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A Companion to J.R.R. Tolkien, ed. Stuart D. Lee, reviewed by Andrew Higgins

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As this is a review for the *Journal of Tolkien Research,* a volume with the title *A Companion to J.R.R. Tolkien* will undoubtedly be of interest to Tolkien students and scholars. Reviewing such a lengthy scholarly work is indeed both a daunting and equally challenging task. The reason for this is twofold: 1) the academic profile of the volume and 2) the eminent line-up of Tolkien scholars who have contributed their specific knowledge to each of the thirty-six papers in this volume.

Regarding the former reason, the profile of the volume, it is joyous indeed that after many years of polite (and not so polite) disdain and dismissal by establishment "academics" and the "cultural intelligentsia" (an area that Patrick Curry thoroughly investigates in his chapter in this volume), J.R.R. Tolkien has been placed in the academic pantheon of authors covered in the Wiley-Blackwell series; this being the eighty-ninth volume in this collection and Tolkien the only writer of fantasy covered to date.

In terms of the second reason, the caliber and reputation of the authors who have contributed to this volume, I admit I feel very much the way I imagine Tolkien himself must have felt when, as first a Reader at Leeds and then Professor at Oxford, he was asked to review the work of top philologists and lexicographers of the time in the three consecutive issues of *The Year's Works in English Studies* (1924-1926). Tolkien was called on to evaluate and criticize the works of Jespersen, Bloomfield, Ekwall, etc. and it fills me with similar trepidation to do the same with the works of Shippey, Flieger, Fimi, Rateliff, Nagy, etc.

Before embarking upon the review proper, I think it is important to applaud the editor Stuart D. Lee for the overall thematic structuring of this volume, which offers a progressive profile of Tolkien the man, the student and scholar, and the mythopoeist. I found Lee's ordering of these papers most helpful in demonstrating the interrelationship between the two dominating aspects of Tolkien's life; on the one hand, his academic career as a philologist, medieval scholar and teacher and on the other hand his life-long work as a myth-maker.

Tolkien "the man" is introduced and explored first with a brief but cogent biographical sketch by John Garth. Garth's profile brings together a great deal of the known biographical information that has been published by and since Humphrey Carpenter's 1977 authorized biography of Tolkien; including offering other information that has been added since then, including Garth's own seminal research into Tolkien's early period. Garth also includes a very helpful chart that traces Tolkien's life and his creative output which is an invaluable resource to refer to when reading the papers that follow.

Tolkien the academic is covered in three papers. The first of these is Thomas Honegger's "Academic Writings" which focuses on Tolkien's own

scholarly essays, many of which were not published until years after he first wrote and delivered them. Honegger establishes Tolkien's academic influence as coming via two routes. First, the more direct influence of the delivery of these papers to scholars and societies and secondly, more indirectly, through his work with, and influence on, students doing their own research; including Tolkien's supervision of many B.Litt. theses (an area of Tolkien studies that John Rateliff has explored one aspect of in his paper "The Missing Women: J.R.R. Tolkien's Lifelong Support for Women's Higher Education" in the 2015 volume *Perilous and Fair: Women in the Works and Life of J.R.R. Tolkien*). Honegger very helpfully divides his exploration of the specific academic essays Tolkien wrote into three broad categories: 1) "Tolkien on Words", 2) "Tolkien on Language" and 3) "Tolkien on Literature," but also builds a convincing case that all of these essays have a common underpinning in the combined examination of "lit and lang" that Tolkien championed. To underscore this, Honegger rightly points to Tolkien's sequel to *The Battle of Maldon*, "The Homecoming of Beorhtnoth of Beorhthelm's Son" (published in 1953), as one of the best examples of Tolkien combining historical information with philological analysis and literary co-creation. Although many of Tolkien's academic essays did not receive a broad readership until after Tolkien became famous as a writer of fantasy, Honegger persuasively establishes that Tolkien's 1936 paper "Beowulf: The Monsters and The Critics" was a defining work for *Beowulf* studies at the time Tolkien gave it. Honegger interestingly contrasts this reception with Tolkien's 1939 talk "On Fairy-stories," which had virtually no impact on scholarship until it was published in *Tree and Leaf* in 1964. Honegger uses the reception of "On Fairy-stories" to underscore the point that many of Tolkien's academic essays are being rediscovered today through readers of Tolkien's fictional works and thus are being seen through the prism of Tolkien's creative work; not necessarily the way Tolkien himself planned or conceived of their reception when he first wrote and delivered them.

In "Tolkien as Editor," Tom Shippey explorers Tolkien's role as an editor of medieval texts. Shippey interestingly notes that "Tolkien's conception of his profession role centered, not on criticism and interpretation, but on editing, with translation as a more personal by-product of his editorial work" (41). Shippey focuses on how Tolkien's strong interest in and focus on linguistic details and his famous "niggling" gave him the mental tools for close analysis of the medieval texts he was editing. Shippey insightfully characterizes the talent and experience Tolkien brought to this process: "He could look at every word and inject all his linguistic learning into the etymological derivations. For this generations of students and scholars have been grateful" (46). Shippey also makes a key point that it was the knowledge of linguistic detail that gave Tolkien as editor the confidence to make changes and reconstruct passages which he felt had not been copied correctly by the scribe who had worked with either the original or copies of the original manuscript. To support this, Shippey explores several examples of Old English texts (*Exodus*, the

Finnsburg Fragment and *Beowulf*) where Tolkien made extensive emendations sometimes verging on complete re-writes. Shippey also demonstrates how Tolkien's questioning of what the scribe had given us led to Tolkien's own creative interest in re-constructing and re-imagining "memories of a vanished mythology" (54). Shippey concludes his excellent analysis by indicating that Tolkien was not just an editor of medieval manuscripts but also a translator of those works he originally edited (e.g. *Sir Gawain, Beowulf, Pearl).* Shippey's conclusion is not only interesting but opens up new avenues of research on comparing Tolkien's editions to his own English translations.

In the third paper of this section "Manuscripts—Use and Using" the editor of the companion, Stuart D. Lee, very much embraces this volume's interrelated focus by exploring the role of manuscripts in Tolkien's own career as a medievalist and as a para-textual element in his legendarium. As a medievalist, Tolkien worked with various primary source manuscripts and Lee explores key ones Tolkien analyzed either in the original or through the emerging use in the 1930's of photographic facsimiles. Lee makes the interesting point, following on the idea Shippey introduces in the previous chapter, that it was through the study of these manuscripts that Tolkien learned about the pitfalls of textual history. Lee supports this idea by citing selections from an un-published lecture Tolkien gave called "Old English Textual Criticism" (Bodleian MS Tolkien A15/1), in which Tolkien explored how the process of textual transmission from the primary source (the author) to the scribe, or reproducer, can lead to errors that will be encountered by the reader and critic. Lee then offers several key examples from Tolkien's own creative work to show how Tolkien reimagined and incorporated his work with manuscripts and the act of manuscript transmission into his legendarium. First, Lee explores Tolkien's "The Book of Mazarbul" as one of the best examples of a manuscript that both appears in the narrative and also one that Tolkien attempted to physically realize to be used as a para-textual element in the printed book (which sadly did not happen due to publishing costs). In his physical representation of the pages from this found archival document Tolkien went to such lengths as burning the edges of the pages; suggesting the pages of the burned *Beowulf* manuscript. Secondly, Lee cites the complicated textual transmission history Tolkien invented for *The Hobbit*, *The Lord of the Rings* and the projected "Silmarillion" materials through an invented tradition of manuscript transmission starting with "The Red Book of Westmarch." Lee concludes by suggesting that Tolkien's imaginative use of the manuscript/transmission framework, drawn from his academic work on medieval manuscripts, not only imitates the practice of antiquarians but also feeds into Tolkien's sub-creating and world-building. In the last section Lee explores the nature of Tolkien's own manuscripts and what a Tolkien academic and scholar is faced with when attempting to decipher and decode Tolkien's own original source documents. Lee concludes this section with a very helpful and illuminating analysis of one specific set of documents around Tolkien's development of the Shelob's Lair plot-line from *The Lord of the*

Rings. I found Lee's analysis a very helpful primer on how to work with Tolkien's manuscripts and a very important source for scholars and students, but felt that a lot more could be explored here. This section merited a separate more detailed treatment than being put at the end of this paper. Indeed guidance and a fuller exploration of how to navigate Tolkien's layers of manuscripts (as Douglas Charles Kane did in his seminal 2009 work on the textual construction of the *The Silmarillion, Arda Reconstructed*), could merit a book in itself.

