



Mythopoeic Society

mythLORE

A Journal of J.R.R. Tolkien, C.S. Lewis,
Charles Williams, and Mythopoeic Literature

Volume 5
Number 1

Article 4

5-15-1978

Letters

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Recommended Citation

Walker, James C.; Patterson, Nancy-Lou; Beyer, Byron M., et al. (1978) "Letters," *Mythlore: A Journal of J.R.R. Tolkien, C.S. Lewis, Charles Williams, and Mythopoeic Literature*: Vol. 5 : No. 1 , Article 4. Available at: <https://dc.swosu.edu/mythlore/vol5/iss1/4>

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Albuquerque, New Mexico; July 29 - August 1, 2022

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Additional Keywords

Sarah Beach, Mark Badger

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LETTERS

James C. Walker Statesville, North Carolina

Nancy-Lou Patterson Waterloo, Ontario, Canada

I wanted to express my elation over Humphrey Carpenter's *Tolkien*. It was a beautiful biography of a beautiful man. Indeed, Carpenter would wish to stress this aspect of Tolkien -- humanness. Tolkien was a man carried into realms that professionals spent years training with maps of the countryside in order to enter. This I think crystallizes the impact Carpenter's biography has had upon myself.

Tolkien has now been contrasted with the Beowulf poet he loved so well. A man trying to deal with his times, clutching at past remembrances, always looking into the future, firmly grounded in the now. Tolkien was not primarily a writer, he did not spend his life trying to capture in words his feelings; rather he spent his feelings in trying to free words for their lives.

He was a man without precedent. He wrote his hobby through freshness, developing not a philosophy that drew inevitable conclusions but approaching concerns with an open mind visualizing many possibilities.

Here is my sadness: of essays, notes, and pictures that Tolkien used to reach into this world, many have been placed at length from us. The star of the cake has eluded us, how can we find it to ride? Mine is a call to bring out all the sources to the public; not all and every source, but those like the Book of Marzabul, the calendars that are so rare to find, and especially the essays Tolkien wrote judging the aptness of certain concerns. It is my hope that some publisher will bring together these oddments.

Mr. Carpenter, I love your book; yet it has only whet my appetite for those scattered fragments you have seen, and to have been one of those noisome visitors that Tolkien had to evade. Thank you, Sir.

In the August 1977 *Mythprint*, Margaret Purdy asks about the shape of Elvish ears, with the remark that she finds pointed ears (a la *Star Trek* and Annette Harper's drawings) "elegant, charming and distinguished." Glen GoodKnight reminds her that "Tolkien never said that elves *did* or *didn't* have pointed ears." But he goes on to inquire, "Why have so many of us imagined them having pointed ears?" This question sparked me to carry out a little research on the matter.

The Elvenfolk of Tolkien -- the High Elves -- are partly based upon the fairy people of Celtic and Norse origin, which in the forms presented to us seem to come from a combination of what C. S. Lewis calls "native" and classical sources (C. S. Lewis, *The Discarded Image*, Cambridge; Cambridge University Press, 1964, p. 124). Katherine Briggs says, "the term 'fairy' now covers 'the Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian ELVES, the DAOINTE SIDHE of the Highlands, the TUATHA DE DANANN of Ireland, the TYLWYTH TEG of Wales . . . and many others.'" (Katherine Briggs, *A Dictionary of Fairies*, London: Allen Lane, 1976, p. 131). The Fairies thus include a wide range of beings: Katherine Briggs includes the "lost heathen Gods," (C. S. Lewis mentions that "Morgan [Le Fay] had once been a Celtic goddess" (Lewis 1964: 126)), "half-deified spirits of the dead and the spirits of woods and wells and vegetation." (Katherine Briggs, *The Fairies in Tradition and Literature*, London: Routledge and Kegan Poul, 1967, p. 4). Stories of the dwellers in the *sid* depict those who "belong to those parts of Ireland which are outside the regions of settlement," (Alwyn and Brinley Ross, *Celtic Heritage*, London: Thames and Hudson, 1961, p. 66) who are associated with "bygone days, . . . the pre-Christian past . . . and the fairy host (*sithchúire*)." (Ross 1961:66). H. R. Davidson says "there were other realms beyond Asgard, like Alfheim, where the fair elves lived . . ." (H. R. Davidson, *Gods and Mythos of Northern Europe*, Harmondsworth, England: Penguin, 1964, p. 28), and points out that sacrifices to the elves are still practised in rural Sweden, as once in *Kammak's Saga* a sacrifice of a bull at a burial mound is recorded as "mak[ing] the elves a feast with the flesh." (Davidson, 1964:156). From all of the above we see that Elves are 1) similar to humans but not human; 2) immortal; 3) without the same sort of souls as mortals; and 4) somehow more "natural" or close to "nature" than are humankind. Hence the pointed ears.

The earliest such ears may have appeared in representations of Mesopotamian divinities who also have horns (the earliest divinities are either animals themselves, or the shamanic human/animal beings with horns, tails, pointed ears, and human bodies, found in the Paleolithic caves of southern France). Certainly by the sixth century B.C. there is in Greek art a picture of a Typhon (from a vase in Etruria) with pointed ears (John Pinsent, *Greek Mythology*, London: Paul Hamlyn, 1969, p. 25). About 440 B.C. a vase shows Actaeon with horns and pointed ears, being slain (Pinsent, 1969:60). Roman art, based upon Greek prototypes, revelled in satyrs and fauns with pointed ears (Stuart Percowne, *Roman Mythology*, London: Paul Hamlyn, 1969, pp. 66-67). It is not surprising, then, that in 1600 these elements could appear in a depiction of "Robin Good-Fellow" as an ithyphallic satyr with horns and pointed ears (Maureen Duffy, *The Erotic World of Faery*, Trogmore, St. Albans, England: Granada, 1974, let. pp. 168-69). The pointed ear tradition was of course given vigorous expression in nineteenth century "Fairy art," as in the works of Fuseli and Dadd.



