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Spezialfrage

The world of JRR Tolkien

handed in by Christoph Saulder

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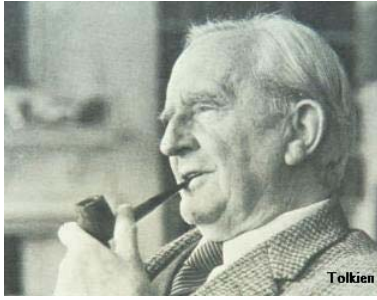
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JRR Tolkien



John Ronald Reuel Tolkien was born in Bloemfontein, South Africa, on 3rd January 1892. His parents both came from Birmingham where they later returned. After the early death of Tolkien's parents a Catholic priest educated him. He took part in World War I and in 1916 he married his youth-love Edith. During the war he was sent back to England because of trench fever. Then he began to write down a "Mythology of England". During his lifetime he published only two famous books: "The Hobbit" in 1937 and the "The Lord of the Rings" in 1954.

Tolkien died on 2nd September 1973 and the material, which he had written for the Silmarillion and other stories, were published by his son Christopher after the author's death.

books

The Hobbit

This was the first book published by Tolkien. It is mostly written like a fairy tale but it's not a simple book for small children. Furthermore I wouldn't recommend all scenes to children. In this book all important species of Middle-Earth appear: Elves, Men, Dwarves, Dragons, Wizards (Gandalf) and of course Hobbits. This folk are a creation of JRR Tolkien himself and he gave them some of his characteristics.

The Lord of the Rings

This is the longest and best-known book of Tolkien. The story includes everything. You can find love, adventure, magic, war and much more. It's written like a heroic epic based on a fictive source. While reading this book you feel that there is more behind Tolkien's world and that everything has its reason.

The Silmarillion

This book was mainly written before the Lord of the Rings but it was published after Tolkien's death. It consists of five parts: The first two parts describe the beginning of the world and the basic mythology. The next and longest part is the Quenta Silmaril. The events in the Age of the Trees and the First Age of Sun are told in many fantastic tales. It reports of the Simarilli and the doom of Elves and Men in Beleriand. The fourth part is about the downfall of Númenor and the last part informs us about the story of the Rings of Power.

Unfinished Tales

The Unfinished Tales are a collection of different stories with comments. They give additional information to Tolkien's world. It reports of happenings in the first three Ages of Sun which were left out or just little mentioned in his other books. It was also published posthume.

The Book of Lost Tales Part 1+ 2

This book describes the first idea of Tolkien's world. Many conceptions were later used in the Silmarillion. It includes many known tales but written in a better style although there are many illogical causes. The plot uses a frame story in which a Men mariner called Eriol (Ælfwine = old-English: Elf-friend) visits Tol Eressea and the Elves tell him about their history in which he finally becomes involved too. It was written shortly after World War I.

other books concerning Middle-Earth

The History of Middle-Earth Volume 1 to 12
 The Book of Lost Tales 1
 The Book of Lost Tales 2
 The Lays of Beleriand
 The Shaping of Middle-Earth
 The Lost Road (and other writings)
 The Return of Shadow
 The Treason of Isengard
 The War of the Ring
 Sauron Defeated
 Morgoth' Ring
 The War of the Jewels
 The Peoples of Middle-Earth
The Adventures of Tom Bombadil
The Road Goes Ever On
Letters of JRR Tolkien



geography

The world “Arda” should represent our own world in a mythological age. The order and the shape of the continents remind us on Earth. Indeed the name “Arda” comes from the German language. The word “Erde” means Earth and by exchanging all E through A you get Arda.

Middle-earth

The continent of Middle-earth stands for the central world. Compared to our own it represents Europe, Asia and Africa. Most of the plot in Tolkien’s books is located in the west of that continent. The face of Middle-earth has changed during the Ages and finally it and the world became more and more like ours. I think the Name Middle-Earth is related to the Viking word “Midgard” which is the old world of Men between the seas.

Beleriand



Beleriand can be translated with “country of Balar”. It lied on both sides of the Sirion. The borders of that country are the Gelion in the East and the Ered Weitrin and the Taur-nu-Fuin in the North. The land was very fertile and there dwelt lots of Elves and later Men too. At the End of the First Age the whole country and many other lands were destroy and disappeared under the surface of the sea. Only a few high mountains remained as islands in the Belegear. In the First Age there was the land of the Coast-Elves, the Falas in the

South and West. On the West-shore of the Sirion there was Nargothrond and on the East-shore the woods of Doriath. Later Men settled in Brethil. In the north of Beleriand there was the Taur-nu-Fuin and Gondolin could also be found there. All realms in this country were either destroyed by Morgoth or by the sons of Feanor. The survivors of all those disasters either sailed away over the sea or went to Lindon. The Men who fought against the enemy became the Númenoreans and got an isle as a gift from the Valar.

Hithlum

Hithlum was the misty land in the northwest of Middle-Earth. During the First Age the Noldor settled in that country, which was surrounded by the Ered Weithrin (Mountains of Shadow and the Ered Lomin. Hithlum consisted of several parts like Nevrast, Dor Lomin, Mithrim and the rest that was called Hithlum. From the beginning of the First Age the Noldor of Fingolfin’s house dwelt there save in Mithrim where some Sindar maintained and later Dor Lomin was given to the Edain. After the fall of Elves kingdom in the Nirnaeth Arnoediad the land was given to the Easterlings, who lived there till the War of Wrath. The landscape can be compared to the North of Europe during the middle ages. In the vast land covered with the mist of legends warriors and kings of great power dwelt there. After the fifth Battle the country was occupied by enemy forces and the aboriginal population suffered. The happenings in Hithlum during the occupation are typical and can be compared to similar events in our history. Rebels tried to re-conquer their homes but failed against a superior

power. The local population was either enslaved or leaves the land. Only a few were hiding in the mountains and waited for better times. You can interpret the events in Hithlum that Tolkien wanted to show the bad sides of conquering other lands.

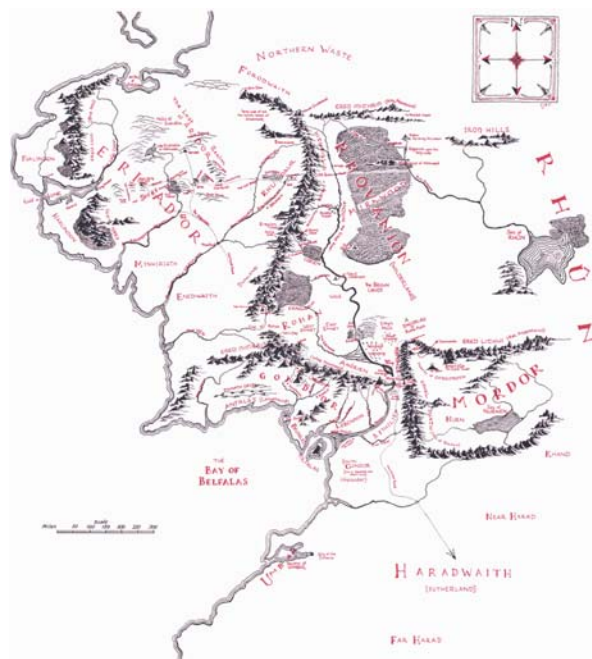
Anfauglith (Ard-Galen) and Lothlann

This landscape was located between the icy North, where Morgoth dwelt, and Beleriand. It was a vast flat land covered with grasses. The Elves and the servants of Morgoth too used ard-Galen and Lothlann as battle planes. After a battle it turned to Anfauglith because all the grasses were burned in the wars. The Nirnaeth Arnoediad took also place there.

Ossiriand (Lindon)

Ossiriand means “land of the seven rivers” and lies in the East of Beleriand on the slopes of the Ered Luin. It’s the only part of the old world, which survived the destruction of Beleriand. It’s a beautiful country, which stayed most time in peace. There all folks had been at least once: The Green-Elves dwell there, the dwarf towns Belegost and Nogrod are placed there, all Men had to pass it before entering Beleriand, the Ents fought a battle against the dwarves there, Orcs invaded it, ... Luthien and Beren had also spent their lives in this country on Tol Galen. After the surface of the world had been changed in the End of the First Age the survivors of the War of Wrath chose it as their realm. Lindon resisted the attacks of Sauron.

Eriador



Before the Second Age little had been known about the vast land between the Ered Lindon and the Misty Mountains. This part of Middle-Earth has many in common with the northwestern part of Europe. The history of Eriador is full of changes and wars. Many realms like Arnor, Eregion and Moria had been founded and destroyed in wars against Sauron and his servants. In the central of Eriador there is Shire the green country of the Hobbits. In the north there were Arnor and Angmar, which fought against each other until their destruction. In the west the Elves had founded the Grey Havens and in the East there are Rivendell, Moria and some Orc strongholds in the Misty Mountains. In the South Isengard and Dunland can be found. Eriador has a rich history, which began in the Age of Trees with the passing of the Elves and

dwarves. In the first age Men arrived in that part of Arda and settled there. One Age later Sauron tried to conquer it but the Elves could avoid it with the help of the Númenoreans. Elendil founded his kingdom there and it lasted until its destruction by the armies of Angmar. The Hobbits also went into Eriador and settled in Shire, where they had peace until the end of the third Age. Vast parts of that country are deserted but they were colonised again in the Fourth Age.

Forodwaith

This is the North of Middle-Earth and the only part where dragons had survived the end of the First Age. Few people live there because of the cold conditions. The country is situated beyond the Grey Mountains and the Iron Hills. Orcs and other beast dwell near the borders of Forodwaith and sometimes a dragon comes forth to steal a treasure.

Rhovanion

This land is bounded by the Misty Mountains in the West and consists of the Mirkwood and the vast land between the Iron Hills and Mordor. In the north of Rhovanion the Dwarves of the Erebor and Iron Hills have their realm. Around the Long Lake the Men dwell in two towns: Dale and Esgaroth. Both species live together in harmony. For a while the Erebor was the home of Smaug a dragon that terrorised the surrounding countries. Near the town Esgaroth there is the realm of the Wood-Elves. The Mirkwood can be described as a vast forest full of evil things. It is like the people during the Middle Age imagined the world outside their homes. There are lost of nasty creatures and beast under the dark trees. In the south of Mirkwood Dol Guldur is placed from which Sauron sent out his servants to terrify Middle-Earth. Next to this evil hill there is Lothlorien where Galadriel and Celeborn governed a host of Wood-Elves. The golden wood of Lothlorien is the last part of the world that remained nearly unchanged since the First Age. In the valley of the Anduin there dwelt the Hobbits' ancestors and the home of Gollum was also there. East of the Mirkwood there was the first settlements of the North Men who later became the Roherim. But they moved to the valley of the Anduin after the war with the wainriders and the growing power of Dol Guldur became a peril for them. The South part of Rhovanion had been deserted after many battles. There are for example the Brown Land were the Ent-wives had their gardens or the Battle-Plain in front of the Black Gate. The Death Marshes between the Eryn Muil and the Dagorlad are a place for legends. There the dead of many battle lay and tricky lights try to lead people into the water. Under the surface the body of warriors are buried. The Death Marshes are like marshes in North of Europe were the ancient Germans put in there dead. Those marshes were hollowed places full of sorcery.