Having given the student and scholar an introduction to Tolkien's life and the intellectual and academic foundation Tolkien was first trained in and then studied and taught on a daily basis, the next section of this Companion focuses on Tolkien's "work of his heart" his life-long work on his legendarium.

Carl Phelpstead's first paper, "Myth-making and Sub-Creation," thoroughly explores the contextual foundation for Tolkien's mythopoeia by critically examining "On Fairy-stories" and the accompanying poem "Mythopoeia" which Tolkien wrote as an illustration of his mythopoeic process. The section also draws upon the previous part of this volume to explore how Tolkien philological training and academic method informed the development of his mythology. Leslie A. Donovan's "Middle-earth Mythology: An Overview" cogently explores some of the key themes of Tolkien's legendarium while outlining the basic arc of Tolkien's mythology. Donovan demonstrates how Tolkien's mythology conforms to primary world mythologies by being accounts of an ancient past that explain origins of life, the universe and the natural world. Donovan also helpfully focuses on several overarching themes that pervade Tolkien's legendarium: the coeval link with language invention (explored in much more detail in a following paper), the role of fate and free will, and finally she makes the very interesting point that in inventing his mythology Tolkien synthesized those aspects of primary world stories that mattered most to him. Thus she concludes that Tolkien's mythology reflects a reworking of classical and medieval themes which most inspired Tolkien's own early thoughts and imagination. Several of these key themes were ones that Tolkien continued to reimagine and re-work throughout life-long work on his mythos.

After an exploration of the foundations of Tolkien's myth-making, the volume turns to the key leaves, or branches, of the legendarium itself. Gergely Nagy explores those mythic texts that have become known as the "Silmarillion" in "*The Silmarillion*: Tolkien's Theory of Myth, Text and Culture." In this chapter Nagy grapples masterfully with the key crux of working with the "Silmarillion" materials. Namely, that there are two "texts" that in Tolkien studies are called by this name. There is that body of Tolkien's life-long work on his legendarium which we now have through the *History of Middle-earth* series and there is *The Silmarillion*, the text edited and published by Christopher Tolkien in 1977 representing a slice of his father's mythology drawn primarily from later post-*Lord of the Rings* versions of the materials. Nagy combines these two "texts" into what he calls the corpus of

"Silmarillion" materials and makes the interesting point that in Tolkien studies and analysis both these texts have been used by readers and scholars as the mythic depth for *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings.* Nagy's analysis shows that this combined textual corpus constitutes a "grand narrative" that governs and explains all things. I found Nagy's work on textual layering very interesting. His analysis opens up several key areas for the student and scholar to explore around how the two "texts" of the "Silmarillion" corpus are used and contextualized by readers (especially now that much more of the different versions of Tolkien's legendarium have been published). Nagy concludes his insightful analysis by emphasizing the importance of both "texts" to the corpus of the legendarium; as these texts "represents everything Tolkien strove to talk about, professionally and creatively; it is grand stories of heroism, good and evil, tragic division and eucatastrophe coming together—but it is also something much larger; a veritable theory of how cultures work to maintain and transmit their traditions, to remember, understand, and continually reconstruct their past" (117). Nagy's concluding point suggests several key areas of work that needs to be done in Tolkien Studies around how analysis and contextualization of Tolkien's work has the potential to be impacted by the version or compilation of versions of texts used in this study; begging the question what textual foundation are we building Tolkien studies on?

John D. Rateliff's "*The Hobbit*: A Turning Point" positions Tolkien's first published work of fiction, which partially grew out of his development of the Middle-earth mythology, as a turning point in Tolkien's career. Rateliff suggests and successfully demonstrates that it was with *The Hobbit* that Tolkien "'found his voice' and produced what we can now recognize, looking back, as a distinctively, characteristically Tolkienian work" (119). I was especially intrigued by Rateliff's concluding comparison of *The Hobbit* with other works where authors "found their voices" and went on to write their bigger and greater works such as James Joyce who found his voice with *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* and then went on to write his first great work, *Ulysses*; and Mark Twain whose earlier work *Tom Sawyer* led to his greater work *Huckleberry Finn.*

John R. Holmes tackles Tolkien's "work of his heart" in his analysis of *The Lord of the Rings*. He starts by focusing on the sheer length of Tolkien's magnum opus—516,00 words which Holmes characterizes as sitting between David Foster Wallace's *Infinite Jest* (at 484,000 words) and Victor Hugo's *Les Miserables* (531,000 words). After giving a very cogent summary of the plot and some of the key elements of Tolkien's story telling (the pacing, the rhythm of action and then rest, the cartographic plot, the interlace of the narrative and other elements of quest romance), Holmes loses his way a bit by delving into an exploration of *The Lord of the Rings* text alongside the Peter Jackson films (a theme which is covered more fully in the chapter on "Adaptations" later on in this volume). I found this sudden jump from analysis of Tolkien's texts to that of the narrative of Jackson's films a bit jarring and was pleased when Holmes got out of the cinema and back into textual analysis

with the other areas he explores in this chapter, namely *The Lord of the Rings* being, as Tolkien said "linguistic in inspiration," the role of allegory in the text (and Tolkien's "cordial" dislike of it) and the fall, morality and the machine; each section offering some very interesting and original analysis. One of the most intriguing areas of Holmes's analysis in this chapter is his contextualizing the end of the Lord's Prayer—"Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil" as an overarching motto for *The Lord of the Rings.* Holmes very helpfully offers the argument that from the 1930's to the 1960's Tolkien worked on a history of the Lord's Prayer for an undelivered lecture (now in the Bodleian in MS Tolkien A 18) in which he translated the Greek word for "temptation" (peirasmos) as "a test or trial (strength or worth)." Holmes equates this with Frodo's trial on Mount Doom, which he fails. However, due to the grace he showed to Gollum, Frodo is ultimately delivered from evil, suggesting that the real trial for Frodo was not destroying the Ring but not killing Gollum (a similar trial to Bilbo's, which they both passed). Holmes's exploration here and contextualization of the work Tolkien was doing on the Lord's Prayer during the writing of *The Lord of the Rings* opens up some interesting areas for further scholarly exploration.

In "*Unfinished Tales* and the History of Middle-earth: A Lifetime of Imagination," Elizabeth A. Whittingham effectively uses Tolkien's development of his Túrin Turambar story cycle as an example of how Tolkien developed and revised elements of the mythology over time. The thrust of Whittingham's argument, which I felt she convincingly put forward, was that Tolkien's creative trajectory in his legendarium can be broadly viewed as a progression from the early fanciful to the later moral and serious. Some interesting examples she cites include Tolkien's early idea of having Túrin and Nienor purified in the Fôs'Almir and becoming shining Valar among the blessed ones (*The Book of Lost Tales Part II*, pp. 115-116). Later he would revise this to give these characters a more tragic end with no sense of overt deification. Another good example Whittingham cites is the changing nature of Tolkien's Valar, who start out as a pantheon of Classical and Norse Gods and Goddesses (married with children!) and progress to becoming more remote and almost angelic.

In "'The Lost Road' and 'The Notion Club Papers': Myth, History and Time-travel," Verlyn Flieger masterfully explores these two unfinished works which have the most elements of science fiction in any of Tolkien's works. She also persuasively demonstrates the inter-dependent nature of these works, each expressing themes and ideas around serial identity and inherited memory. Flieger also shows that in each work Tolkien was exploring other options for a framing story through which his mythology would be told and transmitted. Flieger concludes her analysis by making a very important point and offering words of wisdom for scholars: that it is "Tolkien's reach, not his grasp, that serious students of his work should pay attention to here" (172).

