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Some Readers' Thoughts

Lloyd Alexander

Dainis Bisenieks

Robert Boeing

Frederick Brenion

Joe R. Christopher

See next page for additional authors

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Authors

Lloyd Alexander, Dainis Bisenieks, Robert Boeing, Frederick Brenion, Joe R. Christopher, Paul F. Ford, Paul Nolan Hyde, Paul H. Kocher, Alexei Kondratiev, Nancy Martsch, Margaret R. Purdy, Laura Ruskin, Mark Samuels, Joseph Simmons, Benjamin Urrutia, and Steven C. Walker

unchanging. In The Silmarillion we find things quite well explained and laid out, things that were once indirectly stated, implied, or lay hidden. This difference has dampened the enthusiasm for Tolkien in some of his admirers, who would prefer not to be troubled or perhaps burdened by weighty matters such as these. Indeed, when one would have thought a great new wave of enthusiasm for Tolkien would have arisen following the publication of The Silmarillion, in actuality I saw a gradual diminishing of popular interest in him. I cannot attribute this merely to the other differences between The Lord of the Rings and The Silmarillion mentioned before. I think it was more than that. Some now saw clearly what the foundation of Tolkien's world was really like and it colored their perception of their old favorite, and consequently their appreciation cooled down.

Of course some changes in the mass or overall cultural thinking of our civilization do ebb and flow year by year, but basically we are a secular-minded people; Tolkien was not. As long as he will provide pleasures and personal excitement, all is well, but it is another thing when he reveals what his load of gifts is based on, it is another matter. In 1953, Tolkien wrote to Robert Murray, S. J.:

The Lord of the Rings is of course a fundamentally religious and Catholic work; unconsciously at first, but consciously in the revision. That is why I have not put in, or have cut out, practically all references to anything like 'religion', to cults or practices, in the imaginary world. For the religious element is absorbed into the story and the symbolism.

But in The Silmarillion, where it is necessary to begin at the beginning, this could not be done. "Religion" of necessity must be given. Tolkien said in a letter to Deborah Webster in 1958, "...I am a Christian (which can be deduced from my stories),..." Indeed Letters repeatedly and eloquently testifies that Tolkien was

Christian to the core, and that not only do his works not conflict with his faith, but are a creative outgrowth and interpretive form of it. It would be an exercise in intellectual vanity to demonstrate otherwise. All literary criticism henceforth must deal with this fact, not skirting the currently unpopular or inconvenient. This does not mean everything dealing with Tolkien and his works will of necessity deal with this, only on matters that do pertain to it. Those who do not feel comfortable with this aspect are in a difficult situation in regards to their intellectual honesty. Some may fade away; some will try to ignore it, which will not wash. For those to which this proves to be no problem, they can go on to develop an even greater richness in study and appreciation. I see this parting of ways as having already begun, with both a wistful regret, and a certain relief that all uncertainty and doubt has been cleared away.

The Lord of the Rings and The Silmarillion must each be approached in different ways for all of the above reason, and more, but at the same time the import of each needs to be integrated into a comprehensive understanding if we wish to see along the same line as the mind of the sub-creator. The Silmarillion, Unfinished Tales, and Letters are gold, silver, and diamond mines awaiting further excavations and discoveries.

Mythlore has published articles, reviews, letters, and art on these books before; now we present a special issue, due both to readers interest and the coming together of several articles on them at this time. Keep in mind that we cannot publish what we do not receive about any author or subject. In future we plan to take a balanced approach on printing articles about the older published works of Tolkien and the newer ones. There is much more that can be said about both.

Glen GoodKnight

Some Readers' Thoughts

In the last issue readers were asked to share their thoughts for possible publication on the question "How has the reading of The Silmarillion, Unfinished Tales, and/or The Letters of J. R. R. Tolkien changed my perception and appreciation of Tolkien." There were many responses, and I have used the blue pencil very sparingly in order to share them here. (Editor)

Lloyd Alexander

Drexel Hill, PA

In all accuracy, I'd say that the other works of Tolkien haven't changed my perception and appreciation, already about as high as they could be. They've simply given me a larger view of the man and his creative genius. My admiration hasn't changed, there's just more of it.