Gondor and Rohan

On the slopes of the White Mountains there are two kingdoms: Gondor and Rohan. For the longest period of the Third Age all the land had belonged to Gondor but the realm had become weaker and weaker and has often been attacked by other Men out of the East and South. So Cirion the steward of Gondor called for help and the people of Eorl rode to assist Gondor in its wars. The Eorlingas got Calenardhon (Rohan) as a present for their service and both realms made an alliance. A comparable event can be found in the history of the Roman Empire. In the last century of Rome the Romans allowed some ancient Germans to settle within their border but they had to defend the Empire. This comparison is more fascinating because the Roherim have much in common with the Teutons and the history of Gondor (and Arnor) is often linked with the history of the Roman Empire. An other example is that the Arnor was scattered up and destroyed in wars, while Gondor remained strong. The same happened during the Migration when West-Rome faded and East-Rome (Byzant) survived. Gondor has constantly been at war with Mordor, because the realm was founded by the Faithful who escaped from Númenor. For long Gondor had a king but after the last king died with no heir the stewards began to rule the kingdom. In the End of the Third Age Aragorn who was a descent form IIsidur accessed to the throne of Gondor. Rohan and Gondor have often supported each other in wars and this alliance was even in the War of the Ring against Sauron victorious. The landscape of both countries is beautiful and the ground is fertile. Horses live on the vast green meadows of Rohan and the Ered Nimrais are a good refuge in times of war. Gondor has many valleys and rivers, which lead to the White Mountains. In the South of the realm there is the mouth of the Anduin and the provinces Lebennin and Belfalas. East of the Great River the beautiful country of Ithilien can be found. In the years before the War of the Ring Sauron's armies conquered it. North of the Ered Nimrais there are Anórien and the isle Cair Ardros in the Anduin. The capital of Rohan is Edoras and of Gondor Minas Tirith. Before the civil war in Gondor Osgiliath was the capital but it has been destroyed by the rebels.

Mordor



Approximately a millennium after the beginning of the Second Age Sauron chose Mordor as his land and fortified it. There he built the Dark Tower and used the fire of the volcano Orodruin for his purpose. He forged the One Ring there and his power spread all over Middle-Earth. The name Mordor means “Black Land” and it is surrounded by high mountains: the Ered Lithui in the North, the Ephel Dúath in the West and the South but in the East there are no mountains. Mordor consists of the inland sea of Nurn and the

fertile areas around it and the Gorgoroth. This plain is a dry and hot desert, which surrounds the Orodruin. The borders of Mordor are well protected by Sauron’s forces and strongholds. In the end of the Second Age the Last Alliance attacked Mordor and defeated Sauron. For three millennia Mordor stood empty and the Men of Gondor watched its borders but by the time those guards were drawn away. Then Sauron returned and rebuilt Barad-Dûr. After his downfall the country of Nurn was given to his former servants. Mordor is the land of the evil and place where nobody dare to go. It shows the horror and the power of Sauron.

Harad

Harad is the vast South land of Middle-Earth and it would be Africa in our own world. There are Elephants and the Men that dwell there have a black skin. Men lived in Harad since the First Age and many of them served and feared Morgoth. After his downfall they forgot the evil and during the Second Age the Númenoreans thought and helped them. But after the kings of Númenor had turned away from the Elves the people of Harad had to pay. The Númenoreans founded colonies in Harad like Umbar and the country was conquered. While the Men of Númenor were the aggressors many people turned to Sauron. The happenings in Harad have much in common with the colonisation of Africa by the European powers. At first they helped the aboriginal people but later they took their lands. After the first fall of Sauron the Haradrim still disliked the Numenoreans and its descents. Although many of their realms were ruled by former Númenoreans, the Haradrim could be easily stirred up against Gondor. Sauron used this hate for his own purpose and Harad felt under his rule again.

Romen

The East of Middle-Earth is called Romen and it can be compared to Asia in our world. Many Men live there in the vast country. There are many realms like Rhûn, Khand and Womawas Drus. The legendary Cuiviénen is also located there on the slopes of the East Mountains, where the Elves awoke. Hildorien, the place from which the Men came from, is in Romen too. Few Elves remained in Romen after the awaking of Men and in the Third Age there lived many Men, most under the rule of Sauron. Only a few realms like Womawas Drus resisted the dark power. Men from the East attacked West lands of Middle-Earth to weaken Gondor and its allies. This can be compared to the conquests of the Huns and other Asian peoples. After the fall of Sauron the Easterlings swiftly turned away from evil and returned to their homes.

Númenor

The isle of Númenor can be compared to Atlantis. It had the shape of a 5-ray. In the middle of the isle there was a high mountain called Meneltarma with a holy place for Eru Ilúvatar on the summit. The capital of Númenor was Armenelos and from there the king governed the country. On Númenor there were different landscapes like meadows, forest and hills. In Andunie and Eldalondé the Elves from Tol Eressea disembarked when they visited the isle.



From Rómenna on the east coast the ships of the Númenoreans set out to discover new countries in Middle-Earth. For a long time Númenor was a peaceful isle and only a few people went abroad. The glory of Númenor rose and the kings became proud and started to conquer lands in Middle-Earth. A shadow felt on the isle and the people turned away from the Valar and the Elves. This was the beginning of the downfall of Númenor. Only a few Faithful remained in those days and many of them sailed to Middle-Earth. When Ar-Pharazon brought Sauron as a hostage to Númenor the end was drawing near. The Dark Lord became the power behind the throne and he persuaded the king to attack the Valar. At least Eru

destroyed the isle and the invasion fleet and the world became crooked so that no ship of Men can reach the undying lands. This was called the Akallabêth or Atalante. The story of the glory and the downfall of Númenor is full of parallels to the legend of Atlantis. It was the first high culture of Men but they became too mighty and proud and at least their land vanished under the waves of the sea. You can also see how easy power corrupts Men.

Aman

The blessed realm of Aman is the land of the Valar and Elves. It is like Asgard in the northern mythology. First it laid in the west of the world but after the downfall of Númenor it was drawn out of the circles of Arda.

Valinor



The main part of Aman beyond the Pelori is called Valinor and it's the place where the Ainur and most Elves dwell. There is the Taniquel that is the highest mountain in the world and the home of Manwe and Varda. It has the same meaning as the Mount Olymp in the Greek mythology. Valimar is the main city of the Ainur and Vanyar and in Tirion on Tuna the Noldor live. You can also find the gardens of Lorien and the halls of Mandos in Valinor. In Mandos the spirits of the killed Elves gather and await the end of the world. This place is partly like

Valhalla in the northern mythology where the warriors live after their death. The two Trees stood also in Valinor till they were killed and the sun and the moon were created. Nothing dies in Valinor and everything maintains unchanged. You can find in Valinor the "heaven on Earth".

Avathar

This is the country outside the Pelori and south of the bay of Eldamar. This part of Aman was long forgotten and Ungoliant dwelt there. It was full of shadows and cub webs.

Anathar

Anathar is the land between the sea and the Pelori north of the bay of Eldamar. Aqualonde and the settlements of the Teleri are located there. In the North it lead to the Helcaraxe and the Noldor marched through this land when they left Aman.

Tol Eressea

The Elves were brought to Aman by an island ferry and after the hosts of the Vanyar and Noldor had reached the blessed realm it returned to embark the Teleri. The Teleri wanted the island to stay in sight of Aman but later they left it to dwell in the Undying Lands. After the War of Wrath many Elves that returned to Aman decided to live on Tol Eressea. This island can be compared to Avalon in the English mythology and indeed there is even a town on the island, which is called Avallone. Instead of fairies Elves dwell there.

Species

In Tolkien's books many different creatures appear and most of them have the roots in mythology or the real world. Others are completely invented by him like the Hobbits.

Men

Men are of course known to all of us. In Tolkien's world there are different races of Men that fight each other like in our own world. The Men are the second children of Ilúvatar and awoke with the first rising of sun in Hildorien. Morgoth noticed it and sent his servants to them. But they were strange and unknown to him and so he decided to visit them by himself. Soon a shadow of evil, which lasted forever, fell on all Men but there was also something the Dark Lord didn't understand and couldn't control in the Men. The gift, which gave Ilúvatar to them, is the death that allows them to leave the world. By the time the Men spread all over the Middle-Earth and learned a lot of the Elves. Their own power rose and after many millennia they controlled the world. With the Forth Age the domination of Men has begun.

the three Houses of Edain

300 years after the awaking of Men the first hosts crossed the Ered Luin and reached Beleriand. There the Men met the Noldor and served them. Those Men who lived with the Elves were later called the Edain. Elves and Men became allies and fought against Morgoth. They forget their dark past and let the evil behind. The three main hosts of the Edain were called after their leaders: the house of Beor, the house of Haleth and the house of Marach. Among them there were mighty warriors whose deeds could be compared to those of the Eldar. During the endless wars in the First Age many Men died and suffered with the Eldar but after their victory the Edain got a land for their own, Númenor.

Númenoreans

After the War of Wrath the Edain got the isle of Númenor as a gift from the Valar. There their lives grew longer than those of other Men. A Númenorean had a life span of more than two hundred years. They sailed to Middle-Earth and discovered new countries and assisted other Men, who turned away from evil after the fall of Morgoth. Moreover the Númenoreans had a close friendship with the Elves of Tol Eressea and of Lindon. The first king of Númenor was Elros a half-Elf who chose the life of Men. After two thousand years the kings of Númenor began to conquer and a shadow fell on the isle. Most Númenoreans followed their kings and were corrupted by richness and power. While the glory of their isle grew their lives shortened. Finally Sauron who was their enemy in Middle-Earth was defeated and brought to Númenor as a hostage. He influenced the king and made the people fear death. Then Sauron persuaded the king to attack Aman and the downfall of Númenor followed. Only a few survivors who were called the Faithful because they hadn't broken their friendship to the Elves were able to escape to Middle-Earth. In their kingdoms the wisdom of Númenor maintained but all the other Númenoreans that stayed in Middle-Earth when their isle disappeared became rulers of Men in the South and the East and most of them turned evil.

North Men and the Roherim

These Men were descended from relatives of the Edain who either had never passed the Ered Luin or had returned to Eriador. Most of them didn't trust the Elves. They were friends with the Númenoreans and the people of Gondor in the Third Age. Together they often had to face invasion of other Men from the East. The culture of the Roherim had much in common with the Vikings and the other North Men can be compared to the ancient Germans.

Easterlings

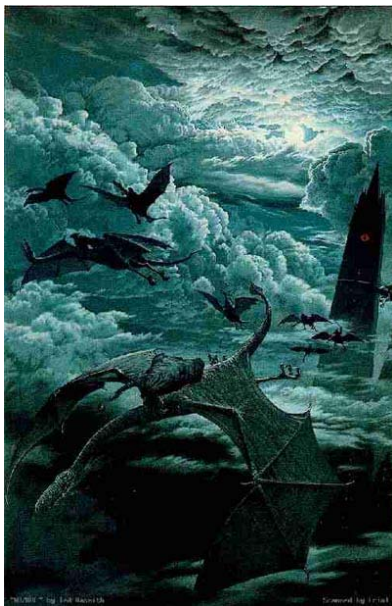
In the East of Middle-Earth there lived many different peoples and nearly all of them were under the rule of Sauron. The folk in the East were very numerous and they attacked the West of Middle-Earth because either Sauron forced them to do so or they needed more land. Their other appearance and their culture was the same as that of the Huns. They fought roughly against the West but after the fall of Sauron they returned home.