In "'Minor' Works" Maria Artamonova explores Tolkien's other creative works (*The Father Christmas Letters, Roverandom, Mr Bliss, Farmer Giles of*

Ham, "Leaf by Niggle" and *Smith of Wootton Major*). She convincingly demonstrates how these works can be viewed as both reflecting themes and ideas Tolkien explores in his legendarium but also shows that they are important works in their own right, giving scholars insights into Tolkien's working methods and, especially in his "Leaf by Niggle" and *Smith of Wooten Major,* some of Tolkien's own concerns and anxieties about his own experience with the perilous realm of Faërie.

The final chapters in this section explore two crucial elements that are found running throughout the very fabric of Tolkien's legendarium. In "Poetry" Corey Olsen skillfully demonstrates Tolkien's passion for and use of poetry in his creative work. Olsen starts by demonstrating how Tolkien's earliest published poem, "Goblin Feet" (1915) already shows some of the key characteristics of his later poetry; namely: playfulness of sound and rhythm, quick shifts in metrical form that amplify tonal shifts in the content of lines, and the narrative of mythic elements through poetry. Olsen persuasively shows that, especially in *The Lord of the Rings*, poetry is near the heart of Tolkien's sub-creative expression, and the poems within his prose works are more like "arteries within the body of the story than jewels on its surface" (177). Olsen provides readers with a brilliant close reading of the poem "Where Now the Horse and the Rider" and analyses the poetic meter to illustrate how Tolkien mirrors the theme of passing in the poem with the gradual unraveling of the tight alliterative Anglo-Saxon meter he starts the poem with. Olsen makes the key point which is to be heeded by all who skip Tolkien's poetry to get "to the good parts" that this poem is not a digression in the text, but an expansion of an idea already in discussion as Gimli, Gandalf, Legolas and Aragorn approach Edoras—a perspective by a man (Aragorn) on the passing of time. This poem fits into, and is an integral part of, the prose narrative. Olsen insists that "Tolkien's uses the poetic form to connect his prose narrative to large, powerful, and mythic ideas, to give his readers a vantage-point from which they can perceive and connect with primal themes" (180). Olsen's also explores Tolkien's faery poem "Errantry" with its "insistent and ambitious rhyme scheme" and the various versions it went through from first being composed in 1933 to its planned appearance in *The Lord of the Rings* as a song for Bilbo to sing. Olsen interestingly concludes by stating that Tolkien's poems often express the first glimpses of themes that will be developed through the prose narrative. Olsen concludes with the key statement that "It is in his poetry, the 'song of words' (*The Silmarillion*, p. 33), that we can come nearest to the wellspring of Tolkien's sub-creation" (188).

In "Invented Languages and Writing Systems" Arden R. Smith expertly examines the element that is at the core of Tolkien's creative process: the invention of language and a mythology concomitant. Just as Olsen makes a plea for readers not to ignore Tolkien's poetry, so Smith illustrates how crucial the role of Tolkien's language invention is in understanding the legendarium. As Tolkien said, *The Lord of the Rings* is largely an "essay in linguistic aesthetic"—to create a world where the Elvish greeting "Elen síla lúmenn'

omentielvo" would fit and make sense (*Letters,* pp. 219-220). Smith explores Tolkien's exploration of his linguistic aesthetic and own experience with language invention in his seminal 1931 talk "A Secret Vice" in which Tolkien explored his earliest attempts at language invention and his realization that privately invented languages need a basic mythology concomitant. Smith, who is himself one of the members of the Elvish Linguistic Fellowship chosen by Christopher Tolkien to edit and publish his father's detailed language papers, very helpfully draws upon his experience working with these texts to summarize Tolkien's own process for his language invention which gives a reason for the many layers of unfinished sketches for his languages: "He generally began with very detailed material on historical phonology, after which he would move to the morphology section, before the end of which the manuscript would generally degenerate into a mass of incomplete notes in a virtually illegible scrawl. He rarely got around to writing anything about syntax. By that time he would have already started revising everything from the beginning" (204). Smith helpfully goes on to analyze aspects of the different historical phases of Tolkien's Elvish language invention. He starts, interestingly, with the linguistic world of *The Lord of the Rings* and explores the nature of the languages Tolkien used in this text and the two key paratextual appendices he included in *The Return of the King* on the language and writing systems of Middle-earth. Smith then goes back to the earliest versions of the languages by exploring the Elvish languages of *The Book of Lost Tales* (Qenya and Gnomish). Smith then moves forward in chronological time to explore the 1930's expansion of his nexus of languages in "The Etymologies," "Lhammas" and "The Tree of Tongues." Smith's focused analysis helps the student and scholar understand the progression of Tolkien's development of what he would call his "nexus of languages" (*Letters,* p. 141) starting with the more familiar forms from *The Lord of the Rings* and then showing were certain key patterns of invention evolved. Smith also draws upon his editorial experience to explore the equally various and multi-layered writing systems Tolkien invented to phonetically express his Elvish languages; the two main ones being the "tengwar" (to be written with a pen or brush) and the Cirth or runes to be inscribed—for both of which Tolkien created a mythic origin in his legendarium. Smith ends his key analysis with the interesting comment that while "Tolkien did not originally intend to publish his invented alphabets or his invented languages, but today his 'secret vice' is known throughout the world" (214).

 The fourth section of this volume, "Context," offers a series of excellent papers exploring different contextual arenas in which Tolkien worked, was influenced by, and, ultimately, both contributed to, and reimagined elements of, in his own mythopoeic work. The first grouping of these explorations are around key languages Tolkien had a passion for, and, in most cases taught and contributed his own scholarship. The second grouping explores some of the key past and contemporary literary influences on Tolkien and the legacy of Tolkien's own creative work on modern authors of fantasy. In true Tolkienian

fashion each chapter in this section thoroughly embraces and explores elements of both "lit" and "lang" in the context of their subject.

In "Old English" Mark Atherton shows that Tolkien's early attraction to Old English while at King Edward's School was based on his attraction to the sounds and syllables; what Atherton characterizes as "the words and phrases, the grammatical forms and the whole texture of Old English . . . this was English, but English in an earlier form" (217). Tolkien's love and study of Old English "lit" and "lang" would be a dominant factor in his entire academic career and his imaginative writings as well. Atherton helpfully highlights a fairly unexplored text by Henry Bradley, *The Making of English* (1904), a text that Tolkien read in his formative years which explores the Germanic origins of Anglo-Saxon. Atherton makes the interesting point that Tolkien's study of Old-English was the motivation and gateway for him to learn other Germanic languages, including Gothic, and by the time he came to Exeter College, Oxford, as an undergraduate he already knew the works of many of the great philologists of the day; including Bradley, Sweet and Joseph Wright whom he ultimately studied with. It was this joint study that also motivated and taught Tolkien the comparative method of philology and the concept of tracing words back to proto-origins. Atherton then explores the impact of Tolkien's study and teaching of Old English on Tolkien's own creative work. He focuses on Tolkien's invention of place-names in his legendarium; such as The Shire, Michel Delving, and the names found in Rohan which, as Tom Shippey has pointed out, resembles the people and land of Anglo-Saxon poetry with forms of names drawn from the West Midlands dialect of Mercian, the ancient language of Tolkien's home county which Atherton characterizes as "local patriotism; in practice, the detail and consistency provide a palpable authenticity to the world that he is seeking to create" (224). Further, Atherton explores Tolkien's attempt to re-imagine and repurpose characters, elements and "lost tales" from Germanic and Anglo-Saxon legend in his early framework for his mythology to link his myths to a lost literature of England. Atherton also very interestingly points to the Anglo-Saxon poems *Maxims II,* which Tolkien knew well and several of which would come out of the mouth of Treebeard, as a gnomic ("wise sayings") source that resonates with some of the key themes Tolkien explores in his legendarium including "kingship, government, man and woman and their role in the world; the natural world and its flora and fauna; and the cosmos and the place of humanity within the cosmos" (227).