© Bilbo Reveals the Arkenstone

The ears, apparently, suggest an animal element, the quality in "Fairy" beings which is not human and yet not spiritual. Katherine Briggs notes that "In Christian times the Scandinavians continued to believe in the elves or huldre folk," (Briggs 1976:122) and says that the huldre girls, though beautiful and elegantly clad, revealed their non-human origin by the possession of "long cows' tails." One thinks of the Egyptian goddess Hathor, and the nymph Io turned into a heifer. The beings we know which are most like us in the world *do* have pointed ears, after all: our dogs, cats, horses -- and cows -- all beasts who whom we feel a deep bond. When we wish to express a very nearby Otherness, pointed ears are an effective device. The kind of intimate Otherness I mean is felt by many of us now for dolphins: intelligent, good, and non-human. In other cultures and other times this dignified status was shared by many animals. The Gods themselves took animal form: Aslan has shown us what this meant. The pointed ears of Mr. Spock are a recent use of the motif to express a benign Otherness. It is a remarkable and suitable usage. But as Glen says, Tolkien did not use it.

Byron M. Beyer

Victoria, Texas

This letter has been a long time brewing. I have just purchased the 1978 edition of the Hildebrandt's Tolkien Calendar. I know that each of us has our own conception of the characters of *The Lord of the Rings*, more than likely, each one will be different.

But there is one thing in particular (and many things in general) which, shall we say "irks" or disturbs me to no end. The atrocity for which I cannot forgive the Brothers Hildebrandt is their gift of *pointed ears* to all hobbits depicted in their paintings!!! In my own mind, I got the impression that Tolkien constantly strove to get away from the modern concept of the impish "elfin" creature with the pointed ears. Disturbing, in this respect also, are the portraits of Arwen and Elrond by Annette Harper (*Mythlore* 13 and 18) -- other than the ears, these two portraits are almost perfect to my conception, especially Arwen.)

The Hildebrandts are not consistent in their depiction of certain characters. The faces of Frodo, Bilbo, Sam, Merry and Pippin have remained the same since the 1976 calendar (I was unable to obtain the '77 edition). However, the new picture of Galadriel isn't in keeping with the '76 picture. The '76 picture was superb. In the new edition, the stringy appearance of the hair just ruins the whole effect.

January's illustration shows Farmer Maggot looking at Frodo with an expression somewhat bordering on bloated lechery. Old Man Willow's possession of a "face" is a rather rude shock. I suppose everyone's got their own Gollum, more than any of the other characters. The Hildebrandts' Gollum just isn't *my* Gollum. Besides, Gollum's eyes were green, not orange! The Hildebrandts, however, do draw good Gandalfs! The June illustration, "Return of Gandalf," is very good, although I cannot say too much for Gimli's afro. The centre plate, "At the Grey Havens," would be perfect, except for the hobbits' ears, and noses (which are too long). The figure I take to be Elrond is not exactly what I had in mind. It looks too much like a medieval merchant -- not noble enough. The Gandalf here is, again, very good. Galadriel, though, once again is wrong. The portrait of Saruman for July borders on the laughable. It in no way resembles the 1976 picture, which was very good. Beorn (September) looks like somebody you'd expect to see on Saturday night wrestling matches on T.V. Once again -- not noble enough. The figure I take to be Eowyn in October's picture looks like a "lady of the evening." Shelob (November) looks like something out of a "B" Sci-Fi bomb-out ("The Blob that Ate Cincinnati"?)



However -- the Hildebrandts are masters of landscape and background painting. The backgrounds of every one of the 14 illustrations are superb. It seems that a good solution would be for the Brothers Hildebrandt to continue doing backgrounds, but get someone else to paint the people! By the way, how do all of you feel about pointed ears?

One more gripe about the calendar: The "readjustment" of event dates! I cannot imagine celebrating Bilbo and Frodo's birthday on Sept. 14 instead of the 23rd. I'd rather have the old dates, thank you!

Being a Society member since 1976, I have not yet seen a word written about Nicol Williamson's 4-album recording of *The Hobbit* on Argo Records. This set of records was given to me as a gift upon my high-school graduation in May, and shall always remain a treasured possession. The records are fantastic. The mastery of an artist like Williamson must really be great to conceive and produce a different voice for each of the many characters of *The Hobbit*. I was particularly delighted with Gollum's voice, and with Bilbo's. Superb!

Of course, much had to be done to condense the story down to a recordable length. However, I wish that the details of the story told by Gandalf to Beorn of the number of the company had not been left out, as was the description of Beorn's house and household help, and the part of Bombur's fall into the enchanted River, the chasing of the elf-fires, and many other, more minor details. I suppose this must be expected if the recording was to be attempted in the first place. All in all, I feel these records to be *absolutely splendid*. (Glory 'n trumpets!) Thanks for your time!

P.S. I just bought Tyler's *Tolkien Companion*. I like the style of the introduction -- the acceptance of everything in *LotR* as fact. Except -- He uses

the term "long-dead authors" when talking about Bilbo and Frodo. Gadzooks!! We *all* know that Frodo and Bilbo are, of course, still very much alive across the sea!

