

ISSUE 8

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## Editorial

Bringing out an issue with such relatively minimal contents is not the way I would have chosen to end my brief editorship; but it has led me to give some thought to the subject of fanzines in general. Those of you who dislike embittered diatribes may wish to skip the rest of this editorial, which has been written at least partly with the intention (by writing something mildly controversial) to stir some of you apathetes out there into some sort of action Now read on. . . . .

In my experience it is not unusual that in a desperate attempt to bring out an issue of a society's magazine, the Committee (or rather the active membership, which is often the same thing) are forced to come up with articles with great haste and hence little thought. The material thus produced need not appear shoddy: indeed, some people seem to write at their best under such pressure. My point is, however, that a drop in quality is only to be expected. Now why is such behaviour necessary?

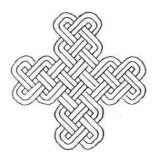
Continuing existence of the society is almost invariably the objective underlying such haste: it may be that an Event approaches at which sales of the magazine will provide much-needed funds; or perhaps it is thought that producing a fanzine is the most effective (or only) means of attracting new members. (The latter reason is of course particularly important to university societies, whose members are almost certain to lose contact after three years.) However laudable these aims may be, they do not arise from the basic raison d'être of societies such as ours: "to encourage interest ... in the life and works of J. R. R. Tolkien", to quote the CTS constitution. For a magazine to further such an aim,

it should contain articles considered by their authors to be as good as they can possibly make them, not in any way 'dashed off' to meet a deadline.

Clearly a conflict arises here, and a decision has to be made: which is to be given greater importance—the pursuit of excellence (to the extent of delaying publication until enough good articles have been written) in writing inspired by Tolkien, or the need to perpetuate the machinery created to publish such writing? As retiring editor I can do no more than point out the options available: however, it should be clear from how I have done so what my opinions are—especially if I add the submission that in perpetuating the said machinery, its reputation may be so damaged that no-one will be reading Anor on that great and hopefully enlightening day when it contains the best Tolkien article ever written (by someone other than Tolkien, that is).

End of rant: have an enjoyable summer. And I hope to see you at Oxonmoot.

Peter Gilliver



### CORRECTIONS

In Anor 7 I managed to let two errors through, for which apologies. The artwork on page 9 was wrongly attributed to Marian Haas—in fact we have Susan Foord to thank for that imposing portrait of Smaug—and poor Duncan McLaren was not even mentioned on the same page as his review of The Mists of Avalon. Please let me know what penance to perform.

## SOLUTION TO LAST ISSUE'S CROSSWORD:

### ACROSS

- 4 Celeborn 9, Fangorn 10, Uner 11, Elbereth 12, Sam 15, Dáin 16, Morgoth 18, End
- 20. Súlimo 21. Arantar 24. Perhael 27. Edain 29. Olwë 30. Théoden 32. Year 34. Lindo
- Azaghâl 39. Gilrain 41. Melian 43. Loa 44. Nenuial 45. Nurn 47. Six 48. Thorndor
   Bill 52. Thingol 53. Orodruin

### DOWN

- 1. Yavanna 2. Age 3. Eru 5. Elleth 6. Eket 7. Rath Dinen 8. Tevildo 13. Morning 14. Aglar
- 15. Dior 17. Lúthica 19. Drúadan 22. Legolas 23. Nenya 25. Elendil 26. Celos 28. Shagrat
- 31. Glornan 33. Ezellohar 36. Bifur 37. Andúril 38. Aman 40. Nólimon 42. Pelóri 46. Anor
- 49. Aha 50. Ent

## Book Reviews

## The Fantasy of PIERS ANTHONY

The three series I have read are the Battle Circle trilogy, the Split Infinity trilogy and the Xanth books (8 so far, and more on the way). The latter two can, and here will be, considered together, as they are in many ways similar. First, I will consider the Battle Circle books:

In Sos the Rope, Var the Stick and Neq the Sword, a post-apocalypse society is portrayed in a style which occasionally is more fantasy than sci-fi, as has become usual with stories of this kind. These books are not 'fun' as are his others, and they are a little confusing as all occur at pretty much the same time—some scenes are in all three books if Neq, Sos and Var were all involved.

