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Letters

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LETTERS

Joan Marie Verba

St. Paul, MN

I was delighted to see "The *Silmarillion* as Aristotelian Epic-Tragedy," by David Greenman in *Mythlore* 53. In particular, I agree with his opinion that, "The *Silmarillion* displays not sketchily or haphazardly sought-for design, but established, masterful artistry." I have enjoyed *The Silmarillion* since the first time I read it. Since I had it in hand at the 1987 Mythopoeic Conference at Marquette University for CRRT to sign, I read it once more, and found it just as enchanting and terrifying as when I read it the first time. The most memorable scene, to me, is the one wherein Fingolfin pounds on the gates of Angband, calls Morgoth a coward, and challenges him to single combat. The words, "And Morgoth came," made me jump out of my chair the first reading, and is still powerful upon repeated readings. I think *The Silmarillion* is the most underappreciated of Tolkien's works, and I am pleased to see that there are those who are interested in analyzing its strengths.

Lynn Maudlin

Altadena, CA

I've been intending, for a good long time, to write a letter and now, before another three years slip by, here is one.

Susan Dawes' cover of ML-53 is a delight and, while I am a big fan of pen & ink, it's a nice change of pace to see some pencil work. Bonnie Callahan's "Yavanna" on the back is another lovely piece, making for a very attractive issue. I was also very impressed with the cover of ML-52; Sarah Beach's "Great Snow Dance" was a different kind of approach for the artist, one that I think works quite well, and Pat Wynne's back cover pen & ink of Tolkien is eloquent.

I enjoyed *The Thingol Scroll* by Tom Loback in #52 (pp. 42-45) and was particularly impressed by Nancy-Lou Patterson's Beorn Hall illustration from p. 33 of ML-50; a piece I'd recommend for any future portfolios the Society might print. Pat Wynne is clearly in profound need of counseling (It's not a job, it's an Orc Venture ???) but, personally, I hope he doesn't get it!

There were a collection of wonderful short pieces toward the back of issue #53: Paul Nolan Hyde's "Turkish Delight" (p. 48); Steven Deyo's "Wyrd and Will" (p. 59); and Robert Boenig's "The Drums of Doom" (p. 57 -- First Men in the Men?!).

Regarding the Boenig piece, I think he misunderstands CSL's use of the word "influence" ("No one ever influenced Tolkien -- you might as well try to influence a bandersnatch"). Lewis doesn't imply that Tolkien has never been inspired by existing books and authors; he is speaking of Tol-

kien's response to criticism, of being swayed or changing opinion. This is perhaps minor quibbling but I think Boenig is taking the Lewis quote out of context.

There are many other items worthy of comment and praise but I've not yet finished the issue and fear that waiting will be the undoing of this nascent letter. Keep up the fine work.

Christopher Gilson

Berkeley, CA

I am just reading you latest *Quenti Lambardilion*, and I must agree that you do have difficulty perceiving the "spirit of poetry". I would humbly and will all due respect suggest that there may be a flaw in your methodology. It is all well and good to identify every possible breakdown of a particular word like *lintulinda* or *plingeve*, when we do not have the benefit of Tolkien's own analysis. But having done so one has to realize that some of the analyses one comes up with are mistaken. There must be some fortuitous sound resemblances in Elvish. (That this is so should become clear to you if you apply your method to some relatively well understood text like "Galadriel's Lament". I think with some effort you could come up with an equally overextended translation, based quite securely on sound resemblances with other Elvish forms.) Having carefully deduced the possible meanings of an untranslated text one has to step back and attempt a synthesis of particular possibilities which in context make sense. In so doing one may have to throw out an interesting or aesthetically attractive correspondence as wholly due to chance and the accident of our imperfect knowledge. The test of whether one succeeds in producing a convincing translation is precisely whether one attains a perception of the thrust of the entire text.

That you have a tendency to inject "meaning" wherever Tolkien's guidance is not directly forthcoming, is clear from your tentative translations of Glorfindel's greeting of Strider, *Ai na vedui Dunadan! Nae govannen!* as "Hail, be everlasting, West-man" or "Be holy forever, West-man". Aside from the obvious fact that no one talks like this anywhere else in Tolkien's writing, you have failed to make the simple observation that two paragraphs later, Glorfindel greets Frodo with the words, "Hail, and well met at last!" It is surely beyond the realm of coincidence that if we reorder these words into *Hail at last West-man! Well met!* we come up with a translation of the Sindarin that is both contextually and etymologically convincing, with the additional attractiveness that Tolkien has provided us with the means of interpretation. (*Ai* = *Q* *Aiya* 'Hail'; *na* = *N* *na* 'with, by'; *vedui* = lenition form of

adjectival **med-ui* < root *MET-* 'end', also seen in *Arvedui* 'Last-king'; *mæ* is related to *Q Maia*; *govannan* has segment *gov-* related to *Q om-* in *omientelvo* 'our meeting', though possibly by merely sharing prefixes derived from *WO-* 'together' > *Q o-*, *N go-* with the coincidental resemblance of *Q men* 'place, spot' with *On. bad* 'way' = Eldarissa *vande*, the sense of both compound verbs being 'paths coming together'.