Haradrim



These Men lived in the South of Middle-Earth, which was called Harad. Long ago they traded with the Men of Númenor and Gondor but because of different reasons war rose between Gondor and Harad. One kingdom of Harad Umbar was under the control of rebels from Gondor. At war the Haradrim were cruel and they used elephants in battles. The skin of the Men of Harad was black and they had much in common with the Africans.

Nazgûl



During the Second Age the Elves of Eregion forged nine rings for the Men with the help of Sauron. Those rings were stolen by Sauron and given to powerful leaders of Men. These kings fell one by one under the rule of Sauron and became the ring-wraith. The Nazgûl were the Dark Lord's most powerful servants and slaves of his will. Their leader was once a Númenorean and the second ring-wraith Khamul was a mighty king in the East of Middle-Earth. They Nazgûl were invisible and they only would be seen if they wore some clothes. The captain of the ring-wraith ruled for a while his own kingdom in Angmar and destroyed Arnor. During the War of the Ring the Nazgûl appeared as Black Riders either on horses or on winged beasts. The Elf Glorfindel foresaw that the captain wouldn't die by a man's hand. He was killed by Éowyn a woman from Rohan. This can possibly be compared to Shakespeare's MacBeth whom was prophesied that he wouldn't die by a man who was born by a woman. A man who was born by caesarean killed MacBeth. The city of the

Nazgûl was Minas Morgul. The Nazgûl showed how easy Men could be corrupted by power.

other Men

Tolkien mentioned many different races of Men. For example the Druedain who were survivors of an ancient culture or the Dunlandings who were an old people of farmers. The variety of Men in Tolkien's world is as endless as in our own world.

Elves

During the Years of the Trees the Elves awoke in Cuiviénen and at first they saw the stars, which they most loved. The Elves were immortal and even if they were killed they would continue their life in Mandos. Before Orome discovered them some Elves were caught by Morgoth's servants changed into Orcs by torture. The others were protected by the Valar during the War of Powers. Many of them feared the Valar and so three ambassadors were brought to Aman. After their return they persuaded most of the other Elves to go to Aman and see the light of the Trees. During the long march many Elves were lost but at least all Vanyar

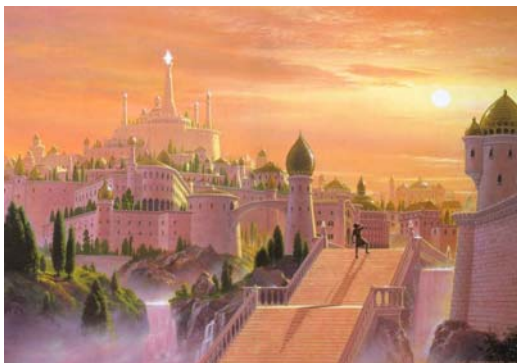
and Noldor and the half of the Teleri reached the blessed realm. Long they suffered in the mortal lands with the end of the First Age many went to Aman forever. Those who remained in Middle-Earth faded and in the Fourth Age only a few Elves whose ancestors marched west lived in the mortal lands. The Elves are the wisest and fairest of all kinds but their fate is bound with the fate of Arda.

The concept of Elves comes from the northern mythology and from the Celtic mythology where they are people between gods and Men. They should be like perfect Men but in Tolkien's world this is only partly valid.

Vanyar

This Elf-tribe was seen as highest of all Elves. The Vanyar most desired to be in the light and with the Valar. Their king was Ingwe, one of the ambassadors of the Elves who visited Valinor. The Vanyar were only few and reached first the blessed realm. At first they lived together with the Noldor in Tirion but then they moved to Valimar to be closer to the Valar. The Vanyar were good at literature and making songs. They were the wisest and fairest Elves and their golden hair was unique in Arda. Only once the Vanyar went into war. They assisted the powers of the West in the War of Wrath against Morgoth and fought to revenge the sorrow of their friends the Noldor. In some cases a Vanyar married a Noldor and there was close bounds between those two tribes. In the first model of Tolkien's world the Vanyar were called Teleri.

Noldor



The Noldor were the Elf-tribe, which was led by Finwe, and they were more numerous than the Vanyar. They came to Aman with the Vanyar and built the city of Tirion on Tuna. The Noldor who had dark hair liked art and science (magic) and created many gems and jewels. That was the reason why Tolkien called them Gnomes in the Book of the Lost Tales, because the initial mean of the word "gnome" describes a creature which changes and works matter easily. As a consequence of their talents the Noldor became friends of Aule and he

thought them a lot. Finally Feanor, who was the most talented Noldor, made the Silmarils, gems in which the light of the Trees was conserved. But Melkor set unrest in the hearts of the Noldor and stole those gems. In wrath Feanor and the Noldor returned to Middle-Earth. There they performed great deeds and enriched Middle-Earth but finally the doom of the Noldor approached. All their achievements were destroyed by Morgoth and in the endless wars of Beleriand numerous Noldor were killed and came to Mandos. But in the last moments the Valar helped them and many Noldor returned to Aman. The Noldor who remained in Middle-Earth founded new kingdoms and fought against the evil. Furthermore they tried to preserve the Old World and to heal the wounds of time and war. But with the end of the Third Age the last Noldor returned to the blessed realm because they had become weary of the sorrow of the world.

Teleri of Aman

The Teleri were the most numerous Elf-tribe and they had two kings Elwe and Olwe, who were brothers. They loved the sea and the forests and were good at singing. The Teleri were characterised by their silver hair. They marched slowest in the direction of Aman because of their great number and some Teleri had doubts. Many of them were lost during the long march into the West and when they reached the coasts they saw that the Vanyar and Noldor had still departed. Their king Elwe got but one day Tol Eressea returned and a great host

under the leading of Olwe embarked. In sight of the coasts of Aman they ordered the isle to stay. After a long time the Teleri built ships and came to Aman as the last tribe of the Elves. There they founded Alqualonde with the help of the Noldor. The Teleri lived near the coasts but in sight of the light of the Trees. When the Noldor departed Valinor the Teleri refused to give them their ships and became victims of the kinslay. Till the end of the First Age there were little friendship between the Noldor and the Teleri. In Tolkien's first model of his world the Teleri of Aman were called Solosimpi.

Sindar and Falasquendi

When the Teleri came to Beleriand their king Elwe was lost and so many decided to stay in Middle-Earth and to look for him. When Elwe who was later called Elu Thingol returned he founded the kingdom of Doriath together with Melian a Maiar. The Elves under their rule became the Sindar (Grey-Elves) and they became nearly as wise as the Elves in Aman. Other Teleri wanted to stay near the coasts and they took Círdan the Shipwright as king. These Elves were called the Falasquendi (Coast-Elves). In the wars of Beleriand the Falasquendi were attacked by Morgoth and retreated to the mouth of the Sirion and to the isle of Balar. After the destruction of Beleriand some Falasquendi remained in Lindon and Mithlond. The Sindar were protected by the Girdle of Melian but after Thingol's death Melian left Middle-Earth. Then Doriath was destroyed and the survivors fled to the coasts.

Nandor and Laiquendi

During the long march some Teleri turned away from the host and settled in the vales of the Anduin or walked in Middle-Earth. Those became the Nandor and some Nandor finally reached Beleriand. These Elves settled in Ossiriand and called themselves the Laiquendi (Green-Elves). The other Nandor that stayed in the forests near the Anduin became the Wood-Elves and their realms were in Lothlorien and the Mirkwood. The king of Lothlorien was Amroth and then Galadriel and Celeborn ruled it. The Elves in the Mirkwood had no lead for a long time but in the beginning of the Second Age some Sindar came to them and they took Tharundil as king. These Elves traded a lot with the Men of Esgaroth and Dale. The Wood-Elves fit best to the normal imagination of Elves because they live in the trees and hide themselves and had a deep knowledge concerning nature.

Avari

Some Elves refused to go to Aman and stayed in Middle-Earth. They walked around and became the first teachers of Men. Although their wisdom and power were small compared to other Elves they were wiser than Men and used some magic. The Avari weren't allowed to sail into the West like other Elves and so they had to remain in Middle-Earth forever.

Dwarves

During the Year of the Trees Aule couldn't await the coming of the Elves and so he decided to create some children by his own. He did this in secret under the mountains and thought the seven fathers of the Dwarves a lot of his knowledge. The Dwarves were strong, stubborn, lived long, but were mortal. They were made to resist Melkor. Ilúvatar noticed what Aule had done but he allowed him to have his children, but they had to sleep until the Elves awake. Aule had created seven fathers of Dwarves and six mothers. Male and Female Dwarves have the same outer appearance and as a consequence many Men believed that Dwarves grew out of stone. This species is very warlike and they fought against Elves, Men, Orcs and their own kind. Some dwarves became evil and served the Dark Lord but others who were Elf-fiends fought against him. In Tolkien's first sketch of his world the Dwarves were an evil people but later he changed his imagination. The idea for Dwarves came from the northern mythology and indeed Tolkien used the names from a dwarves-catalogue, which was a part of the "Older Edda".

Dwarves of Belegost and Nogrod

After the dwarves awoke they spread all over the world and some came to the Ered Luin. There they founded two kingdoms Belegost and Nogrod. Although there has never been a friendship between Elves and Dwarves both species traded and learned from the other. These Dwarves hated the Dark Lord and assisted the Elves in their wars. The Dwarves possessed the advantage that they could resist dragons and that they had better arms than the Elves had. Only Eol the Dark Elf went to Nogrod and lived with the Dwarves but all other Elves disliked those stubborn people. King Thingol and King Finrod paid them to built cave-castles. Because of a misunderstanding a war between Nogrod and Doriath rose which was the reason for a millennia long mistrust between Elves and Dwarves. During the Second Age many Dwarves left Belegost and Nogrod to live in Moria.

Dwarves of Moria (the House of Durin)



At first Durin was alone and founded Khazad-Dum. He discovered Mithril there and this was the beginning of a long period of wealth for Khazad-Dum. The Dwarves traded with the Elves and became rich. Durin even got the first ring of the Seven but after the destruction of Eregion by Sauron the Dwarves hid in their mountain and then their realm was called Moria. In the mid of the Third Age the Dwarves dig to deep and woke a Balrog. They had to leave Moria and moved to the Erebor. There the descents of Durin became rich again until the dragon Smaug appeared and they had to flee again. They spread all over the West of Middle-Earth and founded mines in the Ered Luin, the Grey Mountains and the Iron Hills. After the dragons death and the Battle of the Five Armies many Dwarves of the House of Durin returned to the Erebor and their friendship with the Men of Dale was renewed. Balin tried to re-colonise Moria but the Balrog and the Orcs

were too strong and he failed. During the War of the Ring the Erebor was besieged but the Dwarves were victorious. The House of Durin was the noblest of all although their greed for richness was more than once their doom.

other Dwarves

All over Middle-Earth Dwarves dig in mountains for gold and gems. Some made even an alliance with Orcs but most of them were faithful. In the end of the Third Age there was a long and hard war between the Dwarves and Orcs. It showed that most Dwarves hated the Orcs and that all Dwarves could unit in times of danger.