This style, I hope, should cause no difficulty for anyone who has coped with the simultaneity of alternate LotR books . . . . The plot is not as predictable as those of his other books, and they are quite readable. The general theme is one of the hidden owners of technology seeking to prevent nomadic warriors repeating the errors of the past civilization—the characters after whom the books are named being chief figures in the formation and disbanding of the Empire dreamed of by Sol, Master of All Weapons. The Battle Circle represents the nomad code of honour (as devised by the tech-owners) and the loss of this code brings the downfall of the Empire . . . .

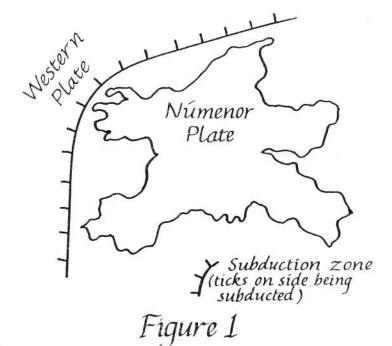
As far as Split Infinity goes, the blurb on the back says it all! Stile is a Game Player and can win citizenship on Proton (a sci-fi world) if he is good enough. On the parallel world of Phaze (fantasy setting), which he can enter only because his Phaze-double died, he is the Blue Adept. In both worlds he is being hunted, and as his important adversaries can also live in both worlds, the books jump from one to the other frequently.

The Game sequences are very interesting—rounds may be on almost anything, and part of the challenge is to ensure it will be something you can do. In his quest to become a Citizen, Stile horse-races, composes poetry, plays football with robots, slides down dust mountains, plays one-armed bandits . . . .

However, these books are similar to those of Xanth in many ways. In all of them there is a source of information which acts as a plot device to get things going, viz the Oracle in Phaze and Humfrey the Good Magician in Xanth.

All the Xanth books have a Big Secret which is, unfortunately, painfully obvious. Examples are: the nature of Bink's talent, the identity of the Horseman, the identity of Jonathan the Zombie in his former life and the nature of Ivy's talent. By chapter 3 these are obvious, yet the whole book must be read before the characters realize . . . I did not mind as the Xanth books in particular are such fun! They are full of puns—nickelpedes being five times larger than centipedes, people living in cottage cheeses and shoes growing on shoe trees being the most elementary examples. The main characters grow old, so Bink is a grandfather at least by now—and a great-grandfather at the end of book 8. Try them—you'll love them!

Adam Atkinson



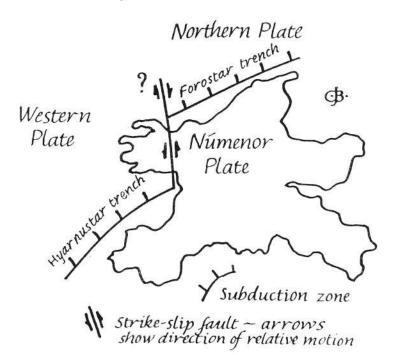


Figure 2

## On Númenor

Some comments on the geological observations made in Duncan McLaren's article "Geographical Observations on Númenor" in Auor 7.

I shall consider the various geological points raised in Duncan's article in the order in which he brought them up, but I should point out first of all that, given the extremely small amount of evidence available, I am not in a position to criticise anything he says; I shall merely attempt to expand somewhat on his comments.

Firstly, the plate tectonic setting of the island. I fully agree with Duncan that the distribution of mountainous country along the north and west coasts of the island suggests that Númenor is located on the leading edge of a plate at a subduction zone. It is not, strictly speaking, necessary for there to be two other plates involved, as it is common for subduction zones to be curved. Thus a possible configuratiom of the plates would be as shown in Figure 1. However, in order to give a more reasonable distribution of mountains on the end of the Hyarnustar peninsular, I believe a split subduction zone, as shown in Figure 2, is more reasonable. This shows the eastern half of Andustar separated from the rest of the Númenor Plate by a large strike-slip fault. This would be reasonable in view of the description of Andustar, which appears to be less mountainous that the Forostar and Hyarnustar promontories. The question which arises here is whether this plate boundary continues northwards beyond the Forostar trench, as shown, which would divide the Western Plate into two plates predominantly composed of oceanic material: the Western Plate and the Northern Plate. Consideration of the triple junction which would be formed if this boundary does continue northwards tells us that the only stable configuration which is consistent with the other plate boundaries and motions we require would be for the boundary to continue northwards as a strike-slip fault, as shown in Figure 2. The direction of motion on this boundary would depend on the relative rate of subduction at the two trenches; it seems from the description that there was greater geological activity in Forostar than Hyarnustar, so it would appear likely that the rate of subduction was greater at the Forostar trench, giving a direction of motion as shown. Thus it would seem to me that, on the basis of the available information, Figure 2 gives the best possible plate tectonic setting for the island of Númenor. Before closing this subject, I must mention two possible arguments which might be used against it. Firstly, the presence of a large strike-slip fault running northwards from the island would be unlikely to give any major geological activity off the coast of Númenor, and so is not ruled out by the evidence available. Secondly, throughout this argument it is necessary to regard the lines surrounding the island in the map in Unfinished Tales as being drawn to give the impression of sea, and not as submarine contours, as the submarine topography would not be as gentle as shown on the map.