I agree that *lintulinda* poses a question of whether to divide the word *lin-tulinda* or *lintulinda*. And it may well be that the poet, in choosing the latter compound was aware of the associations that the former "interpretation" yields, something like 'many-bearing' or 'many-coming', i.e. a repeated phenomenon, which Autumn clearly is. The difficulty I see with this as the primary meaning is that it is not very vivid. And given the fact that the word can straight-forwardly be interpreted as *lintu-linda* 'swiftly singing' or 'lightly singing', seems to me to obviate any discussion of an alternative, primary sense of this word in context, especially when we consider that leaves do create music when touched by the wind (*suyr* in line 2), and the idea recurs in *suru laustane / laustasse-lindon* 'wind roaring like the leaves of forests' and metaphorically in *talin paptalasselindeen* 'with feet like the music falling leaves'. As for your suggestion that in *lintulinda* we have a citation of the first person singular, I can only point out that in "Galadriels Lament" this sound sequence in occurs 8 times and never refers, as such, to the first person. (In *nin* 'for me' this is not completely obvious, but in fact this is to be analyzed as *ni-n* with a dative suffix, rather than **n-in*). The 1st p. sg. is marked variously by *ni*, *ni-*, *-ne*, *-in*, *-nye(s)*, *-nya*, *-nya(r)*, *-inya*, and *-ninya*, but for all of this variety there is nothing to suggest that the ending *-da* can be added after the marker of the first person, or what such an arrangement would mean.

That the words beginning *las-* could in fact refer to either 'leaves' or 'ears' and 'hearing' is noteworthy, especially when one considers the extensive fannish debate that has ensued of over the shape of Elven-ears for as long as I can remember. But the suggestion that any Elf would actually understand *lasse-lanta* as referring to sounds falling into the ear seems somewhat far-fetched. As to your interpretation of the apparent occurrence of the locative ending *-sae* in the word *lasse* and conclusion that it is "likely" that this word refers specially to leaves "no longer attached to the tree", I think you have misunderstood the evidence. This ending refers to position 'at', 'by' or 'near' the locus of the noun it declines, and is quite distinct from the *sblative* suffix *-lo* which means loosely 'from'. If anything, the ending of this word would refer to the situation of many leaves together in the same place, either on the tree or having fallen, or perhaps falling as a group; though there are always problems with trying to equate derivation and declension, even when the historical context is fairly familiar and certain. Still notice that *falasse* 'shore' < 'line of surf' is located at or near the surf, not away from it.

In your analysis of *Pilingeve* you have convinced yourself that *-in* is almost universal as a verb conjugation suffix'. I have already shown that this is a misrepresentation of observable sound-frequency patterns. What is perhaps unfortunate about this example is that you do not follow through in your usual thoroughness, and miss the interesting facts that *Q linga-* means 'hang, dangle', and the verb *linganer* is translated 'hummed like a harp-string'. These two concepts are not very close and we might assume mere accidental resemblance, or suggest that **li-ngan-er* contains the root *NGAN-* 'play (on stringed instrument)' But in fact *-ne* occurs as a marker of the past tense in *ortane* 'lifted up' and in several verb forms in "Ety.m.": *merne, ontano, farnne, tamne, ullyane*, etc. So it seems that *linga-* is indeed the stem in *linga-ne-r*. I suspect that the way *linga-* acquired its musical connotation is connected to the fact described in the entry *LIN-* 'sing', that the stem *lin(de)-* in *Laurelin* was reinterpreted as *lin(ge)-* and the name "taken as 'hanging-gold'", which conception is also seen in the *N Glingal* and *S Glingol*. As the archetypical example of the word *linga-*, it could probably have metaphorical reference to anything that conceivably "hung" from the Golden Tree, including its leaves, blossoms, the "light spilled from the tips of these and splashed upon the ground with a sweet noise" (LT1:72), and the music itself that would hang in the air round the Tree and its splashing dew. Having been led there by the linguistic evidence, I can even imagine the dangling drops of golden light and their paths as they fell resembling the effect of light upon the strings of a harp as they fell resembling the effect of light upon the strings of a harp as they hum their music to hang in the air. Whether this image was available in the sound sequence of an extension of *pilin* 'arrow' to **pilinge* is not certain. But arrows do hang in the air seemingly, and they hum as they fly. If we interpret the suffix *-ve* as a use of the same element seen in *ve* 'like, as' (essentially a suffix something like "as arrows do when they 'hang' humming"). That *pilin* can be used in reference to *flora* is shown by one of Tolkien's drawings labelled *pinehtar*. The plant has dark leaves partly shaped like spears (cf. *ehte* 'spear', *ehhtar* 'spearman') and partly like arrow barbs.