James Spreckels

Beaumont, Texas

About this film being made of *Rings*. The whole matter is, in my opinion, very complex and should be taken and handled carefully. Mister GoodKnight's review of *Wizards* was certainly not "a bit paranoid," as Ms. Margaret Purdy said. On the contrary, it revealed a laudably high standard of taste, a very reasonable concern for the public's understanding and image of Tolkien's work, and an awareness of how our best hopes for that understanding could easily be dashed by a shoddy film. Surely it is obvious that Mister Ralph Bakshi's sensibility is at least vulgar. Surely the two stills from the film that were printed with the review were enough to let everyone know that the man who created such silly faces and cutesy butterfly midges (all with ears well designed for opening Hawaiian Punch at both sides of the can at once) could not possibly envision decently even hobbit pleasantries, much less Elvish grandeurs or Sauronic horrors.

Furthermore, though Ms. Purdy's reply to my last letter in *Mythlore 15* was splendid, it is necessary for me to take sides against her in the matter of pointed ears in general. They may be "elegant, charming, and distinguished" on Leonard Nimoy, but Leonard Nimoy is not Elrond (and, leave us pray, never will be). Pointed ears are a distraction on creatures as greatly serious as the elves. More importantly, it is beyond me to imagine that Tolkien would not have told us so if the elves had had such a particular difference from men in their appearance. Didn't he describe each race of beings in his books at least thoroughly enough that we would be able to catch somewhere an indication of pointed ears if pointed ears were ever intended? If you ask me the Professor probably abominated all such elements as darling and infantile.

Back to the review, let me add that what was taken for paranoia was very likely a pinch too much outraged shock. Mister GoodKnight misunderstood Ms. Purdy's objection about the "spare time." She had reference, of course, to the slighting of Mister Bakshi for playing pinball on Hollywood Boulevard. If our editor's unfavorable reaction to that practice was instinctively right, it was still perhaps not quite fair on the whole to mention it.

All this goes to show how dangerous the film is nearly certain to be aesthetically. If we within the Society have complete differences of opinion on tiny matters like pointed ears, how much more likely is it that those who lack our tender concern for our First Author will create an atrocity?

And yet, the aesthetic considerations are of secondary importance. The ultimate value of Tolkien's work is spiritual. *Rings* contains a hope for improving modern life by giving the reader a new consciousness, by way of a contrast, of what modern life lacks, so that the reader feels a deep desire to remedy the lack, to see the world changed. Hence it is of the first importance that as many people as possible become as well acquainted as possible with Tolkien's major work. If they do not read him, there is perhaps not much that can be done for them. But any publicity, if used well and as much as can be, might be redeemable and even valuable. There's no question but that the film will most likely be both dreadful and widely distributed; *Star Wars* could be taken as an indication that it might be very popular. But this should not make us despair; for to say that "the book was better" has become a standard comment as one leaves the theatre. The very presence of the film would open our way to make our objections known and to

articulate our cause. The very falsity of the film would allow us to sound our trumpet like Gideon's army as loud as we could -- until it reached newspapers, television, radio, every kind and quality of magazine. Though the "look" of the film might miserably unfortunately prevail in the popular mind, still, if we insist urgently but restrainedly in front of everyone that that "look" is unworthy and foolish, they may be provoked to *read* for themselves and see if we're telling the truth. And in the midst of our insisting we can be endeavoring to prepare them for that reading.

If the Mythopoeic Society did indeed thus effectively capitalize on the publicity without suffering a loss of dignity grave enough to impair its voice -- if we could manage to make the world aware of us, not as a small group of people who never outgrew fairy tales, but as reasonable yet visionary adults who have found a new understanding of the meaning and relevance of fantasy literature -- then perhaps the film could be turned to some degree from a curse into a blessing. It would give us an opportunity to explain to everyone "outside" the crux of Tolkien's Columbian discovery that in fairy tales and fantasy, which most adults in our age relegate to the nursery, lies a wealth of meanings which would have been of incalculable use to the betterment of life if they had never been discarded and if we had never trained ourselves over several generations to feel contempt for them.

I think we have indeed a duty to get that message over. We should tax ourselves to think exactly how to go about it. It is a matter for putting earnestly -- let me not hesitate to say prayerfully -- into the hands of no "sub" Creator. When the film comes out we must be ready to speak.

Alan Cohen

Although we often comment on J. R. R. Tolkien and *LotR* we do not say exactly why we read and love his various works. Following are some of my reasons for my vast admiration of J. R. R. Tolkien.

It seems that the characters that are used and created by Tolkien veritably grab the readers. Aside from Tolkien's fluid style, people enjoy the ways and characters of Middle Earth. I am enthralled with the various dispositions of the Elves that we encounter in *LotR*. The reasoning behind this is because, even though Tolkien's characters are not quite human, they are all humanlike and have human values and ideals. They enjoy and do things we do. Dwarves covet Gold and Silver, Elves are masters of lore and verse, Ents are forest and tree lovers and Hobbits have a passion for pipeweed.

Another aspect of why *LotR* is so popular is because it is an adventure story exceptional. It contains battles, a quest and a love story all rolled into one. It simply holds something for everyone. *LotR* is an adventure story, yet there is more than adventure to it.

A very strong third reason behind the popularity of *LotR* is the setting. It is a time when the world was younger and the inhabitants of this marvelous place were not troubled very much by pollution, overpopulation and what you eat may be harmful to your health.

