*, as it leads into why Sam's heroism is so vital to the narrative. Some have contended that 'imagination' is a function which merely produces 'fanciful conceptions' (Schakel, p. 3) and, similar to the treatment of fairy stories as noted by Tolkien, has been a trait 'relegated to the nursery'

(*OFS*, p. 4). Yet other literary scholars such as Janine Langan note that 'imagination' is not simply 'the icing on the cake – the flight, distraction, [or] decoration' of the mind, but it is more so the 'crown' that sits atop 'Truth' (Langan in Ryken, p. 63). It is the process by which disorder and chaos are kneaded into a tangible, meaningful, thing of beauty.[1] For instance, a jumble of letters and images are rendered into poetry; a weedy, vacant lot is tilled into a garden.

The word 'imagination', though currently convoluted with various social and cultural renderings and relegations, originally means 'the power or capacity to form internal images or ideas of objects and situations not actually present to the senses' (Oxford English Dictionary). The use of one's imagination not only invokes the process of creation, but in doing so aims to stimulate and encourage beauty, reason, and truth in spite of the centuries-old suspicion that being imaginative is to be untrue, insubstantial, and therefore, problematic. On the contrary, Tolkien posits that fantasy itself is 'the most pure form' capable of embodying the nature and outcomes of imagination (*OFS*, p. 5), suggesting that the process of imagination is necessary within the development of fantasy.

Within fantasy itself, as Tolkien states in his lecture 'On Fairy-stories' (1939), the element of 'recovery' is critical. Therefore, since imagination is essential to the development of fantasy, it is also essential to the experience of recovery, one of the inherent principles within fantasy. Recovery, the penultimate criteria in a fairy story, is not, as Tolkien describes, 'seeing things as they are' but instead 'seeing things as we are (or were) meant to see them' (*OFS*, p. 9). Bassham describes recovery in his article as 'the restoration of our Wordsworthian ability to see ordinary things' (p. 3). The realised truth which stems from recovery within fantasy, evidently, can be seen as a method of imagination in its oldest, purest definition: 'to see' the 'images, ideas…and situations' that are not there – but perhaps *should* be – and to somehow bring it into being (Oxford English Dictionary).

Out of adventure and chaos, and after the eucatastrophic turn in a story, comes the revelation – a new, clear perspective of the world which often is still in need of repair. Therefore, a bridge between recovery and consolation is, arguably, restoration – the action taken and driven by the new perspective, which in turn, ushers in the happy ending. By using imagination to put something tangible, useful, or beautiful back into the world, one is transforming the world's malady into order, uplifting both reason and truth in the process, or 'seeing things as we are (or were) meant to' (*OFS*, p. 9).

Indeed, characters who sustain and portray such critical concepts are integral to the narrative, not just for plot's sake, but also because they are representations of some of Tolkien's key concepts. Typically, it is the heroes of such tales who exemplify the core principles of the author or genre, but to demonstrate Tolkien's philosophies about imagination and recovery within his structure of fantasy is no small task. Enter Sam – the hobbit whose devoted servitude to the natural world as well as his master not only works to uphold these critical structural elements, but in doing so, earns his place as the foremost hero of the narrative. He is not simply an unexpected hero or a moral hero, but he is the imaginative hero, the restorative hero, which I will work to explicate.

In *The Lord of the Rings*, we see a shift in where Sam places his service, from Frodo to the Shire – but even so, Sam remains in a position of dedicated servitude throughout. It is in his acts of service that we see his imagination – his acts of restoration – bloom, fulfilling Tolkien's principle of recovery within fantasy. J.E.A. Tyler's *Tolkien Companion* aptly states that 'there are few examples of loyalty, devotion, and faithfulness…equal to those displayed by the illustrious Hobbit Samwise Gamgee' (p. 558). Indeed, it is in Sam's service to Frodo and his triumph in returning the scourged Shire to beauty and fruitfulness (both of which are caused by his stature as a gardener) that make him arguably the primary hero of *The Lord of the Rings* and carries him as a restorer of order and beauty in the world of Middle-earth. Of all the heroic types we see in Tolkien's legendarium, Sam embodies virtues differently than other characters do, and without him, the achievements of Aragorn, Éowyn, Gandalf, Frodo, et al. would not have come to fruition.

Like the term 'imagination', the word 'hero' has also been tossed about and reshaped over time. Etymologically, it is derived from the Greek *heros*, meaning 'demi-god' or 'man exhibiting great bravery'; usually, the hero is one who is of great status from birth (Chichester, p. 7). Over time, however, several kinds of heroes surfaced, widening the scope of the definition itself. There is the Byronic hero, the tragic hero, the unwilling hero, and more, most extensively outlined in Campbell's focal text *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*. Yet throughout *The Lord of the Rings*, because of Sam's selfless character and uplifting deeds, another definition of hero (arguably, an even *better* kind of hero) emerges. He is not only the unexpected hero, but he is the selfless hero – the restorative hero. He is one whose pure dedication to service elicits imaginative, and therefore curative, outcomes for all who wish to delight in beauty and truth.

Sam's type of heroism greatly differs from the other heroes present in the mythology. In her article, Verlyn Flieger provides detailed insights on the distinctions between heroes in *The Lord of the Rings*. She states that while a traditional hero like Aragorn is admirable and 'attractive', we nevertheless can 'not identify with him', which is what causes him to be immediately seen and accepted as the hero (Flieger, 'Frodo and Aragorn', p. 124). On the other hand, a hero like Frodo is someone whom we *can* 'recognize ourselves in…He is utterly ordinary, and this is his great value' ('Frodo', p. 124). Flieger continues in her article stating that 'Frodo evokes the greater figures who stand behind him, but he is not engulfed by them' ('Frodo', p. 135). I agree with Flieger's distinctions, but I would also attribute her insights about Frodo onto Sam, who I argue is just as necessary a hero as Frodo (if not more so). Not only is his stature (like Frodo's) of relatable means, but it is precisely his status that allows him to be a selfless hero of the restorative action imperative to the outcome of the narrative.

Sam, as a gardener, participates in the imaginative process, restoring natural grandeur back into the world. By extension,

as *Frodo's* gardener, he portrays a level of genuine servitude that goes above and beyond the borders of the Shire. Hence, we have the restorative, servant hero – not a hero *of* servants, but a hero who is a servant. As Campbell states, 'It is not society that is to guide and save the creative hero, but precisely the reverse' (p. 337). This is what we find in Sam – one who leads his community, his world, into redemption and restoration via his dedication to serving others and healing the earth, which simultaneously puts him in diametrical opposition to the villains of the mythology, like Saruman and Sauron, who glory in devastation and domination over others.

As stated above, there is no doubt that other courageous characters including Frodo, Aragorn, Éowyn, and Gandalf are vital heroic figures throughout *The Lord of the Rings*, comparable to other renowned characters in Tolkien's mythology such as Túrin and Beren. Yet it is dear Samwise who is arguably the foremost heroic character of the narrative. Many play their part in leading the quest to its fulfilment, but in my argument for Sam as the selfless, restorative hero, I would have to adopt the words of Stratford Caldecott, who claims that Sam is the 'central hero' of the tale (p. 29).

Again, the other necessary and valiant characters of Middle-earth embody facets of heroism differently than Sam. While Frodo, the Ring bearer, volunteers himself to go destroy the Ring in Mordor,it is Elrond who affirms his choice, stating that he thinks 'this task is appointed for [Frodo]" (*FR*, II, iii). The word 'appointed' here is well-chosen. After long debate on who should destroy the Ring and how it should be done, Frodo stands up to the task. Yet, Elrond, and perhaps also Gandalf, understands that Bilbo's dealings in the past have certainly influenced Frodo's present fate, particularly since Frodo is called Bilbo's heir throughout the story, inciting a traditional fairy tale motif of sons dealing with the consequences of their fathers' actions. Consequently, Frodo becomes the selected hero destined to destroy the Ring of Power.

Likewise, Aragorn's significance as a hero throughout the text has already been noted, particularly through the perspective of Flieger. His destiny is embraced by his many names: Aragorn, son of Arathorn, Isildur's heir – the one true heir to wield Narsil, the sword that was broken and remade. He is also Estel, or the great hope that is to come; he is Ellesar, the King of Gondor. And, he is Strider, the one who ushers in the Age of Men. Each of these (and more) point to the standard he has to live up to for something far greater than just himself. Aragorn's intentions and actions prove courageous, honourable, and trustworthy throughout his dealings, from ensuring that the oaths of the ancient Dead are upheld (and offering them release from their curse in the end) to assuming the throne as the King of Gondor. Yet he, too, is influenced by lineage and fate. Though his actions are his own, it is his destiny that guides him. He, like Frodo, has a responsibility to Middle-earth. Therefore, their heroism, though distinct from each other in certain ways, nevertheless equally reflects an obligation to fulfil a destiny wrought long before they were born.

Similarly, other heroic figures like Éowyn, Legolas, Gimli, and Gandalf are also led by their traditions and histories.

Éowyn, a shieldmaiden whose Rohirric culture is emblematic of the early English people,[2] chooses to fight because she values her people's heritage and respects the duties and glories of war. Her service to her people and to Middle-earth is indeed brave and poignant to the brink of tears, yet it is also culturally inherited. Legolas, an Elf that has been present for the events of Middle-earth for centuries does his duty for the fate of his people and stands beside Aragorn. Stubborn Gimli, too, fights valiantly at Legolas and Aragorn's sides, but also follows in the footsteps of his ancestors who took battle and retribution head on. The same goes for Gandalf, who is connected to the fate of Middle-earth via his status as one of the Wise and as a Maia. Throughout the mythology, he stands as a bridge between the Valar and the beings of Middle-earth, seen, for instance, when he is given the Elfstone of Eärendil by Yavanna and presents it to Galadriel as a token symbolizing the protection of Middle-earth by the Valar (*UT*, p. 267). This passing of the stone from Valar to Elf is indicative of the events to come involving Gandalf. He will continue to serve as a powerful defender of the Free Peoples of Middle-earth and pave the way for Elessar, or Aragorn II, who is to embody everything that the Elfstone of Eärendil represents.

Sam's heroism, however, comes about in a different way. His lineage implies no obligation to destiny, unlike those of the others. He is Shire-born-and-raised without any familial connection to what lies beyond his homeland's borders, as hinted at in a conversation between Sam and Ted in 'The Shadow of the Past'. There, Sam admits that he '[doesn't] know' what truly lies beyond the Shire, though he holds close to his heart the tales that 'Mr. Baggins [whom he] works for' told him when he 'was a little lad' (*FR*, I, ii). Though Sam feels emotionally and nostalgically attached to tales of the Elves and of adventure, they are still simply stories for him at this point, not experiences. Frodo is more closely connected to Bilbo's experiences through family ties, and therefore readers develop an expectation that he will experience adventure as well (even though Frodo himself does not know it yet). Sam, on the other hand, has no tangible expectation or experience to live up to. Tyler's biographical description of Sam also expounds his humble beginnings, stating that Sam was 'born the youngest of three sons to a staunchly working-class family; and his trade was the humble craft of horticulture' (p. 558). That he is the youngest and lowest, another typical fairy tale motif, hints to careful readers early on of his eventual rise to heroism. Initially, the only expectation for the Gamgees was to continue on in their family trade of gardening, for they were 'renowned for conservatism and lack of aspirations, yet these faults…sprang from respectfulness and a love for their gentle craft' (Tyler, p. 558). Sam was born into the Shire with an expectation to uphold his father's work, not unlike the reader's expectation for Frodo to carry on the adventure Bilbo started in *The Hobbit*. Yet it is precisely Sam's upbringing that shapes his journey into heroism.

Sam was the only one of his generation to uphold the family craft of horticulture after his father, who worked for Bilbo much of his life. When the Gaffer put aside his trade, Sam continues working for Frodo, who he grew up with (Tyler,

p. 559). His upbringing, and consequently his knowledge about and love for nature (important qualities cherished by Tolkien), is what establishes his humility and selflessness as well as fosters his devotion to Frodo. These traits allow him to appreciate his role as a servant along the Great Journey he undertakes with Frodo.

The role of servant is of utmost importance when it comes to defining Sam's heroism. It is critical to note, as it was with 'imagination' and 'hero', that the word 'servant' does not mean 'slave' in this context. For servants as slaves, we need only look to Sauron and his Orc armies. However, derived from the Old French use of both *server* and *servile*, meaning 'domestic attendant', 'foot soldier', or 'one who serves in war' (*OED*), 'servant' implies a far more loyal relationship between a master and a servant. It is not a title provoked by forced labour or authority over another's will. On the contrary, Tolkien writes in a letter to H. Cotton Minchin in 1956, 'My "Samwise" is indeed largely a reflection of the English soldier…the memory of the privates and my batmen that I knew in the 1914 War, and recognized as so far superior to myself' (*Letters*, p. 270). Certain uses of the word 'servant' more readily embrace the definitions of the Latin *servitium*, meaning 'slavery', and *servire*, meaning 'subjection' and 'subservience', particularly during the 18th and 19th centuries (*OED*). Yet Tolkien presents the servant/master relationship quite differently, more in line with the Old French definition as well as his own experience in war, demonstrating a great respect for the foot soldiers – for the numerous Samwise Gamgees of World War I.

Tolkien's position on Sam's servitude is apparent from the beginning. Upon Bilbo's quitting of the Shire, and the Gaffer's retirement, Sam 'continued to work for Frodo in much the same way that his father had worked for Bilbo' (Tyler, p. 559). However, in accordance with the sentiments of Tolkien in his letter, there is an additional factor that nurtures the bond between Sam and Frodo. Having grown up alongside Frodo and having 'learned his letters' from Bilbo (Tyler, p. 559), as well as listening to Bilbo's adventurous stories as a boy, Sam is instilled with a greater sense of loyalty towards the Baggins family, with affection at its core. He calls Frodo '*Mr.* Frodo' not merely for the sake of class distinction, but out of pure respect. He dares not leave Frodo's side in any event, not for fear of condemnation from his master, but because of his genuine love and dedication to him.

Likewise, while the term 'master' is a word Tolkien uses to present social status, it is never used bitterly or in a derisive manner when used by Sam or any of the Free Peoples. Hammond and Scull explain that 'master' is,

> an expression of respect, in the archaic sense of a title denoting high rank, learning, etc. Bilbo respects Gaffer Gamgee as a master gardener—distinct from Mister (as 'Mr Bilbo Baggins', 'Mr Frodo') which is a title of respect in the broader sense, and occasionally Master as a title applied to males not yet 'come of age'…Sam Gamgee himself becomes 'Master Samwise' at last in Book VI. (p. 57)

Contrastingly, later in *The Lord of the Rings*, Gollum's use of the word 'Master' towards Frodo is used out of fear after years of torment and abuse caused by carrying the Ring. He also perceives and behaves as if the Ring itself is not only something 'Precious', but more so his 'Master'. Since Frodo carries the Ring, he also carries the title. Interestingly, in Book IV, Sam also begins to call Frodo 'Master', perhaps out of spite towards Gollum. But again, Sam's perspective of Frodo as 'Master' is out of protectiveness and love, which combats with Gollum's usage of the word.

From the moment Gandalf enlists Sam with Frodo to embark upon the quest in 'The Shadow of the Past', to the moment Sam carries Frodo to the fires of Mordor in 'Mount Doom', we see the progression of Sam's loyalty and service to Frodo grow with insurmountable selfless love and dedication. In 'The Council of Elrond,' after it is decided that Frodo will carry the Ring to its destruction (and, perhaps, to his own), Sam bursts out,

> 'But you won't send him off alone, surely, Master?' cried Sam, unable to contain himself any longer, and jumping up from the corner where he had been quietly sitting on the floor.
>
> 'No indeed!' said Elrond, turning towards him with a smile. 'You at least shall go with him. It is hardly possible to separate you from him, even when he is summoned to a secret council and you are not.'
>
> Sam sat down, blushing and muttering. 'A nice pickle we have landed ourselves in, Mr. Frodo!' (*FR*, II, iii)

Even after Sam has accomplished his dream of meeting the Elves, and after all manners of discussion about the perils that led up to their current council and the trials to come, Sam is still the first one to ensure that Frodo will be safe. It is imperative to note that Sam is not asking to go *with* him, but he is simply inquiring about Frodo's safety – that *someone* should go with him. This contrasts with Merry and Pippin's hasty desires to be a part of the Fellowship for adventure's sake, which Elrond initially frowns upon.[3] But Elrond sees the moral fortitude and concern of Sam and straight away states that Sam will go with Frodo.

What is perhaps even more telling of Sam's humble character is that he is preciously sitting on the floor for the entire meeting, both a nod to the way in which he views himself in such great company and a subtle hint by Tolkien about Sam's place in general. This is certainly not to suggest that Sam is lower in worth, but lower in status at the meeting. Yet by 'quietly sitting on the floor' and interjecting his concern for Frodo (*FR*, II, iii), not only do we see the loveable, laughable side of Sam, but we also gain a sense of how his role as a servant is sustained by humility as well as affection and will ultimately play a crucial part in their journey.

Another example of Sam's dedication and selfless nature comes at the end of *Fellowship of the Ring*, when Sam, who knew better than anyone what Frodo's actions would be, dives into the river in an attempt to catch Frodo's boat. He cries out

with great abandon,

> 'Coming, Mr. Frodo! Coming!' and [flings] himself from the bank, clutching at the departing boat…With a cry and splash he fell face downward into the deep swift water. Gurgling he went under, and the River closed over his curly head. (*FR*, II, x)

After Frodo pulls Sam up into the boat, and Frodo says he would have been 'safely on [his] way' by then, Sam responds,

> 'Safely!…All alone and without me to help you? I couldn't have borne it, it'd have been the death of me.'

> 'It would be the death of you to come with me, Sam,' said Frodo, 'and I could not have borne that…I am going to Mordor.'

> 'I know that well enough, Mr. Frodo. Of course you are. And I'm coming with you.' (*FR*, II, x).

Willing to drown for his master and knowing quite well the potential for danger on the road to Mordor, Sam follows readily, for he cannot bear the thought of being left behind, not for any desire of his own adventure or gain, but for the sake of Frodo's wellbeing.

Sam's dedication to aiding Frodo in the quest is displayed in several other instances similar to these. Yet as the journey lengthens and the obstacles grow more severe, Sam's perseverance and loyalty also mature. In 'Of Herbs and Stewed Rabbit', Sam's developing devotion to Frodo can be seen when compared with the sentiments of Gollum. As Frodo sleeps, Sam notices 'that at times a light seemed to be shining within' (*TT*, IV, iv). He says to himself, 'I love him. He's like that, and sometimes it shines through, somehow. But I love him, whether or no' (*TT*, IV, iv). This is a confirmation of the love that nurtures Sam's service to Frodo. Though he is stating the truth of his heart, he also appears to be making a decision with himself. He confirms that he loves his master, even if the light within him fades at times.