To me it seems highly plausible that the *-r* in *suyr* is equivalent to the same ending in *lune-linqe vea-r* 'in the [blue] flowing sea' and *silda-rana-r* 'in the moon gleaming' and *ya-r i vilya anta miqilis* 'to whom the wind gives kisses'. This appears to be a sort of broadly idiomized "dative" case with references to *recipient, means, location*. These all occur together in the role that *suyr* 'wind' plays in the poetic picture being posed of Autumn as swift in passage but musical, the falling of leaves, like arrows in flight, filling the valley with their sound. This is charged with Elven perspective, the image seems so forceful and fleeting to us, but Fall would be a poignant and swift affair to the long-lived Elves. How to unravel the remainder of the first two lines is more problematic. In *nalla* we must have either adjective or oblique noun form of 'valley' or noun, verb, or participle form of 'cry'. Since the word *ganta* is the only example of initial *g* in a context that

appears otherwise to be "High-elven", it seems reasonable to assume that this fragment represents a uniquely archaic or dialectal sample, if the text is genuine here. If this is Exiled Noldorin pronunciation of Qenya where Noldorin speech habits come to play, then perhaps Q *anta-* 'give' and ON **nganda-* 'harp' have influenced the form *ganta*. If we suppose the text is somehow faulty, then I would suggest perhaps [g]anta 'fills' or 'full' might be a plausible emendation. Under any of these possibilities I would see the same basic spirit to the poem, if perhaps slightly different nuances. If there were enough homophonies to sustain syntactic ambiguity here, I might even suggest a deliberate pun to allow both specific sequences, but in any case something like the following seems a straightforward spirited reading of the poem's beginning:

Ah swift singing Leaf-fall
Like arrows humming to/with the wind (in) the valley
gives/fills...

Kuluvi may contain the element *luv-*, though perhaps the image of 'bow' in curved golden (leaves) is more pertinent than that of lowering (clouds), still the senses may be related and only the implied object different: the 'golden-leaves' plural could be imaged as a cloud overhead, threatening to rain leaves. It is possible on the other hand, that *kulu(v)-i* is simply the plural to *sg. kulu* 'gold'. In any case we would be fairly safe to render *kuluvi ya* as referring (if not literally) to 'golden leaves which...'

As for *karnevalinar* I would start with *karne* 'red' and be confident in positing **karnea* 'of red' like *miruvoreva* 'of nectar'. If this sort of genitive could also be understood and function as an adjective 'reddish', then it could take the plural suffix *-li*. But in fact we need only suggest dividing the word *karneva-li-nar* to be able to render it 'reddish many are' and see the whole line as meaning 'golden leaves many of which are red', whether the ending is a suffixation of the present plural of the verb 'to be', or an instance of the adjective forming suffix *-(i)na* with plural ending *-r*. (Either interpretation serves similar syntactic functions, and etymologically verb and adjective suffix may be the same.) The rhetorical point makes more sense in Qenya because *kulu* is "a class name of all red and gold metals", and so can metaphorically equal either *laure* or *karne*. Another possibility is still open though, that *nar* connects rather with the next line thus:

Ah swiftly singing Leaf-fall,
Humming arrow-like in the valley winds, presents
Golden hues of which many of the reds are
Like...