Ents

This species can be described as a kind of walking and speaking tree. They were created by Yavanna to protect the trees. Ents are slow creatures and they have an endless live. The Ents are invented by Tolkien and there are no references to any other mythology or literature. The name “Ent” comes from old-English and means “Giant”. The Ents in Tolkien’s world are approximately 3 to 7.5 meters tall, a fact that rectifies their name. Tolkien himself loved trees and that was maybe the reason for the creation of Ents. They protect the nature he beloved. Moreover Ents are peaceful creatures and they don’t like wars and care little about the tidings in the world. They will act if the trees are killed but else they will remain calm in their forests.



real Ents

The real Ents were wise and good creatures that loved high trees and vast forests. These Ents were all male because their wives had other attitudes. Only few real Ents existed in the Third Age and after the Ent-wives had been they faded.

Ent-wives

In the Second Age the Ent-wives left their men and crossed the Anduin. There they made small gardens and stood in the sun. The Ents were visiting their wives until they suddenly disappeared. The war between Sauron and the Elves had destroyed the land of the Ent-wives. For long the Ents searched for their wives but finally they return without any success to their forests. Nobody knew about the fate of the Ent-wives but Tolkien himself wrote in one of his letters that the Ents and their wives wouldn't be united before the end of the world.

Huorns

Some trees became entish in the Fangorn forest. They got the ability to move but many of them had a black heart and the Ents had to take care of them. The Huorns were very numerous and when the Ents attacked Saruman the main force of them consisted of Huorns. The phenomenon of the Huorns didn't restrict to the Fangorn. In the Old Forest near Shire existed Huorns too. These living trees symbolise the fear of Men from deep and dim forests.

Hobbits (halflings)

The Hobbits are an other creation of Tolkien's fantasy. It is told that one day Tolkien simply wrote down: "In a hole in the ground there lived a Hobbit" and this is the first sentence of the book "The Hobbit". These tiny creatures are mostly like Men but only half as tall as them. Hobbits have Elfish ears, hairy feet with a natural sole (they wear no shoes) and they like it to eat. These peaceful and innocent creatures live in the Shire and have little interest in the world outside. Only a few of them dared adventures and those became the heroes in "The Hobbit" and "The Lord of the Rings". Many people see in the features and the attitudes of the Hobbits characteristics of Tolkien himself. A very important fact concerning Hobbits is that they have only little power and so they cannot be easily affected by the mighty things like the One Ring.

Tolkien claimed that the Hobbits are completely an invention by his throughout northern Europe; there exists a prevailing tradition of "Little People". They have an endless list of names: brownies, pixies, fays, leprechauns are just some of the more common. In some regions, these beings are far more than just myths or folklore Among these is a being known as a "phynnoddere"; shy of humans, friendly and happy-go-lucky, hairy-legged, fond of wine and beer and given to farm-work. The Manx aren't alone, of course: from Germany, where miners are helped by friendly burrowing 'kobolds', all the way to Iceland, whose Elves occupy a ghostly realm curiously similar to Tolkien's wraith-world", there are similar traditions. Despite of this Tolkien can be seen as the "father" of the Hobbits.

the Hobbits of the Shire

The Hobbits of Shire were friendly people with no worries. For centuries they dwelt in that green land and didn't want to go abroad. In the end of the Third Age they had to rise against the Men of Saruman who repressed them in their own country. It showed that this little people will have some power if they work together. Famous Hobbits of Shire were Bilbo, Frodo, Sam, Merry and Pippin who all had their part in the story of the One Ring.

the ancestors of the Hobbits

The Hobbits descended from three peoples: the Harfoots, the Stoors and the Fallohides. First they lived in the vales of the Anduin but in the middle of the Third Age most of them moved slowly to Shire. Some Stoors remained longer near the river and became a fisher folk. Gollum (alias Sméagol) were one of those.

Ainur

The Ainur were created by Eru Ilúvatar's thoughts and they had existed before the world was created. Their choes sang for Eru and one day he let create them the world. Then the Ainur went down on Arda to live there and to prepare it for the arrival of Ilúvatar's children. Some of the Ainur followed Melkor and became evil but the others lived in Aman. The Ainur can be compared to the Asen in the northern mythology either or to the angles in the Christian mythology. They are organised in different ranks and their duty is to govern the world for Eru.

Valar

The role of the Valar in Tolkien's world can be compared to the Archangels in the Christian belief or the gods in polytheistic religions. There were 15 Valar, 8 male and 7 female who govern Arda.

Name of the Vala	Duties and features	Comparable god(s)
Manwe	Lord of the Arda, wind, airs, birds	Zeus, Jupiter, Odin, Thor
Varda	stars, light,	Tyr,
Ulmo	Water	Poseidon, Neptune,
Aule	smith, substances, building the land	Hephaistos, Vulcanus
Yavanna	plants, fruits	Gaia, Arthemis, Fjörgynn
Námo (Mandos)	doom, guard of the dead,	Hades, Anubis
Irmo (Lórien)	dreams, fantasy	Morpheus
Nienna	sadness, consolation	Albentar, Nanna, Balder
Vaire	time, history	Nornen
Este	Recovering	Eir
Tulkas	fighting, strength, brave	Mars
Orome	hunting, riding	Diana, Osiris
Nessa	running and dancing	Hathor
Vána	flowers, singing birds, youth	Aphrodite, Nonna, Idun
Melkor	evil, has something of all	Satan, Seth, Shiva, Loki

Maiar

The Maiar were Ainur who had less power than the Valar. The Maiar served and helped the Valar by their creations. Melian was a Maiar of Irmo and she founded Doriath together with her husband Thingol. Sauron was a Maiar of Aule before Melkor had corrupted him. Osse was a powerful Maiar of Ulmo who had the control over the seas. The Maiar were spirits (angles?) who all had their part in the world and tried to do the best of the children of Ilúvatar.

Istari (wizards)

When the Valar noticed the second uprising of Sauron they decided to send messengers to Middle-Earth. They should help the Elves and Men to fight evil but they were not allowed to do this by using too much power. These messengers had to take a shape like Elves and Men. The Istari had been Maiar and were sent to Middle-Earth thousand years after the beginning of the Third Age. The Men called them wizards and they were five: Olórin (Gandalf), Curumo (Saruman), Aiwendil (Radagast), Alatar and Pallando (the two Istari Luin (Blue Wizards)). Only one of them was able to achieve his mission and Gandalf was allowed to return to Aman.

Tolkien's wizards and especially Gandalf formed extremely strongly our imagination of wizards. For us it is usual that wizards have wands, straight huts, wear long cloaks and have a white beard. The belief in wizards (men who use magic) is very old and everybody knows for example the wizard Merlin in the Arthur tale. Wizards are simply a kind of super-human who can do things by the power of their mind.

Balrogs



The Balrogs had been Maiar who were on Melkor's side even before Arda had been created. They entered the world as spirits of shadow and fire. Balrogs were about 3 metres tall, could use magic and were strong warriors armed with a fire sword and thongs. They were the leaders of Morgoth's armies and killed many Elves and Men. The Balrogs filled their enemies with terror but they were not invincible. In the Battle of Gondolin two Balrogs (one of them was their lord Gothmog) were killed and in Moria

Gandalf defeated an other Balrog. The Balrogs are an invention of Tolkien but some models existed for him. On the one hand their attitudes have much in common with the ones of Christian demons and on the other hand the appearance of them can be compared to Muspell a fire-giant of the ancient German mythology.

Orcs (Goblins)



The Orcs had been Elves but Melkor corrupted them. This species was completely evil and spread all over Middle-Earth. They hated the Dark Lord but they served him by fear. The Orcs multiply like the children of Ilúvatar and in the Third Age they are the most numerous species except Men. The Orcs were the main army of Melkor and later of Sauron because they liked destroying other things. The word "Orc" is old-English and has the meaning of

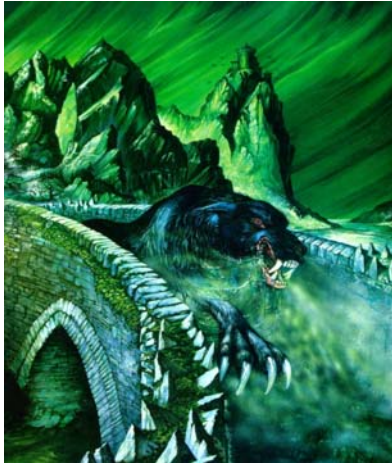
"demon" but this has nothing to do with their origin. In "The Hobbit" Tolkien used the word Goblin for Orc but later it was completely replaced by the more suitable expression Orc. For the Orcs there are no real models for Orcs but in the folk belief of the Middle Age the mountains were full of fell creatures which could be compared to Orcs.

Trolls



The idea of Trolls came from the northern folk belief. They lived in caves, ate Men, had an enormous strength and were changed into stone by sunshine. All those features have Tolkien's Troll too and more. They are dumb and evil. It seemed that Trolls were made by Melkor and had no real life because evil cannot create only mock. They were controlled by an evil will. Troll first appeared in the Nirnaeth Arnoediad as a guard of the

Balrogs. Trolls existed up into the Third Age and most of them served Sauron.



Warge

The Warge were strong and great wolves and allies of the Orcs. Of old the Warge were servants of Sauron even under Morgoth's rule. Beren was imprisoned by Sauron on the isle of Werewolves and in "The Hobbit" Bilbo and his company were attacked by them. Orcs rode on wolves like Men on horses. The concept of evil wolves has its roots in the folk belief. Everyone has heard stories of wolves eating children and Tolkien has simply added some ideas to this imagination. In reality wolves are not as bad as in fairy tales.



Dragons

Dragon came ultimately from the Greek "drakon", meaning "serpent". In the world mythology there can be found two different concepts of dragons: the European dragon and the East dragon. The idea for them maybe developed after people had found bones of dinosaurs. Tolkien's dragons have features of both imaginations. Dragons are intelligent, can speak and are able to use magic like the East dragon does. On the other hand the shape of Tolkien's dragons is the same of the European dragon: a long, mighty reptile, which can spit fire and can have wings. This can't be compared to the fragile Eastern dragon. In Tolkien's world dragons were created by Morgoth who had changed snakes in the First Age. They were ranked among his most feared servants. The only vulnerable point of dragon is its stomach because elsewhere it has armour. Dragons are immortal (except if they were killed) and they multiplied in a strange way that nobody except their master understands because only one dragon can breed others. An other feature Tolkien's dragons have in common with the European dragons is their love for gold. In his world dragons are the reasons for fear and for heroic deeds.

Eagles



respectable species.