Tolkien juxtaposes this expression of faithfulness with an ominous description of Gollum's view of Frodo. He writes, 'Gollum returned quietly and peered over Sam's shoulder. Looking at Frodo, he shut his eyes and crawled away without a sound' (*TT*, IV, iv). Though Gollum had somewhat been 'tamed' back into Sméagol (*TT*, IV, iv), there is a clear sense of tension and foreboding present. Sam is outright in his genuine service to Frodo, while Gollum continues to be conflicted. This becomes even more apparent as Sam remains at Frodo's side to the bitter end with this same love, and Gollum turns against Frodo in favour of his true love and Master, the Ring. Gollum's love for his Master, for the Precious, is a jealous, dangerous love; his love for Frodo is directly tied to his even greater love for the Ring. Yet Sam's love for his master is pure and blameless; he loved his master before embarking on their journey to destroy the Ring, and he loves his master even as the Ring changes him. When Sam's service is given faithfully, it becomes the midwife of love and trust. Once more, we see that the difference between Sam and Gollum is that Sam, through his authentic service, gains and cherishes a trustworthy bond with Frodo, while Gollum's loyalty is short-lived and reverts back to selfish fear.

There are other examples of Sam's progressing heroism, especially within the final books of the novel. In 'Shelob's Lair', after Shelob stings Frodo into a death-like coma, Sam returns the favour with Sting the knife; combined with the power of the Phial of Galadriel, he is able to deeply wound Shelob and come to Frodo's aid (*TT*, IV, viiii). His friendship and service to Frodo are, yet again, revealed when he sees Frodo paralyzed, crying out, 'Frodo! Mr. Frodo! Don't leave me here alone! It's your Sam calling. Don't go where I can't follow! Wake up, Mr. Frodo! O wake up, Frodo, me dear, me dear. Wake up!' (*TT*, IV, x). The phrase 'It's your Sam' illustrates the way Sam sees himself in relation to Frodo. Yet another obstacle arises, and in 'The Tower of Cirith Ungol', Sam must rescue Frodo from the Orcs that steal him away, bravely putting his fears aside to save the spider-stung Ring-bearer. And even when Sam carries the Ring himself, feeling its weight and now able to understand completely the burden of his master, he is able to ward off temptation. In a Gollum-esque episode in 'The Tower of Cirith Ungol', Sam's 'will and reason' are tempted, and 'fantasies [arise] in his mind', as he sees himself as the 'Hero of the Age', a mighty gardener with the fate of the world at his command (*RK*, VI, i). But, Tolkien writes, 'it was the love of his master that helped most to hold firm' against such great temptations (*RK*, VI, i).

This scene between Sam and the Ring in 'The Tower of Cirith Ungol' holds an interesting place within the conversation of heroism. As noted, one of the temptations that the Ring thrusts onto Sam is that he sees himself as the 'Hero of the Age' (*RK*, VI, i). It is revealed to the reader that Sam, in arguably one of his darkest moments, *wants* to be a hero. The Ring, acting in this scene as a powerful, dangerous, 'psychic amplifier' (Shippey, p. 142), shows a most secretive, selfish desire – to be renowned for his work, not just geographically within his home of the Shire, but 'of the Age', suggesting that *all* would know of his deeds for centuries. But why is this desire only surfacing now, with the push and prod of the Ring? Sam's 'fantasies' of heroism are set within the dark experience of the Ring tempting him. This suggests that Sam might have been harbouring this desire all along, but more importantly, that he may have been stifling it, and the lure of the Ring was the only thing strong enough to bring it into full recognition.

Should this deep desire to be the 'Hero of the Age' taint Sam's character and his relationship with Frodo? No. There are two conclusions to draw from his experience. First, Sam seemingly shoved the idea of being a hero aside throughout the journey. His wish to be a hero like those in old adventure tales subsided early on in Sam's journey with the Fellowship. He realised that his task was to protect Frodo, the true hero in his eyes. Second, even though the pull of the Ring was powerful enough to draw out this deep 'fantasy', Sam once again is successful in not just stifling it, but dismissing it altogether. He cuts off all thoughts of heroism for the sake of his master, which ultimately leads him further into the role of a hero.

Unlike other people that have been tempted by the Ring's silky voice of power, Sam triumphs in denying it, stating, 'I'll

get there, if I leave everything but my bones behind' (*RK*, VI, iii). His sheer will to do so comes not from a phial or spell, but solely from the affection he harbours for his master and his valued duty to keep him safe. Additionally, we see an increase in Sam's confidence in these chapters. Not only does he *need* to defeat Shelob and the Orcs, but he also truly believes he can. His determination to care for Frodo stimulates his personal growth, shaping him in the ways of bravery and strength – in the ways of heroism.

And, of course, there is perhaps no greater portrayal of fidelity, friendship, and selfless servitude than that of Sam carrying Frodo up Mount Doom in their most dire moments to finally destroy the Ring and achieve their quest. As Sam looks upon his gasping master, he claims, 'I said I'd carry him, if it broke my back…and I will! Come, Mr. Frodo!…I can't carry it for you, but I can carry you and it as well' (*RK*, VI, iii). Perhaps the most poignant words in the entire text come not from the long-expected heroes of the story, but the stubborn gardener of Bag End. Throughout their journey, Sam has carried pots, pans, food, and supplies. He has additionally helped Frodo carry psychological burdens by inspiring hope and courage. In doing so, Sam had been metaphorically carrying Frodo the whole way, culminating in this momentous scene in which he literally carries Frodo.

Each of these occasions (and several others) work to illustrate Sam as a worthy hobbit of service and develop him into the leading hero of the novel. It becomes apparent that the two outcomes are not mutually exclusive, but rather one stems from the other. Sam's service to Frodo elevates him into the ultimate heroic figure. It is out of his loyalty to his master that he helps '[save] the Quest from disaster', and without his unwavering support, 'Frodo would never have reached the Cracks of Doom' (Tyler, p. 560).

The heroism that Sam portrays throughout the novel is, certainly, different from the heroic deeds of other figures throughout *The Lord of the Rings*. Sam's service to Frodo is the foundation of his heroism because it does not simply stem from the fact that he *is a servant*, but rather it is that he *chooses* to serve Frodo so willingly and devotedly. While he has, or develops, similar traits to the other heroes, including strength, integrity, bravery, and determination, the ways in which he performs them separate him from the rest. Sam is bumbling and stubborn. He is humorous and gentle, plain-speaking and down-to-earth. He is 'half-wise', as his name denotes (Wojcik, p. 16), but able to see beyond present despair into glimmers of truth and hope. Altogether, Sam provides a distinct kind of heroism because his mission is not intrinsically motivated or directed by destiny. Each decision he makes regarding their journey sprouts from his genuine servitude.

Once the War of the Ring finally wanes, when Gollum has eucatastrophically fallen with his Precious and the Eagles have come for the scattered remnants of the Fellowship, the gardener and his master join the others in their long-desired journey home. It is during these chapters in particular where Tolkien's fairytale principle of recovery begins to take hold and bloom, where several characters experience a 'return and renewal of health' as well as a 'regaining of a clear view' (*OFS*,

p. 9). Though the germ for this clarity in Sam is planted during his journey with Frodo, as seen in the 'Tower of Cirith Ungol' when Sam rejects the Ring's temptation and decides that 'all these notions are only a trick', Sam's recovery is complete only after he returns to the Shire (*RK*, VI, i).

He, along with Merry and Pippin, is shocked and angry at the scouring of the Shire caused by the pathetic Saruman, while Frodo is melancholic and pities both the Wizard and Wormtongue. After their miserable deaths, and Merry claims it as the 'very last end of the War', it is Sam who thinks otherwise, stating, 'I shan't call it the end, till we've cleared up this mess', referring to the uprooted Shire (*RK*, VI, viiii). Each hobbit shows development as a part of this recovery – Pippin is no longer as naïve, Merry no longer as hasty, and Frodo no longer as innocent. They all have gained a deeper understanding of the ways of the world and value their lives, as well as the lives of others, differently and are far more appreciative than before. Sam also experiences a renewed perspective; this maturation amplifies his will for servitude, which in turn further cultivates his identity as a hero as his service heals and saves the natural world of the Shire.

Tolkien writes that 'Sam was kept very busy' as 'the clearing of the Hill and Bag End' took place along with the 'restoration of Bagshot Row' (*RK*, VI, viiii). He explains that 'the trees were the worst loss and damage' for they had been 'cut down recklessly far and wide over the Shire', and 'Sam grieved over this more than anything else' (*RK*, VI, viiii). Here, specifically, we see Tolkien imbue one of his deepest values into Sam. In a letter, Tolkien writes, 'I am much in love with plants and above all trees…and I find human mistreatment of them…hard to bear' (*Letters*, p. 239). It is in his grief that Sam 'remembered the gift of Galadriel', saying, 'I'm sure the Lady would not like me to keep it all for my own garden, now so many folks have suffered' (*RK*, VI, viiii). Sam's notion to cultivate and restore the whole Shire rather than just his own land is fully embraced, fulfilling his sentiments when rejecting the temptation of the Ring: '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' (*RK*, VI, i).

By spreading out the gift of Galadriel, Sam partakes in the process of imagination, as discussed previously. As a gardener, he embraces the responsibility to serve where his skills are needed, and from chaos and destruction, he tills beauty and delight once more into fruition. The 'trees began to sprout and grow' quickly (*RK*, VI, viiii). Once again, the 'Party Field' sprouted 'a beautiful young sapling' with 'silver bark and long leaves' – a majestic '*mallorn*' tree (*RK*, VI, viiii). And indeed, it was 'the wonder of the neighborhood' growing in 'grace and beauty' (*RK*, VI, viiii). Because of Sam's great work, the restoration far surpassed what was intended and expected. Sam's work restored more than just the trees. In the year 1420 in the Shire, there was 'wonderful sunshine and delicious rain', as well as many 'children born or begotten that year' (*RK*, VI, viiii). There were also many marriages, the 'fruit was so plentiful that young hobbits very nearly bathed in strawberries and cream' and 'no one was ill, and everyone was pleased' (*RK*, VI, viiii). The act of using imagination, working beauty back

into the world that was once damaged and chaotic, has reaped an even better state than before.

Tolkien goes into great detail when describing the restoration of the Shire, leaving no hill untouched. It is evident, just by his detailed description, that the restoration of the natural world is of serious importance to Tolkien, and represents the necessity for recovery to include a renewed natural space. Several of his personal letters to various people include sentiments about his affinity for trees and nature, as well as his repugnance to the elements of industry which destroy nature.[4] So, of course, there must be the healing of the natural world involved as a part of the story's recovery and consolation. Sam is at the forefront of this endeavour, being a gardener with a dedication to service, and it is precisely these qualities that seal his role as the central hero of the novel. In addition to his incomparable service to Frodo, Sam also serves a vital role in the restoration of the Shire.

For some time, Sam manages to channel his service to both Frodo and the natural world, 'full of delight as even a hobbit could wish' (*RK*, VI, viiii). Yet in the back of his mind lies 'a vague anxiety about his master', and eventually the time comes for Frodo to travel the Havens to find rest (*RK*, VI, viiii). During this time, we still see Sam clinging on to Frodo, not because he is reliant on him, but more so because Sam still believes that Frodo is dependent on *him*. And it is Frodo, who has cherished and respected Sam's service all this time, who tells Sam that '[He] cannot be always torn in two...[He has] so much to enjoy and to be, and to do' (*RK*, VI, viiii). Though Sam rides with Frodo on his trip to the Grey Havens, he understands that he cannot go with Frodo, and so his service is now completely for the Shire and those who dwell within it. He is not only the restorer, the cultivator of imagination and beauty, but also the memory-keeper, who will 'read things out of the Red Book' after he has finished the story using the pages Frodo has left blank for him (*RK*, VI, viiii).

From selflessly devoting himself to his master, to applying his trade in acts of restoration and recovery, Sam's heroism is essential to the final consolation of the narrative, placing him in a league of his own. His dedication to his master is unparalleled, for it is out of joy that he serves, with personal feelings of responsibility and loyalty towards Frodo. In his article 'The Humanity of Samwise', Jerome Rosenburg eloquently affirms that although Sam '[lacks] the nobility of Aragorn, the grandeur of the Elves, the harsh wisdom of Gandalf, the missionary zeal of Frodo, and the other utopian virtues of such venerated members of the mythology' (p. 11), he instead embodies what Verlyn Flieger calls an 'earthy practicality and shrewd common sense' ('Smallest Fragment', p. 149). It is the duties of being a servant that allow Sam to understand his master better than anyone else, prompting him to make selfless decisions like flinging himself into the river to catch Frodo's boat or carrying him up Mount Doom. It is also through his knowledge and love for gardening that he understands the importance of restoring the earth. These qualities allow Sam to '[stay] behind, in the real world of Middle-earth', and permit him to 'bring [his part of] the world' successfully 'into the Age of Men' (Rosenburg, p. 11). A

momentous task for a small, humble hobbit.

Furthermore, through his works of creation as a gardener, using his divine gift unselfishly and utilizing his skills for the sake of others, he stands as an embodiment of the imaginative process, bringing back beauty and order into a world that had just experienced disorder, pain, and chaos. Sam saves Frodo, which ultimately helps save Middle-earth from Sauron. He then saves the Shire, which is a symbol for all that is good and beautiful in the natural world, and thus, he prevents the hobbits and their natural world from a ruinous end.

The choices Sam makes throughout *The Lord of the Rings*, therefore, present readers with a definition of heroism unlike that of others who are guided by destiny and heritage. Samwise Gamgee, proud gardener and staunchly loyal footman, is prompted by his will alone to protect and tend to the master and home he loves. He is the selfless, restorative hero, whose deeds incite hope and beauty, causing the integral concept of recovery to unfold in the novel. Thus, the heroism of Sam, when thoughtfully considered, strikes readers with a simple but unwavering truth, that love born of service and service born of love are far more powerful than any cunning temptation, any doomed fate, and certainly, any Ring.

Notes

1 See Samuel Taylor Coleridge's chapter XIII in *Biographia Literaria*: 'The primary Imagination I hold to be the living power and prime agent of all human perception, and as a repetition in the finite mind of the eternal act of creation in the infinite I AM'.

2 See Thomas Honneger's 'The Rohirrim: "Anglo-Saxons on Horseback"? An inquiry into Tolkien's use of sources', Published in Jason Fisher's *Tolkien and the Study of His Sources: Critical Essays*, pp. 116-132.

3 Though Sam's thoughts on traveling with Frodo (after Gandalf pulls him by the ears through the window for eavesdropping) are initially inspired by his desire to see the Elves, their first encounter with the Elves in 'Three is Company' fulfils his wish. At the same time, this experience instils in Sam a better understanding of the Elves, that they are not beings to be merely ogled at. Rather, they show the hobbits the great splendour of not only their powerful, ancient race, but of all beautiful things worth keeping and saving.

4 See *Letters* 49, 61, 64, 77, 88, 135, 321, and 323.

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article

The Red Book and Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*: A Fantasic Uncertainty[1]

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TRANSLATED BY PAULINE LOQUIN

If *The Lord of the Rings* tells a story characterised by wonders, it also relates the story of the Red Book, in which the different protagonists (especially Bilbo and Frodo) have recorded their eventful journeys. This essay will focus on the presence of this book inside the story and on its *mise en abyme* through the examination of the fictional genesis of the text, through the manifestation of its materiality, and through its reflective dimension: the quest is a story, which alone justifies a written account of it.

The examination of the connection between the two books shines a light on an uncertainty, a weakness in the statement suggested by *The Lord of the Rings*: indeed, it presents the Red Book as an authentic historical document but only on the surface. In fact, this assertion is questioned simultaneously, and this is something the readers often forget. These observations bring about a reflection, specific to Tolkien, on the role of literature and its limits in regard to truth and fiction.

The genesis of the fictional text: The birth of the Red Book

It is crucial to keep in mind the distinction between the writing of *The Lord of the Rings* – written by J.R.R Tolkien between 1937 and 1949 (for the most part), then reorganized and completed before its publication in 1954-1955 (before a second edition in 1966) – and that of the Red Book. The latter is a manuscript which is supposed to have been edited by two characters from the story (Bilbo and Frodo, with some of Sam's additions), and it is given as the source text for *The Lord of the Rings*.

Therefore, it appears as early as the first page of the Prologue (*FR*, I, i), where it is said that *The Hobbit*, previously published, is an incomplete version of the Red Book, while *The Lord of the Rings* follows on from it, since it was based on the subsequent chapters of said Red Book. And indeed, thanks to one of Tolkien's later texts, the collection of poems entitled *The Adventures of Tom Bombadil* (published in 1962), the readers can complete their perception of the Red Book. According to the preface of this volume of poetry, the poems come from the same Red Book, in which they were written in 'margins and blank spaces' or 'on loose leaves'.[2] This redoubling plays a key role as a presumed confirmation: if one assents to this fiction, therefore, *Tom Bombadil*, *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* are all based on the Red Book.

Obviously, the readers can deny its existence and contest it with the references to real books appearing in the Appendices and which can be related to the texts published after the writer's death in *The Silmarillion* or in the manuscripts edited by Christopher Tolkien in the twelve volumes that compose *The History of Middle-earth* which compile fiction, poems, and documents. For instance, a few concise phrases ('The histories of that time are not recorded here' [*RK*, Appendix B, I, i]) account for the shortness of the chronology of the First and Second Ages given in *The Lord of the Rings*, but at the same time, they also explicitly refer to the existence of *The Silmarillion*, which Tolkien originally hoped to publish with *The Lord of the Rings* and which should have answered all the questions of the readers about the ancient history of this universe. This situation was described by Tolkien to young Hugh Brogan in 1948, as he was reaching the end of the redaction of his long novel (*Letters*, p. 129).

As for *The History of Middle-earth*, especially the *Annals of Valinor*, the *Annals of Beleriand* and their different versions, they can all be connected to the chronology published in *The Lord of the Rings* (cf. the versions appearing in *The Shaping of Middle-earth* and *The Lost Road*). However, as they were published posthumously, they make the situation more complicated, since the readers had no access to those texts before 1977 (for *The Silmarillion*), 1980 (for *The Unfinished Tales of Númenor and Middle-earth*), or even much more recently for the last volumes of *The History of Middle-earth*. [Translator's note: So far, only the first five volumes of *History of Middle-earth* have been translated into French.]

Leaving aside the intertextual references to these works, for that would greatly widen the scope of this essay, this analysis will focus on the Red Book and its privileged status in the fictional apparatus of *The Lord of the Rings*.

This great novel enables the readers to follow the birth of the Red Book, introduced at the end of the Quest of the Ring. The readers of *The Hobbit* and of *The Lord of the Rings* follow the characters until they start to write down their memories, once their respective quests are completed. The time of redaction is therefore included in the diegetic dimension. In *The Hobbit*, at the end of his adventures, Bilbo is said to be 'sitting in his study writing his memoirs – he thought of calling them "There and Back Again, a Hobbit's Holiday"' (*Hobbit*, p. 217). Consequently, the beginning of *The Lord of the Rings* presents the Red Book as Bilbo's diary. And since Bilbo is still working on it as he lives in Rivendell (*FR*, II, i), it is still unfinished – although it's been seventy years since the end of the adventures supposed to be recorded in it. Yet, as Frodo becomes the leading character, new chapters must be added to tell his adventures. Bilbo asks his heir to 'bring back all the news [he] can, and any old songs and tales [he] can come by' (*FR*, II, i). Consequently, a second volume is announced, and Frodo will eventually write it based on Bilbo's 'notes and papers' and on his 'diary' (*RK*, VI, vi), but also on his own adventures and his

friends' accounts, as he takes up Bilbo's duty, after having been his heir as a ring-bearer.

