

# mythPRINT



**The Monthly Bulletin of the Mythopoeic Society**

VOL.48 NO.9

SEPTEMBER 2011

WHOLE NO.350



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The Mythopoeic Society also publishes two other magazines: *Mythlore* (subscription \$25/year for U.S. Society members) and *The Mythic Circle*, an annual magazine publishing fiction, poems, etc. (\$8/issue for U.S. addresses). Subscriptions and back issues of Society publications may be purchased directly thorough our web site (using PayPal or Discover card), or you may contact:

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*Mythprint* is the monthly bulletin of the Mythopoeic Society, a nonprofit educational organization devoted to the study, discussion, and enjoyment of myth and fantasy literature, especially the works of J.R.R. Tolkien, C.S. Lewis, and Charles Williams. To promote these interests, the Society publishes three magazines, maintains a World Wide Web site, and sponsors the annual Mythopoeic Conference and awards for fiction and scholarship, as well as local discussion groups.

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**An Interview with Sheri S. Tepper**  
(concluded). By Zach Watkins and  
Leslie A. Donovan.

*Among other ideas, your books have included feminist concepts, environmental concerns, ecofeminist theories, race and culture issues, condemnation of national political structures, reflections on genetic manipulation, and what some might consider radical spiritual beliefs. Such themes have led some reviewers to criticize your work as being “preachy” or too focused on a liberal agenda. Why are such contemporary, and sometimes controversial, perspectives so interesting to you? How does the possibility that your work might be perceived by some as agenda-centered or having an axe to grind concern you?*

“Radical spiritual beliefs?” Liberal agenda. Equality of women is liberal? Equality of race is liberal? Being against cruelty is liberal? Believing that God, if there is a God, is not a male deity who tortures people after death is liberal? Wanting the earth to survive as an ecological entity is liberal? OK. I’m liberal. Yes. I preach because it matters to me. There are writers who do not care about a subject, but only about the writing itself. I’m not qualified by education or training to be one of them. There are writers who measure their success by the awards they win. I am not qualified to be one of them. In place of those motives, I have to write about what I care about. Does it bother me that some people think I have an axe to grind? The only ones who think so are the people who think they have been appointed by God (male, maleficent) to destroy the world we live in, so they can go to heaven: why would their attitude bother me? AND the fact some of them got upset pleases me because at least the matter came to their attention! (And when I get questions like this, I thank God that she didn’t let me go to that writing school!)

*You have mentioned in some earlier interviews that you know the works of C.S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien well. Since the Mythopoeic Society is devoted to the study of mythopoeic literature, what impact or influence, if any, did the works of Lewis and Tolkien have on your own writing or ideas?*

This is the kind of question I cannot answer because I lack the literary references that would mean anything. I have no idea what of Tolkien’s or Lewis’s writings were of greatest significance to me, though perhaps



the end of the last answer has a clue. I find Tolkien morally and philosophical good, and Lewis also in many respects, though I cannot personally accept Lewis’s religiosity. I regularly read Tolkien a couple of times a year up until they made the movies of the trilogy. Part of the delight in reading is the visualizing of what is described. After the movies, one cannot — at least I cannot — see anything at all different from what was portrayed. Now I watch the movies once a year and sigh. I wish that man would make a movie of *Grass*!

*Who are some of your own favorite writers, in fantasy or science fiction, or in any genre? Whose works do you read for fun?*

I am just now finishing a read-through of the works of Trollope and Dickens. I’m rather crippled up with arthritis, and I lie down a lot, reading. I read them first when I was a teenager, and I love them and have read them over and over. (I have never been able to read *Barnaby Rudge*, however!) Of course, I cheat now. There are pages of Dickens that I skim over, knowing what he’s on about, only to cry two pages later when Jip, the little dog, dies. (Actually, I get more upset over him than I do over David’s wife, Dora’s death. I was really very tired of her.) The books I had as a child had been my grandmothers, and they were mostly Victorian. She had Dumas and I loved *D’Artagnan* and *The Three Musketeers* and all the swashbuckling. She had books by Raphael Sabatini — *Scaramouche* and half a dozen others. I loved those, too. I read all the well known science fiction and fantasy writers. I was very fond of A. Merritt, who wrote *The Ship of Ishtar* and *The Moon Pool*. I haven’t been able to find my copies of these in recent years. They may not be as wonderful as I remember them. For all the years that my children were young, I bought every issue of *Fantasy and Science Fiction*, every issue of *Analog* (which was something else before it was *Analog*).