Dainis Bisenieks

Philadelphia, PA

I had been certain all along, at least since I read "On Fairy-stories," that Tolkien as story-teller and stylist knew exactly what he was doing. That impression is confirmed in superlative degree by the Letters. I doubt if any critic has bettered Tolkien's own exposition of the character and the moral choices of the principal persons of The Lord of the Rings, and (as

C. S. Lewis also knew) he was aware that style determines what can be said.

For all the fascination of The Silmarillion and associated works, I cannot find it in my heart to love them as I do LR. There are grand and moving passages in them, the whole vision is grand, but the characters and events don't touch me as nearly as those of, well, the fully mature work. So it is that I regret most the incomplete state of "The Mariner's Wife", in which greatness of spirit is best shown, just before the tale, alas, breaks off.

Robert Boenig

Roosevelt, NJ

The Silmarillion and Unfinished Tales have changed my appreciation of Tolkien in two ways. First, when I reread The Lord of the Rings, I no longer puzzle over/wonder about what all the allusions in the songs and conversations are. The slash between the two verbs in the last sentence is meant to convey both gain and loss, for this new knowledge has diminished for me somewhat the size of LR. I now have, in other words, a map of the perilous realm; I can find my way from place to place with ease, but just a small bit of wonder is gone.

The second way the two books have changed my ap-

preciation of Tolkien is not so ambivalent. Their spare, efficient prose with a minimum of description contrasts, of course, with the detailed, descriptive prose in The Hobbit and LR; the new Tolkien has become a master of two worlds, not just one. The style of S and UT is a medieval one — that of The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle and Malory. By breathing life into a style dead for almost five hundred years and showing our world just how lively it can be, Tolkien gratifies me as a medievalist who no longer need justify reading such prose to his students. "Look at Tolkien," I say, and my case is won.

Frederick Brenion Buena Park, CA

Reading The Silmarillion, Unfinished Tales, and Letters have not so much as changed my views of LR and Tolkien as they have deepened them. I am truly amazed at the sheer depths and heights of Tolkien's soul, mind, and spirit that created such magnificent conceptions of such imaginative intensities. At the risk of sounding as though forming a cult of personality on the good professor, my own thoughts are that in reading LR and The Hobbit my respect and admiration for Tolkien knew no bounds. In reading S, UT, and L I feel as if I have transcended my previous views. This is because in many respects, Tolkien has put more of himself, as it were, into the writings he never perhaps really intended to finish or publish, but wrote rather for himself. In doing so, he inadvertently reveals much more of his rich vision that he carried within. How will all these works affect "Tolkien Studies?" I am not sure, but I am more in agreement now with C.S. Lewis when he said that you cannot study men, you can only get to know them. Perhaps

it is not the studying but the getting to know him that provides for the continuation of that freshness and joy which we first experienced in reading him that carries us back again and again to his works.

Joe R. Christopher Stephenville, TX

A Mote of Dust, in November 1944

While at St. Gregory's, when the Quarant' Ore was being held, there Tolkien kneeling saw within a shaft of light, and sans a flaw, some brightened dust motes gently swirling, soaring. He'd come with worries for his son in wartime, flying in airplanes, and here, in aerial law, motes slowly flowed and swirled; he watched in awe, between him and the Sacrament, adoring.

"As love between the Father and the Son is aye a Person, like mirrors set, reflecting a light between; so, the Godhead won't shun Their high attention on us men, directing a shaft of light: that Love's a person, one to each man, a guardian angel him protecting."

based on Tolkien's Letters, No. 89

Paul F. Ford Arcadia, CA

What a treasure-trove The Letters of J.R.R. Tolkien is! I spent a delighted two weeks reading this collection. The impression of the great, good, struggling, humorous man which so moved me in Carpenter's biography was renewed and deepened by his edition of Tolkien's letters. I winced at T's criticisms of Americans (pp. 65, 181, 412) but cheered his pro-Jewish remarks (37, 229, 410n); I laughed at his references to an author's susceptibility to the "incense" of praise (265, 266, 418) and was transfixed by his descriptions of winter (107) and flowers (402-403).

There was much to be learned from T's statements about Lewis: L's virtues — his encouragement (303), industry (209), honesty (23), great generosity and capacity for friendship (362) and habit of written gratitude (209) — and his faults — his unenthusiasm for Hobbits (376), hyperimpressionability (341, 349) and hidden Ulsterism (95-96). Would that we had more of T's letters to L, beyond the uncomfortable-to-read pp 125-129. And would that T had elaborated his corroboration of Barfield's impression of L (363) in B's essay in Light on C.S. Lewis.