In her exploration of Middle English as a context and influence, Elizabeth Solopova sums up Tolkien's contribution to the study of Middle English nicely as "meticulous and usually highly technical, aimed at making texts accessible and intelligible to both professional and non-professional readers" (234). She also characterizes Tolkien's contribution to Middle English scholarship primarily as a textual critic and historical linguist but first of all as a historical lexicologist. Solopova's analysis very helpfully highlights that while Old English may have been the earliest English Tolkien studied, it

would be his work on and analysis of Middle English texts which would result in his first series of his own academic works and published writing; starting in 1922 with his *A Middle English Vocabulary* and continuing with several key papers; including his development of "The A/B Theory" which suggested a form and shared scribal tradition of Old English had survived the Norman Invasion—"a shared written language of a literary community" (232). Solopova also explores Tolkien's substantial contribution to Chaucer studies including his paper "Chaucer as Philologist: The Reeve's Tale," in which he explored Chaucer's use of the Northern Dialect of Middle English to create a comic effect for the two Northern clerks in this fabliaux. He did this by reconstructing all the Northern forms he found in the original versions of Chaucer's manuscripts. Solopova also makes the interesting point that when Tolkien started his academic career many of the key Middle English texts (such as *Pearl* and *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*) were not available in modern editions and Tolkien saw the task of editing these texts as a pressing requirement for medieval studies; a point he emphasized in his 1925 article "Some Contributions to Middle English Lexicography" where he also stated the urgent need for the compilation of Middle English dictionaries. This focus on Middle English works, especially in the 1920's and 1930's, would also influence elements of his legendarium and Solopova helpfully highlights as one of the key examples of this the influence of the Middle English text *Sir Orfeo,* which Tolkien both edited and translated, as an important motivating factor in the change of the Elves from the Victorian/Edwardian inspired miniature Elves and Fairies of "Goblin Feet" and *The Book of Lost Tales* to the more noble creatures of his later legendarium including *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings.*

Tom Birkett gives a good overview of the influence of Old Norse on Tolkien's academic and creative works. The thrust of his analysis interestingly focuses more on the impact of Tolkien's study of Old Norse literature on his own creative process and writing style than on an analysis of source inspirations. Birkett focuses specifically on Tolkien's *The Legend of Sigurd and Gudrun* as an example of Tolkien creating story by filling in the gaps; in this case Tolkien's attempt to reconstruct the lost parts of the *Codex Regius* and solve the "Köningsproblem" of the missing part of the story of Sigurd the Volsung. Birkett characterizes Tolkien's matching of the subject of this work with its poetic style and actual composition using the old actual meter of Old Norse poetry as a great example of Tolkien the academic joining Tolkien the creator to fill in the gaps for this legend by recreating it with the "inner consistency of reality" of the form and style of an Old Norse poem.

Leena Kahlas-Tarkka, in "Finnish: The Land and Language of Heroes" explores the "lit and lang" of Finnish which was clearly an early and pervading influence on Tolkien's myth-making and language-invention. Kalhas-Tarkka shows that in the case of this Finnish influence on Tolkien the "lit" certainly came before the "lang"; first with Tolkien's early discovery of the *Kalevala* in the 1907 W.F. Kirby edition, and then his attempt at Exeter

College to learn Finnish with C.N.E Elliot's *Finnish Grammar* (1890). She makes the point that what Tolkien was first attracted to was a body of material which had originated in the collected oral tales of the Finnish and Karelian people by Elias Lönnrot, and goes on to give quite an in-depth analysis of how these poems, or runos, were the production of both oral tradition and creation (or elaboration) by Lönnrot. In her analysis Kahlas-Tarkka is clearly of the school that Lönnrot in many ways sub-created the world of the *Kalevala,* joined the runos together and gave it structure. Kahlas-Tarkka also explores the unique features of the *Kalevala* story cycle Tolkien was most attracted to; namely the story of Kullervo (found in Runos 31-36). She helpfully explores the oral and textual tradition of this specific cycle to show how the *Kullervo* story was itself the product of several oral traditions which became merged together. This merging created the types of inconsistencies and gaps in the narrative that, as Verlyn Flieger's scholarship on *The Story of Kullervo* has shown, would be highly attractive to the young Tolkien. Kahlas-Tarkka ends her fresh exploration of Finnish influence by turning to the "lang" of the Finnish language itself which Tolkien admired for its "arresting strangeness" and its isolation from Indo-European. She cites some of Tolkien's Elvish poetry, such as the poem "Oilima Markirya" ("The Last Ship/Ark") to illustrate Tolkien's focus on the beauty of Finnish phonetics and suggests that it was in this poetry that "offered Tolkien his awaited holiday, away from the traditional structures and concepts of verse most people were accustomed to" (269-270). Kahlas-Tarkka ends her interesting paper by making an intriguing parallel observation between feelings of the merit of the Jackson films in bringing people to the books with Tolkien's readers interest in sources bringing them to the Finnish *Kalevala*—a work that in the Finland of today only a few read from cover to cover and that interest in Tolkien is creating a resurgence of interest. Kahlas-Tarkka's concluding idea here suggests some interesting reader-reception work that could be undertaken to explore how Tolkien's use and treatment of key works helps bring them back to life and focus for audiences today as explored in such texts as Stuart Lee's and Elisabeth Solopova's *The Keys of Middle-earth* (which has recently been re-issued in a second expanded edition).

The intriguingly contextual trajectory of J.S. Lyman-Thomas paper "Celtic: 'Celtic Things' and 'Things Celtic'—Identity, Language, and Mythology" explores Tolkien's evolving views from despising "Celtic things" to respecting "things Celtic." Lyman-Thomas starts his analysis by rightly stating that thanks to the recent scholarship of Verlyn Flieger, Dimitra Fimi and Carl Phelpstead the impact of the "Celtic" is an area of Tolkien studies which is starting to expand and become a key area of further Tolkien scholarship. The key point Lyman-Thomas makes is equating Tolkien's interest in "Celtic" things, and especially Welsh, with Tolkien's own personal identification with his ancestors coming from Mercia on the border land of the Welsh marches. Lyman-Thomas explores Tolkien's 1955 inaugural O'Donnell Lecture "English and Welsh" in which Tolkien stated that he felt Welsh was

his "native language" and that there was an "inherent linguistic predilection" for Welsh in him that represented a shared heritage; a philological lineage with the Britons. Lyman-Thomas very cogently argues that "Tolkien understood language as a dimension of identity, integral to the way stories are told and inextricable from the culture the stories are about" (276). She then goes on to convincingly contextualize this with the "Celtic" roots of Tolkien's language invention and briefly demonstrates how elements of the "Celtic" languages shaped the structures of the branch of invented Elvish languages that started with Gnomish and then in later developmental phases became Noldorin and Sindarin. Lyman-Thomas interestingly ends this analysis by making the key point that the languages that Tolkien choose to phonetically model his own Elvish languages on—Finnish and Welsh—had both been in danger of being marginalized through political and cultural suppression. An important point to end on that definitely needs more discussion and exploration.