The next topic in Duncan's article is the lithology of Númenor, and here there is very little I can add, owing to the shortage of information in the description of Númenor. As stated in Duncan's article, a collection of rocks characteristic of subduction tectonics fits the evidence given remarkably well. It would seem likely that some volcanic activity would

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> For a full consideration of the stability of triple junctions in plate tectonics, see D. P. McKenzie and W. J. Morgan, Nature 224 (1969), 125-133.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> "A Description of Númenor", UT 169.

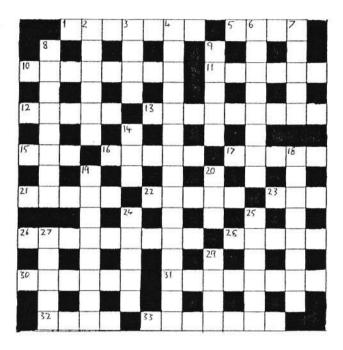
take place in the mountains of the north coast of the island, but this was an almost uninhabited part of Númenor, and so this could quite easily take place without any mention in the few records which were preserved after the Downfall. What is slightly more remarkable is the fact that two large towns, Andúnië and Eldalondë, lie within twenty-five miles of a major strike-slip fault. It would be expected that there would be a history of earthquakes, as is observed in the cities of the western coast of North America. However, there are three possible explanations of the lack of any mention of such events. With a small change in conditions from those observed in North America, the frequency of earthquakes could either be greatly increased or decreased. In the latter case, it would be possible that no major earthquake would occur during the three millenia of Númenor's history, and this would also allow the build-up of a large amount of strain energy, which could account for a large earthquake occurring at the Downfall. If the frequency was increased, the earthquakes would be of very small magnitude, and, being such frequent occurrences, would not rate a mention in the records. The third possibility, and probably the most reasonable, is that there were recorded earthquakes in these two towns, and elsewhere in Númenor, but that such records did not survive the Downfall.

This brings me on to the subject which ends all accounts of Númenor—the Downfall. I am afraid that I take a rather practical view of the downfall of Númenor, and see the tale as told at the end of the Akallabéth in much the same light as the early books of the Bible, that is, as stories handed down and embroidered over the generations to explain events of which no first-hand witnesses were available.

At the time of the Downfall most of the population of Númenor were away in the armada sent to Valinor. Of those remaining, the Faithful took their chance while the navy was well out of the way to slip out of Númenor, so escaping the Downfall. The Downfall itself I see as a two-fold geological event. Firstly, a massive earthquake caused by motion of the strike-slip fault in Andustar, which would cause a tidal wave of colossal proportions, responsible for the destruction of the fleet in the West, and which would also destroy most of the major settlements in Númenor, as all of these, except Armemelos, were coastal towns. Secondly, a massive eruption of the long-dormant Meneltarma, which would give a pyroclastic flow of volcanic material moving at several hundred miles per hour towards Armenelos, and which would wipe out the entire town. (In a recent (1902) observed eruption of this type there were only two survivors, who were in the town gao!!) Thus the entire population of Númenor would be killed, and it is certain that the Faithful, being the only survivors of the Downfall, would have no desire to return to the island immediately. Following this, the island would just be left to slip slowly under the waves—but the legend would grow up that it had vanished in the initial catastrophe.