But what most impressed me was the Tolkien revealed in his letters to his son Michael. These letters were remarkable for their profound, classic Catholicity and spirituality. I know I will return many times to T's reflections on the Eucharist, marriage and divorce, joy, miracles, the poverty of the human spirit, guardian angels, and prayer. Concerning this latter topic, is there any possibility that T's unfinished and "unpublishable" commentary on L's Letters to Malcolm be published? This might be immensely helpful!

Paul Nolan Hyde West Lafayette, IN

Although my enjoyment of J.R.R. Tolkien's works is founded in the totality of the creation of Middle-earth, my scholastic interests have focused on the languages (both invented and historical). The Silmarillion, Unfinished Tales, and Letters are absolutely vital in order to come to an understanding of Tolkien's systems and in order to make any sense at all out of

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Some Readers' Thoughts Continued from page 5

his statements about his "linguistic aesthetic." The glossaries in S and UT provide a wealth of morphological elements which, when correlated with material gleaned from LR, deepens one's appreciation for Tolkien's consistency and detail. The Letters are invaluable in the task of determining the philosophical superstructures around which the languages are formed. Tolkien's "linguistic aesthetic" or his "taste" for certain sounds and syntactic structures is outlined sufficiently in Letters, to facilitate detailed studies of that aesthetic as implemented in the Middle-earth volumes. It would be hoped that a more concerted effort might be made toward developing a lucid and definitive evaluation of Tolkien's linguistic genius.

Paul H. Kocher

San Luis Obispo, CA

In the days when only *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* were known, I viewed these stories as mainly optimistic tales moving to happy endings, and assumed that Tolkien's other histories would be of like mood. In them evil was always present, of course, but the chief current of events was happy, the principal characters were admirable, and the tone of the whole triumphant. The appearance of *The Silmarillion*, a much more tragic book, changed this perception by dwelling not only upon Melkor's rebellion and its initial successes but also upon the revolt of the Noldor and the long series of their defeats on Middle-earth invoked by the curse of Mandos. In general the same is true of *Akallabeth* in the next Age, which narrates the decline and fall of Numenor, from which only Elendil and a few of the Faithful escaped. The making of the Rings of Power in the Second Age, introducing another sinister factor, shows how long and hard had been the struggle between good and evil of which Aragorn's coronation was the triumphant, if perhaps only temporary, conclusion.

Unfinished Tales presents the alternatives Tolkien considered for two tales in *Quenta Silmarillion*, for most of *Akallabeth*, and for certain episodes pertaining to *The Lord of the Rings*. He himself either rejected these or was forced to reject them by his publisher's demands to shorten his huge manuscripts. The *Quenta Silmarillion* tales as published are often so condensed as hardly to achieve credibility. The *Unfinished* versions of the stories of Turin and Tuor, for example, are much more leisurely and revealing of character than the brief versions in QS. Similarly, *Akallabeth* reads like a bare outline of the thousands of years of Numenor's history. The treatment Tolkien would have liked to give the island is visible in the powerful tragedy of Aldarion and Erendis, in which Aldarion's continual, almost compulsive, voyaging ruins his marriage and starts that commerce with the mainland which led to a fatal policy of expansion. By contrast, most of the fragments connected with LR throw light upon it and are enjoyable in their own right. Unhappily this is not true of those mutually contradictory ones about Galadriel, products of Tolkien's old age. He would have done better to stand on her story in its original published form. In the fragments pertaining to the history of Rohan, however, he writes at his best, filling them with luminous inventions of event and character.

Alexei Kondratiev

Flushing, NY

The Silmarillion and *Unfinished Tales* were, for me, not so much a revelation as a confirmation. They demonstrated something all Tolkien lovers had known all along, but which detractors of *The Lord of the Rings* had been unwilling to admit: that Tolkien was not a sentimentalist incapable of facing the tragic element in the human condition, that he did not see evil as something purely external which can be turned away by force of arms, but as an inescapable part of the very process of life, and attitude that tempts every being dwelling on this Earth. The First and Second Age tales constantly express, with the thrill that comes from risk and fear, the precariousness of Earth-bound beauty and goodness. Two scenes in particular stuck in my mind after my first reading: the menace of Melkor and Ungoliant looking down upon the Blessed Lands from the top of Hyarmentir; and the terrible moment when the dragon looks into Nienor's eyes, bewitching her. And there are, of course, the landscapes, the grandeur, wildness and freshness of a

youthful Arda, so different from the world of the Third Age.