One of the standout papers for me in this volume is Nick Groom's "The English Literary Tradition: Shakespeare to the Gothic." In this paper Groom explores and offers new insights on a period of literature less associated with Tolkien (1550-1800) and opens up several new strands of interesting exploration for scholars and students. Groom's fresh insights touch on potential influences on Tolkien's creative works by Spenser, Dryden and Milton. Groom also explores links between Tolkien and William Blake, an inventor of myth in his own right who also used visuals as part of his secondary world layering. Groom makes the key point that Blake with his "dark Satanic mills" also influenced an ecology ideology in Romanticism, which clearly affected Tolkien's own thoughts on nature and such horrific images as found by the Hobbits on their return to the Shire in *The Return of the King*. Groom also gives some unique insights into the influence of the work of 18th century antiquarians on Tolkien's creative process. For example, he cites Thomas Percy whose collection of old ballads *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* (1765) not only sought to recapture a lost Northern past but also included a profusion of those types of para-texts (prefaces, notes, appendices, glossaries) that would become a hallmark of Tolkien's own creative work. Groom also contextualizes the works of such "inventors" as Thomas Chatterton and James Macpherson who used the "aesthetics of antiquarianism" to invent myths and legends and, like Tolkien, felt they were recording a past that was already there. In this last section of his paper Groom masterfully combines the various aspects of the Gothic's impact (both the lost language and the literary movement) on Tolkien. Groom helpfully characterizes the Gothic imagination as "a reminder of progress and simultaneously a lament for the past: a guarded suppression of the carnage of history which has nevertheless led to the present day" (296). For Tolkien it was this "lament for the past" that made the Goths and the Gothic language so attractive. Groom suggests that Tolkien's focus on medievalism is in line with the first Gothic novel—*Longsword* by Thomas Leland (1762)—"the earliest medieval historical romance" (300). Groom concludes this wide-ranging and

focused exploration by characterizing Tolkien as "an active medievalist, seeking to reconnect with and revive archaic Northern identities" (300) and suggests that he is following in a tradition of such Catholic Gothicists as Pugin, Burke and Richard Verstegan whose work, *A Restitution of Decayed Intelligence in Antiquities* (1605), attempted to restore Germanic national origins and aboriginal Catholicism to the English based on philological and legendary evidence (300). Groom's excellent scholarship here not only casts more light on influences from this period of literary development not often associated with Tolkien but offers a much broader context to Tolkien's own passion and exploration for the Gothic people and language which should definitely stimulate more research in both these areas (it certainly has for me!).

Rachel Falconer explores the foundational works of fantasy fiction that came before Tolkien in "Earlier Fantasy Fiction: Morris, Dunsany and Lindsay." Her interesting approach to this analysis is to focus primarily on one key work of each of these authors and explore the impact it had on Tolkien. For Morris, Falconer explores his *The House of the Wolfings* (1889) as a text (along with its follow-up, *The Roots of the Mountains*, 1889) that was inspired by the antiquarian works of writers like Edward Gibbon to create "a quasi-historical narrative of communities who once inhabited Europe" (307). To support this analysis Falconer cites key passages from the text to show how Morris invents the idea of a lost unified idealized Germanic community in which, like Tolkien, he explored ideas around love and fellowship. For Lord Dunsany, Falconer selects his 1924 novel *The King of Elfland's Daughter* and explores Dunsany and Tolkien's treatment of the land of Faërie which she concludes both, in their own particular ways, having at their contextual core a sense of longing and loss. Falconer interestingly contrasts the influence of Dunsany's treatment of Faërie on Tolkien with David Lindsay's *A Voyage to Arcturus* (1920) which Falconer characterizes as "fantasy as a vehicle for *dis*-enchantment" (313) and cites several themes from Lindsay's fantasy which she characterizes as pushing "in the direction of science-fiction" into the context of Tolkien's work. I thought the most interesting part of this analysis is Falconer's comparison of Tolkien and Lindsay's double sense of spatiality in their story-telling—with the horizontal quest (or anti-quest) story and the vertical world theme of the Dantean journey down towards evil and up towards beatitude (314). What Falconer succeeds in showing is that Tolkien drew from and reimagined and repurposed many different themes and tropes of literature that he enjoyed reading—these being three key examples of many.

Two papers look at different aspects of contemporary influence on Tolkien's creative work. David Bratman starts with that community of writers Tolkien was surrounded by: the Inklings. What I found most helpful in Bratman's analysis of the Inklings is his measured treatment of the question of how to understand the impact of the Inklings on the groups' creative work. This comes down to the question of influence vs. encouragement and Bratman seems to come down more on the side of encouragement. He supports this first by citing Warnie Lewis's (brother of C.S. Lewis and himself one of the

Inklings) own reaction to an early work about the Inklings, Charles Moorman's *The Precincts of Felicity* (1966), who also erroneously added into the Inklings group T.S. Eliot and Dorothy L. Sayers and called them collectively "the Oxford Christians." Warnie reacted to this book by saying while all the Inklings "were all believers" it seemed "very shaky" of Moorman to suggest that the Inklings were "a group mind that influenced the work of every Inkling" (318). Bratman also supports his argument by citing the oft-quoted statement by C.S. Lewis about Tolkien "No one ever influenced Tolkien—you might as well try to influence a bandersnatch. We listened to his work, but could affect it only be encouragement" (318). In the second part of his paper, Bratman looks more broadly at other contemporary authors who may have influenced Tolkien and were influenced by him or the rise of fantasy literature that Tolkien's works heralded; including E.R. Eddison, T.H. White and Mervyn Peake. Bratman intriguingly suggests that the Inklings were making a first pass at "establishing a canon of adult fantasy" (326). This canon continued to be developed in the 1960 and 1970's with writers like L. Sprague de Camp and Lin Carter, both of whom developed pioneering fantasy anthologies such as the Ballantine Adult Fantasy Series and the rise of "Sword and Sorcery" fantasy, which Bratman interestingly characterizes as being both like and a departure from the narrative style and themes of Tolkien. Bratman concludes by intriguingly exploring the work of the Inklings in the context of three major contemporary writers connected with *Weird Tales*—the Americans H.P. Lovecraft, Clark Ashton Smith and Robert E. Howard, who like the Inklings belonged to a similar literary circle, and encouraged each other's writing. While there are some interesting parallels here Bratman does make the important distinction that "unlike the Inklings [Lovecraft, Smith and Howard] were professional pulp writers who supported themselves, sometimes barely, by grinding out stories at a penny a word" (329). Lovecraft especially echoed Tolkien in building into his contemporary stories a sense of historic, in most cases horrific, depth. Bratman's exploration of Clark Ashton Smith's fantasy works is far shorter, pointing out the distinctive style of his prose—its ornate and lapidary style. Given his use of imaginary lands and place names (e.g. Hyperborea and Zothique) I was left feeling there was more that could have been done here and a look at Smith's work in regard to Tolkien and the Inklings would open up some other interesting areas of exploration.

In "Modernity: Tolkien and His Contemporaries" Anna Vaninskaya tackles the contemporary influence question from a broader perspective by first evoking Christopher Tolkien's characterization of the corpus of Tolkien's legendarium as "the ceaseless 'making' of his world extended from my father's youth into his old age" (cited from *The Peoples of Middle-earth*, x) to ask and attempt to answer a key question—who exactly were Tolkien's contemporaries? Vaninskaya explores this by breaking up her analysis of "contemporaries" into helpful chronological periods with comprehensive analysis of how specific contemporary forces influenced Tolkien's creative work. She concludes with the interesting observation that Tolkien was a

"Victorian modernist" and supports this by suggesting that Tolkien's work with it focus on intertextuality "full of allusions of varying degrees of complexity" (364) reflects the Modernism of contemporary works by Joyce, Eliot and Pound but Tolkien, as Vaninskaya states, focused on "nineteenth century reconstruction" by reimagining and repurposing shards of myth to invent an "independent myth of his own" (*ibid.*); as opposed to the modernists who were interested in the deconstruction of myth. While Tolkien was influenced by modernism his aim was the Victorian interest "in origins and wholes" (364). I thought Vaninskaya made some interesting points and built a persuasive case and intriguing way to view Tolkien and his work in the context of Victorian modernism.