Mike Percival

## Crossword



## CLUES

1. Bat hard, unfortunately for old City (7) 2. Of kings, of healing (6) 3. Letter spoken of in the East (4) 4. Farmer made housemaid mad about soldier (8,2,5) 5. Child of 15 takes one cake (4) 6. Summoned by Aragorn, dreamed of by Frodo (8) 7. Elf's not left the party (5) 8. King with one main obsession (8) 9. Rock-pit of which Dwarves are lords (5) 10. Dragon left gold—smuggled in horse (8) 11. Bellow in note grade (7) 12. Point after storm-crow? (5) 13. In our era, a king takes an hour to become a king (9) 14. Elf makes cardinal look up (3) 15. Dwarf, nearing 2000 (3) 16. Dwarf's black duckskin (5) 17. Sing "O log!" (5) 18. Wisdom pub girl may have said to Hador (8) 19. Ill-fated child? (Mastered by fate) (8) 20. Unit of sunlight (3) 21. Problem an Orc might have (5) 22. Decorate river (5) 23. Woodman described to an audience (3) 24. Ducks encountered by 4 (5) 25. Hobbit sergeant puts on vestment upside-down (6) 26. Too supple even for leap-year (9) 27. Six right in lunar glass (5) 28. Here, lenient Elves may inhabit (5) 29. Orcs make an expression of disgust (4) 30. Many about scoffed at what Aulë did to 27 (6) 31. Idiot girl found in part of Mordor ... (8) 32... but the Riders are in Hobbiton, in Eriador (4) 33. Moth chewed and swallowed by giant Balrog (7)

## Hobbits, Authors & Translators

A Preliminary Attempt to Unmask the Reality of Middle-earth.

In Anor 7 I mentioned that it was difficult to reconstruct the social and economic nature of towns on Númenor due to the fact that the authors of the recovered works would have taken such things for granted. Here I attempt to explore this problem more deeply and suggest how simply by being aware of the problem we may be able to sidestep it.

Virtually all the records that we have of the earliest ages of the world are tales of heroic acts set in times of change. Thus such records tend to tell us much about princes and battles and little about ordinary people, except when they are forced out of their natural habitat and into the action. At such times they seem to feel themselves that they are part of a story—note Sam's comments such as "I wonder what kind of a tale we've fallen into?" This simply emphasizes the fact that in such situations they are divorced from their 'real' existence. However, it is not only the heroic tales which provide us with a biased picture of the world. Even the more learned texts such as those published in Unfinished Tales generally fail to consider real life. It seems likely that the general social climate and the shackles of patronage which were probably essential for academic work (i.e. academics would rely on support from kings and rulers for their daily bread) led academics into studies of unusual objects and unusual people, such as the palantíri and the Istari.

This is, however only the beginning of our problems. There is also the problem, common to all historical research, of conflicting records. To understand the magnitude of this problem, simply compare The Silmarillion with the Lost Tales. This however could be turned into a bonus if such accounts could be accurately dated, since deeper analysis could give us a useful insight into the changes in society and scholarship in such times. Several of the items also suffer from a third problem which compounds both previous ones-they are translations of rewritings of the original records or diaries. Thus they will include, in an intermingled form, the ideologies and world-views of at least three different people. Indeed in many cases there are four people involved, the fourth being Christopher Tolkien in his role as editor. In The Lord of the Rings, for example, we find especially detailed accounts of events within the Shire-reflecting the hobbit's view of what was important. Simultaneously we have the structuring of the tale and the addition of selected appendices by our later writer, while in translation further changes, if only subtle ones, have occurred. One of the most noticeable of these is the occasional occurrence of Christian (Catholic) imagery. For example, Galadriel seems to have taken on the characteristics of the Virgin Mary, and it is possible to note the reflection of Biblical events and people within Middleearth (see Garrett, I. in Mallorn 22). The final translation may also have been structured by the translator's preconceived ideas of a grand 'legend' cycle into which all these tales had to fit. Therefore, despite Professor Tolkien's protestations to the contrary, it is useful to examine the author or translator as an aid to understanding.

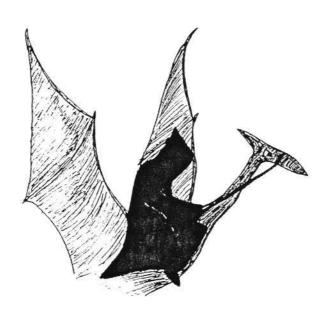
Thus there are obviously several factors which we must take into account if we are trying to interpret and understand the societies of Middle-earth and the actions, both recorded and unrecorded, of people within them.