The last line (which I agree begins with the word *ve* 'as, like' with contraction of its *e* by the initial *e* of *ematte*), assuming Humphrey Carpenter chose a part of the poem that indeed ends with a period, must explain the reds of autumn (or its other characteristics) as "like" something in Eldamar. In this respect it would resemble the opening lines of "Galadriel's Lament", to which we can see already it is similar in general sense, evoking the swift intensity of Autumn, which the other com-

pare to the draughts of *miruvor* in Varda's halls. Perhaps the parallelism continues. Presumably *karneva* could refer to "reddish" wine or liqueur. (The word *miru* is glossed 'wine' in the "Qenya Lexicon", by the way.) If some activity in Eldamar like drinking is involved in the metaphor, then we would not expect *Eldamar* to be the subject or direct object of a subordinate clause, if that is indeed what we have here. But the name is not inflected for case, so that means that somehow one of the other words must tie in *E* as the location. Your idea of *singi* 'in this place' works perfectly in this respect. The difficulty is that the poet's using *v(e)* 'like, as' to introduce something metaphorical ought to refer to some difference in either time or place from his own point of view. While a temporal contrast is evoked in such poems as "Kor-tirion among the Trees", where location of the poet in Warwickshire is spatially identical with the Alaminore of the past it recalls, as Christopher Tolkien observes in the index to *The Book of Lost Tales -Part One, of Eldamar* 'Elfhame', "in almost all occurrences the reference is to the shores, coasts, strand, beach or rocks of Eldamar". i.e. to the old home of the Elves on the central seaboard of Valinor. If the word *singi* is from the demonstrative stem *SI-* 'this, here, now', then perhaps *singi Eldamar* means something like 'even now in Elf-home'.

Of the word *ematte* I would say that Tolkien's gloss of *laita te* as 'bless them' does not necessarily support your generalization that "te and its related forms are dual pronouns meaning 'those two'". Certainly there is a suffix *-nte* described as the "inflection of 3 plural where no subject is previously mentioned" (UT: 317). And I am inclined to view the preposition *tenna* 'up to, as far as' (*ibid.*) as in origin an alative case-form in *-nna* derived from this same pronoun *te*. Also now there is the word *toi* used in the Qenya poem in *The Lost Road* (p. 72), in both instances with predicate adjectives, and meaning essentially 'they are'. If Elvish originally had a distinction in its demonstratives between the stems *SI-* 'this' and *TA-* 'that', then since the former had related personal pronominal forms *su*, *so* 'he', *si*, *se* 'she' which in the entry *S-* are said to underlie verb inflections, it may well be that *Q(u)enya* developed from the contrast of 'that' vs. 'this' an inflectional contrast between 3 plural with subject not yet mentioned and 3 plural with mentioned subject, like the distinction between *tiruvante(s)* 'they will guard (it)' and *(i) harar* '(they who are sitting) (op, sit.)' or the analogous contrast between *Tulielto* 'They have come' and *(I-Eldar) tulior* '(the Eldar) They have come' (LTI: 114). Be all this as it may, there is in any case nothing in the general sense of the poem to motivate the occurrence of a dual pronoun at this point. So I am inclined to see a 3rd person suffix *-te* in *ematte* rather than a 3rd person dual.

As for what root we should appeal to for the primary sense of the verb, your suggestion that *Q ma* may be related holds some promise. Perhaps a stem *ema-* meaning something like 'hand out' > 'serve, provide'. But this falls as such to account for the double *t*. And if the image does involve some golden-red drink of Eldamar, than the Qenya verb stem *mat-* from the root *MAT-* 'eat' seems to

provide a more vivid possibility. Whether the Kenya could refer to feeding in general upon either liquid or solid food, would be difficult to prove. But note that the root occurs in the Noldorin compound *megli* 'bear' < **mad-lj* 'honey-eater' containing roots *MA-* 'eat' and *LIS-* 'honey'. And of course honey is neither specifically liquid nor solid, but as the only canonical example of an object for this verb, significant in its obvious associations with the nectar that drips from blossoms, if this same idea is a valid part of the explanation of *pilingeve* which I outlined above.

While the verb *ematte* could in this way be seen to fit with the spirit of the poem, there is still the difficulty that the concept essential to this interpretation, the drink to which the leaves of autumn are compared in sound and color, is never referred to by any specific word in the fragment. It would therefore be convenient if this were somehow the meaning of *singi*. The closest word I can come up with that might phonetically and semantically support this possibility is *sindi* 'river'. This occurs as derivative of the QL root *SIRI* 'flow' along with *sire* 'stream' and *sirima* 'liquid, flowing', and in the compound *kelusindi* 'a river' under the root *KELÉ, KELU* 'flow, trickle, ooze'. Regarding this compound there is an isolated note: 'The river of the second rocky dwelling of the Gnomes in Valinor was *kelusindi* and the spring at its source *kapalinda*.' (LTI: 157) The alternation of *nd* with *r* is historically justified where the primitive root contained a *d* which shifted to *r* in Kenya between vowels or word finally but remained *d* in the combination *nd < d + n*. Thus from 'Etyim.' root *SYAD-* 'shear through, cleave' come verb *hyarin* 'I cleave' while from derivative **syadno, *syando* 'cleaver, sword' in **stangasyando* comes *Q sangahyando* 'through-cleaver'. Cf. QL *HYARA* 'plough through': *hyar* 'plough', *hyanda* 'blade, share' (LT2: 342). But *d* did not shift to *r* in Noldorin, but rather was softened to the spirant *dh* intervocally while *nd* remained in certain positions or became *nn*. That this phonological pattern was already present in the Lexicons can be seen for example in the Gnomes words related to QL roots *FIRI* and *IRI* (LT2: 341, 343).