This written account has been prepared through many hints depicting the story as fictional, as a 'tale'. Hence Bilbo's delight as he listens to the 'chapters of [their] story' (*FR*, II, i) – that of Frodo's – for he believes that 'someone else always has to carry on the story' (*FR*, II, i). And indeed, his heir uses the same words when he compares his memories to 'a chapter in a story'.[3] Likewise, Pippin comments: 'That came in [Bilbo's] tale, long long ago. This is my tale, and it is ended now' (*RK*, V, x). There's even one example where the repetition doesn't just occur from one chapter to another, but within a matter of lines, when Sam says he feels as if he is in the middle of a 'tale' similar to that of Eärendil and the Silmarils (*TT*, IV, viii).

This 'tale' might turn into a story: it could even 'be put into words', 'told by the fireside, or read out of a great big book'. (*TT*, IV, viii). This last comment logically stems from the accepted analogy between the adventures of the Fellowship of the Ring and the stories of the Elder Days, told in songs or tales, and which appear through the various hints at the translation from the elven tongues made by Bilbo in Rivendell. From a perspective outside the narrative of *The Lord of the Rings*, the readers might see those elements as allusions to some chapters of *The Silmarillion*; the characters of *The Lord of the Rings* stand in a literary tradition, oral and written, and it is remarkable that they use the exact same words – 'tale' and 'story' – used by Tolkien in his letters to describe his novel. It is even possible to see emblems of this work as symbolic miniatures in the Mirror of Galadriel, for it shows the past, the present, and the possible narrative outcomes; but they could also appear in the Palantir: The Seeing-stone which makes possible the vision of the past and the rereading of the chapters of the story of Middle-earth.

Finally, the use of intertextuality (which is present on several levels) can be taken as a proof that the story itself asserts its fictional status, not only through the allusions to other stories written by the same author, but also as it stands under the patronage of older texts, like *Beowulf* or medieval romances. In this regard, the interlacing – one of the processes that build the story – which enables the crossing of different narrative threads, is attested through several hints alluding to the framework of the text. Those signs can easily be perceived by the readers, and they confirm that there is a metafictional system taking the shape of a *mise en abyme*, according to the definition given by Lucien Dällenbach. Dällenbach explained that a *mise en abyme* is 'a sequence which is connected by similarity to the work that encloses it … A "*mise en abyme*" is any internal mirror that reflects the whole of the narrative by simple, repeated or "specious" (or paradoxical duplication)'.[4]

Accordingly, the last chapter of *The Lord of the Rings* presents this glimpse of the Red Book:

> There was a big book with plain red leather covers; its tall pages were now almost filled. At the beginning there were many leaves covered with Bilbo's thin wandering hand, but most of it was written in Frodo's firm flowing script. It was divided into chapters, but Chapter 80 was unfinished, and after that were

some blank leaves. The title page had many titles on it, crossed out one after another, so:

My Diary. My Unexpected Journey. There and Back Again. And What Happened After.

Adventures of Five Hobbits. The Tale of the Great Ring, compiled by Bilbo Baggins from his own observations and the accounts of his friends. What we did in the War of the Ring.

Here Bilbo's hand ended, and Frodo had written:

THE DOWNFALL
OF THE
LORD OF THE RINGS
AND THE
RETURN OF THE KING

(as seen by the Little People; being the memoirs of Bilbo and Frodo of the Shire, supplemented by the accounts of their friends and the learning of the Wise.) (*RK*, VI, ix)

The appearance of the book, depicted at the beginning of the novel as a mere 'leather-bound manuscript' (*FR*, I, i), becomes clearer, as if the wishes uttered by the heroes during their adventures were finally taking shape: for instance, Sam dreamt of 'a great book with red and black letters' in which their story would be written (*TT*, IV, viii). There are references to the materiality of the text (colour and bookbinding), its shape (dimensions and the number of chapters), its writers, and a few details concerning the size of the two successive tales – Bilbo's and then Frodo's – along with the repeated allusions to the written manuscripts. The indication given in the Prologue which has been previously mentioned is therefore completed: *The Hobbit* is said to be based on 'the earlier chapters of the Red Book, composed by Bilbo himself (…) and called by him *There and Back Again*', and this is precisely what is depicted here, among many other things (*FR*, Prologue, I).

Nevertheless, the readers might be surprised by this multiplicity of titles, by their differences, or even their contradictions. Gerard Genette explained that, usually, the hesitations about a title are not supposed to appear in the volume,[5] although they belong to its gestation; it was Tolkien's choice to mention them here… and some of those titles reveal the content or the genre of the text. In the first case, they mention an 'Unexpected Journey', 'There and Back Again. And What Happened After', but also the 'Adventures…' (referring to *The Hobbit*), and 'THE DOWNFALL/ OF THE/ LORD OF THE RINGS/AND THE/ RETURN OF THE KING'. The other elements appear as generic indications, but not as equivalents (a 'diary' and 'memoirs' are different things). Moreover, some elements are in opposition: the expression 'tale (…) compiled' refers to a story in which truth itself is questioned (the word 'tale' is relevant), and it also contains 'adventures', that is a collection of events that stand out of the ordinary life; on the other hand, the adjective 'compiled' refers to the notion of 'historical' texts, just like the

annals which are supposed to be true to the facts – and this is consistent with the logic of *The Lord of the Rings*. It can be noted that the English text plays with the polysemy between 'tale' and 'compiled', all the while encouraging the readers to privilege one of the meanings: a *tale* can depict a true story or a literary work, but the first meaning is old-fashioned, whereas the meaning favoured here is much more common.

In *The Lord of the Rings*, as Frodo writes his own part of the story, he chooses a specific title, and its length enables the inclusion of elements that were previously considered by Bilbo ('ring' and 'friends'). Likewise, The Red Book now includes *The Hobbit* in a longer collection. However, the conspicuous multiplicity and diversity of titles might increase the hesitation of the readers regarding the nature of the texts. This hesitation had already appeared in the course of the story, as the tension between truth and wonders revealed itself. A title always suggests a certain interpretation, or a reading of the book being read, and the diversity which can be observed here seems to prove the heterogeneousness of the volume, its instability, so to speak, since it does not fit under one single name. This diversity represents an opening towards a multiplicity of readings! The generic pact which should be implied by one single designation is here blurred by a certain number of discordant hints.

This last remark can be clarified by one assessment: the inclusion of the (fictional) Red Book in *The Lord of the Rings* (a novel that was actually published by J.R.R Tolkien) obviously shows that those two texts have different statuses. What would be the characteristics defining the relation between those two texts?

The fictional sources of *The Lord of the Rings*

In *The Lord of the Rings*, the narrator mentions both oral and written traditions; firstly, that of songs and tales, like the elegy sung for Théoden, as the narrator credits this 'song of the Mounds of Mundburg' to 'a maker in Rohan' (*RK*, V, vi). But another tradition appears through secondary documents, like the archives of the Dwarves found by the Fellowship in Moria (such as the Book of Mazarbûl), or the manuscripts found in Gondor[6] and the 'book of the days of old' (*RK*, Appendix A, I, v) from which is taken the story of Aragorn and Arwen told in the Appendices. These references to other sources make clear the indication – given in the paratext – that *The Lord of the Rings* is 'drawn mainly from the Red Book' (*FR*, Prologue, IV). And one of the sources was actually present in *The Lord of the Rings* as Tolkien had planned it out, since it should have included excerpts from the Book of Mazarbûl, the Dwarvish archives; however, this wish was postponed for fifty years, for financial reasons, and was finally realised in the (deluxe) edition of the novel published in 2004.

However, these fictional references were, for the most part, written by Hobbits. For instance, there are some specifics about the Elvish calendar,[7] the language of the Ents[8] or about the Dwarves, where the source is not always given. There

is one case, aside from that of the Red Book, that is worth analysis: *the Herblore of the Shire*. Merry (one of Frodo's companions) is said to be the author of this text presenting the pipe-weed smoked by the Hobbits as an invention of this people, that was itself created by Tolkien. It is particularly interesting for the intertextual game, which reverses the temporality in a rather complicated way: the Prologue of *The Lord of the Rings* gives an excerpt taken from the *Herblore* (which, consequently, does not exist only as a title), supposed to have been written by Merry after the completion of the quest, but which is already 'mentioned' (literally) by this character a few hundreds of pages after the Prologue, several months before he wrote it: his explanations about 'Tobold the Old' (*TT*, III, viii) calls to mind 'Tobold Hornblower of Longbottom in the Southfarthing [who] first grew the true pipe-weed in his gardens in the days of Isengrim the Second, about the year 1070 of Shire-reckoning' (*FR*, Prologue, II).

The sequence of reading contradicts the chronology of the story, which is therefore characterised as fictional but in a discreet way, since the readers must be able to connect the two passages, which are fairly far apart in the text. Yet, this highlighting of the fiction through a *mise en abyme* and its textual repetition is emphasised, for it is probably doubled with a parodic allusion to *The Song of Roland*! On the one hand, the name 'hornblower' is reminiscent of one of the most famous passages of this medieval gest, when Charlemagne's nephew blows his horn. On the other hand, the date '1070' is the possible (although uncertain) date of writing of this same gest, 'signed' by so-called Turold, a name which is phonetically close to that of Tobold, Tolkien's character: '*Ci falt la geste que Turoldus declinet*', 'So ends the tale which Turold hath conceived.'[9] This is probably the kind of allusions intended for Tolkien's first audience, the Inklings, his circle of friends, writers and critics, to whom he read *The Lord of the Rings* episodically. Likewise, the story *Farmer Giles of Ham*, which he read during an evening in Oxford, is full of winks intended to his colleagues.

Several other sources could be mentioned, if only to exemplify the richness of this process. As for the Red Book, the narrator of *The Lord of the Rings* pretends that he used it to write his own work. With this process, Tolkien invented a written tradition, stemming from Bilbo's diary, completed by Frodo and copied several times, each copy containing its own annotations and additions:

> This account of the end of the Third Age is drawn mainly from the Red Book of Westmarch. That most important source (…) was in origin Bilbo's private diary which he took with him to Rivendell. Frodo brought it back to the Shire, together with many loose leaves of notes, and during S.R. 1420-1 he nearly filled its pages with his account of the War. (…) To these four volumes there was added in Westmarch a fifth containing commentaries, genealogies, and various other matter concerning the hobbit members of the Fellowship. The original Red Book has not been preserved, but many copies were made. (*FR*, Prologue, IV)

According to the Prologue, several copies come from the Fairbairns, keepers of the Red Book of Westmarch,[10] and the copy kept in the Great Smials was made in Gondor (by Findegil) from 'The Thain's book' (*FR*, Prologue, IV), that is the first copy of the Red Book – its name might call to mind a famous Welsh text Tolkien was familiar with: The Red Book of Hergest.[11] Yet Tolkien's Red Book is not limited to a few allusions placed throughout the text, for it displays a certain 'reality' much more tangible, as it was reproduced in *The Lord of the Rings*. This text (which is supposed to have come down to us through copies, just like many medieval texts) is said to be presented and to have been translated in modern English by an 'editor' (in the scientific sense).

It is to be understood in the Prologue, and it is confirmed in the Appendices through some expressions: 'In transcribing the ancient scripts…' (*RK*, Appendix E, I) and 'the Authorities, it is true, differ whether this last question was…' (*FR*, Prologue, IV). The 'editor' must make the text understandable to the modern readership, through the transposition of names, languages, and weekdays, in order to help the readers follow the chronology. Part II of Appendix F (which focuses on languages) specifies that 'in presenting the matter of the Red Book, as a history for people of today to read, the whole of the linguistic setting has been translated as far as possible into terms of our own times' (*RK*, Appendix F, II).

In the case of the Appendices, this 'editor' also chose, shortened, and noted the different levels of the texts through several signs (quotation marks, notes, brackets),[12] just like in modern editions of medieval texts – it should be noted that J.R.R Tolkien was behind the publication of an edition of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, and *Ancrene Wisse*, among other texts.[13] He distorts this sort of activity through their transposition within a fictional frame, more or less as he did in the preface of *The Adventures of Tom Bombadil*, the collection published in 1962 and in which he comments that the poems are supposed to be (fictionally) included in the Red Book.

The writer of the fictional preface of the collection explains that he decided to transcribe the oldest version; he gives its date but also specifies in which passages the influence of Elvish poetry can be found, and comments on the trace of historical events in the poems, along with the signs which enabled him to establish their origins: Gondor for 'The Man in the Moon Came Down Too Soon' or 'The Last Ship', Buckland for the poems called 'The Adventures of Tom Bombadil' and 'Bombadil goes boating'. He even gives a few details about the geography of this land – making more explicit some of the proper names mentioned in the poem – as a critic of a scientific edition would do in the notes.[14]

Distorting mirrors (the Red Book, *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*)

The previous pages explained why the readers of *The Lord of the Rings* mostly remember the 'heroic' aspect of a genuine and grave text, extremely coherent, giving out the feeling that the narrator tells 'the truth'; but that would limit the novel to a single aspect.

From a perspective inside the fictional frame, according to

which the Red Book is the 'source', the readers could wonder to which extent the so-called 'editor' of the text – that is the person preparing it for publication – modified the source manuscript. They could also question the exact degree of faithfulness between *The Lord of the Rings* and its fictional source. Several narrative elements are taken from that source, but the readers are invited to believe it is not a mere copy, and that the text was deeply reshaped: not only is the Red Book fictionally doubled in its publication – split between *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* – but its genesis is also staged (highlighting the fictional dimension of the work, as explained by Lucien Dällenbach about other *mises en abyme*[15]). Moreover, the two titles are different, which reveals the gap between the two tales. What is 'The Lord of the Rings' indeed, if not a partial borrowing from ' THE DOWNFALL/ OF /THE LORD OF THE RINGS/ AND THE/ RETURN OF THE KING'? It is also part of a game, since the end of the complete title (the return of the king…) is that of the third part of the novel which includes books V and VI.

This is very different from a book which includes references to another work bearing the same title with no clear indication about the text it refers to – as in *The Novel of the Mummy* or *The Counterfeiters*.[16] The *mise en abyme* of the Red Book in *The Lord of the Rings* is not an identical reduplication either, and thanks to this difference, the interpretation remains open. The embedded text is not developed (it is only a single page), therefore it does not overshadow the global narrative in which it is embedded, for that would suggest a single, closed interpretation. Finally, if there is indeed a *mise en abyme* of Frodo's adventure (told in The Red Book and in *The Lord of the Rings*), one must not ignore the staging (and embedment) of the production and reception of the text, which is meant to be read by Sam and passed down to his heirs. Consequently, it should be noted that, when Sam is given the Red Book by Frodo, he does not make any manifest comparison between the manuscript and the adventures they went through together. This interpretative work is left to the readers.

The previous remark about the titles of the two texts is unfortunately one of the only certainties suggested, since it is impossible to find in the text other indications about the exact connection between *The Lord of the Rings* and the Red Book. There is only one passage in the 1954 foreword that introduces the novel as a transcription of the Red Book which would be more faithful than that of *The Hobbit*. But the text of *The Lord of the Rings* does not give any information about the modifications which could have been made by the 'editor' from the pages credited to Frodo:

> This tale, which has grown to be almost a history of the great War of the Ring, is drawn for the most part from the memoirs of the renowned Hobbits, Bilbo and Frodo, as they are preserved in the Red Book of Westmarch. This chief monument of Hobbit-lore is so called because it was compiled, repeatedly copied, and enlarged and handed down in the family of the Fairbairns of Westmarch, descended from that Master Samwise of whom this tale has much to say.

> I have supplemented the account of the Red Book, in places, with information derived from the surviving records of Gondor, notably the Book of the Kings; but in general, though I have omitted much, I have in this tale adhered more closely to the actual words and narrative of my original than in the previous selection from the Red Book, *The Hobbit*. That was drawn from the early chapters, composed originally by Bilbo himself. If 'composed' is a just word. Bilbo was not assiduous, nor an orderly narrator, and his account is involved and discursive, and sometimes confused: faults that still appear in the Red Book, since the copiers were pious and careful, and altered very little.[17]

This excerpt could be relevant of Tolkien's wish to call attention to the differences between *The Hobbit*, a children's book – and later he voiced some regrets about this aspect, and how it contradicts some of his own ideas about fairy stories – and his new novel, *The Lord of the Rings*. However, the foreword says nothing more on the matter and those elements disappeared with the 1966 edition.

In other words, the readers do not directly read an original work (only the title page of the latter appears in *The Lord of the Rings*), the real structure of which remains unknown (save for the number of chapters), just like its type of storytelling! Bilbo certainly wrote his diary in first person, whereas in *The Lord of the Rings*, there is an omniscient narrator who rephrases Frodo's story in third person, although Frodo himself wrote his own adventures (in first person?) and that of his friends. A few hypotheses can only be suggested: Is the transformation concerned with the position of the narrator? Probably not, since the notes Bilbo writes down about Frodo's adventures in Book II are aligned with his own diary. Consequently, the first pages of the second part of the Red Book are (probably) written in first person, by a narrator who introduces Frodo as a third person actor, as in *The Lord of the Rings*. Yet, could the omniscient narrator (who barely takes part or gets involved in the story) and Bilbo have the same style and the same relation to the protagonists of those adventures?

In *The Lord of the Rings*, apart from the sixty-two chapters telling the quest of the Ring, there is a preliminary poem, a prologue, maps and appendices (with chronologies, tales, alphabets and family trees), but also indexes and a foreword, in the English edition. Those elements surrounding the main text, and which are usually called 'paratext', are more likely to be found in scientific or didactic texts, and they must be analysed thoroughly, as they belong here to a work of fiction. Besides, it has become obvious that they characterise an entire tradition in fantasy literature, initiated by Tolkien.

Therefore, it is crucial to analyse this paratext to try to better answer the readers' logical questions. At first glance, it seems possible to make a distinction between the paratext which can only be credited to the real writer (J.R.R Tolkien) and the one that is presented as belonging to the Red Book. How do things really stand?

Uncertainties and dramatic turns of events

The foreword of the second edition published in 1966 not only refutes all allegorical readings of *The Lord of the Rings*,

but it also underlines the hardship of its genesis, revealing the different steps, the slowness, and the difficulties. It also highlights the reasons which encouraged Tolkien to compose a text which he claims as his own creation – there is no attempt at crediting another author – but also as a fictional work. There is a clear difference from the original foreword from 1954 which pretended to believe in the existence of Hobbits (nowadays) and introduced the text as the result of an editorial 'work', of a 'translation' and of a 'selection from the Red Book'.