Finally I would like to point out what I feel is the most important reason for why we enjoy Tolkien and *LotR*. It is that there is a very special feeling in our hearts and souls that endears J. R. R. Tolkien and *LotR* to us. If one was to describe it in a nutshell you would have to say that it is a combination of Love, suspense, admiration, enjoyment, comedy, drama, excitement and respect all rolled into one. This may be a very clumsy way to put it, yet it comes from my heart and it is sincere.

ML 17

Michael J. Chapran

Birmingham, Michigan

In response to Gary Hunnewell's letter, which appeared in *Mythprint* #6: Aule was neither a dwarf nor a "lesser" vala; rather, he was one of the five "greater" valar which are mentioned in *LotR*: Manwe, Elbereth, Orome the Great, Aule the Smith, and Melchar (afterwards called Morgoth, the Great Enemy.) Presumably, Aule was in charge of the Dwarves because he was, in fact, a Smith -- as the Dwarves are. Orome the Great, on the other hand, was considered a Hunter; and was possibly in charge of the Edain. The Men of the North even had a name for him -- "Bema" -- and therefore it can be assumed that there was a greater link between Men and Orome than between Men and any of the other Valar. Mannish names for them are not stated.

Elves, obviously, were the protege of Elbereth; and the Black races those of Morgoth (Melchar).

In response to Margaret Purdy's Speculations about (of all things) pointed ears in elves: It never occurred to me that the issue was so important. But, at any rate, Mr. Spock of Star Trek had pointed ears because (according to various concordances) they enabled his race to hear better in the thin air of Vulcan. Elves, as far as I know, didn't come from an area with particularly thin air, and hence do not need pointed ears, except to reinforce the stereotyped image of an elf as an imp, six inches tall, with pointed ears, who spends most of his time souring milk and cutting clotheslines. Tolkien's Eldar could not be more removed from that image. Pointed ears are unnecessary. And as far as Star Trek goes: Live Long and Prosper!

Asher Brauner

Chatsworth, California

When reading *LotR* I discovered some impossible occurrences such as: Who recorded the words of Ioreth to her cousin? Did, or did not the Rings of Power give invisibility? The One Ring did, and the Nine did (the Ringwraiths were invisible to all but the Ring-Bearer), but the Three did not (nor did the Seven) seem to give invisibility. Why was the conversation between Sam Gamgee and Ted Sandyman which took place in "The Green Dragon" about Entwives ("walking trees") never recalled when Treebeard asked for news of them (Entwives)? There are two possible reasons: either Tolkien wanted this very question to be pondered, or he was just too busy a man to remember it. I prefer to believe the latter.

Tolkien clearly states that there were only three unions between Elves and Men; Luthien and Beren, Idril and Tuor, and Arwen and Aragorn. But Elwing was definitely an Elf, and Earendil was definitely a man, and they married, so there were four intermarriages. Also, the men of Dol Amroth were said to have Elven blood in them, so that would make at least one more marriage between Elves and Men. I would very much appreciate comments on any of these observations.

Robin B. Goldman

Ballwin, Missouri

Mythlore 16, especially Daniel Kobil's essay on "The Elusive Appeal of the Fantastic," prompts me to comment upon the bizarre combination of science fiction, fantasy, and gothic romance that has recently immobilized the movie industry. I am speaking, of course, of George Lucas' "Star Wars."

The widespread enthusiasm of moviegoers for this unusual production seems to puzzle reviewers and movie giants alike, according to the mass of critical essays in current newspapers and magazines. It appears that "Star Wars" contains no



... "MITHRANDIR!" HE CRIED, "MITHRANDIR!"

moral issues, no deep inner meaning, no real sex, and violence only in pure, good-against-evil cases. Where, then, lies the attraction that compels people to sport "Star Wars" T-shirts, and buttons reading "May the Force be with you"?

The answer should be no mystery to readers of *The Lord of the Rings*. Tolkienites can find, indeed, that "Star Wars" allurements lie primarily in what Mr. Kobil calls "the desire to experience dragons"; that is, the appeal of the fantastic. People flock to "Star Wars" for the same reasons they read Tolkien's trilogy, or for that matter, search the waters of Loch Ness. We wish to encounter the unknown, whether it present itself as the future, the past, or remnants of the past in the present world. The major difference, though, is that where monster-hunting elicits a "smug, patronizing attitude," as Mr. Kobil puts it, and fantasy reading still barely hovers on the edge of popular acceptance, attending a showing of "Star Wars" is a perfectly respectable, and even encouraged, method for "experiencing dragons." After all, the "dragons" are either mechanical or extraterrestrial, and the fantasy -- pardon me, science fiction -- worlds are portrayed in Technicolor.

Whatever its presentation, the similarities between "Star Wars" and *LotR* are cheerfully obvious to the Tolkienite. A fellowship composed of an odd assortment of creatures, and representing a small but determined force of "good people," travels a great distance through incredible peril into the heart of the enemy's strongholds with one doubtful chance of destroying him. The hero comes by his role by chance, as Frodo does, but it is he who manages in the last possible moment to prevent the annihilation of his allies by the enemy (who, of course, is masked and cloaked in black). The group's guide is a grey-bearded old man who wields mysterious powers and sacrifices himself at a critical junction so that the rest may flee. (No doubt this Gandalf figure will be resurrected in a sequel.) In the course of the action the fellowship separates, but its members all eventually contribute to the final victory.