Dimitra Fimi in "Later Fantasy Fiction: Tolkien's Legacy" explores the impact and influences of Tolkien on later fantasy fiction and masterfully establishes the "long shadow" of Tolkien by citing the late Terry Pratchett's observation of comparing Tolkien with the image of Mount Fuji in prints, sometimes small in the distance, sometimes close up and sometimes not at all because the artist is standing on Mount Fuji (335). Fimi suggests that the reaction to Tolkien being the "founder" of modern fantasy literature has been two-fold: the desire to imitate him or the urge to react against his blueprint and create fantasy literature with its own distinctive character and voice. Fimi demonstrates the first reaction by exploring some of the direct "imitators" of Tolkien (collectively known as "Tolk-clones") such as Terry Brook's *The Sword of Shannara* (1977) and contextualizes these works with the concept Ursula K. Le Guin described as "commodified fantasy" written to fuel the market for fantasy books that works like *Lord of the Rings* created, but now becoming more focused on "supply meeting demand." Fimi helpfully links these type of works to the view of Tolkien as a Freudian father-figure and cites Harold Bloom's "anxiety of influence" to describe how some fantasy authors deal with and tackle the legacy of Tolkien. Fimi then turns to several authors of modern fantasy writers who she explores as having "succeeded in finding their own, independent voice, have created original fantasy works which have taken the genre into new, exciting territories" (337). One group of contemporary British fantasy writers Fimi explores are Susan Cooper, Alan Garner and Diana Wynne Jones—who interestingly were taught by Tolkien or attended some of his lectures and each in their works choose to reimagine and repurpose elements of British folklore and myth. Fimi notes that one of the key sources and inspirations for the medieval subjects and themes these authors would imaginatively explore came from their studies in Oxford based on the English syllabus that Tolkien and Lewis had developed. But interestingly Fimi makes the key point that both Cooper and Garner chose to focus more on "British" elements of myth and folklore; such as in Garner's *The Owl Service* (1967) and Cooper's Arthurian cycle *The Dark is Rising* (1965-1977). Fimi explores and evaluates the nature of the fantasy these authors write and intriguingly suggests that while Wynne Jones wrote "high" or immersive fantasy, both Garner and Cooper tended to write more intrusive

or liminal fantasy in which there is an interaction between the landscape and the fantasy—Garner especially being interested in "the links between British myth, folklore, landscape, and ancient ruins" (340; a quote redolent of Tolkien!) and sees low (or intrusion) fantasy as a way to explore this interaction. In turning to the seemingly American direct heir to Tolkien—Ursula K. Le Guin—Fimi carefully demonstrates how Le Guin's work is and is not like Tolkien—in terms of the way Le Guin frames the history and culture of her secondary world of Earthsea; inspired by Le Guin's musing on the origin of wizards like Tolkien's Gandalf. In Le Guin's *Earthsea* books issues of race and cultural history are central and just as Tolkien's creative work is based on his philological approach to his mythology, so Le Guin's is rooted in her background in archaeology and anthropology and thus takes a different approach to race, culture and gender. Fimi also explores Tolkien's influence on modern fantasy literature through Tolkien's own manifesto on fantasy literature, "On Fairy-stories." Fimi rightly characterizes this work as an important and key contextual framework for analyzing modern fantasy literature pervasive even in the descriptive terms he introduced, such as "primary world" "secondary world" "sub-creation" and "eucatastrophe," which have become the "vocabulary" used in the 21st century to express, explore and analyze fantasy literature. Related to this idea, Fimi also makes the interesting point that Tolkien's "On Fairy-stories" created a legacy of other fantasy writers (such as Le Guinn, Wynn Jones and Cooper) who also analyze their works and other works of fantasy in several key reflective essays; such as Le Guin's *The Language of the Night* (1979) and, in a more humorous way, Wynne Jones's *Tough Guide to Fantasy Land* (1998). Fimi also demonstrates how in concert with Tolkien's "On Fairy-stories," these reflective essays have built up a body of theoretical analysis that goes towards answering the question; "what is fantasy for?" In the last section "Fantasy in the Twenty-first Century" Fimi explores the works of Philip Pullman and J.K. Rowling. Pullman's *His Dark Materials* trilogy is a polemical reaction to the Christian undertones in Tolkien and Lewis (344) who also attributes his work to realism. Fimi helpfully cites an interview where Pullman says, "I'm trying to write a book about what it means to be human, to grow up, to suffer and learn. My quarrel with much (not all) fantasy is it has this marvellous toolbox and does nothing with it except construct shoot-em-up games" (345). Fimi then contextualizes how Rowling's Harry Potter series explores a key theme similar to Tolkien's; namely the question of where evil comes from. Fimi strikes the salient point that this question is just as, or perhaps even more, important in the twenty-first century "when evil is becoming an increasingly difficult category to define and understand" (346). Fimi also convincingly demonstrates how Rowling's focus on death is in concert with Tolkien's own claim in several of his letters and interviews that *The Lord of the Rings* is about death and the desire for deathlessness.

 The final section of the volume "Critical Approaches" offers a series of reflective papers that give in-depth themes and trends in Tolkien's creative

work, reception and scholarship. In "The Critical Response to Tolkien's Fiction," Patrick Curry tackles the topic (mentioned at the beginning of this review) of how Tolkien's creative work has been received by critics and scholars. Curry sets the stage for this analysis by helpfully citing W.H. Auden's characterization of *The Lord of the Rings*, "I rarely remember a book about which I have had such violent arguments. Nobody seems to have a moderate opinion" (370). This type of reaction to Tolkien's work has formed the foundation of critical opinion of Tolkien's creative works which, as Curry points out, has for the most part been negative, causing Curry to state at the beginning of his paper "I therefore make no apology for concentrating overall on the critical hostility to Tolkien's fiction" (370). Curry takes the student and scholar through the first phase of the "patrician critical judgement" (370) on Tolkien. He cites Alfred Duggan who ironically commented "This is not a work which many adults will read through more than once". Curry also explores the criticism of Edwin Muir, Catherine Simpson and, of course, Edmund Wilson's review "Oo, Those Awful Orcs!" in which *The Lord of the Rings* was dismissed as "juvenile trash." Curry shows how this type of academic criticism followed in reviews of Tolkien's posthumously published works of his legendarium by the like of Christine Brooks-Rose, Rosemary Jackson and Fred Inglis, who in the 1980's called Tolkien a fascist. Of course Curry is careful to point out that this negative critical reaction was countered by the growing body of Tolkien scholarship by Tom Shippey, Verlyn Flieger and others who sought to oppose these critical responses by focusing on the texts Tolkien wrote. Critical response was exacerbated in the 1990's by *The Lord of the Rings* being voted as the best book in popular polls such as the UK Poll done by Waterstones (1996) and "The BBC Big Read" (2003)—voted on, as the hostile critics said, by Tolkien's "fans" (not readers). The mounting negative criticism of Tolkien's work continued to be countered by Tolkien scholars—like Tom Shippey's *J.R.R. Tolkien: Author of the Century* (2000) and Clute and Grant's more balanced assessment of Tolkien in *The Encyclopedia of Fantasy* (1997). Curry concludes this focused and balanced analysis of the critical response to Tolkien with a quote about *The Lord of the Rings* by Tolkien's own publisher Rayner Unwin "a very great book in its own curious way" (384).

In "Style and Intertextual Echoes," Allan Turner explores Tolkien's use of language to create different literary styles in his creative work. Following on from Curry's paper on "Criticism," Turner states that Tolkien's literary style is one of the chief targets of critical review and Turner cites especially Burton Raffel's comment in 1968 that "Tolkien's style is so simple and lacking in conventional novelistic textures that *The Lord of the Rings* cannot be considered 'literature'" (389). After offering a good overview of some of the key analyses of Tolkien's literary style from Tom Shippey, Brian Rosebury and most recently Steve Walker in the informative *The Power of Tolkien's Prose* (2009), Turner helpfully divides his short but cogent overview of Tolkien's style into linguistic features based on: phonology (the sound of