Criticising this process in a note found in one of his copies, Tolkien stepped back from his previous position: 'Confusing (as it does) real personal matters with the "machinery" of the Tale, is a serious mistake'.[18] As he reworked the foreword in 1966, he offered a new version making a distinction between, on the one hand, the authorial, authentic foreword – that is the non-fictional one – and on the other hand, the text – and the parts of the paratext fictionally belonging to the Red Book. This evolution is fundamental since it affects the status of the fictional manuscript.

Contrary to the foreword written by the real author, the Prologue of *The Lord of the Rings* asserts the fiction of a text that would have been written thousands of years before our era, and which would be annotated with the old commentaries given in the Appendices. If Tolkien was very much involved in the foreword, playing with the pronouns and autobiographical information, he is not as present in the Prologue. Instead of the first person, he uses 'this book' or 'that story', along with passive sentences or general pronouns such as 'we/us' referring to everyone: 'A few notes on the more important points are here collected from Hobbit-lore, and the first adventure is briefly recalled' (*FR*, Prologue, I). This stylistic choice was ignored by the French translators who preferred to use a pronoun referring to an author: '*Nous* [we] *réunissons ici quelques notes sur les points les plus importants de la tradition hobbite, et nous rappelons brièvement la première aventure*'.[19]

Finally, the different steps of the real genesis of *The Lord of the Rings*, written by Tolkien between 1937 and 1954, are replaced with details about the fictional source. The Prologue appears as an implicit contradiction of the first elements of the paratext (the title page, the foreword); only implicitly, since the writer does not openly deny that he is the author of the text, he merely credits someone else for it. This is interesting, for he tends towards uncertainty, an uncertainty which is made clearer if this Prologue is compared to the paratext of *The Name of the Rose* or *The Life of Marianne*, among other examples.[20] As the paratext is not signed, the edition of *The Lord of the Rings* is therefore credited to an anonymous figure who could share some features with Tolkien, by default.

The apparatus itself is rather complex: it relies on the simulation of a preface supposedly written by an anonymous 'editor' and not by the real author of the story of the Ring, a story which is fictionally a monograph (written by this same anonymous editor), although, originally, it is an allograph again, since it was written by the actors of the story, who are much more remote from Tolkien. Those two successive steps gradually disconnect Tolkien from the text, and prepare the readers to get inside the novel, through a prologue, already

fictional, introducing a fiction (that of the Red Book) *and* the world of Middle-earth, to which is given a 'frame-story'.[21]

However, the Prologue undermines those features, as it does not go through with its own authentication and attributional process. In *The Three Musketeers*, *The Novel of the Mummy*, or even *The Name of the Rose*, *The Life of Marianne*, and *Nausea* (to name only a few famous examples from different periods and linguistic areas), the readers of the prefaces expect precisions about the 'editor' and the way he came into possession of the source. Yet, the Prologue of *The Lord of the Rings* does not clarify those elements, as it only explains how the copies of the Red Book reached our era. This silence is even more striking as other fictional texts written by Tolkien are, on the contrary, quite explicit on the matter, such as *The Notion Club Papers*, published after his death in *Sauron Defeated*, one of the volumes of *The History of Middle-earth*:

> These Papers have a rather puzzling history. They were found after the Summer Examinations of 2012 on the top of one of a number of sacks of waste paper in the basement of the Examination Schools at Oxford by the present editor, Mr. Howard Green, the Clerk of the Schools. (*Sauron*, p. 155)

Tolkien had considered several places for their discovery, including the publishing house of Oxford University Press – and this hesitation suffices to show how important this feature is (*The Notion Club Papers*, in *Sauron*, p. 155, 149). This process is reminiscent of other texts, scholarly ones, such as his lecture about *Finn and Hengrest*, in which the circumstances of the discovery by G. Hikes of this fragmentary Anglo-Saxon poem are immediately given – such explanations are obviously expected.

However, the opening of *The Lord of the Rings* does not clarify those points, and gives no indication about the structure of the manuscript; if the editor translated and adapted it, did he also reshape the Red Book? Indeed, the beginning of the manuscript is supposed to be written as a diary, a text with a form which has nothing in common with the well-wrought storytelling of *The Lord of the Rings*.

Are such striking and recurring omissions supposed to be hints about the fictional aspect of the narrative? Could they be part of a device that is supposed to undermine the explicit statement of the Prologue pretending to certify the authenticity of the fiction? Those hints would indeed be more discreet than the opposite process employed in the Prologue, but it must be noted that Tolkien enjoyed these sorts of games. For instance, in *The Notion Club Papers*, he juxtaposes two incompatible readings. Indeed, while one introduces the text as an authentic one (in the 'Note to the Second Edition'), the other one insists on its fictional nature: M. Green states that he is 'convinced that the Papers are a work of fiction' (*The Notion Club Papers*, in *Sauron*, p. 158). The connexion with fantasies is finally highlighted through a few anachronisms, with an indication that there was no club of this name in Oxford then, and that the names of the members are invented or borrowed from other texts (*The Notion Club Papers*, in *Sauron*, p.187, 155).

article

Similar questions could spring from the Appendices of *The Lord of the Rings*, as a mirror effect at the end of the volume, for it seems – according to the patchy indications – that the Appendices could sometimes be annexed to the Red Book, and therefore serve the fiction. The beginning of the Appendices is reminiscent of what the Prologue says about the archives of the Shire, and it makes explicit the connections detected by the readers. Similarly, the allusion given in the Prologue about a book 'containing commentaries, genealogies, and various other matters concerning Hobbit members of the Fellowship' (*FR*, Prologue, IV) seems to foreshadow, at least in this vague depiction, Appendices C and D.[22] The Appendices resemble those 'annotations' (*FR*, Prologue, IV) which used to complete the Thain's Book. And as the readers investigate, they discover in the Prologue more and more references to the Appendices connecting those two paratextual elements. Those references appear as implicit allusions (for instance, a note about Argeleb II p. 4 can be related to Appendix A[23]), or as explicit statements when they precisely say which passage to read to get more details.[24]

Finally, it is impossible to tell apart the versions of the Red Book used by the fictional 'editor' of *The Lord of the Rings*, or to identify the different levels of the text and to attribute a specific passage to a specific copy; only a critical edition could make this possible. The whole of the Appendices is neither credited nor identified in such a way, and their fragmentary nature makes this issue even more complicated than it already was in the Prologue, the latter having been entirely completed. Consequently, it seems more homogenous to the readers: for instance, Appendix B gives *The Tale of Years* (*FR*, Prologue, IV and *RK*, Appendix A, III), whereas the content of Appendix A refers to *The Silmarillion*. In addition, the indications identifying the Appendices as texts belonging to the copies of the Red Book are not devoid of ambiguities, as they are often quite vague ('probably', 'mainly'). Lastly, it should be noted that the foreword to the second edition of *The Lord of the Rings* appears as rather prudent comparing to that of 1954 which introduced the Appendices as authentic, as an 'account … of the languages, the alphabets, and the calendars that were used in the Westlands in the Third Age of Middle-earth'.[25] In 1966, the foreword is much briefer on this point – only three lines – and more importantly, it does not depict them as true.

Consequently, in the case of the text and paratext, the readers must proceed with uncertainty, a sort of ambivalence which must be ascribed to Tolkien's skills and which has to do with his literary convictions; or (and this is not incompatible) with a sort of playful humour which aims at establishing a complicity with the reader.

Indeed, The Red Book is sometimes presented as an authentic text, through the mentions of the sources, of the stories and its copies, and with the statement about its 'historical' nature asserted in the Prologue. However, other elements deny the reality of this book: the plurality of the titles appearing in the page quoted at the end of *The Lord of the Rings*, along with its *mise en abyme*, show the tension between reality and fiction at stake inside the novel. They also reveal the heterogeneity of the text, while the difficulty to reconcile the text and the paratext reduplicates this heterogeneity.

In this regard, *The Lord of the Rings* appears (partially, at least) as a heterogenic, hybrid book. Indeed, the Appendices were made by Tolkien – before the publication of *The Lord of the Rings* in 1954-55 – from a selection (following what criteria?) of a few dozen pages among a great number of archives and drafts of independent texts.[26] The latter can be associated, for instance, with the texts published in *The Unfinished Tales of Middle-earth and Númenor*, and their presence plays a key role in the definition of the novel, since Tolkien mentioned them when he opposed two different types of reading: if one takes into account the entire book, the other one does not consider the Appendices and focuses on one single narrative: 'Those who enjoy the book as an "heroic romance" only and find "unexplained vistas" part of the literary effect, will neglect the appendices, very properly'.[27]

And indeed, although the story comes to an end, it is not fixed. Tolkien mentioned the idea of eventually deleting passages that would become superfluous after the publication of *The Silmarillion* (the chapter called 'The Council of Elrond' in Book II, for instance) precisely because it relates the events constituting the historical and legendary background of *The Lord of the Rings*.[28] Finally, even if the much clearer case of *The Silmarillion* (a posthumous compilation of heteroclite fragments by Christopher Tolkien) is left aside, one aspect must be kept in mind: the confusion stemming from the publication of *The Lord of the Rings*, if only because the readers do not always speak of the 'same' *Lord of the Rings*. This difference is due to the variations between, for instance, the British editions and the American ones, or to the absence of certain notes in some translations, or even the absence of the writer's foreword – and it was just demonstrated how crucial the foreword is, since it questions the assertions given in the rest of the paratext, the reading of which would therefore be distorted if it is not complete – or the absence of some of the Appendices in most of the French editions.[29]

Finally, the paratext appears as divided between a 'serious' one and a fictional one; the latter is even more difficult to understand since Tolkien does not go through with his ideas, favouring imprecision regarding the circumstances of the discovery of the source, the identity of the translator-editor and his transposition work (which parts were used?[30] What sort of modifications were made?). Consequently, it seems that, for the author, the main flaw of *The Lord of the Rings* is its length; more precisely, 'the book is too short' (*FR*, Foreword) according to Tolkien. Beyond the jest, he refers here to the absence of the volume which should have accompanied the novel: *The Silmarillion*.

This kind of jest can also be found in the title page from Frodo's manuscript – 'THE/ DOWNFALL/ OF THE/ LORD OF THE RINGS/ AND THE/ RETURN OF THE KING' – which happens to be anachronistic. Although Middle-earth should not be seen as 'medieval' in every detail, several elements display a certain degree of technology which can obviously be connected to this era of our history. Yet this sort of 'title page' only appeared at the end of the 15th century. Could it be a device to identify the Red Book as a complete

invention? Additionally, in a much more striking way, or amusing way, Tolkien asserts in his letters that the Red Book is supposed to have been written long before our era, six to seven thousand years, that is long before the oldest texts, and even before the invention of writing! From such a meticulous author, a philologist by profession, it can only be part of a game with the readers. This aspect can be supported by the discretion of the 'editor' of *The Lord of the Rings*, who, in the Prologue, never comments on the exceptional historical value of the Red Book (superior to that of the *Notions Club Papers*, for instance).[31] It is up to the readers to detect, or not, a wink at its fictional nature.

Although everyone knows that *The Lord of the Rings* was obviously written by Tolkien, this literary process must not be disregarded. Far from composing a monolithic work, in which the association of text and paratext would serve the fiction, Tolkien plays with the tension between fiction and authenticity.

This analysis of the presence of the Red Book – a fictional work mentioned in *The Lord of the Rings* – which includes the genesis of that fiction inside its diegesis, shows how difficult it is to define the relations between those two works. In the case of the paratext (if one seeks to attribute it to the Red Book or to the frame-narrative), this comparison also reveals the tension between those elements, encouraging the readers to reread *The Lord of the Rings* differently and keeping them from reading it as a fiction that would be completely coherent. It also enables them to question the trust the novel seems to put into literature. If the *mise en abyme* is not, of course, the prerogative of marvellous literature, it still appears under specific shapes in texts where verisimilitude and veracity are staged in much more explicit ways than in other *mises en abyme*, where they sometimes try to serve realism.

Tolkien's storytelling relates its own birth, not as a claim of its own autonomy, but to better assert its fictionality. The close analogy between *The Lord of the Rings* and the Red Book enables a meditation on literature and on its relation to reality beyond just this book, which displays a dizzying fictional device, as it combines coherence, meticulousness – the fictitious commentaries which invent the tradition of copies – and the fragility of the whole structure.

Notes

1. This article has been updated by the author and then translated into English for *Mallorn*. The original article's citation information is as follows: Vincent Ferré. "Le Livre Rouge et Le Seigneur des Anneaux de Tolkien: une fantastique incertitude". Françoise Dupeyron-Lafay. *L'Image et le livre dans la littérature fantastique et la science-fiction*, Publications de l'Université de Provence, p. 105 -131, 2003. ffhalshs-01063345.

2. *Bombadil*, p. 29, about the poems 'Princess Mee', 'Fastitocalon' and 'Shadow-Bride'.

3. The complete quote reads 'It was like a chapter in a story of the world's youth' (*TT*, IV, iii)

4. Lucien Dällenbach. *The Mirror in the Text*, trans. by Jeremy Whiteley and Emma Hughes (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1989), p. 110.

5. G. Genette about 'the genetic prehistory or prenatal life of the title' in *Paratexts, Thresholds of interpretation*, trans. by Jane E. Lewin, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 66.

6. Such as Isildur's manuscript, which is read by Gandalf who mentions it during the Council of Elrond, or 'The Book of the Kings' mentioned in the foreword of the original edition of 1954.

7. About the Elvish calendar: 'The Reckoning of Years', in which Merry analyses this point, is described as one of the books kept in the Brandy Hall library (*FR*, Prologue, IV).

8. The third part of Appendix A concerning Dwarves, is based on hobbit archives, and is said to be 'derived from Gimli the Dwarf, who maintained his friendship with Peregrin and Meriadoc.' (*RK*, Appendix A, I, i).

9. *The Song of Roland: An Old French Epic*, trans. by Charles Kenneth Scott-Moncrieff (North Delhi, Lector House, 2019).

10. There is an echo to this at the far opposite of the story, in a note given for one of the family trees: 'the Fairbairns of the Towers, Wardens of Westmarch, who inherited the Red Book, and made several copies with various notes and later additions' (*RK*, Appendix C).

11. cf. 'English and Welsh' in *Monsters*, p.189.

12. cf. *RK*, Appendix A, I, iii.

13. The first edition of *Sir Gawain* by Tolkien was published in 1925; J.R.R Tolkien's edition of *Ancrene Wisse* was published in 1962, and *The Adventures of Tom Bombadil* was published that same year.

14. *Bombadil*, p 29-34.

15. Lucien Dällenbach, *The Mirror in the Text*, trans. by Jeremy Whiteley and Emma Hughes (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1989), p. 57 : 'As a secondary sign, the *mise en abyme* not only emphasizes the signifying intention of the primary sign (the narrative that contains it), it makes clear that the primary narrative is also (only) a sign, as any trope must be—but with added power, according to its stature: *I am literature, and so is the narrative that embeds me*.'

16. Both examples were analysed, among others works, by G. Genette in *Paratexts, Threshold of interpretation*, trans. by Jane E. Lewin, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

17. *The Lord of the Rings, A Reader's Companion*, Wayne G. Hammond and Christina Scull, HarperCollins Publishers, London, 2005 (p. lxviii).

18. Notes on the Text, *The Lord of the Rings*, 2nd edn, 1966 (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1987), p. viii.

19. *Le Seigneur des Anneaux*, édition complète, trans. by Francis Ledoux, Paris, Christian Bourgois Editeur, 1991), p.11

20. Cf. *The Life of Marianne*, by Marivaux: '*having no talent for writing as an author*' (*The Life of Marianne: Or, the Adventures of the Countess of **** by M. de Marivaux. Translated from the Original French, Second Edition Revised and Corrected. of 2; Volume 1) or some excerpts from *The Name of the Rose* by Umberto Eco: '*On August 16, 1968, I was handed a book written by a certain Abbé Vallet*, Le Manuscrit de Dom Adson de Melk, traduit en français d'après l'édition de Dom J. Mabillon (…) *my Italian version of an obscure, neo-Gothic French version of a seventeenth-century Latin edition of a work written in Latin by a German monk toward the end of the fourteenth century…*' (transl. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich Inc and Marin Secker & Warburg 1983, Vintage Classics; New e. edition, 2004).

21. According to the expression used, for instance, by G. Genette.

22. As for the App. A, it contains a part of the story of Aragorn and Arwen, which comes from 'the book of the days of old' (*RK*, Appendix A, I, v).

23. cf. *RK*, Appendix A, I, iii.

24. cf. *FR*, Prologue, IV.

25. *The Lord of the Rings, A Reader's Companion*, Wayne G. Hammond and Christina Scull, HarperCollins Publishers, London, 2005 (p. lxviii).

26. cf. *Letters*, p.167 and 158.

27. cf. *Letters*, p.210.

28. cf. *Letters*, p. 143.

29. It must be noted that their publications in France was delayed for more than ten years, until 1986: this separated publication can appear as another token of this heterogeneity (cf. *Le Seigneur des Anneaux*. 4/Appendices et index, trans. by Tina Jolas, Paris, Christian Bourgois Éditeur, 1886), p. 222.

30. Amongst the numerous texts which are available, written by Tolkien but credited to other authors, some are used and yet shortened (*RK*, Appendix A, II).

31. *The Notion Club Papers* is introduced in a similar way on many points: material depictions ('They were in a disordered bundle, loosely tied with red string. The outer sheet, inscribed in large Lombardic capitals [...]', *op. cit*. p. 155) and notes on the writing and on the author (p.156). This text is presented as particularly interesting, although it is only about sixty years old ('[...] attracted the notice of Mr. Green, who removed them and scrutinized them. Discovering them to contain much that was to him curious and interesting, he made all possible enquiries, without result', p. 155); What about the Red book in comparison!

Tolkien's Friend Selby

DOUGLAS A. ANDERSON

One of J.R.R. Tolkien's most interesting early letters is not included in *The Letters of J.R.R. Tolkien* (1981), but is definitely a significant one. It dates from 14 December 1937 and was written to a friend named Selby. Tolkien wrote, in part:

> I don't much approve of *The Hobbit* myself, preferring my own mythology (which is just touched on) with its consistent nomenclature — Elrond, Gondolin, and Esgaroth have escaped out of it — and organized history, to this rabble of Eddaic-named dwarves out of Voluspa, newfangled hobbits and gollums (invented in an idle hour) and Anglo-Saxon runes. My elves have a more gracious and cunning alphabet which appears on the pots of gold in one of the coloured illustrations of the American edition — if they have chosen that one.
>
> However, there it is: I did not offer it for sale.
>
> But as the MS. was discovered (in a nunnery) by one of G.A. and Unwin's people and an offer made for it, I let it go. I knew I was in for trouble. My children, for one thing, do not wholly approve of their private amusements being turned to cash; even to pay for the excessive costs of their education. That was the hope. [...] Also Oxford was mildly pained: my own college was frankly hurt, until both the Times and the T.L.S. took notice. I am now forgiven, but the matter is not mentioned. We are not in Pembroke expected to descend to the level of J.B.S. Haldane. Not that I think I have — except in the matter of illustrations. They are my own, I fear, and with the possible exception of the jacket, bad. [...]
>
> I shall now, they say, have to do more. I offered my publishers something good: a complete & heroic history of the Elves — and they clamour for more hobbits. Mr. Baggins had more sense, and properly went into retirement. (*J.R.R. Tolkien: The Hobbit: Drawings , Watercolors, and Manuscripts*, p. 4)

The tone of this letter — its self-deprecation especially — is remarkable. *The Hobbit* was published on 21 September 1937, and it was reviewed anonymously by C. S. Lewis in both *The Times Literary Supplement*, on 2 October, and in *The Times*, on 8 October, so the 'hurt' at Pembroke College cannot have lasted long. By referring to J.B.S. Haldane, Tolkien alludes to the children's book, *My Friend Mr. Leakey*, published in late October, just over a month after the publication of *The Hobbit*.