"Star Wars" popularity is no enigma to anyone acquainted with the Middle-Earth experience. Any production which successfully follows the fantasy formula would be enjoyable -- providing that the viewer can "suspend disbelief" long enough to enter into the (here, somewhat corrupted) realm of Faerie. This involvement appears to me to be the key to both successful science fiction and fantasy. For example, the dialogue of the film is terribly trite out of context, but is perfectly appropriate once one is submerged in the story. Similarly, hobbits in themselves are not all that believable, but when surrounded by the hills of the Shire and Tolkien's skillful narrative, can anyone help but accept the creatures?

John Canaday

Lebanon, New Jersey

In response to Robert Foster's letter printed in *Mythlore* 16, I have these things to say:

I wholeheartedly agree with his comments on Paul Kocher's Tale of the Noldor. Some of his criticisms, both positive and negative, were very enlightening, and his statements were, on the whole, most valid.

With his belief that we should not speculate or hypothesize about questions which will be answered in *The Silmarillion* I disagree, however. Of course his first two questions concerning the Valar, their functions and social structure, will be answered in *The Valaquenta*. This, however, should not discourage us from drawing conclusions about them until September when we actually have *The Silmarillion* in our hands. We know definitely that Manwe was the head of the Valar, while Elber-

eth, his wife, was in charge of the stars and other forms of light. (This is hinted at by the facts that it was Elbereth who placed Earendil in the sky as a star and a sign of Hope, and also that it was she who clothed the Undying Lands in shadow; relieved the islands of light.) Under Manwe, and perhaps Elbereth also, the rest of the Valar seemed to have equal power, though it too was apparently specialized. We see this specialization in Aule; the Valar's smith, Orome's interest in men and other forms of fauna in Middle Earth, and in Elbereth's power over light.

Mr. Foster's third question is perhaps the most obvious of the seven questions he proposed. Melian was an Eldar. What other group of beings could be referred to as the (chosen) people of the Valar? After all it was the Eldar who the Valar chose to live among; truly their favorites.

Concerning Mr. Foster's fourth question we truly can not know the answer unless it is revealed in *The Silmarillion*. We may, however, speculate that Morgoth was indeed of the Valar. The Istari and Sauron were of a different breed however, I fancy. Perhaps they were in some way related to the Balrog. Since the Balrog was second in evil power only to Sauron, and Gandalf just barely defeated it, all three beings seem to possess a similar amount of power. Also, since evil, personified by Morgoth, cannot create, only corrupt, it is possible that Morgoth corrupted the Balrog and Sauron from the breed of the Istari. A hypothesis only, but a highly probable one.

As to Aule, I think that we may assume that he was indeed a Valar, albeit one most interested in the dwarvish race. This is pointed to by Dwarvish Lore itself, in references to Durin I as the first dwarf, as well as in the custom of naming succeeding dwarf kings after him. Is it not logical to assume that the dwarves would have named their kings after Aule, rather than Durin, if he had indeed been the first dwarf? Additionally the fact stands out that Aule is not a dwarvish name as it should be if he were a dwarf.

I think Gandalf may answer Mr. Foster's sixth question. I quote him from *The Two Towers* (page 164 hardback) when he says to Theoden: "For Treebeard is Fangorn, . . . and when you speak with him you will hear the speech of the oldest of all living things."

Mr. Foster's last and favorite question may, indeed, only be answered by *The Silmarillion*, though I believe we may assume the Noldor to be one of the Three Kindreds.

If anyone disagrees with my analysis of Mr. Foster's questions, and I am sure there will be many of you, Mr. Foster not the least, I welcome your letters. I would be most grateful to learn of the weak points in my projections before *The Silmarillion* precludes all doubt. Now I am off, as Mr. Foster suggested, to re-read *LotR*, my favorite pastime.

Dale W. Simpson

Denton, Texas

I would like to bring up a few things for clarification and discussion concerning naming in Tolkien's works. First, in reference to Mark Epstein's qualification of my reading of Moria as "folly" (*Mythprint* 15, 6 August 1977, 2), I want to respond as follows. I agree with his qualification basically in that the power of the dwarf rings affected their bearers only, but they also affect the race in much the same way as Thorin Oakenshield's lust for the Arkenstone affected his people who were sworn to his service by blood and by oath, or as the seven sons of Feanor are bound to his oath concerning the Silmarils (as is told in *The Silmarillion*). So this is how the power of gold and jewels over one may affect a



The Captains of the West

whole race or house of men, elves, or dwarves. And yes, in one sense the Elves would think it folly to live underground. However, the Elves have learned the wisdom that Turgon once ignored: "Love not too well the work of thy hands and the devices of thy heart . . ." (*The Silmarillion*, pp. 125, 240). Thus, it would be a greater folly to bore into the earth in the lust for precious metal and raise a thing of evil to endanger the peace of all, than it would be simply to choose to live underground.

A complicating factor in Tolkienian onomastics is the presence of two linguistic planes in many of the names: the fictional Middle-earth languages and the "real" languages which underlie many of the names. The pun on Moria is an example of these dual levels of meaning. Another good example of this dual level of name-meaning in *Lord of the Rings* may be seen in Gandalf's various names, where, by the way, two of the five names have their roots in Latin. In *The Two Towers*, p. 353 (pbk), Gandalf says of himself:

Many are my names in many countries. Mithrandir among the Elves, Tharkun to the Dwarves; Olorin I was in my youth in the West that is forgotten, in the South Incanus, in the North Gandalf; to the East I go not.