words), lexis (the choice of words), and syntax (the grammatical arrangement to form sentences). Interestingly Turner initially limits his analysis to only works that appeared in Tolkien's lifetime, which he characterizes as "therefore completed to his [Tolkien's] satisfaction." However, Turner immediately contradicts himself by adding to his analysis *Roverandom* and supports this by suggesting that *Roverandom* was published with only minimal emendation (390). He confuses this analysis further by then including *The Silmarillion;* supporting this with the statement that as it was edited by Christopher Tolkien it is close enough to his father's own creative work. Surely this text in particular represents a considerable amount of emendation from the base texts that Christopher Tolkien drew from to construct the 1977 published work? This left me puzzled as to why Turner made the first point of only including works published in J.R.R. Tolkien's life time. Turner does demonstrate Tolkien's change in style from the children's story of *Roverandom* and the first part of *The Hobbit* (including the intrusive narrative voice of children's stories) to the "high style" complexity and archaisms of the later part of *The Hobbit*—with its Beowulfian inspired proper names (an interesting point for further exploration), *The Lord of the Rings* and ultimately *The Silmarillion.* Turner's analysis succeeds in giving specific focus to the most significant stylistic features that represent the development of his prose style from *The Hobbit* to *The Lord of the Rings.* He cites Tolkien's use of different linguistic registers to characterize different peoples, which Shippey has explored in The Council of Elrond scene (cited from Shippey, *J.R.R. Tolkien: Author of the Century*, 69ff). Turner gives the reader a good exegesis on how Tolkien achieves this in *The Lord of the Rings* and how he uses archaisms to match the people who are speaking; such as the archaic lexis of the Riders of Rohan to match words from Anglo-Saxon. Turner concludes by making the very important point that in exploring Tolkien's use of literary stylistics "we are not making a statement about quality; it is not the purpose of stylistics to say whether a text is good or bad, merely to analyze its characteristics" (402). Turner concludes by offering a good concept to remember while analyzing Tolkien's style—"any qualitative judgment about style needs to be based on a careful consideration of the details of the text as sketched out here, and not on the unsubstantiated prejudice of the critic" (*ibid.*).

In "The Hero's Journey" Anna Caughey explores the various types of hero's journeys in *The Lord of the Rings.* She uses as a contextual framework the model of the "quest-romance" found in several Middle English texts which Tolkien would have read. She starts by exploring the literary device of *entrelacement* or interlacement in which quest heroes split up and there are two or more interconnected stories that take place at different locations but happen simultaneously in time. I was surprised here not to see Caughey engaging with Richard C. West's seminal work on the use of this literary device in *The Lord of the Rings* "The Interlace Structure of *The Lord of the Rings*" (1974) even though she cites another work by West in her bibliography. Caughey shows that in *The Lord of the Rings* this interlace

occurs at the breaking of the Fellowship, which Caughey characterizes as when the story becomes "a true quest-narrative" and presents the readers with multiple hero's journeys. For the remainder of the paper Caughey helpfully focuses on three types of hero's journey. The first one she links with Bilbo (in *The Hobbit)* and Merry and Pippin (in *The Lord of the Rings*) is the "there and back again" hero's journeys; the hero who goes out into the world, has challenging adventures and returns home laden with treasure, but not very much changed by the experience. Most interestingly, Caughey contextualizes Merry and Pippin's experiences with that of the untried hero's quest for knighthood in Medieval romances (such as King Horn, Havelock and Malory's *The Tale of Sir Gareth*) in which these knights in an early stage of their quest find themselves in the "Wood of Error" where there is temporary distraction and confusion before the final triumph—shades of Fangorn Forest but in this case this location becomes a key part of Merry and Pippin's growth —both heroically and physically! I was less convinced by Caughey's characterization of Merry and Pippin as "liminal figures" especially owing to the direct action both take in the story. The second type of hero's journey Caughey calls "The Broken Hero"—namely Frodo, and compares his quest to Sir Gawain and Lancelot in *Queste del Sante Grail* both of whom ultimately fail the task which has been entrusted to them. But this does not mean the quest has been in vain (indeed ultimately Frodo is the instrument by which Gollum falls)—the heroism comes in the sacrifice the hero undertakes the ultimate price he pays—as does Frodo who saves the Shire, but not for himself. Finally, Caughey explores the hero's journey of "The Patriarch's Quest" which she links to both Aragorn and Sam. In this journey the inexperienced young man who emerges from his adventure not merely glorified, but transformed: who moves forward into a stage of social and emotional maturity that fits him for the role of husband and father. Caughey offers some interesting contexts to explore the role of the hero in Tolkien's legendarium; though I was expecting to see a wider treatment of heroes outside of *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* such as Túrin, Beren and Earendel.

Christopher Garbowski skillfully tackles the tricky and complex theme of evil. Most helpfully for the scholar and student Garbowski outlines and engages with the various aspects of evil Tolkien reimagined in his legendarium. On the one hand, the Augustinian notion, as explored among others by Shippey, that evil is nothing, that evil cannot create and can only imitate and pervert the good, Tolkien imagines this type of evil with the concept of the shadow. The opposing view drawn from the thought of the Manicheists is that evil is a real living force and must be actively resisted.

In "Nature" Liam Campbell explores the role nature plays in Tolkien's works, which is replete with descriptions of the natural world—highly detailed and vibrant passages about trees, flora, fauna, mountains, wilderness, rivers, weather, swamps, etc.—the layers of rich narrative description which added to the "inner consistency of reality" and a secondary world one can visit as if it

were a real place. Campbell righty links Tolkien's descriptions of nature with Tolkien's own love of nature, especially trees, and his desire to defend the rights of natural things, which came from his upbringing in the "pastoral hamlet" of Sarehole. Campbell points out that in his creative works Tolkien lets nature speak for itself and cites to support this Tolkien's creation of the Ents as well as Tom Bombadil, Goldberry and, in a negative aspect, Old Man Willow and Caradhras (who Gandalf refers to as "he"). Campbell cogently concludes his exploration with the characterization that "Middle-earth is much more than a backdrop against which a plot is played out: it is awake and sentient. Natural elements and features are given character, agency, and even personality" (440). Tolkien also believed that by seeing these ordinary elements of nature through the lens of fantasy we might look at them anew, what in "On Fairy-stories" he called "recovery."

In "Religion: An Implicit Catholicism" Pat Pinsent explores the implicit (as opposed to explicit) role of Tolkien's Christianity by first giving a background to Tolkien's Roman Catholic upbringing with a special rather unique focus on the influence of the works of the founder of the Birmingham Oratory Cardinal John Henry Newman. Pinsent points out that one key precept of Newman's teachings which Tolkien would have encountered during his time at the Oratory was the concept of the potential for holiness in the ordinary person doing ordinary things and to embrace "an intimate friendship and affection towards those who are immediately about us" (448-9). While Pinsent paper starts off with these intriguing ideas with a promise of how they might be contextualized with Tolkien's creative work I found that her argument becomes progressively muddled as she attempts to explain how Newman's concepts works in *The Hobbit* (which she does well); although I thought her suggestion of religious intertextuality in Bilbo's greeting to the dwarves and the "Dominus vobiscum" of the Catholic mass to be a bit of a contextual stretch. I am afraid in the rest of the paper her analysis tends to come off track by moving to finding more explicit parallels with religious themes and the date of the downfall of Sauron and the annunciation of Christ (25th March) which Pinsent characterizes as "surely not a coincidence" (456) and the Christ-like attributes of Gandalf. I would have liked to have seen more from Pinsent about how Tolkien embedded implicit elements of Christian belief and teachings into the fabric of his mythology rather than a catalogue of seemingly explicit, and somewhat questionable, correspondences.

Janet Brennan Croft skillfully explores how war impacted on Tolkien's life and runs as a motif throughout his creative work. Croft's excellent analysis characterizes Tolkien's experience in World War I where he witnessed "incredible carnage and impossible heroism" (470) as ironically creating in Tolkien not despair but "a deep underlying sense of hope and trust in providence in spite of all the war could do" (*ibid.*). Croft also makes the interesting point that for Tolkien the addition of more machinery into war (the tanks of World War I which Tolkien mythically reimagines in "The Fall of Gondolin," and the bombing raids on London of World War II) distanced the

heroism of war. Croft characterizes this as an idea that "erases the differences between night and day, summer and winter, that in primitive times limited war to particular seasons and supported a natural rhythm of 'a time for war and a time for peace'" (*ibid*.). Croft also suggests some interesting avenues of exploration for future academic work on Tolkien and war; including Michael Drout's suggestion that Tolkien be taught alongside the poets of World War I and Tom Shippey's suggestion at the 2005 Return of the Ring conference (which this reviewer attended) that it would be of interest to explore Tolkien's connection with William Joseph Slim; a classmate of Tolkien's at King Edward School a fellow member of its Officer Training Corps who became a Field Marshall during World War II (471).