One wants to understand the context of this letter, and to know more about the person to whom it was addressed. The letter was first offered for sale at a Sotheby's auction held on 29 July 1977, where it was accompanied by two other letters and one postcard addressed to the same person. They are listed in the auction catalogue as 'the property of G.E. Selby.' Over the years these letters have shown up in other sales, and the letter dated 14 December 1937, the earliest of the four, is now owned by the Pierpont Morgan Library of New York. The full text was published in the exhibition catalog *J.R.R. Tolkien: The Hobbit: Drawings , Watercolors, and Manuscripts* (1987) when the letter was exhibited at the Patrick and Beatrice Haggerty Museum of Art at Marquette University.

G.E. Selby was Geoffrey Edmond Selby, who was born in Doncaster on 10 September 1909, the son of Edmond Wallace Selby (1869–1943) and his second wife Lily Vercoe (1875–1959), who were married in 1908. Geoffrey had one half-brother and two half-sisters from his father's first marriage to Edith Mary Vercoe (1866–1906), the elder sister of Lily Vercoe. The father Edmond Selby was a surgeon, first at the General (later Royal) Infirmary and Dispensary in Doncaster in Yorkshire. In 1921 he moved to Leeds, where he had been appointed the regional medical officer of the Ministry of Health. Later he was promoted and served as divisional medical officer of the Ministry in Kent from 1930 until his retirement in 1935, after which time he resettled in Leeds.

Geoffrey was educated at Oudle School in Northamptonshire, and matriculated at Hertford College, Oxford in October 1928.[1] He received Third Class Honours in English in 1932. He served as a pilot in WWII, and married Mary Glen McCall (1913–1981) in Renfrewshire, Scotland, in 1943. They had one child, daughter Jean, born in Grimsby in the spring of 1944.

Selby took a teaching position at the College of the Venerable Bede (for men) in Durham near the end of WWII, and he remained there until his retirement around 1968 or 1969.[2] Nearly two hundred and fifty rare books (mostly seventeenth or eighteenth century) were purchased at that time for the college library (they are now held in Special Collections at Durham University). Selby died in Durham, on 16 July 1987, leaving an estate probated at nearly ninety thousand pounds.

The four letters auctioned at Sotheby's give us a bit of perspective as to the relationship between Selby and Tolkien. Selby sent Tolkien a letter on 28 November 1937, with some questions about *The Hobbit*. Tolkien replied on 14 December, as quoted above.

The next letter dates from 19 September 1944, in which Tolkien agreed to act as referee for a post to which Selby was applying. Tolkien congratulated Selby on his marriage and the birth of his daughter, and noted that his own daughter Priscilla was helping to type a long romance which he hoped his publisher would accept.

The third item is a postcard, dated 7 July 1946. Selby had evidently seen some report that implied Tolkien (or another Merton professor) was retiring, and Tolkien replied that he wasn't, but hoped to get the chance to work on non-academic writing again soon. This postcard is now held in the Wade Center at Wheaton College, in Wheaton, Illinois.

The name Selby occurs next, in terms of chronology, in the published volume of Tolkien's *Letters*. On 24 February 1950, Tolkien wrote to Stanley Unwin somewhat testily:

But at any rate I should long ago have answered your query, handed on from Mr. Selby. Though dated Jan. 31st, it was in fact addressed to me on Dec. 31st.

I cannot imagine and have not discovered what Mr. Selby was referring to. I have, of course, not written an 'Authentic history of Faery' (and should not in any case have chosen such a title): nor have I caused any prophecy or rumour of any such work being circulated. I must suppose that Mr. Selby associates me with 'Faery', and has attached my name to someone else's work. It seems hardly likely that he can have come across some literary chat (of which in any case I am ignorant) in which somebody has referred to my *Silmarillion* (long ago rejected, and shelved). (*Letters*, pp. 135-136.)

Here Tolkien oddly doesn't admit to knowing Selby, who must have recalled the mention in Tolkien's 1937 letter that he had 'offered my publishers something good: a complete & heroic history of the Elves' — misremembering it as an authentic history of Faery. (It is worth noting that in Tolkien's letter published in *The Observer* on 20 February 1938, Tolkien also mentioned — the first datable usage — the 'Silmarillion'; which he denoted as 'a history of the Elves' *Letters*, p. 31.) It seems equally odd that Selby would have questioned Tolkien's publisher instead of Tolkien himself.

The final letter was a six-page handwritten letter. Undated, it was apparently from late 1955 or 1956, and covers details about *The Lord of the Rings* and Tolkien's views on allegory, the Elvish language and his system of versification. Unfortunately, the present location of this letter is unknown.

Unfortunately these letters don't really tell us much about how Selby and Tolkien knew each other. It seems likely that their acquaintance began during Selby's time in Oxford (1928–1932), but Selby's college records do not indicate any academic relationship (i.e., Tolkien was apparently not Selby's tutor). Selby probably attended some of Tolkien's university lectures, but Selby's own literary and historical interests seem to center on the seventeenth and eighteenth century, a later period that Tolkien's own expertise. Selby is not known to have published anything — no books or articles have been found. Yet they addressed each other familiarly, and Tolkien felt he knew Selby well enough to help him in a search for a position. Interestingly, most of Tolkien's letters to Selby (at least the ones that Selby saved) concern Tolkien's literary writings, so one is left to wonder if Selby might have been part of the original undergraduate Inklings club, founded by Edward Tanye-Lean during his time at Oxford (1929–1933) and attended by Tolkien and C.S. Lewis, whose name Lewis soon transferred to the group of academic men who met in his rooms at Magdalene College. Still, such a possible connection is mere speculation, and the nature of the friendship between the two men remains unknown.

Notes

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note

Hyphens as Sub-Lexical Morphemes in *The Hobbit*

SPARROW ALDEN

J.R.R. Tolkien uses 410 distinct hyphenated words in *The Hobbit* which appear a total of 669 times. They can be found along with some supporting discussion posts in Alden's 'Hyphen Mini-Concordance'. These hyphenated words name things (such as Under-Hill and Bag-End), describe the landscape (Smaug licks the mountain-sides with flame, and leaves rock-shadows dancing), reveal the archaic and fantastic nature of the world (arrow-storm, wolf-guards), and communicate some details of unfamiliar cultures (goblin-cities, hobbit-girls, elf-prince). Sometimes, these hyphenated words even give readers a taste of foreshadowing (the only people described as 'grim' are kings… and Bard of the Lakemen is 'grim-voiced' and 'grim-faced' well before he is crowned).

Hyphenated words communicate more than semantics. They read like translation artifacts which reinforce the frame narrative that Bilbo Baggins wrote the work and Tolkien acted as a compiler. Tolkien himself revealed this conceit in runes on the dust jacket: 'The Hobbit or There and Back Again Being the Record of a Year's Journey Made by Bilbo Baggins of Hobbiton Compiled from his Memoirs by JRR Tolkien and Published by George Allen and Unwin LTD' (*Letters*, p. 17).

In order to demonstrate how Tolkien's hyphenated words act to reinforce his framing of the text as a translation, we have to establish that their use throughout the text is not due to common use. This graph, created using LEXOS and marked up with GIMP, acts as a map of the frequency of hyphenated words in *The Hobbit* across the chapters.

The graph (Figure 1) illustrates that Tolkien did not use the hyphenated words randomly, which would produce a fairly straight line. Why does the frequency of hyphenated words build in Chapter 1 and then suddenly drop in Chapter 2? The contrast turns around briefly in Chapter 3 and then plummets in Chapter 4. Whatever these hyphens represent, it grows steadily into Chapter 7 and then drops like a stooping falcon in Chapter 8, recovers, and plummets again in the sequence of Chapters 15 and 16, beginning a recovery in Chapter 17.

Because Tolkien frames *The Hobbit* as a translation, our attention is drawn to Elrond's act of translation within the text, a scene in which hyphenated words are worthy of remark.

Elrond, who 'knew all about runes of every kind' (*Hobbit*, iii), demonstrates the use of hyphenated words as a translator by translating *Glamdring* as 'Foe-Hammer' and *Orcrist* as 'Goblin-cleaver'. Clearly the single-word names of these weapons do not convert directly to single words in English. Though the elven names for the weapons are single words, we assume that they are compound words because we see 'orc' within Orcrist's name (Elrond translates this as 'Goblin-cleaver' rather than 'Orc-cleaver' because these beings are called 'goblins' in *The Hobbit*). Elrond could have called these weapons 'Hammer' and 'Cleaver' and missed a good deal of nuance. As a lore-master, he could probably have declaimed at length on each word; however, Elrond took the middle path and translated the most important concepts of each name into one easy-to-remember word. Whether the translation is a hyphenated word in Westron, the language Elrond spoke to the dwarves and Bilbo, or simply in its twice-translated form in English, we learn from the example: Words in translation that have compound, nuanced meanings show up in English as hyphenated words.

Tolkien, who chose his words carefully, seems selective in his use of hyphenated words; their use as a means of translation has been modelled in the text by Elrond. Let us investigate the hyphenated words included in *The Hobbit* to see if they can be interpreted as Tolkien's own translation artifacts.

Just over half of the hyphenated words in *The Hobbit* are perfectly ordinary English words recognized by the *Oxford English Dictionary* (*OED*), such as 'wood-fire' and 'key-hole'. Some of them may have no hyphen in the preferred spelling, some may have a space instead of a hyphen between the elements, but the hyphenated forms are found at least in the example sentences of the *OED*; see 'smith-craft' and 'back-door'.

The other half of the hyphenated words are inventions of Tolkien's. Of these, some are attested in the *OED* specifically as creations of Tolkien, such as 'elf-king'. Others are credited to Tolkien for introducing the hyphenated form, for example 'riddle-game'. Some, like 'raven-messenger', are in the *OED* in the same format as used by Tolkien, but he has used them with a completely new meaning. I have treated such occurrences as Tolkienien
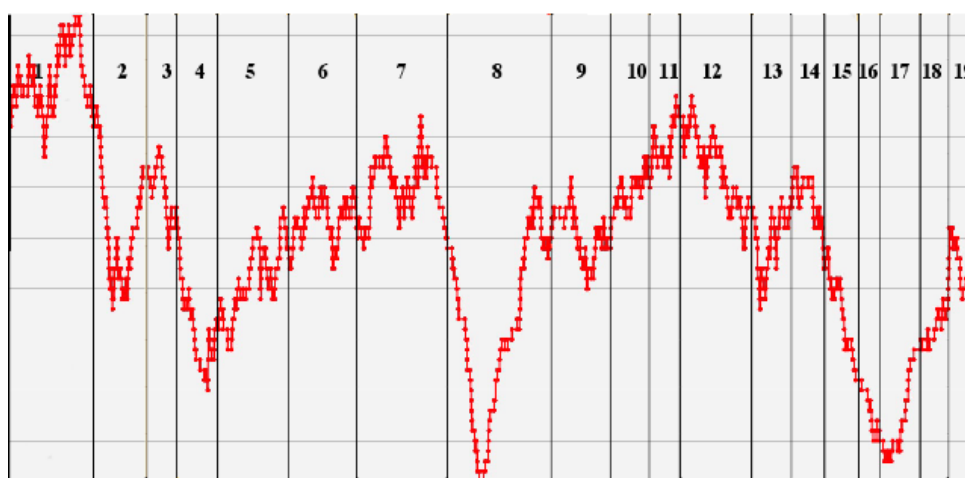

Figure 1

inventions for *The Hobbit*. The majority of Tolkien-created hyphenated words, whether proper names or plain words such as 'thunder-battle', are simply not found in the *OED* at all. All of these Tolkien-invented words can be found specifically under the 'JRRT' tag on Alden's *A Tolkien Concordance*.

Do we learn anything by comparing the distribution of Tolkien-created hyphenated words with the graph of all hyphenated words? The lower line (blue) in Figure 2 shows the pattern of Tolkien-created hyphenated words. It is informative to compare this with the total hyphenated words, shown by the upper line (red).

Chapter 1 holds a robust peak of hyphenated words; the densest region of hyphens is Bilbo's beloved Shire. Tolkien is clear that, 'The Shire … is in fact more or less a Warwickshire village of about the period of the Diamond Jubilee' (*Letters*, p. 230). Throughout the work, in scenes that take place within the Shire (in Chapters 1 and 19) or in sentences *about* the Shire, Tolkien uses hyphenated words eighty-three times. Of those, sixty-three are found in the *OED*, either as main entries or acceptable alternate spellings, such as 'clay-pipe' and 'deep-set'. Twenty are created by Tolkien, such as 'blacksmith-work' and 'burglar-expert'.

It seems that Bilbo's native language of Westron is perfectly suited to hobbit life and has many specific words relevant to the Shire and the hosting of tea-parties that plain English

Figure 2

can't translate *directly*, leaving hyphenated words to cover the inadequacy. The similarity of the Shire to a Warwickshire village supports the notion that there are plenty of *special* English words to do the job, supplemented by Tolkien originals.

Chapter 2, in contrast, uses far fewer hyphenated words as Bilbo leaves the Shire. Also in this chapter, the text reminds readers of the importance of language in the narrative:

> At first they had passed through hobbit-lands, a wide respectable country inhabited by decent folk, with good roads, an inn or two, and now and then a dwarf or a farmer ambling by on business. Then they came to lands where people spoke strangely, and sang songs Bilbo had never heard before. (*Hobbit*, ii)

People spoke strangely in strange lands. Tolkien's readers find nuances throughout his work that indicate region, culture, and social class, for example: 'a-arguin' and 'a-sneakin' exemplify troll speech. The knowledge that Bilbo did not

recognize the speech and songs of these lands amplify the reader's sense of the wild and unknown.

The rise in the number of hyphenated words in Chapter 3 is driven by Tolkien's invented words, which set the fantastic scene: the doings in Rivendell of Elrond the elf-friend, fair as an elf-lord, his house full of story-telling, and who explains that the swords just found are not troll-make, but made for the Goblin-wars ('story-telling' is an *OED*-acceptable form of 'storytelling', but all examples of the hyphenated form are from quotations written before 1905). Bilbo has been hearing stories of elves all his days, so here he has specialized words, but English does not. Similarly, Chapters 12 through 14 take place far from the Shire, but the hyphenated words therein are about landscapes, dragons, elves, and Lake-men, which are within Bilbo's experience or childhood stories. Tolkien creates new hyphenated words to communicate these concepts; we get the sense that these are nuanced concepts that do not map directly onto the English vocabulary.

Chapter 4 sees a small drop in total hyphenated words — a chapter full of goblins and things unfamiliar to Bilbo and to the *OED*. In Chapters 2 and 4, then, readers receive nonverbal signals, the loss of hyphenated words, that Bilbo does not have specialized vocabulary at the ready to describe his experiences. The number of specialized words — hyphenated but not Tolkien-invented — grows slowly and unremarkably through Chapters 5, 6, and 7.
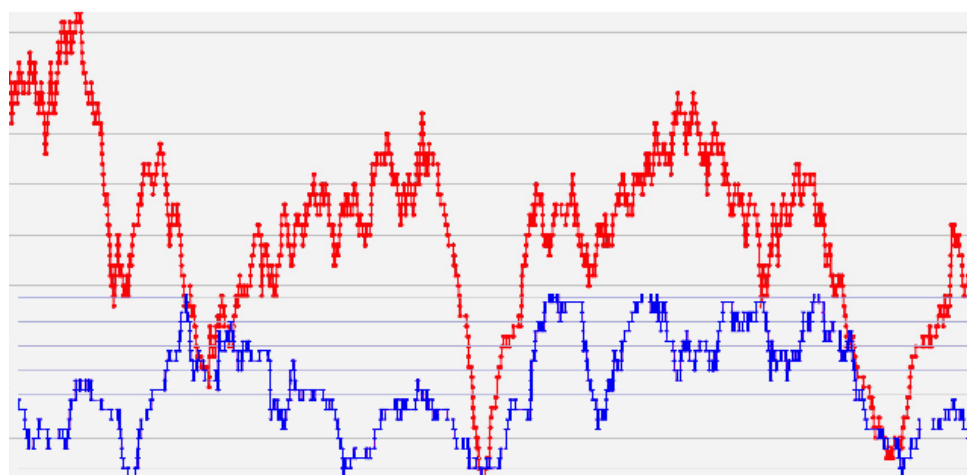
The sections of interest, because of their total number of hyphenated words, are the opening Shire scenes (high peak), the Mirkwood adventures before the elves get involved (nadir), and scenes of conflict (nadir). Each of these sections comprise about nine thousand words with about fifteen Tolkien-created hyphenated words, so I have chosen another section with the same number of total words and Tolkien-created hyphenated words as a control passage for comparison, Chapter 6 through the beginning of Chapter 7.

In the opening Shire scenes, we have a good working theory about the peak of hyphenated words: Bilbo's specialized vocabulary for describing the nuances of hobbit life. But what about those deep low points? If hyphenated words give us a sense of Bilbo's familiarity with a scene, is the inverse true?

Bilbo has no stories, no background, which prepare him for Mirkwood. He enters this completely unfamiliar place, stocked with black butterflies and white deer and poisonous

Opening Shire Scenes	'In a hole in the ground' to 'without a pocket-handkerchief!' (*Hobbit*, i)	9434 words	107 hyphenated words	14 JRRT words
Chapter Six and Seven	'Bilbo had escaped the goblins' to 'He had no hat to take off, and was painfully conscious of his many missing buttons.' (*Hobbit*, vi and vii)	9140 words	58 hyphenated words	17 JRRT words
Mirkwood Adventure	'Then he galloped away' to '"Where is Thorin?" he asked.' (*Hobbit*, vii and viii)	9352 words	36 hyphenated words	15 JRRT words
The War	'Then Thorin burst forth in anger:' to 'and he fell with a crash and knew no more.' (*Hobbit*, xv to xvii)	8656 words	31 hyphenated words	17 JRRT words

waters. He achieves one of his great turning points here (Olsen), a kind of coming-of-age when he kills the spider with a stroke between the eyes and acknowledges his newfound status by naming his little sword. He is half-tied up and flailing — but such a situation would never have happened in a familiar place. His trial-by-spider appropriately takes place in a wild and unknown otherworld to Bilbo (Johnson).

Indeed, the longest stretch in the whole book without hyphens is the thirty-four paragraphs in a row that centre on the crossing of the running water in Mirkwood. Bilbo does not have specialized words for the scenery of Mirkwood. It reads as though he must fall back on basic concepts to describe the place. Remembering the graph of all uncommon words, there is also a dearth of uncommon English words used. At the heart of the passage, Bilbo writes, as it is translated by Tolkien, '...something bad did happen' (*Hobbit*, viii).