As an example we can take a brief look at the hobbits of the Shire. Superficially we get a picture of a contented, peaceful society whose members' main interests lie in food and drink, but which occasionally-perhaps by genetic accident-produces an adventurous individual or two. However we should consider that society in much more depth. Firstly we must remember that there is a need for a subsistence level existence at least. In the Shire this was clearly based on agriculture, and in particular on horticulture, although the apparent frequency of fish consumption sets something of a problem in a society so far from the sea, most of whose members were afraid of water. It is possible that fish may have been a trade good but if so, we must ask with whom and for what was it traded. If anyone knows anything more about this I should be glad to hear it! It is clear that the details of horticulture or of trade would not be recorded by the hobbits, for to them it would simply have been commonplace knowledge. Nor would they be recorded by the later writer who was more concerned with 'creating' an enjoyable tale and who therefore put only what he considered necessary details into the appendices. The presence there of detailed genealogies may be indicative of the continued importance of inheritance and ancestry in his society as well as in the Shire.

As well as subsistence we should also consider the nature of state organization. In the Shire this would appear to be minimal. This portrayal may well reflect the hobbits' or the author's ideals in which it is clear that a large state organization is related to oppression and evil, such as in the Shire under Saruman. It is even possible that the translator's ideals have reinforced this by the use of terminology such as 'sheriff' and 'mayor' which are associated with a lower level of state control than are 'policeman' and 'premier'. Even so, one cannot deny that the state organization was small. This indicates a virtually self-policing society—the key to which may have been the giving of birthday gifts. In some contemporary societies in Melanesia, for example, gifts are prestige goods, the production of which shows status and power, and the giving of which is a form of ritual conflict, particularly on the inter-tribal level, where combat (at least of a fatal nature) is largely replaced by a feast-giving tradition in which each tribe attempts to outdo the others. Birthday gifts could have served a similar purpose on an individual scale in hobbit society. Again this is a topic which begs further research.

Thus I hope it can be seen that there were important structures in society which are not revealed directly by records in the form in which they exist. If we can unmask this reality we may be able to explain the actions of individuals as something other than simple destiny.

Duncan McLaren



CMH CSR

"I DON'T CARE IF YOU ARE
THE WALKING UNDEAD \_ YOU'RE NOT PARKING THAT
THING ON A DOUBLE YELLOW LINE!"







## Raven and Golden

Some further comments on my article in Anor 4, to which Jessica replied in Anor 5. I had better add that the subject is of interest to me as an artist and writer, and not as a geneticist, but that I prefer to bring scientific information to bear wherever possible, which puts me on the side of the geneticists. However, so little specific information is given about the appearance of the elvish characters in Tolkien's writing that it is difficult to bring genetics to bear and gain anything but the most basic conclusions.

Although a good deal has been said on the subject of hair colour, some of it by both myself and Jessica in sources other than those cited, I am unable to find a justification in the sources for Jessie's decision that Thranduil's blonde hair is "a Tolkienian error, for he was a Sindarin elf". Even taking into account the name change from Finrod to Finarfin, this does not alter my point that the description of hair colours in Appendix F should apply to the Noldor and not to the Eldar as stated, and therefore need not apply to the Sindar (and we have examples of silver-haired types in the Sindar, which are not accounted for by any explanation) or any other branch of the race.

We know that there were other gold-haired elves from the examples of Haldir's friend, and Nimrodel, who were not Vanyarin. Thranduil is simply another example. This illustrates the point that I have made elsewhere that, in *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*, which were intended originally as independent tales and not to mesh closely with material in *The Silmarillion*, every elf who is actually described to us, except Elrond and his direct descendants, is blonde. This I hold to be because, as Jessica puts it, "golden hair was magical and denoted power and beauty of a supernatural kind", which in the early published tales meant any elf whatever. Only when we start running up against Tolkien's identification with himself and Edith does the dark streak reappear in the published tales, with the descendants of Lúthien.

I think that Tolkien worked out his hair colours, when he did so, by 'eye' and according to their personal significance, and not by tribe, house or family—these justifications came afterwards.

Going back a long way and picking up Jessica's point about the marriage of Indis and Finwë being "the only marriage between a golden-haired Vanya and an Elf of another tribe" and this being the only point at which the golden gene entered the Noldor tribe: of course, Idril daughter of Turgon was also blonde, although not a descendant of the blonde son of Finarfin, and I think this is justified somewhere by her dead mother being named as a Vanya. Following my usual assumptions about Tolkien's way of working, I would guess that, this being the case, Turgon's late wife was specified as being a Vanya specifically in order to get Turgon a blonde daughter as a match for Tuor, the golden representative of men. Also, of course, one of Fëanor's sons is described as 'fair' in opposition to his brother who is 'dark', and so far as we know there was no Vanya blood involved here at all.