In the essay on "Women" Adam Roberts challenges the popular (erroneous!) view that women are not very well represented in Tolkien's creative work by first setting up and then successfully refuting the two key critical arguments: the "boy's adventure" one and the broader Tolkien's work being "conservative, Catholic, traditional, a worldview in which women, however cherished (by men), play as it were second fiddle in the musical ensemble of life" (473). Roberts suggests that the first of these arguments is plausible if one only reads *The Hobbit* where female characters are only mentioned, but clearly shows this is not the case in *The Lord of the Rings*. Here Roberts gives a helpful summary of the critical work that has been done on Tolkien's main female characters (Galadriel, Éowyn, Shelob, Arwen) and the theories that Tolkien has a higher regard for women and he saw them "existing on a higher, purer, more spiritual and beautiful plane" (475). In his analysis, Roberts especially takes on one of the key critiques of Tolkien's female characters—their passivity. Roberts attempts to explain the wider implications of Éowyn at the conclusion of *The Lord of the Rings* going from active shield-maiden to passive healer and wife of Faramir by suggesting the key is looking at the gerund of the word "passion"; "by way of suggesting that that is the logic under which we can most fruitfully read Tolkien's elaborate fantasy of Catholic sacrifice and atonement" (479). Roberts suggests that the key to understanding this passivity is through understanding the Christian concept of surrendering one's will to a bigger divine plan and suggests this idea is also in play when Galadriel resists the temptation of the Ring of Power, "passes the test" and reassigns herself to diminishing into the West and remaining Galadriel (as opposed to the evil queen she would have become had she taken the Ring). Passivity therefore is an active choice and negates the argument that Tolkien's female characters are just puppets or idealized symbols; as Roberts states "Passivity in this novel is a passion. This is the heart of the matter; for it might seem axiomatic this one of the major battles of feminism has been against the sense that passivity is a woman's 'natural' state, whilst activity and agency are reserved for men" (481). The later part of Roberts's essay veers off a bit more into broader discussions around race, including evoking Hegel's "master-slave" dialectic but he comes back around to his general argument at the end and suggests an interesting process for

scholars to recontextualize the general opinion of Tolkien creation of idealized and marginalized female characters by focusing on the way passivity and passion inter-relate in Tolkien's dramatizations of them. Roberts highlights and offers some interesting analysis into a topic that—thanks to such recent volumes as *Perilous and Fair: Women in the Works and Life of J.R.R. Tolkien* (2015)—is adding to the exploration of this area of Tolkien studies.

In his paper on "Art," Christopher Tuthill first explores the contextual importance of visual art in Tolkien's myth-making. However, after a brief but cogent description of Tolkien thoughts on the role of the visual arts, Tuthill switches his focus to an interesting look at how different modern artists who visualize Tolkien's work—John Howe, Jeff Murray (who sadly just recently passed away) and Ted Nasmith—depict key scenes from Tolkien's legendarium. I certainly found this analysis interesting but was somewhat surprised not to see any engagement by Tuthill with Tolkien's own visual drawings and paintings, much of which has been published by Scull and Hammond.

In "Music" Bradford Lee Eden convincingly demonstrates the importance of music to Tolkien himself and the key role music plays in his mythology; indeed, as Eden rightly points out, it being the very engine ("The Music of the Ainur") of the creation of Eä. Although Tolkien himself wrote on several occasions that he had very little musical knowledge, Eden helpfully cites quotes from several of Tolkien's letters to demonstrate that Tolkien did in fact have a good deal of experience with and liking of different forms of music. Eden thoroughly reviews and builds upon the critical work on the role of music in Tolkien starting with Verlyn Flieger's *Splintered Light* (2002) in which she characterized Tolkien as "a musician of words" and explored the dual nature of language and music. Eden builds upon Flieger here by citing several poems, such as "Tinfang Warble" to show how Tolkien evoked music in the imagery of his poetry. Eden also thoroughly explores more recent scholarship in this area; helpfully focusing on two key critical texts—*Music in Middle-earth* and *Middle-earth Minstrel* both published in 2010. Eden ends his paper by exploring how contemporary music has used Tolkienian themes and offers "the richness of sub-created music inspired by Tolkien's writings is also an area ripe for research and exploration" (511).

Kristin Thompson takes on the analysis of the major adaptations of *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* from the Morton-Grady Zimmerman film project of 1957-1959 up to the most recent major film adaptations by Peter Jackson. Thompson thoroughly examines Tolkien's written comments on the Zimmerman-Ackerman film script of *The Lord of the Rings* which gives insights into Tolkien's own thoughts on the adaptation process for his works. Most interestingly Thompson highlights some of the lesser-known but equally interesting adaptations including the 1985 Russian adaption of *The Hobbit* (a 71 minute television movie, *Skazochnoye puteshestviya mistera Bilbo Begginsa Khobbita*, or *The Fabulous Journey of Bilbo Baggins the Hobbit*) and the 1993 Finnish *Hobitit* (Hobbits) nine episodes covering both books in

which an aging Sam Gamgee tells the story to a group of children (524). Thompson ends with a thorough analysis of the creation and success of the Peter Jackson films up to the first part of *The Hobbit.* I was surprised not to see any engagement with the key radio adaptations of Tolkien's work, especially Brian Sibley's 1981 production for the BBC which clearly inspired Peter Jackson's thinking about his film adaptation.

In "Games and Gaming: Quantasy" Péter Kristóf Makai offers a very intriguing exploration of games and gaming as a sub-creative and world building element of the Middle-earth mythos. Makai meticulously explores the historical development of gaming around Tolkien's works starting with the early board games, then the role Tolkien played in the development of the role playing game *Dungeon and Dragons* as well as the impact of computers and the Internet on developing on-line Tolkien games and environments culminating in the massively multi-player online game *Lord of the Rings Online*. Makai ends his really interesting exploration by suggesting that it was Tolkien's own texturing of his secondary world which allowed and inspired the transference of this to first a role-playing and then computer environment. Role-playing in itself was a Tolkenian inspired sub-creative opportunity for anyone to conjure up "rich fantasy playgrounds for daring-do, intrigue, and simulated battles" (542-543). Makai engages with comparable theories that Mark J. P. Wolf has explored in *Building Imaginary Worlds: The Theory and History of Subcreation* (2012) that this sub-creative act has now taken on a more extensive and global part in secondary world building through on-line and digital mediums. Makai makes the key point that today's technology brings the participant closer to the feeling of secondary-world immersion that Tolkien introduced in "On Fairy-stories" as "Faërian drama." Makai offers the student and scholar a very helpful bibliography of books and articles on the role of gaming in secondary world building—an area of emerging study that offers some interesting opportunities for further research.

Overall, I applaud the editor of this volume, Stuart D. Lee for fulfilling the stated objective of the Wiley-Blackwell series by bringing together a collection of the best Tolkien scholars and academics to provide new perspectives and positions on Tolkien which successfully lays the groundwork, challenges and debates the academic work already done in each area and, in many cases, motivates the scholar and student to explore each of these areas in more depth and with new focus. The student and scholar here is supported in this by very helpful specific bibliographies after each paper including a further reading section and a general bibliography at the end of the volume of Tolkien's work and major scholarship.

There are very few gaps in this scholarly coverage; although I was surprised not to see a paper on the foreign language adaptations of Tolkien's work and, given its important influence on Tolkien, a specific paper on *Beowulf.* Also, the compilation of this volume came too late to cover the recent publication of *The Fall of Arthur* which has established it as an important part of Tolkien's creative work with a significant link to the

legendarium. But these are mere quibbles and the price of this volume will pay dividends in the knowledge and insight the scholar and student will receive, and the motivation each author encourages for further study and exploration. I highly recommend this volume and count it as one of the most important works of collected scholarship on Tolkien to date.

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