And the dearth of hyphenated words from 'Then Thorin burst forth in anger:' (*Hobbit*, xv) to 'and he fell with a crash and knew no more' (*Hobbit*, xvii)? From the moment that Thorin responds to the Elves and Lake-men with anger, there is war. As the landscape and creatures of Mirkwood are the opposite of the farms and free air of the Shire, so war is

antithetical to the peaceful hearts of Shire-folk. Hobbits 'are plain quiet folk and have no use for adventures' (*Hobbit*, i). If there are nuances in war, then they are unknown to Bilbo by his own and his people's very nature. He writes his memoirs with plain words, and Tolkien translates them with plain English.

If hyphenated words represent Bilbo's specialized vocabulary for which Tolkien, as compiler, used Elrond's translation technique, then hyphenated words represent Bilbo's familiarity with the situation.

Hyphenated words look like the compound words that Elrond uses in translation, and the reader can imagine (without a single syllable spent) that this is a text in translation. They fall off as Bilbo is leaving his home territory and when he first encounters the world of goblins. They practically vanish when Bilbo is at a loss for words to describe the nightmare otherworldliness of Mirkwood and is experientially — and spiritually — unable to speak of war.

Tolkien says about *The Lord of the Rings* to Naomi Mitchison (*Letters*, p.174-175), 'I am a philologist, [...] 'language' is the most important, for the story has to be told, and the dialogue conducted in a language'; although Tolkien is writing about *The Lord of the Rings*, we can apply this principle, of course, to *The Hobbit*, and we pay close attention to language. He says further, 'but English cannot have been the language of any people at that time. What I have, in fact done, is to equate the Westron or wide-spread Common Speech of the Third Age with English; and translate everything, including names such as *The Shire*, that was in the Westron into English terms, with some differentiation of style to represent dialectal differences'. Therefore, we closely read the work and look for translation artifacts, left by this experienced philologist and translator. When we look, we discover patterns. We know that in stark contrast to the Shire, Bilbo entered an otherworld of landscape in Mirkwood and an otherworld of pain and discord during the war.

Hyphens are sub-lexical morphemes. These nonverbal signals subliminally carry changes in meaning, speaking without the waste of one syllable: 'This is a work in translation: know that Bilbo is real; that the story is true; that we can go there and come back again.' These subtle, gentle clues reveal an unspoken dimension of the tale six hundred times throughout the work.

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Can You Tell Me How to Get, How to Get to Watling Street?

KRISTINE LARSEN

Tolkien's masterful integration of astronomical allusions into his crafting of Middle-earth is well known. From creating elvish versions of the constellations to poetic explanations for the phases of the moon and eclipses, the *legendarium* is rich with observations of the night sky and the objects visible therein. It is therefore uncharacteristic of Tolkien to have apparently neglected one of the most awe-inspiring objects visible under dark skies: the Milky Way. This hazy band of light crossing the night sky — the combined light of billions of stars mingled with clouds of gas and dust — traces the plane of our galaxy and its spiral arms. Before the advent of artificial nocturnal illumination (Thomas Edison's scourge of humanity), some part of the Milky Way was visible in the night sky from every location on earth. Throughout most of Tolkien's life, light pollution in England had not yet progressed to the extent that it would have completely robbed him of the ability to see it from Oxford, and during the pivotal decades that he was first creating the grand mythology of Middle-earth it would have been impossible to ignore it in the night sky (Larsen, 'And the Stars Were Hidden', p. 17).

The absence of a direct Middle-earth analogue is even more puzzling given the myriad references to the Milky Way in mythology and poetry from around the world. IIn classical studies, we find Manilius comparing its pale appearance to ash, the remains of stars strewn across the sky in the wake of the sun chariot's journey across the heavens. This is not its usual pathway of the ecliptic (the zodiac), but rather the errant route taken under the reins of Phaethon (I. 735–49). Another myth noted by Manilius is the common one concerning the Milky Way as having emerged from the breast of the goddess Hera, 'a stream of milk which left its colour upon the skies' (I 751–3, trans. Goold). In his *Metamorphoses* (I. 167–71), Ovid explains that

> When skies are clear
> a path is well defined on high, which men,
> because so white, have named the Milky Way.
> It makes a passage for the deities
> and leads to mansions of the Thunder God,
> to Jove's imperial home. (trans. More)

In his preface to the *Kalevala*, John Martin Crawford refers to it as 'Lin'nun-ra'ta (bird-path)' and draws connections between the galaxy's appearance and Swedish and Slavic myths 'in which liberated songs take the form of snow-white dovelets' (p. xxxi). Other traditions call it 'Winter Street' in Sweden, 'Jakobs-Strasse' and 'Jakobsweg', 'Jacob's Road' in Germany, 'the Way of Saint James' in England, and the related 'Road of Saint Jacques of Compostella' in France (Allen, pp. 1963: 479–80). Indeed, in his commentary to Chaucer's 'The House of Fame', Reverend Walter W. Skeat observes that 'The

fact is simply, that the Milky Way looks like a sort of road or street' (p. 263). Constellation 'biographer' Richard Hinckley Allen adds that the widespread concept of the Milky Way as a street or pathway may owe something to the 'fancy that this heavenly way crowded with stars resembled the earthly roads crowded with pilgrims' (p. 478).

In Book 2 Chapter 15 of his unfinished work *Il Convito, The Banquet* (c. 1304–7), Dante Alighieri speaks of 'the Galaxy', as being visible as a 'white circle which the common people call the Path of St. James' (trans. Sayer). Dante offers his readers a laundry list of Ancient Greek hypotheses concerning the nature of the Milky Way, from the ashes of the sun's path (which he connects to the ill-fated journey of Phaethon) to a 'collection of vapours' and a rather modern interpretation as 'a multitude of fixed stars … so small that we cannot distinguish them from here below'. The earliest known usages of the English words 'galaxy' and 'Milky Way' are generally attributed to Geoffrey Chaucer's 'The House of Fame' (c. 1380), a work that Tolkien in his labour as a scholar was familiar with. As the narrator is carried skyward by an eagle in Book II (935–39) towards Fame's abode, the bird not only explains the name 'Milky Way' as due to the galaxy's white colour, but notes its alternative name of 'Watling Street':

> 'Now', quod he tho, 'cast up thyn yë;
> See yonder, lo, the Galaxyë,
> Which men clepeth the Milky Wey,
> For hit is whyt: and somme, parfey,
> Callen hit Watlinge Strete (Vol. III, p. 28).

Interestingly, the classically educated eagle next relates Ovid's story of Phaethon in the ensuing lines. In his commentary Skeat notes 'the Roman peasants called it *strada di Roma*; the pilgrims to Spain called it *the road to Santiago* … and the English called it the *Walsingham way*, owing to this being a route much frequented by pilgrims, or else *Watling-street*, which was a famous old road, and probably ran (not as usually said, from Kent to Cardigan Bay, but) from Kent to the Frith of Forth' (Vol. III, p. 263). Chaucer also references the galaxy in 'The Parliament of Fowls' (c. 1382). When the narrator falls asleep, Scipio Africanus the Elder guides him into the heavens and explains (55–56)

> And rightful folk shal go, after they dye,
> To heven; and shewed him the galaxye. (Vol. I, p. 335)

It is therefore quite peculiar that Tolkien, a knowledgeable observer of the night sky and Medieval scholar, seems to have neglected to reference it in his *legendarium*, even in a veiled way. Perhaps we are simply just not looking hard enough, or in the right places.

note

Tolkien mentions the Milky Way in several places outside of his *legendarium*. In a 1972 letter to Rayner Unwin he describes the early spring flowers in Fellows' Garden as 'blazing green starred like the Milky Way' (Letters, p. 417), while in the opening sentence of his 1934 paper 'Chaucer as Philologist' he imagines Chaucer 'surveying from the *Galaxye* our literary and philological antics…' (p. 1). Tolkien's commentary on the term *galaxye* in 'The Parliament of Fowls' notes that our English *galaxy* comes from the 'Greek *galaxia*, translated in Latin *orbis lacteus* of which our *Milky Way* is in turn a rendering, though influenced by more native notions of the Milky Way as a road… behind which lurk legends now almost entirely lost' (Bowers, p. 125). This last comment echoes a conclusion drawn about the name *Watling Street* in his 1924 article 'Philology: General Works' published in *The Year's Work in English Studies*. Tolkien first notes that while philology does not seem able to trace the name further back than the Old English 'Wæclinga stræt', the connection between the street and 'Milky Way' (originating in Middle English) is solid (if not well explained) ('Philology: General Works', p. 21). He does question the 'usual assumption' (for example found in the *Oxford English Dictionary*) that the usage of the name to refer to the galaxy is a 'secondary application' but notes that the 'original sense is probably lost forever' ('Philology: General Works', pp. 21–22). He does make a point to connect the Middle English name of another Roman roadway, Ermine Street, with the 'German *Irmin-strasse* = 'Milky Way' and 'Vatlant Streit' reportedly with 'a name given to the Milky Way by Scottish sailors', arriving at the conclusion that we see here: 'an old mythological term that was first applied' to the roads 'after the English invasion' ('Philology: General Works', p. 21).

Another source with which Tolkien would have been intimately familiar, the *Bosworth and Toller Anglo-Saxon Dictionary*, describes the Old English *Wætlinga-stræt* as 'the Roman road running from Dover … to Chester', explaining that 'Florence of Worcester, in his Chronicle under the year 1013, gives a mythical explanation of the word, that it was the road which the sons of King Weatla made across England' and that 'In later English the word was applied to the Milky Way'. While Tolkien is clear to use *Wæclinga stræt* rather than *Wætlinga-stræt*, I would be remiss if I did not point out that the Old English *wætla*, 'bandage' (Bosworth and Toller, '*wætla*', n.p.) brings to mind *Arocea*, the Armenian and Syrian name for the Milky Way (Walsh, p. 1), which Allen suggests derives from '*Aruæāh*, a Long Bandage, and well applied to this long band of light' (p. 475).

The relevant CE 1013 entry in the *Chronicle of Florence of Worcester* cited by Bosworth and Toller references 'Watling Street, that is, the road which the sons of King Weatla made across England from the eastern to the western sea' (p. 121). This appears to have made an impact on the intellectual sponge that was J.R.R. Tolkien, for soon after returning to post-war Oxford he outlined a short myth based on the entry, apparently with the intention of finding a home for it in his nascent *legendarium*. *Parma Eldalamberon* No. 15 (2004) includes a series of writings cited as 'Early Runic Documents', including 'EnȝlaȝesíÞ', subtitled 'Notes of words of Interest/

place names/hints of legends/etc./etc.' (p. 94). The first four sheets of ruled paper, which had been cut from a bound notebook after their composition (as evidenced by the first letters of some lines being missing) interest us here (Tolkien, 'Early Runic Documents', pp. 98, 100). These contain many Old English words beginning with the letter W, with Watling Street included on the fourth page. Here Tolkien sketches a story in which the 'Wætlingas' are the 'sons of King Watol (or Watla)'. Íring, the 'son of King Ír, ancient lord of the Íras … built a road for King Watol through his lands in seven years, but being angered by his arrogance, the Wætlingas who had befriended the Gnomes of Péac wagered they would build a better in three years'. Íring requests that his father, who is in league with the 'wild orcs of Íwerin', aid in hindering the Wætlingas in their task. Three years later, Íring fears losing the wager and kills his competitors. Wóden (Manweg)[1] then 'allows him to build a road paved with dust of stars across the heavens parallel to Íringesweg', a 'road in heaven' that is afterwards called 'Watling Street but Íringesweg [a]lso; that his name shall not fade' (Tolkien, 'Early Runic Documents', p. 96).

The use of vague male pronouns makes it unclear who exactly performs the roadbuilding; 'him' is in the conclusion of the story — did Watla build it to commemorate his dead sons, or did Íring build it in atonement for his sins? Regardless, the important points here are (1) the notation 'not yet used' followed by a date, '29/xi/18' or 29 November 1918, and (2) the fact that several later insertions are made in the text, suggesting that he had reread and reconsidered it carefully (Tolkien, 'Early Runic Documents', p. 96). The editorial commentary points out that '*Iringes weg* "Milky Way" and *Íras*, "the Irish" are attested in Old English, and *Íwerin* is a Qenya name for Ireland', while '*Péac* (or *Péaclond*) is the 'Old English name of the Peak, a hilly district in northwestern Derbyshire' (Tolkien, 'Early Runic Documents', p. 100). While the myth was apparently not directly incorporated into the mythology that became *The Book of Lost Tales*, I will now argue that palimpsests of the myth of the 'heavenly road' — i.e. the Milky Way as Watling Street — are actually visible throughout the *legendarium*, ranging from *The Book of Lost Tales* through *The Lost Road*, perhaps even appearing in *The Silmarillion*. In fact, it is quite possible that the first stages of the legendarium itself — writings c. 1914 to 1917 — sparked the 'Íringesweg' legend (perhaps unconsciously), thus explaining why it was not openly adopted within the grand mythology of Middle-earth (especially not by late 1918): it was already there.

Perhaps the most obvious nod to a 'road in heaven' appears in the 'list of cosmological words accompanying the *Ambarkanta*' (c. 1930s) published in *The Shaping of Middle-earth*. Here we read of 'Ilmen. Place of Light. The region above the air, than which it is thinner and more clear. Here only the stars and Moon and Sun can fly. It is called also *Tinwë-mallë* the Star-street, & *Elenarda* Stellar Kingdom' (*Shaping*, pp. 240–41). Is it possible that in 'Star-street' we see Tolkien playing with the technique of the kenning, similar to the infamous 'ofer hronráde' of *Beowulf* whose translation as 'whale road' he rails against (pun intended) in his notes on the poem (*Beowulf*, pp. 141–43)? Such a seeming inconsistency would

not be unheard of in the *legendarium* of course, for example the use of allegory by the same man who famously explained in a 1951 letter and the Foreword to the Second edition of *The Lord of the Rings* that that he "dislike[s] allegory" (*Letters*, p. 145; FR, p. 7). If we discount this example as simply too literal, we still have several, much more subtle, instances.

The earliest story in *The Book of Lost Tales*, that of 'The Cottage of Lost Play', was composed 'no earlier than the winter of 1916–17' according to Christopher Tolkien's reckoning (*Lost Tales I*, p. 13). In the tale, the narrator, Vairë, recalls that 'in the days of Inwë… there was a place of fair gardens in Valinor beside the silver sea… near the confines of the realm but not far from Kôr' (*Lost Tales I*, p. 18). The time of dusk was 'a time of joy to the children, for it was mostly at this hour that a new comrade would come down the lane called Olórë Mallë or the Path of Dreams', said to be a path that 'ran by devious routes to the homes of Men', ultimately leading to 'the Cottage of Lost Play' (*Lost Tales I*, pp. 18–19). It is said that when the 'fairies left Kôr that lane was blocked forever with great impassable rocks', leaving the cottage empty and abandoned (*Lost Tales I*, p. 19). Christopher Tolkien points out that there are two further references to this 'Way of Dreams' found in the second volume of *The Book of Lost Tales*, one by the narrator of the 'Tale of Tinúviel' (c. 1917) and the other by the narrator of the 'Tale of Turambar' (c. 1919) (*Lost Tales I*, p. 127; *Lost Tales II*, pp. 8, 70). While the Olórë Mallë is described as a terrestrial rather than heavenly road, its connection with dreams brings to mind Chaucer's dream vision poems 'The Parliament of Fowls' and 'The House of Fame', in which the Milky Way is mentioned. Some journeys — some roads — are apparently only accessible within dreams.

A second, but according to Christopher Tolkien not contradictory (*Lost Tales I*, p. 225), usage of the Olórë Mallë appears later in the first iteration of the *legendarium*, in the tale of 'The Hiding of Valinor'. Manwë decides not to cut all ties between Valinor and the world, and bids Lórien and Oromë to create special pathways. Lórien 'wove a way of delicate magic, and it fared by winding roads most secret from the Eastern lands and all the great wildernesses of the world even to the walls of Kôr, and it ran past the Cottage of the Children of the Earth', i.e. the Cottage of Lost Play (*Lost Tales I*, p. 211). 'Olórë Mallë, the Path of Dreams' then crossed all bodies of water via 'slender bridges resting on the air and greyly gleaming as it were of silken mists by a thin moon, or of pearly vapours; yet beside the Valar and the Elves have no Man's eyes beheld it save in sweet slumbers in their heart's youth' (*Lost Tales I*, p. 211). Again, we see a direct connection with travel in dreams, or dream visions. More important, the description of the path as 'greyly gleaming as it were of silken mists by a thin moon, or of pearly vapours' is a quite accurate description of the Milky Way.

Oromë makes his bridge from the golden hair of his wife Vána, creating the rainbow, 'Ilweran the Bridge of Heaven' (*Lost Tales I*, p. 212), while a third road already existed, 'Qalvanda … the Road of Death, and it leads only to the halls of Mandos and Fui' (*Lost Tales* I, p. 213). Christopher Tolkien notes that there is 'no vestige in my father's later writing' of

the three roads, noting that 'it is difficult to interpret this conception of the 'roads' — to know to what extent there was a purely figurative content in the idea' (*Lost Tales I*, p. 224). It is interesting that both the Milky Way and the rainbow have been viewed throughout real-world mythology as the roads the dead have traveled to heaven (Wintemberg, p. 244). Therefore Tolkien's trifold road to Valinor has an interesting mythological redundancy built in, as well as a traditional connection to the Milky Way.

Returning to Tolkien's 'Watling Street' myth, we are reminded that the 'road in heaven' is described as 'a road paved with dust of stars', what we might think of as a glittering or gleaming road ('Early Runic Documents', p. 96). Such imagery can be found in the early descriptions of the hill Kôr near to Valinor, upon which the Elves established their dwellings. Aulë brought to them the 'dust of magic metals that his great works had made and gathered', much of it gold (*Lost Tales I*, p. 122). On Kôr itself the Elves 'built fair abodes of shining white — of marbles and stones quarried from the Mountains of Valinor that glistened wondrously, silver and gold and a substance of great hardness and white lucency that they contrived of shells melted in the dew of Silpion' including the creation of 'white streets' (*Lost Tales I*, p. 122). Again, these milky-white streets evoke a connection with the *orbis lacteus*. The similarity to the streets of Kôr is interesting. Again, the earliest work on this part of the *legendarium* predates the notation at the end of the 'Watling Street' myth, so any cause and effect would work backwards from the *legendarium* to the myth and not vice versa. Importantly, thanks to the efforts of the Gods (the Valar), Kôr is said to be 'lit with this wealth of gems and sparkles most marvelously', including the sparkle of 'pebbles of diamond', 'crystals which the Gnomes cast in prodigality about the margin of the seas', and 'glassy fragments splintered in their labouring' (*Lost Tales I*, pp. 128–29). This gem dust plays a central role in our final possible connection, the heavenly voyages of Eärendel the Mariner.