The upshot is almost certainly that *Q sindi* is not a regular historical development from primitive Elvish, for their Gnomish cognates *sir* 'river', *siriol* 'flowing', and *Sirion*, show that the *r* in *Q sire, sirims* is original and not derived from *d*. The word *sindi* is a clearcut example of analogy within Kenya, of the Noldoli expanding its vocabulary to suit their own tastes, and with evident deliberation. Phonologically the derivation of *sindi* imitates the association of *hyanda* with *hyar, indi* 'earth-dwellers' with *irmin* 'the world', *findi* 'lock of hair' with *firin* 'ray of the sun', *lindeló* 'song, music' with *lirilla* 'lay, song'. Syntactically it imitates the prevalent pattern of nouns derived from verb stems using an 'infix'd' nasal: *lutte* 'ship from *lutu-* 'float', *limpe* 'drink of the fairies' from *LIPI* as in *lipte-* 'drip', *linge* 'water' from *liqn* 'wet', *lambo* 'tongue' from *LAVA* 'lick'. And semantically the resulting assonance not only with *linge*, but also with *nienigpe* 'white bear', *nigwa* 'blue', *rin* 'dew', *winge* 'foam, spindrift', and especially *kapalinda* 'spring of water', may all have

helped to reinforce the particular choice of the form *sindi*, as a neologism.

I have gone into this much incidental detail regarding the historical position of *sindi*, because it illustrates the mechanics of a process that was probably widespread through the development of Kenya as spoken by the Noldoli, if not so readily demonstrable. I believe, by the way, that part of Tolkien's purpose in building the "Lexicons" was, as the term suggests, to explore just these sorts of derivational interactions within each language; just as the purpose of "The Etymologies" was to explore the phonological interrelationships that underpin their lexicography. And I would even go so far as to suggest that this difference in purpose is largely responsible for the apparent divergence in vocabulary between the earlier and later works, where shifts in nomenclature of the stories themselves are not demonstrably the cause of such divergence. But whether or not this seems reasonable, clearly *sindi* is close enough in the external chronology to service an explanation of *singi*. And if in fact *sindi* was perceived as loosely evocative of such other "water" terms as *rin* 'dew' (with its relatives *ringa* 'damp, cold, chilly', *ringwe* 'rime, frost') and *winge* 'foam' (with *wingild-* 'nymph', *wingilote* 'foam-flower'), it could possibly provide in its turn the basis for another analogical formation *singe* or *singi*, suggesting 'cool foamy liquid' whence the meaning of 'mead' or 'wine'. Also if we are looking for associations with Kenya forms containing *ing*, the name *Ingil* may have some bearing. He was the son of Inwe, King of all the Eldar when they dwelt in Kor. He built the great tower for which *Kortirion* was named, and Tol Eressea was called *Ingilore* after him. In the introduction to the earliest version of "Kortirion among the Trees" it is stated that: "Yet still there be some of the Eldar and the Noldoli of old who linger in the island, and their songs are heard about the shores of the land that once was the fairest dwelling of the immortal folk." It may be that the present poem was supposed to be just such "a wistful song of things that were, and could yet be" (line 49) or "woven song of stars and gleaming leaves" (line 103), attributed therein to these latter-day Elves. The connection with *Ingil* and our suggestion for the meaning of *singi* may be hinted at in the legend of that star Sirius is *Gil* (= Gn. *Gilweth* = *Q Ingil*) who "in the likeness of a great bee bearing honey of flame followed Daimord" (= *Telimektar* 'Orion') into the heavens from Tol Eressea in pursuit of Melko, and as such is also called "the Bee of Azure, *Nielluin* whom still may all men see in *autumn* or in winter turning nigh the foot of *Telimektar* son of *Tulkas*". (See LTI: 182, 256, LT2: 281.) The introduction to *Kortirion* also claims that "it seems to the fairies and it seems to me... that autumn and the falling of the leaf is the season of the year when maybe here or there a heart among Men may be open, and an eye perceive how is the world's estate fallen from the laughter and loveliness of old." Whether or not *Ingil*'s overlooking of this season has any connection with the words in the Kenya poem fragment, it would seem to me that this sentiment has something to do with the spirit of the simile drawn between the music of falling leaves and whatever activity is taking place in *Eldamar*.