The Silmarillion and *Unfinished Tales* are a trove I have only begun to dip into, and I will reread them many times. But of the newly released Tolkien books it is the *Letters*, I think, that give the most immediate enjoyment. Apart from providing authoritative answers to so many questions readers have been tossing about for years, they dispel the impression, given by some biographers and interviewers, that Tolkien was an unreasonable crank with extreme and categorical opinions. The *Letters* show that Tolkien was fully capable on going back on some of his more controversial pronouncements (cf. his statement on Dante, p. 377), and that he admitted to "limited tastes" without any hint of self-righteousness. I urge all those who have loved Tolkien's others works to read this one, especially those who might be tempted to bypass it because it is not fiction: far from being peripheral to the fictional works, it is right at the heart of the matter.

Nancy Martsch

Los Angeles, CA

I can't say that reading *The Silmarillion/Unfinished Tales* had much effect on my perception of Tolkien the man (although *Letters* did cast some interesting sidelights); the key work here was the biography of Humphrey Carpenter. But *The Silmarillion* had a profound effect on my appreciation of Middle-earth. To begin with, I was fascinated by the material in the appendices to *LotR* (particularly the linguistic material) and wanted more. I approached *The Silmarillion* with a feeling of awe and reverence. Here, at last, will be revealed THE TRUTH. Well it was and it wasn't: some questions were answered and many others asked. Even so, I find I like *The Silmarillion* as much as, if not more, than *LotR*. I enjoyed *LotR* more when reading it; it's a thrilling story. I don't think I would have got hooked on Middle-earth had I read *The Silmarillion* first, but I find I think about *The Silmarillion* far more often. I would not quite call it a religious experience, but it certainly provides a philosophical guide to life. (This, by-the-way, is the way to read *The Silmarillion* — as a collection of myths and legends, the history and religion of Middle-earth; not as an adventure story).

Margaret R. Purdy

Ridgewood, NJ

Waiting for *The Silmarillion* was like living on top of a plateau with mist all around it. The plateau was vast varied, and beautiful, with all sorts of places to explore, people to meet, and things to do and learn. But then there was this mist surrounding the place. We had some knowledge of what lay outside. There were tales. Every so often a patch would open up and we'd glimpse part of it, or an occasional traveler from those regions (e.g., C.S. Kilby) would let slip a few words about it; and of course, our own knowledge of geology, botany, and so forth would enable us to deduce things about it. But then, suddenly, one day, the sun comes up, the mist is miraculously lifted, and at last we can see! Now we have the full vista before us, and we can see where we are, where we came from, how the land we knew makes part of the larger whole. And, of course, we can now cross over and explore the surrounding lands, with all their beauties and terros. Many of these are the ones we had heard of (though often somewhat different from what we had expected); others are totally new (to us, that is — they have of course been there all along, and we can often see how something we knew in our own place was a reflection of one of these, or proceed from it).

With the *Unfinished Tales* and the *Letters*, (if I may change the metaphor), we have reached that delightful stage . . . called 'filling up the corners.' We have the full outline of myth complete in *The Silmarillion* and *LotR*, and now what remains is to enrich, proliferate, and adorn the whole, with varienats, details, interpretations, and sheer "lore." (Like Niggle's Tree, it is finished, but not finished with.) Some people, of course, don't have the taste for this kind of thing, but I am the sort who loves to nibble. Every new volume is a source of new delights, whether those of Middle-earth itself or the voice and presence of its creator. As far as I am concerned, I'm "ready to listen to anything, and to cheer at every full stop." Bring 'round the dessert wagon again!



Escape from Gondolin

Laura Ruskin

Whittier, CA

I love The Silmarillion for Turn Turambar, for the rivers of Beleriand, the loves and Elves and Men, Feanor's bitter pride, for the Making-Song of Arda, for Beren's high and long resolve, for the two trees shinging — but most of all, for him who was no pen hero, who slew no Worms, bore no blades of doom, founded no citadels — who only loved. Most of all, The Silmarillion gave to us the young Olorin, Grey Pilgrim, Mithrandir, lone stormcrow Gandalf, Istar mysterious no longer, now revealed as but a wanderer laboring not to win his beloved, but to give her the peace of

his forgetting. Scoured crag, fronting Orthanc and Barad-Dur, how great your wisdom, if you can rap peremptorily on a round green door at Bag End and be taken for a confustication only. Yet, in your last days of so many ages, were you given to accomplish a deed of valor mightier than Turin's, or Beren's, or and princely youth's: to overcome the Balrog of Moria. If I could finish your tale, Olorin, then where your beloved lies, would a mallorn-tree take root and spread its golden branches, to burst the roof and let in hope again, that high in its boughs you and she once more embracing, might truly forget all sorrow forever. Mithrandir Olorin, Namarie! Continued on page 36

Unfortunately, the dragon had no say in the Dragonslayer's script. The story lacks human depth, and this is aided and abetted by Peter MacNicol, who portrays the hero as a beamish boy without the grit or fiber to stand up even to the shadow of the dragon. However, Caitlin Clarke, the girl who had once been a boy, and Emrys James as her father, do.