Christopher Tolkien observes that the 'Tale of Eärendel' is both an early and incomplete work, existing in the form of several outlines. (*Lost Tales II*, p. 252). While Eärendel's journeys into the heavens in general appear from the first iterations, important details emerge in stages. For example, his brilliance was originally caused by the 'diamond dust' that he picks up on his person (at first just his shoes) when walking through the deserted streets of Kôr, a detail added in what Christopher Tolkien terms Scheme C (written perhaps as early as 1914) (*Lost Tales II*, pp. 255, 262). In the next iteration, the 'Sketch of the Mythology' (c. 1926–30), Eärendel 'climbs the hill of Côr, and walks in the deserted ways of Tûn, and his raiment becomes encrusted with the dust of diamonds and of jewels' (*Shaping*, p. 38). The 1930s revision 'The Quenta' version QII finally adds the Silmaril to his brow, but still keeps the vision of Eärendel walking through the 'deserted ways of Tûn' with 'the dust upon his raiment and his shoes […] a dust of diamonds' (*Shaping*, p. 154). While Christopher Tolkien observes that in these later revisions it is no longer directly said that the diamond dust is picked up from the streets of Tûn (*Lost Tales II*, p. 259), no contradictory explanation is given.

note

The final language that appears in *The Silmarillion* dates from the *The Lord of the Rings*-era revision the 'Quenta Silmarillion' (*Lost Road*, pp. 325, 327) and is quite similar: 'He walked in the deserted ways of Tirion, and the dust upon his raiment and his shoes was a dust of diamonds, and he shone and glistened as he climbed the long white stairs (*Silmarillion*, p. 248). In his apotheosis to the Evening Star, Eärendil (as the name is now spelled) is described as sitting at the helm of his now 'fair and marvellous' celestial ship 'filled with a wavering flame, pure and bright', the mariner himself 'glistening with dust of elven-gems; and the Silmaril was bound upon his brow' (*Silmarillion*, p. 250). Recall that Tolkien's Watling Street myth ends with the creation of the Milky Way as 'a road paved with dust of stars across the heavens' ('Early Runic Documents', p. 96). While it is not a perfect analogy (what is?) we end here with Eärendil carving his pathway among the stars, bejeweled with both the Silmaril and the diamond dust from the streets of Tirion. I admit that the path of the Evening Star relative to the stars — the ecliptic — is certainly not the same as the plane of the Milky Way, but this is not surprising given how far the image had evolved over the decades, and would not be more egregious than any number of Tolkien's other astronomical errors. Examples include the erroneous 28-day cycle of moon phases in "The Weaving of the Days and Months and Years" (*Lost Tales I*, p. 218), inconsistent (and in some cases impossible) phases of the moon in *The Hobbit* (Larsen, 'The Lunacy of *The Hobbit*', pp. 20–21), and, interestingly, the visibility of Eärendil as a stationary beacon in the Western sky all night long during the first voyage of the Edain to Númenor (*Silmarillion*, p. 260). But if we recall that Manilius connects the ash from the sun's path during the flight of Phaethon with the Milky Way, perhaps it is not a mistake as much as another example of a celestial vessel with a mind of its own. It also brings to mind an early description of the path of the moon ship as 'threading a white swathe among the stars' in 'The Tale of the Sun and Moon' (*Lost Tales I*, p. 193).

In his supposedly unused myth of Watling Street, we perhaps see Tolkien at his most Tolkienian: maddeningly mercurial, marvelously mythical, and perpetually polymathic. In the end it matters little which came first, the chicken of these examples from the *legendarium* or the egg of the Professor's Watling Street myth. The point is that the allusion of a glittering pathway through the heavens, evocative of the average skygazer's experience of the Milky Way, does indeed exist in the *legendarium*. Can you tell me how to get to Watling Street? Certainly — just move out of the distracting glare of the obvious and open your eyes to the subtleties, both in the *legendarium* and the night sky.

Notes

1   The connection between Wóden/Ódin and Manwë is explored in 'Story of Eriol's Life' (*Lost Tales II*, p. 290)

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Middle-earth, or There and Back Again

Edited by Łukasz Neubauer
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Near the end of 2020, a notably bleak year, Walking Tree Publishers released a collection of well-written, accessible, and thought-provoking essays by Polish scholars that will delight scholars and non-academics alike. Edited by Łukasz Neubauer, this collection looks at the medieval source materials that inspired Tolkien's imagination. Combined with Tolkien's lived experience and Catholic faith, these materials influenced, modified, and helped him create something original, according to these scholars. The essays show Tolkien's treatment of these sources as synergistic, creating work that bridges the medieval and the modern, not only keeping these stories alive, but also imbuing them with potency for audiences today.

The first essay, 'Tolkien and the Myth of Atlantis', written by University of Warsaw historian Michał Leśniewski, looks at the 'Platonic myth of Atlantis ... [playing] a highly significant role in the development of Tolkien's legendarium' (p. 1), his interest in the development of myths, and the connection of Tolkien's own recurrent dream in which a 'stupendous and ineluctable wave' was 'advancing from the Sea or over the land' (*Letters*, p. 361). Leśniewski writes:

> [Tolkien's approach to] history and its correlations with mythology ... are essentially stories, narrative constructs made up from the available scraps of information which reflect not so much the historical truth (or mythical 'truth'), as the author's notion of it. After all, what matters is not whether the account is true or not, but whether it is captivating and ... plausible to the reader. (p. 11)

Tolkien, according to this essay, considered Plato's weaving of 'the threads available to him' to create the Atlantean myth and saw its potential as 'indubitably moralizing' (p. 12). Leśniewski posits this possibly helped Tolkien develop the story, found in the 'Akallabêth', of the Edain who are rewarded by the Valar for their courage with a new land created near Valinor. Leśniewski argues that the flawed nature of man sees the Edain reject the laws of the Valar (like the Atlanteans rejecting their better natures) and 'despite all their knowledge and awareness of certain historical factors and issues, the Edain are still inclined to make the same mistakes, over and over again' (p. 17). (As Tolkien says in Letter 256, 'the most regrettable feature of [man's] nature' is his 'quick satiety with good' [*Letters*, p. 344])

In '"You cannot pass": Tolkien's Christian Reinterpretation of the Traditional Germanic Ideals of Heroism and Loyalty in The Lord of the Rings', Łukasz Neubauer compares two specific characters: Byrhtnoth, the Anglo-Saxon leader in the Old English poem *The Battle of Maldon*, and Gandalf the Grey on

the bridge of Kazad-dûm (*FR*, II, v). In Byrhtnoth, Neubauer says, we find a leader who is more careful of his reputation than of the lives of the people he serves. Furthermore, the essay claims Tolkien admired the indomitable northern heroic spirit, but found it at odds with the Christian doctrine of sacrifice for the greater good. Tolkien took this heroic ideal, and rather than imitate it, refocused it away from the vainglorious toward a leader like Gandalf:

> [who] knows he has an enormous responsibility both upwards (the fulfillment of the mission to save Middle-earth) and downwards (his companions) ... (I)t should come as no surprise that the fatigued wizard ... sacrifice(d) what seems dearest to every living creature and ultimately [made] a gift of his life. (p. 31)

Neubauer argues that Tolkien uses Gandalf to reveal his 'deep sense of moral and social responsibility shaped by (his) Catholic principles', elevating a heroic character with 'universal and unchanging ethical values' (p. 35).

Tolkien translated the Middle English poem *Pearl*, and its influence upon the treatment of jewels in his works is the topic of the essay by Barbara Kowalik. According to her, the symbolism of jewels suggests that an obsession with smithcraft can progress from joy in the work of creation, something to be mutually and communally enjoyed, to something to be envied, guarded and that can ultimately corrupt one's desires. Also, Kowalik considers the One Ring as the unadorned symbol of binding and domination (and a fun etymology of the word bagel), and explores the word 'precious' with its historical double meaning.

In the fourth essay Bartłomiej Błaszkiewicz discusses the composition of Tolkien's *The Fall of Arthur* and the medieval conventions that Tolkien followed, as well as his unconventional use of secondary characters in more active roles.

Although the influence of *The Story of Kullervo* on Tolkien has been well documented, Andrzej Szyjewski's essay explores how Tolkien took the patchy model of Kullervo's universe and 'smooth[ed] out the inconsistencies', which he later used in his approach to 'the Valar and their relationship to Ilúvatar' (p.83). For an essay of such brevity, this is a dense and thoughtful exploration of Tolkien's adaptation. Szyjewski claims that the genius of Tolkien was that he took mythological aspects of *The Story of Kullervo* and incorporated them into his own imaginarium – one of the many skills modern writers who imitate his work struggle with.

Being somewhat familiar with the writing of St. Paul, I was most interested in the last essay, 'The Wisdom of Galadriel: A Study in the Theology of J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*', by Andrzej Wicher. He argues that the wisdom of St. Paul comes from lived experience, his journey from sinner to disciple of Christ, rather than secular sources. Moreover, as Wicher says, St. Paul invites us 'to turn away from what is commonly called wise, for the purpose ... of finding the genuine or true wisdom' (p.114). He proposes that Galadriel possesses this same paradoxical wisdom, the cutting insight of learning tempered with the wisdom of experience and observation. His

essay includes several bonus insights into Galadriel's adhering to and resisting gendered expectations; her refusal to take the One Ring in knowledge that in doing so she would accelerate her diminishment; and comparisons to the Virgin Mary and Mary Magdalene.

Walking Tree Publications continues to set the standard for excellent scholarly work in this volume of engaging considerations of Tolkien's work and sources of influence.

Reviewed by Tamsin Barlow and Milton Nye Weatherhead

Tolkien and the Classical World

Edited by Hamish Williams
Cormarë Series #45: Walking Tree Publishers, 2021, 458 pp. £19.85 PB
ISBN 978-3-905703-45-0

When J.R.R. Tolkien began his studies at Exeter College in 1911, he was reading in Classics. He had studied Latin and Greek since childhood and, like most products of the English school system of his day, had been brought up on a steady diet of classical authors from Homer to Virgil and everything in between. But even at King Edward's School a preference for Germanic philology was emerging; in a 1965 letter Tolkien explains a Gothic inscription he had scribbled on a volume of Thucydides as a precocious eighteen-year-old (*Letters*, p. 356-358). Between stories like this and Humphrey Carpenter's assertion that Tolkien's switch to English in 1913 was a reaction to being 'bored with Latin and Greek authors' (p. 55), it's no wonder that Tolkien is sometimes viewed as rejecting the classical tradition entirely, championing the merits of Germanic lore over the outraged cries of Oxford scholars blinkered by centuries of Greco-Roman exceptionalism.

And so, although many readers (and more than a few scholarly essays) have identified classical allusions in Tolkien's works, considerably less ink has been spilled on this topic than the gleaming hoard of material available on Tolkien's medieval and Germanic inspirations. *Tolkien and the Classical World*, the forty-fifth volume in Walking Tree Publishers' Cormarë Series, begins to narrow the gap a little. In the words of editor Hamish Williams – a classicist at Friedrich Schiller University Jena in English and American Studies – it 'tracks the *reception* of "the Classical world" – that is, the history, literature, myths, philosophy, and society of ancient Greece and Rome – in Tolkien's life, thoughts, and writings' (p. xii, emphasis in original).

While Tolkien himself famously warned in 'On Fairy-stories' that 'we must be satisfied with the soup that is set before us, and not desire to see the bones of the ox out of which it has been boiled' (p. 39), when done properly, source study 'can add another dimension to the awe so many of us feel' (Fisher, p. 41) for Tolkien's sub-creation. *Tolkien and the Classical World* does it properly. It is not content with mere source-hunting, and generally succeeds in its aim not just to identify resonances of the classical world in Tolkien's legendarium, but to add valuable insight to our search for meaning in it.

The book's fourteen chapters are grouped into five sections, most of which focus on a particular genre of classical source material. The first section ('Classical Lives and Histories') serves up an appetizer of two chapters: a biographical survey of Tolkien's lifelong relationship with the classics, and an analysis of his borrowing from classical histories in writing the history of Númenor. The two topics are connected by only the most tenuous of links, but this is easy to forgive when they're both so good. The first (by volume editor Hamish Williams) begins the book at its natural beginning, and the second (by Ross Clare) is especially illuminating to the sparse history of the Second Age.

The second section ('Ancient Epic and Myth') may be the most accessible to many readers, exploring echoes of familiar Greek and Roman myths in the Middle-earth legendarium. The myth of Orpheus and Eurydice is discussed in two of the four chapters as both a direct and indirect influence on the tale of Beren and Lúthien: both unswerving romances featuring a journey to the underworld to bring back a slain lover. Another chapter by Giuseppe Pezzini explores the patterns of interaction between gods and mortals in the *Iliad* and *Aeneid* as inspirations for the Valar in *The Silmarillion*. But the most engaging chapter of this section – and perhaps the entire volume, for this reviewer – is that by Austin M. Freeman analysing *estel* (usually translated as 'hope', but also spiritual 'trust') as a virtue combining pagan Roman *pietas* ('duty', 'piety'), Christian Greek *pistis* ('faith', 'trust') and the 'Northern courage' extolled by Tolkien in 'Beowulf: The Monsters and the Critics'. Freeman also examines parallels between Virgil's account of the destruction of Troy and Tolkien's fall of Gondolin, and the *pietas* of Aeneas as a precursor to Tuor: another valuable study into one of Tolkien's more unfinished tales.

The third section ('In Dialogue with the Greek Philosophers') highlights Tolkien's reception of Plato and Aristotle in three chapters. Given the impact of Aristotle on medieval Christian thought, it's surprising that Aristotle's work is examined in only the last of the three: an analysis of *The Children of Húrin* as a tragedy conforming to the norms of the *Poetics*; though the chapter in question is a satisfyingly thorough look at a topic that has captivated many readers. The other two chapters consider Plato as a source, namely the story of Atlantis – a topic undoubtedly on the wish list of any *Akallabêth* aficionado reading this book – and the Ring of Gyges, a soul-corrupting invisibility ring with a more-than-passing resemblance to a certain precious trifle that Sauron fancies.

Entering the fourth section ('Around the Borders

of the Classical World'), we move beyond the ancient Mediterranean to Northern Europe – more familiar territory for Tolkien studies – for a look at how cultural exchanges between the Greco-Roman and Germanic peoples in the real world served as templates for similar exchanges within the Middle-earth legendarium. Each chapter in the section has its merits, but Richard Z. Gallant's excellent comparison of the Romanization of Germanic settlers in the late Roman Empire with the 'Noldorization' of the Edain in First Age Beleriand is, on its own, enough to justify a look at the volume.

The final section contains two shorter studies grouped by length rather than theme. The first, by Alley Marie Jordan, connects the ideals of pastoralism in Virgil with the values of Hobbits. The second, by Oleksandra Filonenko and Vitalii Shchepanskyi, discusses classical theories of music (including the lovely Pythagorean concept of the 'music of the spheres') as inspirations for the musical cosmogony of Tolkien's *Ainulindalë*. Both chapters are fascinating introductions to topics deserving further exploration. Though very different in subject matter, taken together they close the volume beautifully by reminding the reader that Tolkien's interests tended to the celestial as well as the terrestrial – that the author who gave the world Hobbits and Ents and *whatever Tom Bombadil is* also wrote about flying star-vessels and angelic voices singing in timeless heavens. This is J.R.R. Tolkien: a 'man of antitheses', as Carpenter tells us (p. 95); and so it's no surprise that he retained some influence from the classics despite devoting his professional and creative life to the medieval world.

As noted in Graham J. Shipley's afterword, the fundamental claim of *Tolkien and the Classical World* is not that the ancient Greco-Roman tradition 'provided the most important foundation for Tolkien's imagination' (p. 392), but that it formed a *part* of the 'leaf-mould of the mind' (Carpenter, p. 126) in which the seeds of his stories took root. The volume makes that claim convincingly, and dispels any notion that Tolkien forgot all of his classics training when he changed majors. It is certainly a welcome addition to the bookshelf of any Tolkien reader interested in the classics. However, even among Tolkien fans who don't know their Aeschylus from their Aristophanes, the book should prove an accessible and engaging introduction to the study of the classics: a gateway to ancient Greece and Rome through the back door of Middle-earth.

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Reviewed by Shawn Marchese

Following the Formula in Beowulf, Örvar-Odds saga, and Tolkien

By Michael Fox
New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020, 264 pp.
£55.99 eBook
ISBN 978-3-030-48134-6

A recent trend in Tolkien studies has focused on reading and understanding Tolkien as a modern or even a post-modern author, reading his works in conversation with other authors of his time. Works along these lines include both Shippey's *J.R.R. Tolkien: The Author of the Century* as well as Ordway's recent *Tolkien's Modern Reading*. Ordway's book in particular offers a 'major corrective' to the reading of Tolkien as 'fundamentally medieval and nostalgic'. While such a corrective is valuable, it is possible that in addressing this misconception about Tolkien's works we create a false dichotomy. Fox's *Following the Formula* offers a way through the Scylla of medievalism and nostalgia and the Charybdis of modernism: Tolkien, like the author of *Beowulf*, employed a scheme of formula and variation in interacting with his medieval sources which imbued old words and formulae with fresh perspectives. In doing so, he bridged the gap between the medieval and the modern by employing a freedom of referent and variation shared both by the authors of the *Beowulf* poem and *Örvar-Odds saga*.

Fox's first chapter, '*Beowulf* and Formula', gives a thorough overview of the history of the development of 'formula' studies and terminology in the field of *Beowulf* studies. What is meant by 'formula' has changed significantly over time, from comparisons to oral-formulaic features in the Homeric poems, to a generative 'system' or 'grammar' of phrases and narrative patterns (p. 9). Fox concludes that to speak of 'formula' in *Beowulf* is to really to speak of a 'tissue of formulas' (p. 36), a phrase which calls to mind the fractal structure of trees or the cardiovascular system. Rather than confining his examination of the formula to half-line, phrase, scene, or episode, Fox is interested in the way that formulae on a small scale are then developed into progressively larger fractal patterns which work their way through the text. This, it seems, is the approach which is taken to examining formulae in the following chapters.

The second chapter, 'The Half-Line Formula: *weox under wolcnum* (8a)' follows one such development in *Beowulf*. This chapter is a convincing case study of the way the titular half-line is woven throughout the poem, connecting its various characters and scenes and painting a dramatic landscape of light and darkness by its contrast with another half-line, *on wanre niht* (p. 64). Interestingly, Fox not only draws a parallel with similar formulaic developments in The *Dream of the Rood*, but draws a connection between the two poems, suggesting the two works may share a connection to

an older vernacular tradition.

In the third chapter, 'The Fitt Formula: Genesis and Fitt 1' Fox tackles the difficult question of the fitt divisions in the *Beowulf* poem, in which he argues a clear and cohesive pattern can be seen. Fitt 1 introduces a basic pattern as regards the 'complex net of temporal interdependencies' so peculiar to the poem (p. 79). Here, Fox builds on the method of pattern examination in the previous chapter, arguing for a deep intertextuality between fitt 1 and the various versions of the Old English *Genesis*. This relationship is complex, since the *Beowulf* poet uses significant freedom in appropriating biblical themes for the narrative. For instance, there is a formulaic relationship between the construction of the Tower of Babel in *Genesis A* and the raising of the hall of Heorot, but the result in the latter case is something rather more paradisaical (p. 84).