There is one further point to make. The interpretation of *singi* as a noun rather than a preposition leaves *Eldamar* syntactically dangling. I would therefore appeal to the fact that in English, as probably in most languages, the verb in one clause can be included implicitly in a parallel clause by a sort of ellipsis, as for example in:

Music fills the studio, like laughter the playground.

It is possible then that the overall syntactic pattern of the fragment can be represented by something like the following in English:

Autumn with its musical sounds fills the valley,
like mead-consumption Eldamar.

This is perhaps only marginally grammatical in English, but if so this is a question of usage, and we have no way to judge the question as regards Kenya, once we recognize the possibility, save by the yardstick of the sensibility it can render the fragment we are attempting to interpret. To sum up I would offer the following as a translation of the Eldarin text:

Ai lintulinda Lasselanta
Ah swift-singing Leaf-fall
Alas the swiftly singing fall of leaves

Pilingve suyer nalla [q]anta
Arrow-hanging/humming-like wind-in valley fills
like the hum of arrows hanging on the wind fills
the valley

Kuluvi ya karnevalinar
Goldens which red-of-many-are
with golden hues and variegated reds

V'ematte singi Eldamar
like did-eat-they liquid-cool/foamy Elven-home
like the sounds of their feasting on mead filled
Elfinesse

[Certainly the exegesis given above deserves more than a simple rebuttal or dismissal. Since I am not naturally given to polemics, I will attempt neither. Instead I will state that my approach to the languages of J.R.R. Tolkien have almost always been "speculatively descriptive" rather than "definitively prescriptive". My motives have been two-fold: (1) I do not believe that there is presently sufficient contextually-defined material to be even moderately conclusive about syntax and grammar, particularly since there is such a plethora of dialects invented by JRR and we are often not privy as to which dialect is functional in a particular text; (2) I believe that one of the delightful things about Tolkien linguistics is the joy of discovery, finding out for one's self, out of a genuine desire to know for one's self, an approach that is invariably squelched by the overbearance associated with prescription. My methodology has been, therefore, to present a variety of possibilities, some admittedly far-fetched, in order to spark interest. In making this confession, I hope no one thinks of my little essays as being intentionally patronizing; I have no such inclination for doing so and I despise that particular weakness in others. I am simply a student, at the feet of a linguistic genius,

learning what I can from his notes, cryptic though they may be at times. I frankly feel that any other approach stultifies the aesthetic appreciation of what J.R.R. Tolkien has done in his creations. In conclusion, I personally look forward to the possible publication of the complete poem from which Carpenter's quote represents the not-quite-correct lines #5-#8. Chris and I will undoubtedly then have another opportunity to revise our present views --PNH]

Pat Reynolds

Milton Keynes, England

I am afraid in my article "Looking Forwards from the Tower" in *Mythlore* 52, that on page 8 and in note 24 I confused two of the speakers at the second Tolkien Workshop, ascribing an idea in a paper by Christina Scull to her fellow speaker Jessica Yates. My apologies to both these ladies.

Darrell A. Martin

Wheaton, IL

I find it hard to motivate myself to write in contradiction of anything in *Mythlore*; its arrival each quarter is one of the highlights of my cyclical existence, and I am much more often instructed and entertained, or corrected, than aggravated. Two recent articles, both on Tolkien, are unfortunate exceptions.

Gene Hargrove's article "Who is Tom Bombadil" in *ML* 47 was one. Bob Acker's letter in refutation in *ML* 53, except for finding Hargrove's argument "extremely plausible", is quite satisfactory. But, except in cases of the same name (e.g. Glorfindel) or authorial comment (e.g. Olorin=Gandalf), I find precious little justification for the whole "who is" genre, when the conclusion is to identify a minor character as an appearance of one of the major ones. One might just as well try to identify each naiaid and dryad as "being" one of the Olympic pantheon. "The Ainulindale" tells us that "of the Ainur some abode still with Iluvatar beyond the confines of the World; but others, and among them many of the greatest and most fair, took the leave of Iluvatar and descended into it." The Classical parallel may be instructive; a few "Olympic Valar" with authority throughout Creation and with subordinates in their elementally oriented sphere (Manwe-Zeus/Jupiter-Air, Ulmo-Poseidon/Neptune-Water, etc.) and a horde of lesser spirits oriented toward subdivisions of the elements (Osse and Uinen, the Inner Seas), or geographically (Bombadil and The Old Forest), or both elementally and geographically (River-woman and the Withywindle).