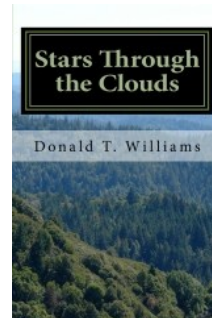
*Our Society’s next annual conference will be held for the first time in Albuquerque. We know you will be unable to attend this conference, as much as we would have loved to have you participate. However, you have lived in both Southern Colorado and near Santa Fe, New Mexico and, therefore, know this area’s landscapes and cultures very well. How has living in this region of the U.S. shaped your life and writing?*

I think it is not as important that I have lived in this area, as that I have lived on farms both in childhood and now. Living on a farm puts one in close association with animals, trees, crops, plants, all kinds of things that city people simply do not encounter or understand on a daily basis. When one lives with nature, one thinks oneself into the cycle of nature. One does not live in an air conditioned cocoon. I think people who live in cities, surrounded only by people, can contemplate the hive world that is coming with a good deal of acceptance. It is people like me who look upon it with numbed horror.

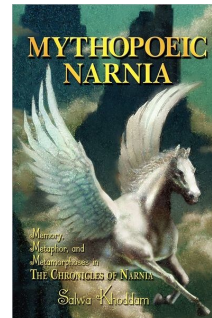
*What new books are you working on that we can look forward to reading in the future?*

Now, since I am at the end of my writing career, I am writing a book that ties the first books – *True Game*, *Jinian*, *Maven* – together with one written mid-career called *A Plague of Angels* and my most recent one, *The Waters Rising*. The ship that carried the people of *True Game* to the world of Lom returns to Earth some thousands of years after leaving it, bringing with it the knowledge of why Earth is being drowned. (As a critic pointed out, the waters covering the Earth in *The Waters Rising* seemed more fantasy than science fiction, and one cannot allow that to go unchallenged. That water is coming from somewhere!) The PURE science fictioners will call it fantasy, and the PURE fantasists will call it some kind of hybrid, and if nobody wants to print it, it will stay in the computer for anyone who wants to download it. ≡

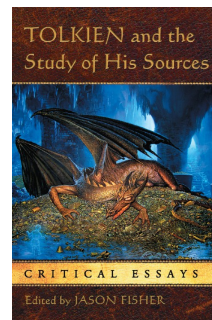
## NEW AND FORTHCOMING BOOKS



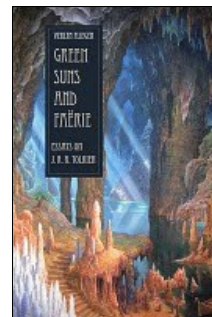
*Stars Through the Clouds: The Collected Poetry of Donald T. Williams.* Lantern Hollow Press, 360 pp. \$15.00 (softcover). ISBN 978-1460906514. Spring, 2011.



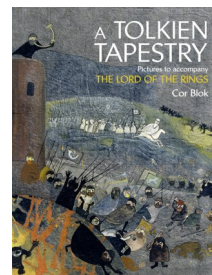
Salwa Khoddam. *Mythopoeic Narnia: Memory, Metaphor, and Metamorphoses in The Chronicles of Narnia.* Winged Lion Press, 286 pp. \$16.99 (softcover). ISBN 978-1936294114. July, 2011.



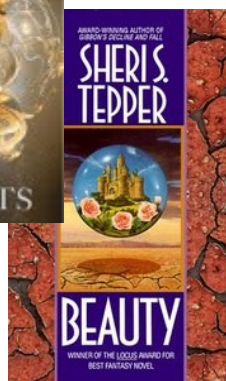
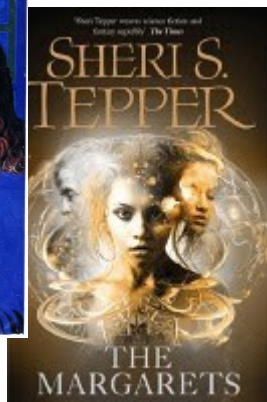
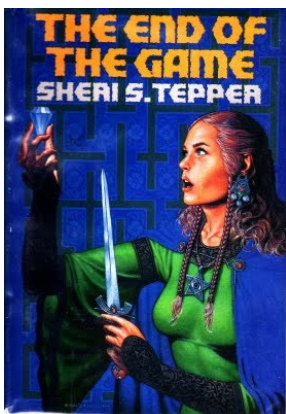
Jason Fisher, ed. *Tolkien and the Study of His Sources: Critical Essays.* McFarland, 240 pp. \$40.00 (softcover). ISBN 978-0786464821. July, 2011.