The fourth chapter 'The Digressive Formula: The Sigemund-Heremod Digression' continues to build on the ground laid by the previous two chapters to show how the digressions the poet employs enrich the artistic effect of the poem, inviting the reader to 'continually compare and contrast different aspects of his text' (p. 140). One of the most interesting features of this chapter is the examination of the relationship of the abode of monsters described in the first two-thirds of the poem with 'Blickling Homily XVI' and the Latin *Visio Pauli*. Building upon the analysis of Wright, Fox argues that the two texts both refer back to a vernacular translation of the *Visio Pauli* no longer extant, and that the poet uses formulae and imagery from this apocryphal work to build a series of polyvalent associations between three dragon-slayers: the pagan Sigemund, the Christian figure of the Archangel Michael, and Beowulf who is somewhere in between these two worlds.

Chapter five 'The Folktale Formula: *Beowulf* and *Örvar-Odds saga*' compares two texts which are not typically associated with each other. Demonstrating that both texts owe something to the 'Bear's Son Tale' and are built upon a pattern of shared motifs, he argues that *Örvar-Odds saga* is a more valuable analogue for understanding *Beowulf* than *Grettis* saga. Its value as an analogue 'lies in the very difficulty of its deployment', since it offers insight into the 'compositional process and layers of the poem' (p. 181). This insight is crucial to Fox's final chapter.

In chapter six 'The Formula Reformulated: *Sellic Spell* and *The Hobbit*', Fox offers a critique of the view of Bonniejean Christensen that *The Hobbit* is 'a retelling of *Beowulf*, but from a Christian rather than a pagan point of view' (qtd. p. 223). Building upon the foundations of the pattern traced through chapters 2-5, Fox follows the way those same patterns are employed and ultimately renewed in Tolkien's two different attempts to grapple with the *Beowulf* poem in the form of a children's story. In Fox's view, Tolkien is not merely retreading old medieval sources, nor is he engaging in a Christianizing of essentially pagan material. Rather, he is reworking the formulae, themes, fight-structures, and episodic narrative in a way that would not have been unfamiliar to the poet,

or to the author(s) of *Örvar-Odds saga*, and in the process he is creating a story which resonates deeply with modern audiences.

Tolkien scholars will no doubt be most interested in this chapter, but it does not stand apart from the methodology developed in chapters 2-5. For those able to follow that methodology, this book offers valuable insight into Tolkien's medievalism. Tolkien is not unique among the fantasy authors of his day for his appropriation of medieval sources. Rather, his particular genius lay in his ability to adapt those sources in a truly medieval way, interweaving patterns and turning formulae on their head in a manner deeply similar to the *Beowulf* poet. Understanding the way in which these stories change and grow can help us to move beyond the shallow source criticism which sometimes afflicts Tolkien studies.

Following the Formula is a complex book which offers an intricate, iterative argument for the process by which stories - both medieval and modern - develop. To fully appreciate its arguments requires a strong background in Old English and Old Norse studies, and in particular, a deep familiarity with *Beowulf*. The first chapter, though establishing a necessary critical frame for the rest of the book, could benefit from a stronger definition of 'formula' as Fox understands it, without which the core argument may prove difficult to follow. But it is an argument worth following; as Fox has thoroughly demonstrated, this reading and understanding of formulae yields rare insights and offers substantial challenges to long-held orthodoxies.

Reviewed by Richard Rohlin, Signum University

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Tolkien's Modern Reading: Middle-earth Beyond the Middle Ages

By Holly Ordway
Word on Fire Academic, 2020, 382 pp, $29.95 HB
ISBN 978-1-943243-72-3

Tolkien's Modern Reading: Middle-earth Beyond the Middle Ages is Holly Ordway's meticulous answer to the popular opinion (albeit not the prevailing consensus among scholars) that Tolkien dismissed modern literature. Consisting of twelve chapters, plus image galleries and extensive notes and bibliography, Ordway takes her readers on a journey to explore modern literary works that influenced Tolkien in his writing.

Ordway opens the book with a fictionalized story of young Tolkien and his mother observing the house where philosophical romance novel *John Inglesant* had

been written, stoking our imaginations about how Tolkien slowly built the puzzle pieces of his writing with contemporary works as inspiration. She uses the first few chapters to emphasize important contexts in Tolkien's personal and academic life, dispelling popular notions about him being dismissive of modernity. One thing to note is the fact that Ordway creates imaginary dialogues between Tolkien and his mother, something that Tolkien biographers like Humphrey Carpenter did not do.

Ordway's strong criticism toward Humphrey Carpenter's biography of Tolkien is understandable, though the fact that it takes up much of the first chapter might seem a little jarring. Carpenter's Tolkien biography was the first of its kind when published in 1977, and it gave deep insight into Tolkien's life and works that readers at the time had never witnessed. It created a strong impression for generations of Tolkien's readers, cementing certain aspects of the author's life and making it hard to consider other interpretations; however, Carpenter was not the first person to voice an opinion about Tolkien's supposed dismissal toward modern literature, so dedicating a big chunk of the chapter to disparage him might seem unfair, albeit well-written.

Ordway mentions a notable quote from Carpenter in *The Inklings* (1978) about how Tolkien ignored the influences of the major literary names in the twentieth century, preferring earlier literature as his literary focus and interest. Mentioning this quote is a great way to contrast the popular belief about Tolkien's literary focus with his actual library, especially since more details have come to modern readers about Tolkien's life and works, making Carpenter's remark outdated.

She also uses the entire second chapter to lay the groundwork of the book's content, limiting the scope of the study to works of fiction, poetry, and drama published after 1850. (p. 27). A convenient decision, although one that unsurprisingly might invite some debate over the possibility of leaving out important authors. Ordway herself addresses this issue, stating that 1850 is not the start of modernity and merely using the year as a necessary cut-off point.

The 'meat' of the book starts at Chapter 3 with Victorian-era children's literature, something that might sound familiar among academics and dedicated Tolkien readers. Ordway mentions Tolkien's interest in the works of fairy-story writers such as Andrew Lang, John Ruskin, Charles Kingsley, and William Thackeray. Readers can find interesting tidbits in this chapter, such as how a tale called *Soria Mora Castle* (from George Dasent's *Popular Tales from the Norse*) influenced the image of Moria.

To make matters more interesting, Chapter 4 continues with post-Victorian children's literature, discussing authors like Beatrix Potter, E. A. Wyke-Smith, Arthur Ransome, Kenneth Grahame, and E. Nesbit. Ordway notes that Potter's tales were important parts of Tolkien's children's bookshelves. Ordway adds extra length for discussion about Tolkien and Lewis's *Narnia* series; she

mentions some anecdotes such as jovial remarks by Lewis when he and Tolkien 'have often played with the idea of a pilgrimage to see here (at her home in the Lake District)'. (p. 65).

Despite dedicating two chapters to children's literature, Ordway deliberately skips George MacDonald's work in the discussions. Instead, Ordway devotes an entire chapter to him, citing Tolkien's lifelong, important, and complicated relationship with his works. This chapter could have provided more insight into Tolkien's changing views toward MacDonald's work, but it is understandable that Ordway focuses more on explaining his literary influences.

The book continues with talks about science fiction writers, the 'fine fabling' (with talks about authors like Lord Dunsany, Algernon Blackwood, and Francis Thompson, among others). The number of authors discussed in one chapter sometimes makes the descriptions and analysis feel a little shallow, and in some parts, the connections Ordway makes between them and Tolkien seem to only graze the surface. Nevertheless, they are great starting points to expand one's reading and analysis when it comes to Tolkien.

I appreciate the additional materials that Ordway inserts. The image gallery in the middle is a refreshing break from the book's meticulous texts. The images also help give clearer context for the discussion, present diverse styles of illustration, and emphasize the points she makes. From Beatrix Potter's *The Tale of Benjamin Bunny* and the Atlantis wave in E. Nesbit's *The Story of the Amulet*, to the image on the *Peter Pan* playbill from 1907, each image presents details that connect them to Tolkien's works and his personal library. Some would invite questions because they appear to be stretched in the connection, but they still add great visual context for the book.

Finally, the book presents a comprehensive table of Tolkien's modern readings on the appendix, which academics and general readers would appreciate. It lists all the works featured in this book, with information on where Tolkien mentioned them, such as his letters, interviews, and writings. It is quite long, but readers will find it convenient for exploring different authors discussed in the book.

Tolkien's Modern Reading is a great addition for casual and serious readers interested in learning about literary influences on Tolkien. Despite scrutiny in some parts, Holly Ordway does a great job creating a bridge between Tolkien's reading of modern literature and his enduring image as a lover of classic works.

Reviewed by Putri Prihatini

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letters

Dear Dr. Shelton,

I have discovered in the latest issue (60 Summer 2020) that on page 44 *The Fellowship of the Ring* is missing from the Abbreviations list...

Yours sincerely,

Balogh Nora

Comment on *Working Over Time*:

I enjoyed Mr. Hick's article and information on Edwin Neave. The figure in the drawing is correctly identified as Tolkien. Wayne Hammond and Christina Scull previously stated that the figure was Edwin Neave (*Artist and Illustrator (Artist)*, p. 13; C&G, p. 1.11), However, Tolkien repeatedly drew Edwin with a signature, prominent moustache (*What is Home Without A Mother {Or a Wife}*) and even shows it protruding from a rear view in *For Men Must Work* (McIlwaine, pp. 133, 134). It is also apparent in T*hey Slept in Beauty Side By Side* (*Artist*, p. 100). A sequence for these cards or dates would be helpful in understanding them. Only the date of 27 April 1904 is given for *They Slept in Beauty*. We do not know if there were other cards in this sequence.

In this postcard, Tolkien shows his understanding of his mother. It would reassure her that he was studying and making up for work he had missed at school during his illness, as he would be well aware of her hopes for his education and his future. He appears to depict the typical busy wallpaper, wall clock, and tall desks that would be found in a business office of the time. The reader may wonder why 'S.P.Q.R.', usually translated as the Latin abbreviation for the 'Roman Senate and People' or 'the Senate and People of Rome', is present. One needs to know that SPQR is sometimes jokingly seen as the abbreviation of 'Small Profit, Quick Return'. This motto would fit with the setting of the insurance company and perhaps Tolkien's hopeful expectation of a 'Quick Return' on his studying. Tolkien's well-known joking nature is already apparent here. The mouse hole on the right is also a humorous addition. Tolkien, who was very well read for his age (Carpenter, p. 28), appears also to be playing on the standard imagery of the poor clerk slaving away at his desk as immortalized by Charles Dickens in his character, Bob Cratchit in *A Christmas Carol*.

Hammond and Scull mention a 'trade mark', 'Msrs Sambo and Nephew Series' on the back of *They Slept in Beauty* (p. 13). A similar 'trade mark', 'Mesrs S(?) nephews Series', appears in the lower left-hand corner of *What is Home Without A Mother{Or A Wife}* (McIlwaine, p. 133) with a pinwheel shape in an oval. This pinwheel is also visible on the right side of *They Slept in Beauty*. Tolkien continues this pattern, putting 'Trade Mark' with the same pinwheel shape in the bottom right hand corner of *Working Over Time, S.P.Q.R.*

In the 'trade mark', Tolkien appears to be playing on the idea that he would be Edwin's nephew once Edwin and Jane marry. It is possible that he may have also known that the surname Neave meant 'nephew' in a standard reference work of the time (Bardsley, p. 551; *C&G*, p. 2.842). Tolkien's interest in the origins of words was already present as he had acquired a copy of *Chamber's Etymological Dictionary* in late 1903 (*C&G*, p. 1.10).

To the right of Tolkien in *What is Home Without A Mother {Or A Wife}* there is the drawing of a photograph with the initials 'AJS' underneath it. The Tolkien brothers apparently referred to their Aunt Jane Suffield as 'AJ' (Tolkien, p. 66). The drawing shows that Edwin had a photograph of 'AJS' or Aunt Jane Suffield, his sweetheart. Perhaps the prominent display of Aunt Jane's picture in Edwin's quarters is why Tolkien wrote 'Show Aunt Jane' on the card so she would know that Edwin was thinking of her daily.

Nancy Bunting

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Dear Editor,

I would like to go on with the Cottage of Lost Play debate. It seems that when Nancy Bunting was proposing her theory of the poem being about Ronald and Hilary ('Checking the facts', *Mallorn* 59, pp. 52-6, also in 'Tolkien's Fantasy Landscape', *Mallorn* 61 p. 12, and also in her book T*he Gallant Edith Bratt*, pp. 125-7), she made little of our first encounter with the poem, in the *Book of Lost Tales 1*, in which Christopher Tolkien hints very strongly that it is a love poem: "The reader [...] will in any case not need to be assisted in his perception of the personal and particular emotions in which all was still anchored" (p. 31). Furthermore, I have just been reading Brian Rosebury's book on Tolkien, *Tolkien: A Cultural Phenomenon* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2003, a revision of the 1992 edition) which has a lot of good sense in it, with many opinions which have stood the test of time, and, having immersed himself in Tolkien's writings, Rosebury also takes the romantic view (pp. 92-3, 138). I have also just bought Nancy Bunting's book about Edith and, having just dipped into it, I think the factual research into Edith's early life is invaluable; but some of her speculations, including about

the Cottage of Lost Play, are, in my opinion, a little too far for me to follow, though there are others I could well agree with, having done quite a bit of speculating myself.

We can't discount such an approach as suggesting that "possibly" or even "probably" certain personages held particular opinions and acted from particular motives, but we should respectfully offer it for the consideration of our readers, rather than stating, for example, that "Hilary seems to be the most logical candidate for the 'You'" (*Mallorn* 61). If he had dark hair, so did Edith; if he wore a nightgown when young, so did Edith as a young woman: "our goodnights when sometimes you were in your little white nightgown" (*Biography*, Part Two, Chapter 3); and why shouldn't Tolkien write a love poem to Edith and follow it with a poem to Hilary, 'Tinfang Warble': one each. It seems to me that in taking time out from his revision in April 1915 he must have had some really passionate feelings to write out before turning back to his books.

I am however indebted to Bunting for identifying some characters in the *Legendarium* with Hilary, a thought which had not occurred to me before, but feel I must disagree with her on the details. In her footnote to 'Checking the facts', p. 56, she lists Túrin, Parish, Pippin and Frodo. In my opinion she is half-right, and prompts me to add further suggestions. To begin with, I think the last word on Túrin was written by Charles Noad in 'Some thoughts on the matter of Túrin' (*Amon Hen* 131, reprinted in *The Best of Amon Hen 1* (TS 2000)), in which he couples both Túrin and Beren as avatars of Tolkien himself. Parish is closer, although for the purposes of *Leaf by Niggle* he must be an unsympathetic parasite during life, and it is only after his death that he becomes a true companion to his neighbour, helping to lay out the garden as they prepare for paradise. Pippin (a kind of apple, as well as the latinised form of Charlemagne's father and son) is an excellent suggestion, and the friendship of Merry and Pippin is comparable to the friendship of the Tolkien brothers. M.S. Monsch comes in here, for in his *Switzerland in Tolkien's Middle-earth* (pp. 52-3) he identifies Tolkien with Bilbo, Jane Neave with Gandalf, and Tolkien, Hilary and two other young men who shared the same bedrooms as models for the four questing hobbits in *LotR*.

I think Tolkien has to be Frodo, for with Aragorn and Gandalf they make up the leading point-of-view (or POV) characters with which the novelist must inevitably identify. It may start out as conscious and deliberate, but then becomes unconscious and automatic as the author continually asks himself, "What would I say? What would I do?" and to a lesser extent this must also be true of the supporting characters, whether goodies like Faramir or baddies like Denethor and even Gollum, whose dialogues the author must role-play. Finally, what about Sam, whom Bunting does not mention (I haven't read her articles in *Beyond Bree*)? Officially Tolkien said he based Sam on a private soldier or batman, but he wouldn't let family details out to strangers: subservient and working-class to begin with, Sam becomes a joint hero and eventually "the most famous gardener in history" so details of Hilary's career and visits to his farm

must have crept into the story. Thanks to Bunting for awakening my perceptions here.

I finally return to 'You and Me' for a comparison with another creative work by a slightly earlier author, Kipling, which could confirm the poem as what Charles Noad described as "a retrojection of [Tolkien and Edith] into an imagined shared childhood". In his long short story 'The Brushwood Boy' (1895), collected in *The Day's Work* (1898), and which is linked from the Kipling Society website (http://www.telelib.com/authors/K/KiplingRudyard/prose/TheDaysWork/brushwoodboy.html) Kipling expresses the joint fantasies of a young man and woman having met in dreams throughout their childhood. They built up a fantasy realm which the Boy even draws on a map, and they meet as adults only for the second time, having met briefly at the theatre in childhood to imprint one upon the other. The Boy goes into the Indian army with great success, and returns home for a long leave. When the Boy is due to meet the Girl socially as an adult, he is reluctant until he overhears the Girl singing a song about their fantasy world as an after-supper entertainment. Next morning he recognises her, but she does not know him. He is then posed with the problem, in the chaperoned Victorian social atmosphere, of finding a private moment to reveal his identity and begin their courtship.

I doubt that Tolkien would have read this story, or he would have mentioned it somewhere, as it is so powerful, along with 'The Gardener', one of Kipling's greatest short stories. However, it demonstrates the power of wish-fulfilment to inspire a creative artist to project back into his childhood the thought that he might have met his partner in dreams long before they met in real life, so is a suitable independent parallel to 'You and Me'. (Kipling did not meet his future wife until they were in their mid-twenties.)

Yours sincerely,

Jessica Yates
(October 2021)

Errata in *Mallorn* 60:

On p. 5, second column, Shelton writes 'Erik Muller-Harder' in reference to the note on the Tolkien Art Index. This should read 'Erik Mueller-Harder'.

On p. 7, first column, Curren refers to 'Hobbiton, which has been surrounded by a "great spiked gate"'. This is Buckland, where the bridge had 'a great spiked gate' on either end, not Hobbiton (*RK*, VI, viii). Also, one of the hobbit guards is quoted as saying 'you'll awake the Chief's big man', but this should read 'you'll wake the Chief's Big Man' (*RK*, VI, viii).

On p. 11, second column, Curren writes: 'In the final conversation with Saruman, Frodo explains "I have already done much that you will find it hard to mend or undo in your lives"'(*RK*, VI, viii). It is of course Saruman, not Frodo, who explains that his deeds will be difficult to undo.

On p. 37, first column, the first editor listed for *Tolkien and the Classics* should read 'Robert Arduini' not 'Robert Arduino'.

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All citations of *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* use volume, book, and chapter only because there are so many editions. E.g. "When Mr. Bilbo Baggins of Bag End announced that he would shortly be celebrating his eleventy-first birthday with a party of special magnificence, there was much talk and excitement in Hobbiton" (*FR*, I, i). Tolkien's other works, however, should include page numbers. E.g. "Lo, now do we know the reason of our transportation hither as it were cargoes of fair slaves" (*Lost Tales I*, p. 164).