"Who are you, Master?" is a worthy question, if by it one means, "What sort of being are you?" Frodo began the game, after all. But a worthy conclusion will have to resemble Tom's reply, "Don't you know my name yet? That's the only answer."

The other article that got my goat was Betty J. Irwin's "Archaic Pronouns in *The Lord of the Rings*" in *ML* 51. The left side of my brain was bothered by the inaccuracies I found, and the right side was saddened by the author's significant misunderstanding of an emotional moment that depends, to a great extent, on the use of language for its power.

I was raised with the King James Bible as my basic literary text. Unlike many fellow churchgoers, I took the trouble to learn the correct usage of the archaic pronouns and verb-forms. Irwin quotes Moore on the late-16th Century use of *thou, thy, thee* as only to inferiors and intimate equals. I do not believe it for an instant. The KJV (trans. before 1611) uses these words as the common 2nd pers. sing., including addressing deity. Even if I were convinced of this 16th Century use, Tolkien was writing for 20th Century readers. English has been so affected by the KJV that we now regard these pronouns as formal, even exalted, speech (the Quakers being an anomaly, in much the same way as were the Shire folk). Tolkien's note in Appendix F, II, "On Translation" explicitly confirms the "ceremonious" nature of the use of archaic pronouns, and clearly explains the few cases where familiarity is intended instead. None of the evidence contradicts the note, and I see no reason to discard it.

Irwin makes a point of the change between *thy* and *your* in the elves' song to Elbereth. The distinction is illusory. The antecedent of *thee* and *thy* is in each case "Elbereth", but of *your* it is "stars". Elementary grammatical analysis would not have missed this.

Irwin's misapprehension of the use of archaic pronouns results in a loss of meaning in the passage she quotes from "The Pyre of Denethor". Denethor uses both modern and archaic forms, while Gandalf uses only modern. She inverts the truth by attributing a consistent formal attitude to Gandalf, and implying a familiar attitude to Denethor. In fact, Gandalf is speaking normally -- even soothingly -- while Denethor uses poetically excessive formal speech. Yet when Faramir moans and calls for his father, "Denethor started as one waking from a trance." For the next six sentences spoken by Denethor (though there are no pronouns to help us), he is a sane, sorrowful father. His words are simple, his language normal, his sentences short. But as Gandalf carries Faramir away and calls to Denethor to follow, "Then suddenly Denethor laughed. He stood up tall and proud again," and we are back to flowery formal speech -- and despair. The parallel between Denethor and the ill Faramir in Rath Dinen, and Gollum and the sleeping Frodo on the Stairs of Cirith Ungol, is poignant. We should not allow a misinterpretation of most of Denethor's speech as familiar and Gandalf's as formal to cloud the scene.

Irwin does correctly point out that Denethor sometimes uses *you* in places where *thou* would be expected. I suspect that Tolkien avoided *thou* when it would seem to require awkward-sounding archaic 2nd pers. verb constructions such as "thou mayest triumph" and "thou commandedst this halfling", but accepted archaic forms of auxiliary verbs such as "Didst thou think" and "Thou shalt not deny"; again, the archaic use being not familiar but formal.

I was informed and enlightened by Greenman's "The Silmarillion as Aristotelian Epic-Tragedy" in *ML* 53, and by Reckford's "Odysseus and Bilbo

Baggins" in the same issue. I am also thoroughly delighted by the Greek ceramic style used by Patrick Wynne in illustrating the latter article. Keep this artist happy!



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by Patrick Wynne

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Helena Sanders

Haddenham, England

I have just received my first numbers of *Mythlore*. As I must be amongst the oldest of your readers on either side of the Atlantic, I thought that you and they might be interested in my experiences of our favorite authors.

I became a fan of Dorothy L. Sayers when the
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first Lord Peter book came out. I cannot remember if it was *Murder Must Advertise*, or *Five Red Herrings*. I have read them all regularly since. I used to discuss them with my grandmother, who died in 1936. Her greeting to me on what must have been my last visit to her was "When is Dorothy Sayers going to write another book?"

I was at that time a licensed Parish Worker, with my first car. It was neither young nor beautiful, but very useful. I called it Miss Climpson. The vicar under whom I worked was rather annoyed. He wanted the name for a used car that he had just bought. It was in better condition than my car, quite smart, but second-hand. He called it Harriet.