In Tolkien's world eagles are the messengers of the Valar Manwe. They were good and assisted the exile-Elves. They watched Morgoth and brought news to Manwe. In the Third Age the Eagles helped Gandalf and the enemies of the Dark Lord in their war. Before the fall of Númenor Eagles attacked the isle. In many folk beliefs Eagles are evil bird but Tolkien turned this concept up side down and made them to a

Spiders

Tolkien created spiders that were bigger than that ones we all know. In the Years of the Tree Ungoliant a Maiar in spider-shape allied with Morgoth to destroy the Trees. Both fled to Middle-Earth and there Ungoliant lived in the Ered Gorgoroth. She bred other giant spiders, which filled the Mountains with terror. One of her descents was Shelob that had lived in Cirith Ungol for millennia. Some of her breed terrified the Mirkwood and Bilbo faced them during his adventure. The word “lob” in Shelob is the old-English expression for spider and it was a good idea of Tolkien to use the natural dislike of spider in his books. In his world they were hungry and dangerous creatures, which were filled with evil.

other creatures

Tolkien’s world is full of different forms of life and all have their features and origin.

Giants

Giants were first mentioned in “The Hobbit” when the company passed the Misty Mountains. Little is told about them only that most of them were unfriendly and that they like throwing stones. Maybe they symbolise the erosion of the Mountains. However Giants are one of the most mysterious creatures in Tolkien’s world.

animals

Nearly all animals and especially birds are intelligent and influence other living creatures. This fact can be compared to the eastern religions where every life form has its soul.

Eru Ilúvatar

Eru Ilúvatar is the name of god and he has a central part in Tolkien’s mythology. He existed first and made the Ainur who helped him creating Arda. Eru Ilúvatar stays outside the world. Eru should be the same god who is mentioned in the Christian religion. But he could also be compared to the god Amun of the Egyptian mythology because he stepped back and let other gods rule the world (like the Valar did in Tolkien’s world).

Tom Bombadil

The most mysterious creature in Tolkien’s world is Tom Bombadil. He is an enigma, which doesn’t fit, into his mythology and there are lots of discussions concerning his nature.

history/tales

All stories told by Tolkien take place in a time span of many thousand years. A long time ago everything began with the creation of the World.

The Beginning

First there was Eru Ilúvatar alone, but by the power of his mind he created the Ainur and they sang for him. One day Eru taught them a new theme, which was mightier than all others before. During the song Melkor, the most powerful of the Ainur, got the idea to add some of his own thoughts into the song. A giant battle of music began and Melkor tried to defeat the theme of Ilúvatar by loudness but it survived though its beauty. At last Melkor was defeated by the last theme of Ilúvatar. Then Eru showed the Ainur what they've achieved. The Void was no longer empty because the World had been created by their music. Every Ainur would find his thoughts in the world and Melkor, the mighty, had also had his part and Ilúvatar told him that his ideas would last increase the beauty of Arda. Then Eru said: "Ea" and the world was created. Then the Ainur descended into the world to prepare it for the arrival of the Children of Ilúvatar, which are the Elves and the Men. First Melkor added the others but he wanted to design all at his will. So the Valar forced him to leave the world and he went into the Void.

The story of the creation of the world can partly be compared with the Christian mythology. Eru is God and the Ainur are angels. The Valar shall symbolise the archangels and like to the Bible one of them turned evil. The Christians call him Lucifer and in Tolkien's mythology he's named Melkor or Morgoth. On the other hand the Ainur have the features of the gods in European and Mediterranean mythologies. An other interesting aspect of this story is the word "Ea". This is also the name of the creator god in the Babylonian legend of Gilgamesh.



The Spring of Arda

Aule built two lamps that were higher than all other mountains to enlighten the world. From that time all plants began to grow and the animals appeared. In the middle of the world the Valar dwelt on an isle called Almaren and relaxed from their work. In that moment Melkor returned and fortified a stronghold called Utumno, which is situated far in the north of Arda. Plants began to die and animals turned into cruel beasts. The Valar felt that Melkor had returned but before they could act the Dark Lord made the first strike and destroyed the lamps. The strength of his attack changed the surface of Arda and the Valar needed all their power to calm the world. Their homes had been destroyed and so they left Middle-earth and began to dwell in the land of Aman in the west of Arda.

In this tale the world is prepared for the following ages. Evil returned to Arda and became strong and the Valar retreated into the west of the world. It is just another part of the story of creation.

The Years of the Trees (length: 1,495 years (=14,325 solar years))

After the Valar had went to Aman Yavanna made two Trees (Telperion and Laurelin), which spent light to the country. While the Valar built their homes and protected their new land, Melkor's power spread all over the world. One day Aule couldn't await the coming of Ilúvatar's children and decided to create some by him. So in secret Aule made the dwarves deep under the mountains. When Yavanna heard of this she wanted to have someone to

protect her trees. Manwe gave her the allowance to make the Ents. Most Valar stayed in Aman but Orome often went abroad to Middle-Earth and hunted there. One day he discovered the Elves in Cuiviénen and the Valar wanted to protect. As a consequence the Valar attacked Melkor and defeated him. The Dark Lord was imprisoned in Mandos and many Elves who were begged by the Valar decided to go to Aman. Not all Elves were able to reach the blessed realm and many Teleri remained in Beleriand or in other parts of Middle-Earth. Some looked for Elwe who met Melian the Maiar and felt in love with her. Both founded the realm of



Doriath. During this time the Dwarves and the Ents awoke but some evil, which had remained, became stronger too. In Aman Feanor made the Silmarils in which the light of the Trees was preserved. Melkor was unchained because he regretted his deeds but in true he tried to divide the Elves from the Valar. When his treason was unmasked he fled to Avathar and allied with Ungoliant. They re-entered Valinor and killed the Trees and stole the Silmarils. From that time on Melkor's lies affected Feanor and he rose up

the Noldor. Feanor and his sons swore an oath against Melkor to get the Silmarils back. Most folk of the Noldor followed Feanor and Fingolfin. In Alqualonde Feanor stole the ships of the Teleri and many on both sides were killed in a battle. The Noldor went north to the Helcaraxe and Mandos spoke to them and asked them to return but only Firaфин stayed in Valinor. Feanor and his fellowship took the ships and sailed over the sea to Middle-Earth and there he burned the ship. The others had to pass the ice of the Helcaraxe. Melkor had still attack Beleriand and his armies returned to his new main stronghold Angband when the Noldor arrived. The troops of Feanor defeated the Orcs and he attacked Angband. But he went to far so that he had to face the Balrogs alone and Feanor had been injured to death when his sons arrived. So the Noldor had to retreat and during negotiation Maedhros was captured by Melkor.

In this part of Tolkien's stories you can find man connections to the northern and Christian mythology, but there are many invented tales too. The march of the Elves to Aman and the descriptions of that very country come from the Edda but the return of the Noldor to Middle-Earth reminds me on the leaving from Eden from the Bible. The Trees of Valinor are from my point of view comparable to the Life Tree. You can also see in the kinslay of Alqualonde a connection to the story of Kain and Abel, because the consequences up to the end of the next age are nearly the same. The Silmarils are a symbol of the power and glory during the Elves' noontide. The madness of Feanor shows the influence of Melkor on the Elves and how easily good can turn evil.

[The First Age \(length: 583 years\)](#)

From the last flower of Telperion the moon was created and the Maiar Tilion drove it across the sky. After seven day of moonlight the sun, which was made from the last fruit of Laurelin set out. Arien an other Maiar whose function could be compared to those of Helios' in the Greek mythology or to Ra's in the Egyptian mythology stand head the sun across the sky. With the first sunrise the Men awoke in Hildorien and Morgoth retreated all his forces in fear. Fingol who had been a friend of Maedhros went to Angband and rescued him. In a council Fingolfin was crowned to the High King of the Noldor and the sons of Feanor founded their realms in the east of Beleriand. In Hithlum Fingolfin founded his kingdom and Angband was besieged. Because of a counsel of Ulmo Turgon built the hidden city of Gondolin and Finrod founded Nargothrond. The next centuries the siege of Angband held although Morgoth tired to break it.

One day Aredhel the sister of Turgon, who was the king of Gondolin, wanted to set out and visit her relatives. After a long debate Turgon agreed with concerns and she left the Hidden City. But then she turned away and escaped her escort. Aredhel intended to visit the sons of Feanor but she was caught by Eol and he wedded her, not completely against her will. They



got a son Meaglin and they dwelt deep in the middle of a dark forest. One day when Eol visited the Dwarves Aredhel and Meaglin left the forest and fled in the direction of Gondolin. But Eol had returned earlier than expected and followed them. Aredhel and Meaglin reached Gondolin and to their surprise Eol was caught when he tried to enter the valley. In desperate Eol wanted to kill his son who intended to stay in Gondolin but his poisoned arrow hit Aredhel. She died and Eol was executed but he foresaw that his son would die the same

death as he did.

Three hundred year after the Noldor had returned to Middle-Earth Finrod wandered through Ossiriand and there he discovered the first Men which had passed the Ered Luin. That meeting was the first step to an alliance, which strengthen the enemies of Morgoth because the Men were willing to assist the Elves. In the next years many Men-tribes crossed the



mountains and settled in Beleriand. The following decades Morgoth built a strong army and in the 455th year of the First Age he broke the siege of Angband. In the great battle Dagor Bragollach the troops of Elves and Men were scattered and had to retreat. Fingolfin saw the fall of the Noldor approaching and rode to Angband alone. The King and Morgoth fought a single battle till Fingolfin was killed. In this chaos the brothers Hurin and Hour were brought to

Turgon by eagles. They hadn't seen the way in and because the King of Gondolin allowed them to leave. Then the power of Morgoth grew and many people were driven away from their homes.