Now, *Olorin* and *Incanus*, the wizard's names in Valinor and the South of Middle-earth, are Latin words lifted almost intact from the language. *Olorinus* is a term meaning 'of or pertaining to a swan,' the linguistic root seeming to suggest the wings. *Incanus* is a botanical term meaning 'hoary-haired,' white or gray. Both of these terms describe different aspects of Gandalf's character, the former his religious and eternal nature, and the latter his physical appearance. Incidentally, it is interesting to note that *Gandalf* may also be

a contraction of 'gander-elf' (hence, perhaps, 'swan-elf'), in addition to its more frequently noted Old Icelandic source in *The Elder Edda*, where it may be translated as meaning 'elf with the magic staff.' Ganders are noted for their habit of aimless wandering during their hen's setting time; thus we see how close 'gander-elf' is to Elvish *Mithrandir* 'grey pilgrim or wanderer.' The wizard's five names illustrate how both fictional and actual languages exist together in the names of Tolkien's characters. We miss some or perhaps much of the meaning of the names if we interpret them only in the languages of Middle-earth. And the names are important because they contain the essence of the characters.

I have just completed reading *The Silmarillion*, having taken advantage of the Land of Legend discount offer. I don't know how other readers have reacted to it, but I can offer some observations concerning the book. I especially liked the "Ainulindale" and the "Akallabeth" for their power. The height of the drama comes in the "Akallabeth" in the description of the perverted religion of Numenor and the island's destruction. And the height of beauty is in the songs of Illuvatar and the Ainur. Most disappointing dramatically, for me, is the breaking of Thangorodrim. The most incredible scene, I feel, is the one in which Beren and Luthien master Melkor and steal the Silmaril -- most unbelievable. Overall, *Quenta Silmarillion* is too ambitious, too broad in scope to be effective with any kind of dramatic power. It suffers from its lack of immediacy and character development. And the cast of characters is too long to keep up with. I do realize, however, that this work was not conceived as another drama of the nature of the four hobbit-books. Rather, it is of the nature of the Appendices, and thus must be judged by a different standard than the hobbit-books. I marvel at the imaginative power of the man who created the history of Middle-earth, from its hierarchy of gods to the very stones and fields throughout three long ages of events. On the strength of Tolkien's imagination and the detail of it, the whole work succeeds -- as "feigned history" (as Tolkien called it in the "Foreword" to *The Fellowship of the Ring*, p. xi).

Several of my conclusions concerning unelaborated Middle-earth matters were confirmed in *The Silmarillion*. I was positive that the Numenor story was Tolkien's reshaping of the Atlantis myth from the perspective of Middle-earth. One can compare Plato's account of the Atlantis myth in "Timaeus" and "Critias" with the "Akallabeth" to see the numerous parallels. Then too, Tolkien gives Numenor the name *Atalante* in the Eldarin tongue (*The Silmarillion*, p. 281). I had also concluded that *Morgoth* was an acquired appellation rather than an "original" name; that his title was more properly *Melkor* the *Morgoth*. And I had also earlier discovered that *Melkor* recalls the Canaanite god Moloch, if the etymology of the name means anything. Thus the Numenorean ritual of human sacrifice to *Melkor*, Lord of Darkness (or the Underworld) recalls the Canaanite practice of human sacrifice to Moloch which so abhorred the Hebrews and which the Hebrews later practiced themselves when seduced away from Yahweh.

I shall be looking forward to reading how others have reacted to *The Silmarillion*.

Julie Watkins

Urbana, Illinois

I was disturbed by your review of *Wizards* in *Mythlore* 16, and was even more disturbed by your remarks in the August *Mythprint*.

I enjoyed the movie very much. I have seen it three times. I will admit there is a lot wrong with it, but it seemed to me that Bakshi needed most was additional time and money for animation and editing. He concentrated his efforts on a

few key scenes in which (in my opinion) the animation was excellent. The rest of the movie was more quickly done. Obviously he will have more to work with for *LotR*. I think he did well with what he had. The narration sequences were especially effective. Even though the sequences were "short cuts" I believe they were necessary to advance the story at a reasonable pace. The narrator's voice was excellent (I have never heard a voice at once to melancholy and beautiful), as was Michael Ploog's artwork.

In calling the animation "too crude to handle the subtlety of Tolkien's various personalities" you are asking too much. Only live action (apparently) will satisfy you -- but that's impossible considering the height differences and the huge sets that would be needed.

Animation cannot duplicate reality. A certain amount of cartooning is necessary. The characters in *Wizards* are probably more cartooned than what will be used in *LotR*. The tone of *Wizards* was less than serious, and the style of animation (and the ending) reflected this. This is not a criticism of the movie. Bakshi had fun making it, I had fun watching it.

This doesn't mean he isn't going to take *LotR* seriously. He must have or he wouldn't have gotten the movie rights. From what I have read, a lot of people besides him were interested. Unlike *Wizards* which was a hurry-up job, Bakshi has been working on *LotR* for years (if only in his head until he got backing). He is emotionally very committed to this project.

Like everyone else, I have my own ideas of what Middle-earth should look like. But I don't get mad at the Hildebrants because their vision doesn't agree with mine. I did get mad at the Frazetta fiasco (if you haven't seen it, it is a portfolio of six pen & ink sketches, two of which are Eowyn & the Nazgul, and there is no way she could have been mistaken for a man) but I didn't try to get my money back or take it out of circulation. The Hildebrants have read the book. Frazetta didn't (or didn't pay attention). Bakshi has read the book, and cares about it. He will give it his best, and I don't ask for anything more.