I told Miss Sayers about this when, just after the war, I got to know and love her. She had the reputation of being arrogant. But to me she was kindness itself. We often met at St. Anne's House, Schoe, London. It was run as a Mission to intellectuals. St. Anne's Church had been bombed and one of the wardens of the house was the Rev. Patrick MacLoughlin, Vicar of nearby St. Thomas', Regent Street. Dorothy Sayers was his Church Warden. We were constantly discussing the Church's teaching about sex and marriage, not only at meetings, but in casual conversations. We had no idea that she was married to a divorced man, and had an illegitimate child. I often wonder what she thought.

I once went to a study group led by the other Warden, the Rev. Gilbert Shaw. He was talking about the place where science, philosophy and theology meet. I understood about every tenth sentence. Only two other people were at the study group. One was Dorothy Sayers, who had brought a friend. After a while she said "I am afraid this is rather beyond me."

As far as I know I have read and re-read everything she wrote (apart from "Dante", I could not get on with that) including "Striding Folly" and the little-known "Even the Parrot". I went to hear her speak when I could, including a lecture on "The Technique of Murder", and one about the Resurrection, early in the war. Some of her theological work has dated, but "The Man Born to be King", "The Zeal of Thy House" (a play about Canterbury Cathedral) and above all, "The Mind of the Maker" are of lasting value, which had a great influence on the thinking of my husband and myself.

The recent BBC series based on "Strong Poison", "Have his Carcase" and "Gaudy Night" was excellent. I used to dress like Harriet Vane. They caused much enjoyment.

I was fascinated by the article in *Mythlore* 45 "C.S. Lewis, A Grief Observed as Fiction". I had stopped reading it because it was too painful. After the war I came to live in Cornwall, and in the 1970's I worked with the Rev. Canon Harold Blair on the Truro Diocesan Adult Education Committee. He told me how, when he was a chaplain to a Royal Air Force station, he had invited C.S. Lewis to come and talk to the men. He warned me against trying to score off a difficult questioner. C.S. Lewis had done just that and had lost his

audience. Lewis had brought "his pathetic little wife". When she became ill, C.S. Lewis asked Canon Blair to use Charles Williams' Prayer of Substitution. She recovered, and Canon Blair's son became ill (not with cancer, and he recovered). Canon Blair warned me against praying the Prayer of Substitution, unless I was prepared to take the consequences. "God will take you at your word. It will be alright at the end. But you will suffer."

My only contact with C.S. Lewis was a letter he wrote in answer to one from me, after I had read *The Problem of Pain*. I asked him to write a novel about an unfallen man. He is said to have answered all the letters he received from his fans. To me he replied that he felt like a salesman in a shoe shop saying "Step this way Madam" as he took *Out of the Silent Planet* down from the shelf.

His ideas about animal survival set out in *The Problem of Pain* became central to our thinking. I am now much concerned with animal welfare in Great Britain and Italy. His theory about animals finding their true selves in Man has been criticised, as Man also degrades animals in circuses, factory farms and laboratories. But I believe that when I leave this world, I shall be met by my parents and brother, my husband and a long line of cats, including one representative of the Venice cats, and two enormous dogs. I am less familiar with the works of Charles Williams, and I never met or corresponded with him. But his idea, hinted at in *The Place of the Lion* that wild animals go back to an archetype, is very credible. Perhaps exterminated feral cats will return to Archetypal Cat.

I have kept the best until last. C.S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien were lecturing in Oxford when I was an undergraduate in the 1930's. I had never heard of either of them. But we all knew about Tanguy Lean, said to have been the originator of the Inklings. All we knew was that he was unpopular, we had no idea why.

I read C.S. Lewis' review of *LotR*. I nearly missed reading it, for I misread the title as "Lords of the Ring" and *The Fellowship of the Ring* I thought was about boxing, those who control the sport, and how boxers help each other. However, read it I did. I was then an Urban District Councillor. Shortly after reading *Fellowship of the Ring*, the Chairman of the Council came running after me. I thought there was a municipal emergency. He said "Does Frodo the son of Drogo mean anything to you?" We decided, against the rules, that either of us who got the next volumes out of the library should pass them on. For nearly thirty years, I suffered the frustration of never being able to discuss J.R.R.T. and *LotR* with anyone. I read everything he wrote, and much of what was written about him, except, of course, the rubbish put out by his learned, blinkered and spiteful critics. I much enjoyed Professor Shippey's exposure of their ignorance. I listened to all the B.B.C. radio broadcasts, and saw the awful film. [Bakshi's]-Ed.] In 1983 there was a pleasant interlude when four members of the Guernsey Smial [of the British Tolkien Society] camped on our land on the way to Oxonmoot. When they arrived, I called out "Peddo melon" and only pressed the electric lock when one of them said "Melon."