A group of Men remained in Dorthonion and fought against the Orcs. It consisted of Beren's father Barahir, Beren himself and their company. Treason led to the death of all except Beren and he became a man of nature, wandering around, animals were his allies. The enemy drove him out of Dorthonion into the Ered Gorgoroth. Beyond them lay the lands of Doriath. This was a terrible trip, where no Man or Elf was laid his or her feet upon the soil. Somehow he arrives in the beautiful forests of Doriath, where no mortal had been permitted to enter, Beren was fated and doomed. Luthien daughter of Thingol, the most beautiful Elf danced in the forest. She sang and he called her Nightingale. He attempted to call to her for a while, at first she did not respond, then eventually they hugged and they desired to be with each other. Luthien took him before Thingol and Melian. The father was not satisfied with the relationship. Thingol told Beren to get a Silmaril from Morgoth' iron crown and bring it back to him and then he would offer his daughter's

hand to Beren. He accepted the fate and went his way, leaving Luthien behind. Beren travelled by himself for a while and entered the land of Nargothrond. Beren had worn a ring his father had possessed. It given in service from Finrod, the King of Nargothrond. That protected him from being shot with arrows by the other Elves. Beren was brought before the King and explained his situation. Felagund offered his personal aid. Celegorm and Curufin

resided in the king's hall. They wanted to claim power and the Silmarils at any cost, due to the oath. Felagund and his kin head to Beren's destination. They made great distances and were captured by Sauron and thrown into the dungeons. In Doriath, Luthien was locked away in a tree house because she had attempted to leave to help Beren when the word of the captured had reached her ears. With a magic cape, she fled and was later captured by the sons of Feanor. Huan, Celegrom's hound, found Luthien and was tricked in returning with them. Huan helped her escape, from the room where she was locked by the sons of Feanor, to aid Beren. Felagund and Beren were the only remaining in the dungeon alive, as Sauron wanted to leave Felagund for last, as he was the most powerful of the Elves. A werewolf came for Beren, Felagund burst his bonds and wrestled the animal dead, though he was gravely injured and died shortly after. Luthien sang and Beren heard. Sauron also heard and sent werewolves. Huan took them all down. Sauron came in a fearsome werewolf form and went straight to Luthien who fainted. Huan pounced and they fought. Huan almost killed her, when Sauron gave up Luthien allowed him to leave and he became a vampire and flew away. Beren and Luthien wandered around, not wanting to return to Doriath. After a while, Beren felt terrible for withholding from her life and returns her to her home. Nargothrond suffered interregnum as many who were captured returned home, mourning the death of their beloved king and called the sons of Feanor cowards, as a maiden had been braver than they. Tension grew as the people turned their loyalty to another. The sons of Feanor got mad and left for a short while. Upon leaving they found Beren and Luthien, Curufin captured Luthien into his saddle, Beren launched and Luthien was thrown down and the two guys fell to the ground. They fought and Beren was wounded. Luthien who was saved by Huan healed Beren. In mythology of Roman, Aeneas was cured in a similar fashion when Venus got a leaf that heals Aeneas's wound. Beren wanting her to be safe left her. She heard him singing and rode on Huan to catch up with the Man. They left to get the Silmaril. They disguised themselves and sneaked into Angband. Beren hid underneath Morgoth's throne, but Luthien's disguise was lost, however she sang, occupying Morgoth until the whole court was put to sleep. Beren then cut a Silmaril from the crown. They almost escaped until everyone began waking up. They were met up by Caratharoth, a greater wolf whom bit Beren's hand off that held the Silmaril. They fled but Beren fainted at the gates, having venom in his wounds. Eagles came by and gave them a lift. Bad times fell on Doriath as evil spread. Everyone thought Beren to be dead, everyone was in grief. Rumours had that Luthien was in Nargothrond to be wed to Celegrom. Thingol was furious and sent people to find out what was going on, he wanted to war with the brothers. If things were thought not to get worst, the wolf that had beaten off Beren's hand was around in the land raising havoc. Luthien and Beren returned to Thingol, he claimed to have the Silmaril in his hand, and then he displayed his stump. Thingol grew a bit kinder to the Man. A hunting party was put together consisting several kinsmen, Thingol and Beren to hunt down the great wolf. Caratharoth was found by Huan and launches at Thingol, Beren got between the wolf and King and suffered a biting wound to the chest. The wolves leave to fight. Huan won only to shortly die from the venom by Beren's side that was also dying. One of the Kinsmen slashed the belly of Caratharoth where the Silmaril remained. This news was received with horror. Luthien went into a depression and her spirit went to Mandos. Beren lingered around at the Halls of Mandos where no Man's spirit lingered wanting to wait for Luthien. She negotiated with Mandos to be granted with remain with Beren, since his spirit was to leave. She was given two choices, she could be sent to Valimar to be with the Valar, with all her memories of sorrows removed or give up her immortality, being subject the second death as spirits of Men. She took that so she could remain with Beren.

The deeds of Luthien and Beren showed that Morgoth wasn't invulnerable and so Maedhros decided to make a new alliance between all enemies of the Dark Lord. He gathered as many troops as he could and prepared for war. He got assistance from the other Noldor, the Dwarves and from the Men but not from Thingol. Morgoth had traitors and spies among the Men and he knew of Maedhros plan and prepared for battle too. When the day of the battle



came Turgon opened the gates of Gondolin and sent an army of 10,000 warriors. The victory was near but the sally of the Noldor started too early and Maedhros was held up by the Men in his company. They were servants of Morgoth and attacked the Elves. The dwarf-king fell and the Dwarves retreated. The battle was lost but the army of Gondolin could escape. Hurin and Huor stopped their pursuers till Huor was killed and Hurin was captured. That battle was later called Nirnaeth Arnoediad, the battle of the numberless tears.

Hurin was captured during a battle with Morgoth and was held captive to watch the doom that befalls everyone whom he loved.

Morgoth gave the land to the Easterlings who had assisted him in his war. The times were



hard for Turin and his mother and his sister. So Turin was sent to Doriath, he fostered by Thingol. When he had grown older, he did many great deeds. Beleg Cuthalion was a best friend with Turin. Turin had a quarrel with an Elf and the next day this Elf attacked him. Yet Turin was too strong and hunted the Elf till he died by accident. Turin was insulted by the court and left through Girdle of Melian and joined a small group of outlaws. Beleg offered his services to fetch Turin. When Turin was found he did not want to return, Beleg was told to leave and not try to get him to return. Turin changed the life-style of the outlaws and they met a dwarf who will allow them to live in his house (hill) if he let him alive. From there the outlaws fought against Orcs till Mim the Dwarf betrayed them.

Turin was captured by Orcs. Beleg, who had joined the outlaws before, began to hunt him down and ran into Gwindor, a Noldor-slave who had escaped from Angband. Hearing the news that Turin was captured, they joined forces and trudged on. Beleg was later killed by Turin in mistaken identity with a malicious sword crafted by Eol. They buried Beleg and return to Gwindor's former home in Nargothrond. The daughter of Lord Orodeth, Finduilas, fell in love with Turin, but was told to forget him because the Man was doomed. Turin was a powerful warrior but grew proud and overconfident. Finally Nargothrond was attacked and raided and the dragon Glaurung put Turin under a spell and fooled him to seek after a family that was no longer at their home but in Doriath. In his wrath he organised a little rebellion in Dor Lomin but it failed and he left the country. He had forgot to save Finduilas who was apparent he was doomed to lose. Turin met some Men of Brethil and decided to stay with them. His mother and sister were at Doriath waited no longer and wanted to find Turin. Morwen, his mother, set out to look for her son. Her daughter was told to remain in Doriath but she sneaked out and they travel to Nargothrond. There the dragon attacked them. The daughter was caught by the dragon and put under its spell. All memory and temporary sight and speak were removed from her. One of Thingol's guards found her and attempted to return when Orcs attacked them. Turin's sister fled into the forests and became lost. Turin found her and took her to shelter. He had never seen his sister and she didn't know who he was as he had changed his name. They fell in love and married. Turin was not allowed to fight any longer by her except their homes were in danger. The dragon approached and Turin left to slay the dragon. He achieved to kill the dragon with his sword but he had been injured. His wife thought he was dead and the dragon told her that her husband Turin was her brother. In grief and disgust she threw herself into the river after she had cried out: "A Turin Turambar turun ambartanen, master of doom by doom mastered". The former leader of the Men with whom Turin lived was jealous and angry against Turin and saw Nieniel's suicide. He returned to his people and told them about the tidings. Turin also returned alive, hearing the tale he thought that he was being betrayed and killed his friend only to find out he was telling the

truth. He ran away alone and committed suicide when the Elves of Doriath found him because he wanted to protect them from himself.



In the tale of Turin Turambar you can see clearly a doom motive from the Greek mythology. Nobody can escape his destiny. There are some parallels between the story of Turin and of Oedipus. Both were doomed and both married relatives because they didn't know about their identity and killed innocents by accident (Turin->Beleg, and Oedipus->his father). Seen from an other point of view the tale of Turin can be compared to the Odyssey of Homer because like Odysseus he wanted to return home, but he couldn't because of a

god's doom. The tale of Turin is the most tragic one written by Tolkien.

Hurin was released by Morgoth and went into his country but nobody knew him. Then he wandered around and met his wife only shortly before her death on the barrow of their children. Hurin went to Doriath. Morgoth had corrupted him and Hurin cursed the king because he had been responsible for his family's doom. Suddenly the madness left him and he gave Thingol the Nauglamír as a gift. Hurin left Doriath to look for Turgon but Turgon didn't let him into Gondolin because spies of Morgoth followed Hurin. Finally Hurin committed suicide by jumping into the sea.

Thingol ordered some Dwarves to put the Silmaril into the Nauglamír because he desired the gem more and more. For long the Dwarves laboured and finally they made a unique artwork that they were not willing to hand out for the negotiated price. The king grew angry and intended to release the Dwarves unpaid but he were killed by them. One of the murderers escaped and told the king of Nogrod that they were betrayed by the Elves. Melian Thingol's wife sent the Nauglamír to Beren and Luthien and left Middle-Earth forever. With her departure the Griddle of Melian vanished and Doriath was then opened for attacks. The Dwarves of Nogrod conquered Menengroth and plundered it. When they returned to their mountain they were attacked and killed by an army of Green-Elves leaded by Beren. Beren's son Dior became the new king of Doriath and after the death of Luthien and Beren he got the Nauglamír with the Silmaril. When the sons of Feanor noticed it Doriath was again attacked. Most people where killed but Elwing Dior's daughter was able to escape with the Silmaril and looked for refuge near the mouth of Sirion.



Tuor, Hour's son, became a slave in Hithlum after the Easterlings had got the land as a gift of Morgoth. When he was old enough he escaped and became a wild man but then a power drafted him away. He met some Noldor that leaded him through the mountains. In Nevrast he walked to the former dwelling of Turgon. There Ulmo appeared and gave Tuor mission. The Vala would send him a guide who would escort him to Gondolin. In the Hidden City he had to warn Turgon that the king had to leave the town. After that event Tuor discovered in the former halls of Turgon war equipment of the Elves and he took it for him. Voronwe a Noldo who was sent out by Thingol to find the Valar suddenly appeared and Tuor knew that this mariner was his guide. Ulmo gave them a part of his cloak and so the were able to wander to Gondolin unseen. When they reached the Hidden City after a long and weary march the king welcomed

them. He recognised Hour's son but despite he had grown to proud and was not willing to accept Ulmo's counsel. The king and his lords thought that Gondolin was unable to fall. Hour and Idril the daughter of the king fell in love and married. After their son Earendil was born Idril saw the doom of Gondolin approaching and ordered people of trust to build an escape tunnel out of the city. To the bad of Gondolin her prediction was right. Meaglin, the son of

Eol, wandered through the surrounding mountains and left the defence parameter in secret. Meaglin was captured by spies of Morgoth and taken to the Dark Lord. There Meaglin agreed to tell Morgoth all about Gondolin when he became the new lord of the city and Idril as wife. The Dark Lord let Meaglin return and nobody knew about his treason till the city fell. A short



time later a huge army of Morgoth marched to Gondolin and attacked the unprepared city. It was a long and hard battle. The Elves achieved many great deeds, for example Gothmog the lord of the Balrogs was killed. Tuor killed Meaglin when he tried to kidnap Idril and the Elf found the same death as his father. Tour, his family and only a few others were able to escape through Irdil's tunnel. A Balrog attacked the survivors in the mountains and the Elf-warrior Glorfindel faced him alone. He was able to

defeat the Balrog although the Elf died too. After a long march the survivors of Gondolin reached the mouth of Sirion where they united with the people who escaped from Doriath.