What bothers me the most about your comments is that it looks as if you want a letter-writing campaign started to cancel the movie. If Bakshi doesn't do the film, who will? Disney? Disney would turn it cute, talking foxes and all. Outside of Bakshi we have no alternatives. I have read there are good things happening in France with animation, but I haven't seen any here and I wouldn't like having to read subtitles anyway.

I think your "quail in fear" is unwarranted. Hollywood has been "ruining" classics since the beginning without any real effect. The "untold numbers who will see the film and think they therefore know the book" probably wouldn't have read it (or much else) anyway. I should refer you back to your own words about Mr. Griffith wanting to force *Bored of the Rings* off the stands: "When I heard it was going to appear I feared some real harm would be done, but in retrospect it seems Tolkien and *The Lord of the Rings* have weathered this tempest in a teacup exceedin' well."

I personally am looking forward to Bakshi's movie. I hope I get a chance to see it.

L. Sprague de Camp

Villanova, PA

Thanks for *Mythlore 16*. Having seen Bakshi's *Wizards*, I quite agree with your objurgations on the film, and then some. The man seems to have no sense of internal logic, which as I have said elsewhere is, if anything, more important in fantasy than in realistic fiction. For instance, he starts out with a series of sermons on the evils of technology; then, at the end, the good wizard settles the conflict by shooting the bad wizard with a

Luger automatic -- a minor triumph of technology.

Some -- perhaps all -- the medieval battle scenes lifted from old black-and-white films come from the Russian movie *Aleksandr Nyevskiy*, which was shown at the New York World's Fair of 1939. The picture dealt with the victory of Prince Alexander of Nizhniy Novgorod over the Teutonic Knights in the thirteenth century. The picture contained a few propagandistic touches, e.g. the helmets worn by the German infantry were a bit too much like the modern German *Stahlhelm* for complete authenticity. Then, on August 24th, Hitler and Stalin signed their nonaggression pact, setting the stage for the Second World War. *Aleksandr Nyevskiy* promptly disappeared from the screen; Stalin did not want to do anything to antagonize his new ally.

Regarding F. W. Edwards's letter (pp. 36f), I merely posed a question and put forward a speculation for discussion; I did not presume to answer it. You and Mr. Edwards have given your answers, which seem pretty persuasive; but I should like to hear others. I still suspect that there may be a connection between fantasy writing and childhood of a certain kind -- but it may be only a weak bias or tendency, like that which leads certain professions to attract sadists, other homosexuals, and so on.

Judy Cole

Hollis, NH

In *Mythlore 16*, Paul Kocher asked if anyone noticed similarities of Tolkien's names anywhere other than in the *Jerusalem Bible*. I found some in Malory's *Le Morte Darthur*. Among the many knights are: Pellinore, Dinadan, and Balin.

One thing I'm confused on is the subject of Elf-Man marriages. At one point Tolkien mentions that there were only three Elf-Man marriages, referring to Beren-Luthien, Earendil-Elwing, and Aragorn-Arwen. But what about Tuor (of the House of Hador)-Idril Celebrindal (King Turgon of Gondolin's daughter) that were Earendil's parents? Wouldn't that make him "Half-Elven" and his son Elrond "quarter-Elven"? Then there was stated that the folk of Dol Amroth had Elven blood mixed with the Numenorean, so there must have been more than just the four famous marriages.

Although I am by no means learned in languages,



I did notice something in Tom Bombadil's Elvish name: Iarwain Benadar. Elrond translates this as "oldest and fatherless." I can't help noticing the Hebrew element *Ben* meaning "son of." Would *adar* then translate as "none" or "no one" to give the full "son of no one" or some such?

Lastly I would like to comment on the Hildebrandt calendars. I think they are marvelously done for the most part (I don't agree on all points, but that's to be expected). Although some people feel it is too much like a wax museum, I think that is a great compliment to the artists. Anyone who can take an idea, turn it into a painting so successfully as to make one feel they are wax models, is an excellent artist. My only complaint is that all the elves (except Elrond and Arwen) have been given blond hair. In Appendix F, Tolkien states: "They were tall, fair of skin and grey-eyed, though their locks were dark, save in the golden house of Finrod;" . . . In other words, the only Elves that had golden hair were Gildor, Glorfindel, and Galadriel. Could any message be given to the brothers in order to correct this inaccuracy?

Margaret Hannay

Albany, NY

I should like to respond to the recent letter by Dr. Dirk W. Mosig. When he stated that Lewis's "Actual concepts on hierarchy and on gender as transsexualreality . . . are miles above the kind of footling taking-of-offense which seems to be the stock in trade of feminist critics," he has missed the central issue. Christian feminists disagree with three of Lewis's basic assumptions about the nature of Reality:

1. that the categories of masculine and feminine do have a transcendent reality beyond gender;
2. that the male or masculine is superior (hierarchically or otherwise) to the female or feminine;
3. that God is masculine.

Disagreement with presuppositions is not "footling taking-of-offense." If, in my article on Lewis and women, I let demonstration that he held these beliefs interfere with a clear statement of differences, then I am indeed at fault. (There is not space here to defend these objections; the reader is referred to the excellent work by Paul Jewett and Virginia Mollenkott for a full debate of the issues.)

But may I reiterate that my respect for Lewis as myth-maker, apologist, and scholar is undiminished by this disagreement. In my recent doctoral dissertation on Lewis's literary criticism I conclude that he is a seminal force in twentieth century criticism; many of the most significant recent studies of Spenser and Milton, for example, have been provoked by an idea Lewis expressed in *The Allegory of Love*, *Preface to Paradise Lost*, or the Sixteenth century volume of OHEL. Perhaps we could all agree to disagree on the validity of Lewis's "doctrine of woman" and concentrate on these more rewarding studies.