But the player, and you can feel it in the marrow of your bones, who is a match for any dragon is Sir Ralph Richardson. He gives the best performance in the four movies because he lets you believe in the story's time and place and lets you feel deeply about the people and the forces of nature he encounters. It is by his reflection that we best see the dragons.

Don't think that it took miracles to believe in dragons during the sixth century. You believed on the mornings you awoke to find the pig cuddled next to you, the dirt floor flooded during the night, and the chicken knocking breakfast out of the roost to crack and splatter on the wet stones. The film gives an accurate feeling of this.

Also, this film, like Excalibur, gives you an accurate feeling for the shift from figurative man's ways to literal man's ways and from the old religions to Christianity. At first the dragon, fire pot and piles of gold, moved right into the new religion. This is clearly reflected by objects like the twelfth century Celtic-Viking-Christian processional cross of Cong, whose upright post is held firmly in the jaws of the wolf. Or currently, in the Zapotec Indian's corn goddess looking out from underneath Mary's celestial crown. But the new religion and Dr. Johnson's dictionary have persisted in evening out most of the rumples in the dragon's bed, and it is difficult to see his form.

Despite my own better judgement, I have tried to describe the dragon anyway. When the dragon, wrapped around the earth's middle of a Sunday morning, reads my attempt to describe him, he will probably roll on his back and kick his feet in the air with laughter.

Nichols Grimes

NOTE: as much as possible, the whimsical spelling in this delightful review is the critic's own, but a typist (even if she is an Editor) can nod. Supply your own sic! N-LP.

Some Readers' Thoughts

Mark Samuels

from page 21

Cambridge, MA

My appreciation of Tolkien has altered in two significant respects as a function of reading The Silmarillion and Unfinished Tales. (I have not read the Letters.) First, and more obvious, these books, and in particular S, are laced with a highly developed theology. Tolkien's Christianity was certainly not

absent from LotR, but it was expressed more as an underlying sense of morality than as a dogmatic framework. I found this preferable, and certainly more profound. The explicit theology of the First Age of Middle-earth involved a narrowing of scope, and demanded far more of the reader in accepting its relevance.

The second, and not unrelated, effect, has been to increase my respect for LotR as a story. Although the informative content to the later books is considerable (and enjoyable) nowhere do they strike to the heart, except in the story of "Aldarion and Erendis." The trials of the Children of Hurin, and even the tale of Beren and Luthien, left me sympathetic but essentially untouched. I could not conceive them as real people; they never spoke of ordinary matters or simple pleasures, they were caricatures. I don't think this was a consequence of the unfinished state of the material. It derived from the distinction between myth and story. Tolkien presented the First and Second Ages as myth, whereas LotR is story. No doubt this was deliberate, but, for all its psychological depths, myth lacks the complexity and essential humanity of story.

Joseph Simmons

Sacramento, CA

I am a latecomer to Tolkien. I stated out with C.S. Lewis' writings and then began to read Tolkien and Williams about the same time. I love them all, though I have more trouble relating to Tolkien than either Lewis or Williams. This may be because I prefer my heroic sagas with as little fantasy as is necessary. I would much rather read about knights pursuing the Holy Grail with its miraculous element than about Elves or Hobbits. For me LotR was engaging and fascinating but somewhat long. I would prefer The Silmarillion or That Hideous Strength.

It seems to me that in The Silmarillion, Tolkien establishes himself as a theologian/mythmaker. I am fascinated by his first section concerning creation and good and evil but I am much more touched by his stories of high heroism. Again, this is probably based simply on my preference for stories that deal with the heroic in relationship to present human experience. Consequently, if I would have to choose (and I thank God that I do not) between reading The Silmarillion or Williams' The Place of the Lion, I would choose Williams every time.

Benjamin Urrutia

SUNY, Albany, NY

Reading more Tolkien has made my soul hunger for even more. It wants to read of Tolkien's poetry — uncollected, unpublished, or unfinished — and Mr. Bliss and The Book of Lost Tales, and the long Hobbit-conversations that were cut out of the LotR ms., and his diary, and the letters that were not included in the collected volume, and his Philology, and his unfinished stories about time travel and about the troubles a century after LotR. Why are we denied all these? How long, oh powers that be?