The tale of the fall of Gondolin can be compared to the Ilias of Homer, in which the fall of Troya is told. Idril is Cassandra and Helena in one person. She foresaw the fall of Gondolin like Cassandra and she was one reason for the fall like Helena because Meaglin loved her and this lead to the fall. In the Ilias Helena was loved by the king of Sparta that was the main reason for the siege of Troya. Turgon ignored the warnings of Tuor and Idril in the same way as the king of Troya ignored Cassandra. The killing of Gothmog has much in common with the death of Archiles in the war of Troya. Furthermore the fall of Gondolin and of Troya were enabled both by people who were within the walls. Despite of this parallels there are numerous new elements in the tale of Gondolin.

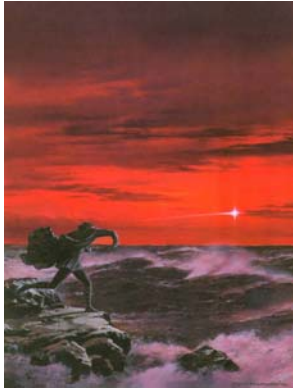
Together Círdan and Earendil built a unique ship. With this ship, Earendil sailed to Valinor in search of Tuor and Idril, who had left Middle-Earth. He never found them. When out upon the sea, he desired to return to Elwing, whom he had taken to wife. She wore the Silmaril about her neck. The sons of Feanor came to her demanding the gem. Upon her refusal, bloodletting followed as Maedhros and his brother came down fatally slaying all those opposed them. The fighting was terrible and many were lost. Earendil finally returned and didn't found his wife and his two sons that she bore, Elrond and Elros. He was later informed that his sons were taken captive and his wife had thrown herself into the sea with the Silmaril. Maedhros and



Maglor did not get the Silmaril. Elwing was not lost to Earendil as Ulmo gave her the flight of the bird and returned her to Earendil's ship. Earendil was weary of Middle-Earth; with his wife at his side they made their journey back to Valinor. Earendil bore the Silmaril on his brow in a very valiant gesture. By the power of the light older than the sun his ship passed through the perils that guarded Aman. They arrived and Earendil insisted that everyone remained on the ship while

he was gone. Elwing would not have it and followed not wanting to be parted from her husband forever. He was the first of Men (Half-Elf) to step upon the Immortal Lands. Earendil with the Silmaril climbed upon Tuna and found no one in Tirion. He had not realised that it was festival time in Valimar, which was a distance away. He cried, and called for anyone to answer him, but no one answered. He began to make his way back and was stopped by the Herald of Manwe, Eonwe. He was taken to the halls in Valimar to meet with the Valar. A council was held for Earendil. He was doomed as he was both the lines of Men and the line of Noldor. However, Manwe would not hold this to Earendil as he made his passage in the love of both Man and Elf. Earendil and Elwing were given the choice to remain. Their sons would also be given the choice either to take the fate of Men or of the Elves. Elwing had been left alone for a very long time; she wandered the coast until she came upon the fleets of the Teleri. She told them the woeful stories of Beleriand and what had befallen Doriath and

Gondolin. The couple decided to stay in Aman. Earendil was given as really special ship, the Vingilot, that would allow him to travel the heavens and worlds beyond the Door of Night. There was conflict that arose because of Morgoth The Dark Lord was defeated by the Army of the West and the Silmarils should return to Aman. Maglor desired to give up the oath and assist in being rid of the Silmarils. Maglor thought that less would be harmed if they broke the oath. Unfortunately Maglor followed Maedhros and they killed the guards and stole the Silmarils. Maglor and Maedhros fled with the stones. Since they were the remaining, sons they kept one stone to themselves. Maedhros's hand was burned by the stone. Then he realised that the oath was in vain. He threw himself in to a fiery chasm returning the Silmaril to the earth. Maglor could not endure the pain with which the Silmaril tormented him; and he cast it at last into the Sea, and thereafter he wandered ever upon the shores, singing in pain and regret beside the waves. And thus it came to pass that the Silmarils found their long homes: one in their airs of heaven, and one in the fires of the heart of the earth, and one in the deep waters. The



Elves began their migration to the West. Only a few remained behind.

Morgoth was thrown through the Door of Night and a guard was placed upon him. However Morgoth had already planted his seeds of evil upon the Men and Elves alike and it would be only time before they grown.

The First Age ends in glory with doubts. Earendil who sailed in the sky would be Venus (the planet) in our world. The oath of Feanor shows the danger of oaths sworn in anger and wrath. As consequences murders and worse deeds have happened. Perhaps this is a little critic on the blood-revenge in the cultures of the ancient Germans.

[The Second Age \(length: 3441 years\)](#)

Most Edain sailed to Númenor in the beginning of the Second Age and the Elves founded their kingdoms in Lindon and Eregion. After centuries the first ships of the Númenoreans returned to Middle-earth.

One of the great mariners was Aldarion who was the king's son. He voyaged along the coast of Middle-Earth for years but his love Erendis forced him to stay with her in Númenor. On day his desire to sail returned and she allowed him a short voyage but because of the uprising of Sauron he was held back for more than two years. His wife grew angry and bitter and began to hate all men especially because she had born Aldarion a daughter. When he finally returned Erendis didn't want to have anything to do with her husband and insisted to educate their daughter alone. Aldarion informed his father about the situation in Middle-Earth and the king gave the sceptre to his son because he wasn't willing to face the approaching times as king. While Aldarion built a strong sea force for Númenor his former wife educated Ancalime her daughter. Ancalime moved against the will of her mother to the capital of Númenor and became after Aldarion's death the first ruling queen.

The tale of Aldarion and Erendis shows the typical problems of a relationship between men and women. On the one hand it criticises the behaviour of Aldarion who wasn't willing to stay with his wife. He divided his love between the sea and Erendis and he behaved without respect to his wife's wishes. On the other hand Erendis of course grew angry but she exaggerated too. At first she tolerated her husbands "hobby" but then after lots of disappointments she wanted to accept Aldarion's wishes any longer. Her growing hate against men should maybe show the inequality between both sexes.

In Middle-Earth Sauron fortified Mordor and went to the Elves in a fair guise. He made the Noldor of Eregion to forge the Rings of Power. In secret he forged the One Ring, which he made to rule the other in fire of the Orodruin. When the Elves saw that they had been betrayed they hid the Three Rings. Two went to Gil-galad (he gave one to Círdan) and

Galadriel got the third ring, because she knew that Celebrimor, who forged the Rings, loved her in secret. Sauron attacked the Elves of Eregion and destroyed their realm.



The Men of Númenor began to grow proud and they were not willing to follow their old traditions. They broke their friendship with the Elves save the Faithful. At that time the Nazgûl appeared and the power of Sauron and of Númenor grew. Only one king regretted the deeds of his people but it was too late and after his death Ar-Pharazôn took the sceptre of Númenor. He sent a great army to Middle-Earth and Sauron's servants left his master. The Dark Lord went to Númenor as a prisoner but there he became the advisor

of the king. He made the Númenoreans to attack Aman to get immortality (which was not possible). Eru destroyed the isle of Númenor and bent the world. The shape of Arda was changed from a disc to a sphere and Aman had been taken out of the circles of the world. Only the Faithful survived the downfall of Númenor and founded their own realms in Middle-Earth. Sauron's spirit returned to Middle-Earth and he began to fight against the survivors from Númenor and the Elves. The Last Alliance between Elves and Men was made and they were able to through down Sauron. Yet Isildur took the Ring and didn't destroy it.

[The Third Age \(length: 3021 years\)](#)

After the war Isildur wanted to return to Rivendell where his family stayed. His company was attacked by Orcs near the Gladden Fields. Although Isildur saw the danger of the Ring and intended to ask Elrond for counsel because the king's heir had changed his opinion he put it on his finger. Isildur was able to escape the Orcs but when he swam in the Anduin the One Ring left him. Isildur became visible and he was killed by the arrows of the Orcs.

A thousand years after the beginning of the Third Age a shadow fell on the Mirkwood and the Valar noticed the second uprising of Sauron. They held a council and five ambassadors were sent to Middle-Earth. So the wizards came to Middle-Earth. Two (Gandalf and Radagast) stayed in the west of Middle-Earth while the three others went into the east but of them only one (Saruman) returned. The next centuries peoples of the east and south regularly attacked Gondor. In the Angmar the Lord of the Nazgûl founded his own kingdom and started a war with Arnor. In Gondor a civil war destroyed the capital Osgiliath and after the victory of the royal forces the rebels fled to Umbar and formed the Corsairs. Although Gondor sent an army to support Arnor it was too late to save the kingdom but they were able to destroy Angmar. In Moria the Dwarves woke a Balrog and they had to leave their homesteads. At the same time Amroth king of Lorien was persuaded by his love Nimrodel who feared wars to leave Middle-Earth and to sail to Aman. But on their way to the coast they were separated. Amroth reached the coast where some Elves prepared to leave Middle-Earth. Before Nimrodel arrived Amroth and his ship were drawn out on the sea by a storm. He sprang into the water and tried to swim back to the coast but he drove. Finally Nimrodel came to the coast and faded after she had found out what had happened to his love. While the Dwarves founded a new kingdom under the Erebor. The Nazgûl conquered Minas Ithil, which became Minas Morgul. The king of Gondor went alone to the haunted city to fight against the Captain of the ring-wraiths but he never returned. The line of kings of Gondor ended and the steward began to rule the realm. Gollum found the Ring in the 2463rd year of the Third Age and retreated into the Misty Mountains. The next years Sauron let attack Gondor. In the last moment the Eorlingas rode to support the kingdom. As a gift for the rescue of Gondor Cirion gave the North-Men the land of Calenardhon (Rohan) and both peoples made an alliance. More than two centuries later



Smaug destroyed the dwarven realm of Erebor and in Moria the king of the Dwarves was slain by Orcs. The Great War between the Dwarves and the Orcs started and ended in the Battle of Azanulbizar in front of Moria. The Dwarves were victorious but they didn't re-colonise Moria because of Durin's bane. Fifty years later Gandalf went in secret to Dol Guldur and proved that the Necromancer of the hill was

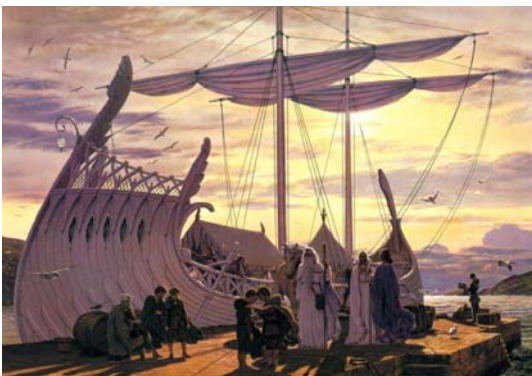
indeed Sauron. Gandalf intended to get rid of Smaug who could be used by Sauron as a dangerous weapon. So he went to Thorin and it was easy to persuade the Dwarf to reconquer his old kingdom.