Jessica Kemball-Cook Yates

London, U.K.

I am glad to see the occasional article dealing with another writer than one of our Trinity. Ruth Berman's piece on Garner's *The Owl Service* was fine, and I have a point to add from a talk Garner gave about the book, reprinted in "Children's Literature in Education" No. 2. Garner said that the reason why Margaret (Alison's mother) won't permit Alison and Gwyn to be friends, is not just a ques-

tion of class. In the previous generation, he said, Alison's mother and Bertram had an affair before Bertram took Nancy away from Huw. Therefore Alison's mother suspects that Alison is Bertram's daughter and that Gwyn is his son -- therefore romance would be incest. She's wrong about Gwyn anyway.

More recently CLE has printed some articles relevant to our main interests. In the winter 1975 issue, there is an article by Joy Chant called 'Niggle and Numenor' which the Tolkien Society is reprinting in the next *Mallorn*. In the summer 1977 issue, No. 25, there is an answer to the notorious Holbrook article on Lewis (discussed in *Mythlore* 10 and 12).

Thomas Santoski

Scranton, PA

In response to Ms. Goldman's remarks on the Sindarin word "Aglarond." I am not a linguistic scholar, but I would say that she is correct in translating "Aglarond" as "glorious caves."

However, the point of this letter is to point out some of the differences between Foster's *Guide to Middle-earth* and Tyler's *The Tolkien Companion*. Has anyone noticed that Mr. Foster took his sources almost solely from *The Hobbit*, *LOTR*, *RING*, etc., and that Tyler must have used unpublished sources since he translated the words "Elwe," "Finwe," and "Fingolfin"? Also, Tyler places in his "Companion" place-names from the Pauline Baynes map of 1969, which are not credited to anyone.

I cannot find anywhere in the books, the place names: Druwaith Iaur, Framsburg (which Tyler goes on and gives a history for), Lond Daer and Edhellond to name a few. Does anyone know where these entries originate from? Are they from unpublished Tolkien material that Ms. Baynes and Mr. Tyler have had access to?

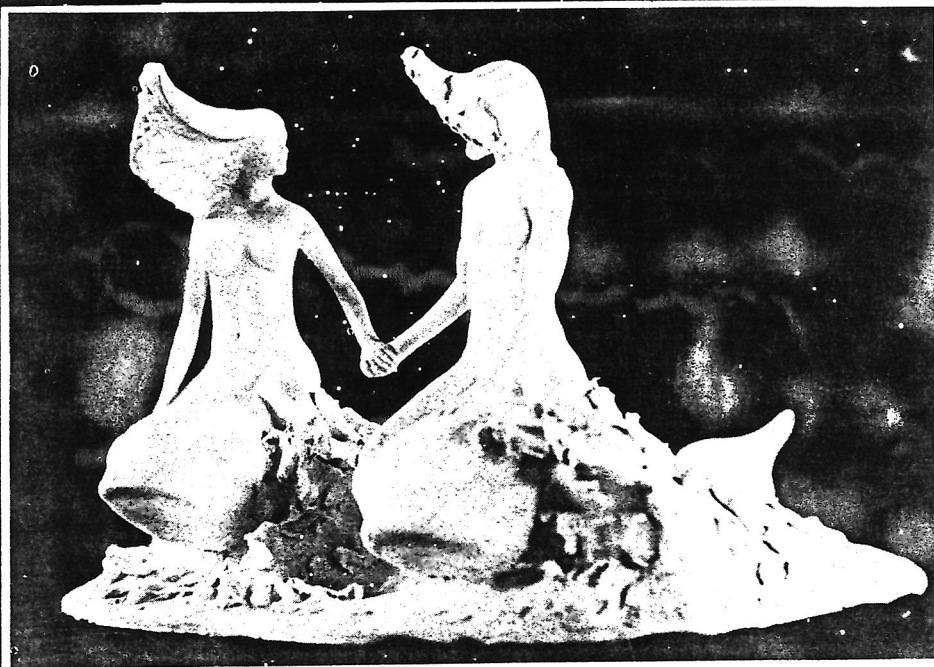
Letters of Comment

Letters of comment are encouraged and welcomed. Those whose letters are printed will receive a one-issue extension of their subscription. All material printed in each issue does not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Editors or the position of the Society. Readers may challenge or further explore points made in any part of the issue. See page 2 for the address to send letters.

On the lateness of the issue

In the December *Mythprint* I alluded to a period of personal distress and readjustment due to a marital separation, and apologised for the delay in publications. Only days after that issue was in the mail, I was a victim in a serious automobile accident on the freeway. My car was demolished, and I received back and neck injuries. I was in near-constant pain for over two months, and underwent physical therapy. The supposed period of healing and treatment did reduce the pain, but I still have it daily, and am about to begin treatment with a different doctor. This has been the main reason for the delay of this issue. This has been a period of intense frustration. I am distressed that this issue has unexpectedly taken so long to complete, and plan to place the main responsibility for future issues in other competent hands. I want to assure all our readers that all memberships and subscriptions to *Mythprint* and *Mythlore* will be honored through their *Mythlore* expiry, no matter when that issue is published, so they will not lose anything by any publication delays. I apologise for giving such a personal explanation in a publication such as this, but the readers are owed a reason.

The Editor



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