Steven C. Walker

Provo, UT

Almost a decade ago, I conjectured in my Ph.D. thesis: "Tolkien's projected book, The Silmarillion, promises a complexity and intensity overshadowing The Lord of the Rings as that work eclipses The Hobbit." When The Silmarillion finally was published, I was stunned to discover it aesthetically inferior not only to LotR, but to the juvenile Hobbit. But The Silmarillion's inferiority to Tolkien's other major

Continued on page 47

CONTRIBUTORS

We are pleased to further introduce the writers of articles and cover artists.

Howard Davis

B. A. in English at Yeshiva University; M. A. in English Literature at San Diego State University, where he did his thesis on Tolkien. He currently teaches at MiraCosta College and Palomar College. He also practices meditation, and is preparing a Tolkien slide show with narration and music, which he will use as a form of teaching with media.

Bettina L. Knapp

B. A.: Barnard College; M. A. & Ph. D.: Columbia University; Sorbonne Certificat. She is a Professor at Hunter College and the Graduate Center of CUNY, and Lecturer at the C. G. Jung Foundation of New York. She has published 22 books, has a Guggenheim Fellowship, a Grant from the American Philosophical Society, Palmes Academiques (awarded by the French Government), Medal from the Alliance Francaise, a member of the National Humanities Faculty, and is President of the North-East Modern Language Association.

Janice Johnson

B. S. in English Literature and ESL at Southern Illinois University. She teaches English Literature, ESL, and Swedish, as well as being a free lance writer. Her independent studies include Nordic Runes, the Swedish language, Scandinavian history and literature, English history and Charles Dickens, besides studying Tolkien since 1968. She enjoys her small cottage, her flower garden, snow falls, spring flowers, and the small of October bon fires.

Steven Peregrine

B. F. A. in painting. He lives in upstate New York, where he is an artist and illustrator. His personal interests include mysticism and natural science, comparative literature and religion, parapsychology, and history. He enjoys married life, gardening, carving, and eleven cats.

Benjamin Urrutia

With apologies, information will appear in the next issue.

Patrick Wynne

He lives in Fosston, Minnesota and works as a Dental Lab Technician, besides the great deal of drawing which he does. Besides his strong interest in Tolkien, he enjoys writing poetry, and reading historical novels such as by Robert Graves.

SUBMISSIONS

Mythlore welcomes submissions of articles, art, reviews, poetry, as well as other materials. See Page 2 for the address of the appropriate Editor when making a submission. Contributors' of articles, cover and back cover art, should also submit a short biographical paragraph for publication.

While not required, we would appreciate having manuscripts typed in format: single spaced in 4 1/2 inch wide column, double spaced between paragraphs with a carbon ribbon typewriter. To save space, please restrict the use of footnotes in incorporating "ibid." and "op. cit." citations in your text in parentheses. Type your name and address on the first page, and your last name on each succeeding page; staple cover letter and pages together. An enclosed postcard will hasten acknowledgement. Enclose self-addressed envelope with paper-clipped stamps.

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The 13th Annual
Mythopoeic Conference
August 13-16, 1982

Chapman College Orange, California

Reminder: Room and meals payment should be sent by July 15 (it may be possible to pay about 10 days beyond this, but this is not certain). The rate for room and meals is \$27 a day, or \$85 for those staying the entire conference. This price includes meals, and an air-conditioned room (double occupancy). Write for further details on questions you may have.

The theme of the 1982 Mythopoeic Conference is The Celtic Influence on Fantasy Literature, with special emphasis on the writings of the Inklings.

Much has been planned to make this a very special and enjoyable conference, and we hope you will be there to share in it.

Please send all memberships (which are now \$20), inquiries, and requests to MYTHCON XIII, P. O. Box 5276, Orange, California 92667.

Some Readers' Thoughts Continued from page 36

fiction paradoxically expanded my appreciation for him as a writer. *The Silmarillion* — the soil from which that great tree, *The Lord of the Rings*, grew — confirmed what LotR hinted at: an awesome array of implicit mythic detail buttressing Tolkien's narrative. And *The Silmarillion* deepened my respect for Tolkiens aesthetic discipline as much as for his fecund inventiveness.

(The Editor wishes to thank those who participated in sharing their thoughts in this issue. The diversity of perspectives is like to leaves on a tree, and a tribute to Tolkien who offered so much to so many different individuals. -GG)