A small hobbit called Bilbo was persuaded by Gandalf to take part on an enterprise with the dwarf king Thorin and his fellowship to reconquer Dwarves treasure. Bilbo, the Hobbit, should come with them and assist them as a burglar. A perilous travel to the Erebor on which Bilbo found the Ring. After they got through the dangerous Mirkwood the Dwarves reached the Lonely Mountain. The death of the Dragon Smaug, the Battle of the Five Armies and the driven away of Sauron followed. Finally Bilbo returned home.

Sauron went back to Mordor and began to fortify it. His power rose very quickly and he gathered his forces. Balin tried to re-colonise Moria but he failed because of Durin's bane. Orcs killed all Dwarves in Moria.

Frodo and his companions made quest to destroy the One Ring of Power and to save Middle-



Earth from Sauron's armies. The fellowship of the Ring travelled through the West of Middle-Earth and had to face many perils and adventures. Finally Sauron was defeated and Aragorn became the king of Gondor and Arnor.

During the War of the Ring the Elves of Lorien fought against the evil of Dol Guldur and the Erebor was besieged by a strong army of Sauron. After the fall of the Dark Lord the Elves and the Dwarves were victorious and the Mirkwood was cleaned from evil. The One Ring is a kind of Holy

Grail, which gives the power immortality. Moreover it is a cloaking device and enables the bearer to control others. But it was forged with evil power and turns everything into evil. Furthermore the Ring has its own will and tries to return to its master. The War of the Ring is an ultimate fight between good and evil (although the frontiers are not completely clear) seen from weak and obviously (not) important people. This literary technique has often been used by famous Chinese authors.

[The Fourth Age](#)

During the Fourth Age the power of the Reunited Kingdom (Gondor and Arnor) grew under the reign of king Elessar. Sam became the mayor of the Shire but after Rose's death he departed into the West as the last of all ring-bearers. In the year 120 Aragorn died and Legolas and Gimli sailed to Aman. The company of the ring had left Middle-Earth and Arwen died in Lorien. Many years later a shadow fell again on Gondor.

[The End of the World](#)

In Tolkien's stories there is often mentioned the End of the World. Arda was created by the music of the Ainur and it won't last forever. One day Morgoth will return and there will be

the last battle. Even Manwe will step down from his throne. After this battle the world will be broken and there will be a second music. In this music the Men will support the choirs of the Ainur and a new world will be created. The dwarves will help by its construction but there is no prophecy, which mentions the fate of the Elves after the destruction of Arda. It is only told that the Elves will be released by Mandos to fight in the last battle.

This final tale describes an Armageddon, which is an essential part of every mythology. Many cultures believe that the world will end in a final battle between good and evil. In Tolkien's version the sun and the moon will fall down on Earth and everything will be undone and all secrets will be revealed. It seems to be a mixture of different ideas of the Armageddon.

languages

For his book JRR Tolkien developed complete languages with own grammar and vocabulary. Mostly the whole plot is "translated" from the original language but for the names of locations and buildings Tolkien let them use their own languages. The various languages let appear Tolkien's world more realistic.

Elf languages

The Elves of Tolkien were a species that was able to speak in words since their creation. This idea came from the Greek Aristotle who defined the Man as "zoon logon echon", as animal, which has a language. Tolkien uses the same concept for the Elves.

Quenya

This language was used by the High Elves. We know many words of this language because Tolkien made a dictionary for this language. Some word collections of Quenya have about 40 pages. This language has a very complex grammar. It uses ten cases, three different Plural-forms (a concrete pair, some, many) and five known tenses (2 present tenses, 2 past tenses and 1 future tense). The Quenya was strongly influenced by the Finnish language.

Sindarin

An other Elf-language is Sindarin and it was spoken by the Elves in Middle-Earth. From this language we have only a few hundreds words to use. The grammar is relatively easy although there are irregular forms in the Sindarin. The cases are expressed by word order and not by the ending of the word. There is one Singular but two Plural forms: the "normal" Plural and the collective Plural, which is used for great amounts. Although only a present tense is known to us it is possible to build the passive voice of a sentence. The Walish was the model language for the Sindarin.

other Elf languages

Tolkien also made other languages for the remaining Elf-tribes but neither the grammar nor the vocabulary is much developed. We know only 30 words of Nandorin and 110 words of Telerin. The only other language we have more information is the Ancient-Elfish which possesses 620 different words and a little grammar (tenses and a few cases).

Men languages

The different Men of Middle-Earth use a great variety of languages. In many cases it is visible that Men learned the languages of the Elves first before they developed some for themselves.

Adûnaian

This language was spoken in Númenor and was strongly influenced by the Sindarin. This language has a complete grammar. Adûnaian possesses 4 genders, a Singular, a Dual (for

pairs), a Plural, cases, prepositions, adjectives and adverbs, 4 tenses, a conjunctive and an imperative. It would be possibly to learn speaking this language like any in the real world.

Westron

This language was used in the western parts of Middle-Earth and it was also called the common speech. Tolkien “translated” nearly everything from this language into English but he told us a little about its structure. The Westron can be compared to the Scandinavian languages because it uses a special ending instead of an article but.

the language of the Rohirim

We know little about the language of the Rohirim because Tolkien “translated” it into old-English. This language should be related to the original language of the Hobbits. It sounds partly soft and partly strong.

other Men languages

About the languages of the other Men in Middle-Earth Tolkien gave us only a few words, which should show that those Men were speaking in a different language but he made no certain notes on those languages.

Khuzdul

Khuzdul is the secret language of the Dwarves. This short and hard sounding language was made to characterise the nature of the Dwarves. It should show that they talked little and kept their secrets. Although we have only a few words of Khuzdul we know that there are 5 short vocals and 4 long vocals. The grammar of this language is very complex and has many exceptions (like real languages). Its basic structure can be compared to Arabic and Hebraic.

the Black Language

The Black Language was developed by Sauron for his servants. It’s a simple and hard sounding language and Tolkien himself didn’t like it. This is the reason why he didn’t invent more of it than he needed. Only very few words are known to us from the Black Language.

other languages

In Tolkien’s world every species has its own language.

the language of the Ents

The language which is spoken by the Ents can be described as a long monotonous humming. It is very precise and beautiful but you will have to have “a lot of time” if you want to talk in it. It characterises the nature of the Ents who are “no hasty” creatures.

Valarin

Valarin is the language of the Valar. It uses long words and allows many sounds (seven vocals which can be spoken long and short). We know nothing about the grammar, although it seems that there exists one, but we simply have a too small vocabulary.

Discussions about Tolkien's world

Many aspects can be discussed in the world of Tolkien and I will just give a short overview about possible topics.

Racism

It is often told that Tolkien's books transmit a racial view of the world but this is surely incorrect. Some called Tolkien even a Nazi although he was against them. He answered a letter in which the German government (under Nazi-control) asked him for the allowance to translate his stories into German in a very unfriendly way because the Nazis wanted him to prove that he had no Jew in his lineage.

It is true that Tolkien liked the culture and the literature of north European peoples but he respected all the other cultures too and his mythology is full of aspects, which he collected from every significant culture worldwide.

The main argument of the people who see in Tolkien a racist is that the outer appearance of the "evil Men" can be compared to those of Africans and people of Asia while the "goods" were of European stature. In Tolkien's world every Man can be corrupted by evil and whites too. Indeed the main evil characters are "Europeans". For example Sauron, Saruman, the Lord of the Nazgûl and the Mouth of Sauron were all white and there is no hint that white Men can resist the Power of the Ring (evil) longer than any other Men. Indeed the Men in the west of Middle-Earth were not under the control of evil because of the Elves and there were some realms in the east too, which resisted Sauron. Womawas Drus an Empire of the Easterlings was mentioned as an everlasting counterpart of the Dark Lord in the east. One king of Womawas Drus became the ring-wraith Khamul and his people saw the power of evil. After Khamul had left the country his former people fought against evil like Gondor did it in the west. It must be mentioned that many "evil" realms were former ruled by Númenor (the downfall of this island is an other evidence that all Men can be affected by evil) and this was the reason for the people's hate against Gondor. This should criticise colonialism and its long-term effects.

An other argument for racist elements in Tolkien's books is the fact that there were "high", "middle" and "lesser" Men. This system was only used by the Númenoreans and the people of Gondor and it should symbolise that those realms were proud and saw themselves as the only high culture. For the ancient Greeks all peoples outside their realm were seen as wild Barbarians (from Gondor's view: the wild Men in the east and the south) and only a few which had something in common with them were seen as Half-Barbarians (like Rohan and the Men of the Twilight from Gondor's point of view). Frodo doubted this system after he had seen a killed Man from Harad. Frodo thought that that Man was only a victim of lies and false promises and not evil. Indeed even Faramir (a man from Gondor) wasn't sure if their view of the world is correct and not too proud.

Tolkien's heroes

The strange on the heroes in Tolkien's books is that they don't act alone. In contrast to nearly all mythologies in which the great heroes achieved their deeds completely by themselves (like Herakles). The ring-bearer Frodo for example had first a whole company to assist him and later when it broke always at least two remained together and co-operation leded them to success like Earendil, Éowyn and Merry, Turin, Hurin and Hour, the sons of Feanor and more. Although many heroes fought with other some did great deeds alone but nearly all (The only exceptions were Beren in the Ered Gorgoroth and Tour) died when they achieved their heroic deeds. For example Feanor went to far in his wrath and at least he was alone and then the Noldo was slain by Balrogs. Other examples were Gandalf the Grey, Glorfindel, Fingolfin

and maybe Théoden. In contrast to many other tales the “good” heroes in Tolkien’s world can be killed too. Normally the good ones survive while the evil is destroyed. But Tolkien gave both sides the possibility to die and to survive. Evil persons like Saruman, Sauron, Gothmog and the Captain of the Nazgûl were slain but other like Melkor and the Dragons continue living. Some goods (Sam, Galadriel, Earendil, Beren and Aragorn) have lived until their natural death (in case if the weren’t immortal) but many other were killed directly (Finrod, Fingolfin, Feanor, Théoden, Thorin and Turgon) or indirectly (Turin). In Tolkien’s world the heroes are of course strong and mighty warriors but they are mortal and not always successful. A fact which makes his mythology much more realistic.

The sources of his mythology

Tolkien’s mythology is based up on elements of significant mythologies and religions from all over the world. The main focus lies on the European cultures and especially on the Scandinavian cultures. But in his mythology there can be found ideas and concepts from the Chinese, Indian and Mesopotamian cultures. Of course many elements came from the ancient Mediterranean high cultures like Greece, Rome and Egypt (I don’t know if Tolkien’s knew it but pictures of an electric lamp which can be compared to the Blue Lamps of the Noldor in were found in an Egyptian tomb). He also mentioned the legend of Atlantis in the downfall of Númenor. Maybe even elements that have their roots in the Native American cultures can be found. The Inca believed that the Mountains were created by the agonies of the World Beast. This is comparable to the rising of the Misty Mountains after Melkor has tortured the world. Although sources can be found for many mythological elements a lot of Tolkien’s mythology has no roots and has been invented by the author.

Sources

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The Lord of the Rings (including Appendix)
The Hobbit
The Silmarillion
The Unfinished Tales
The Book of Lost Tales Part 1+2

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