As I have said above, the only justification for the appearance of silver hair among the elves was in the case of Thingol, who appears to have acquired his from standing still in Nan Elmoth for a very long time. This can't have been the case with all of them.

I think we must discount camouflage as a factor. Quite apart from the appearance of blonde persons like Nimrodel, and the fact that the elves routinely wore cloaks and hoods when they did not want to be seen, some early drawings by yours truly of elves in a woodland habitat tend to indicate that elves with the very dark hair described would

stick out like a sore thumb.

Finally it might be worth considering, with reference specifically to the Hobbit blondes, was it something they ate? We know that red peppers, which contain a colouring agent which causes yellowness in normal concentrations, are fed to chickens to make the chicks and egg yolks an alluring shade of yellow. Perhaps the young hobbits, or their parents, had been nibbling elanor, or apples sweeter than wildberries, or some other suitable source of coloration and acquired their blondness in this fashion?

In conclusion, I doubt if Tolkien ever got a close enough look at Legolas to decide what colour he was, and Baynes's picture of him, hooded and from the rear, in the original Allen & Unwin map, tends to confirm this. It is just as well, as Legolas is the only elf we have a consistent, day to day experience of, that he is not too closely defined or identified with one character type or another (and I think that most readers of Tolkien must by now agree that hair colour actually has more to do with character type than anything else).

Helen P. Armstrong.



# tuhy do communits Like tolkien?

This may at first glance seem a rather puerile question; after all communists, being human (?), are as entitled as anyone else to enjoy good literature. Yet a brief consideration of the current membership of the Cambridge Tolkien Society would seem to indicate that an unusually high proportion of the members (or at least of the ex-chairmen) are communists. It is quite easy to see why communists are attracted by 'hack and slay' fantasy for in such wanton killing they have what might be called a professional interest. But it seems on the surface quite inexplicable that communists of all people should enjoy fantasy literature in

general and Tolkien in particular.

Before answering my original question I propose to lay some philosophical groundwork. The theory of communism is based upon the concept of a transition from the present capitalist world-system to a classless society in which everyone would be equal. Such transition would be brought about by revolution, which hopefully would not involve lining all the bourgeoisie up against the wall and shooting them, but then again it might. From this it can be clearly seen that the communist utopia is a pipe-dream and just as much of a fantasy as Middle-earth. Thus one can suggest this similarity may foster their enjoyment of Tolkien. In fact it is possible to argue that there are even deeper similarities in that both the communist dream and Middle-earth are sub-creations or alternative realities.2

However, a true sub-creation, like the magic of the elves, has as its ultimate goal, the reflection or enhancement of the Creator's world in the form of Art. Communists, like scientists, are seeking for Power rather than Art. Moreover, communists explicitly and scientists implicitly deny the existence of God, an act which proves that they cannot be true sub-creators-they, like Sauron, are attemping to create independently, and they, also

like Sauron, fail.

Thus in general we must conclude that the similarities between Middle-earth and communism are mere superficialities which obscure the underlying structural reality which is that communists simply enjoy good literature (whether or not they are entitled to). However I feel that this does not necessarily explain the interest of one of the particular communists considered above. He enjoys Tolkien because he can personally identify with a certain major character in Middle-earth, and I don't mean Eöl!

For a more comprehensive treatment of the theory of communism see Marx' Das Kapital, (all three volumes).

Notes: Firstly I should like to point out that any resemblance of persons mentioned in the above to real people is entirely deliberate.

<sup>2</sup> If you are unfamiliar with this concept see either Tolkien's On Fairy Tales, or I.R.Morus' article in Anor 7.

The Cambridge Tolkien Society is a University registered society whose aim is to further interest in the life and works of J. R. R. Tolkien.

Meetings are held approximately fortnightly during full term.

Membership is £2.00 Annual or £4.50 for life (covering only three years' Anors).

For further information contact the Secretary, Adam Atkinson (Trinity College). Subscriptions should be paid to the Treasurer, Perdita Stevens (King's College), or via Mike Percival at the address below.

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