Verlyn Flieger. *Green Suns and Faërie: Essays on J.R.R. Tolkien.* Kent State UP, 224 pp. \$24.95 (softcover). ISBN 978-1606350942. August, 2011.



Cor Block. *A Tolkien Tapestry: Pictures to accompany The Lord of the Rings.* HarperCollins, 160 pp. £20.00 (hardcover). ISBN 978-0007437986. September, 2011.





Marly Youmans, *The Throne of Psyche* (Mercer University Press, 2011), 100 pp., \$18.00. Reviewed by Randy Hoyt.

Readers of *Mythprint* might be familiar with Marly Youmans from her two fantasy novels for young adults, *Ingledove* (2006) and *The Curse of the Raven Mocker* (2009). I was unacquainted with her work until I came across her most recent book, a slim volume titled *The Throne of Psyche* (2011) that contains a collection of her poetry. The title poem ("The Throne of Psyche") is around 420 lines long, while the remaining poems are typically less than forty lines apiece. Gorgeous artwork by Welsh artist Clive Hicks-Jenkins adorns the cover of this well-made paperback from Mercer University Press.

The title poem draws upon the myth of Eros and Psyche from ancient Greek mythology. Psyche herself is the narrator, reflecting back on the events of her story after becoming immortal. Youmans does not have Psyche merely *recount* the events in chronological order; Psyche's reflections move back and forth through different moments in the myth. (For example, in the section titled "Two Incidents Of Curiosity," Psyche recalls both the time she carried the lamp into her marriage bed to see Eros's face and the time she opened Persephone's box looking for beauty.) If you do not already know the myth, you will be hard-pressed to piece it together from the poem. Instead, Youmans assumes a shared knowledge of the myth to explore what it means to be human: Psyche, a human being turned goddess, provides a fresh perspective on this question.

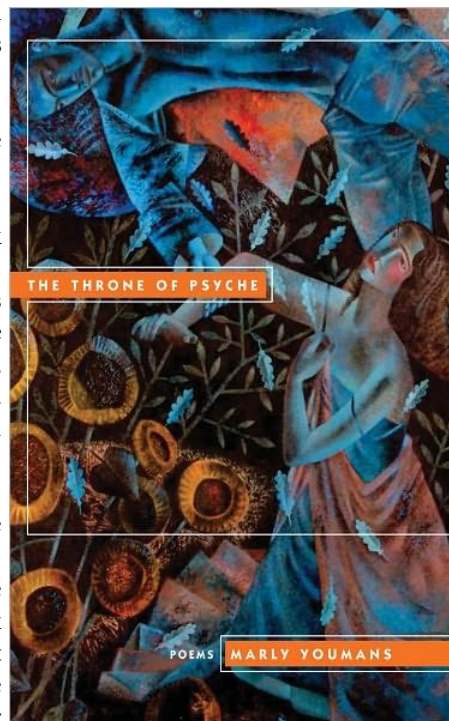
Students of the Inklings will no doubt wonder how this poem compares with C.S. Lewis's *Till We Have Faces*. Both are retellings of the same myth, written from the first-person perspective of a major character in the story. Both reveal their narrators' innermost thoughts, expanding on the myth with new motivations and psychological insights. In addition to the difference in length and form, the two authors employ the myth to comment on very different topics: Lewis, the darker side of jealous need-love and the nature of faith; Youmans, the contrast between mortality and immortality.

The two authors handle the details of the original material quite differently. The oldest surviving literary version of the myth is contained in the second-century Latin novel *The Golden Ass* by Apuleius. We know Lewis read this novel and drew on it as his source for *Till We Have Faces*, though he took great liberties in altering the original story. Youmans, on the other hand, matches the details very closely. (The only difference I noticed is Youmans's use of the Greek names like Aphrodite and Eros for Apuleius's Latin names like Venus and Cupid.) Because Youmans follows the traditional tale so closely, she can rely on the reader's familiarity with the events; Psyche only needs to allude to them.

The other fifty-three poems in the collection are shorter, typically less than forty lines apiece. They were not originally composed for publication with "The Throne of Psyche"; I believe all have been previously published elsewhere. But they are quite complementary, working well together as a collection. Like the title poem, many are filled with otherworldliness: creatures like dragons, demons, phoenixes, and dryads; characters from various traditions like the Trojan Tithonus or the fairy-tale Snow White; and places like Eden and the Edge of the World. Most of the otherworldliness is employed to consider *this* world and our existence in it: the inevitability of death (as well as the burden of limitless longevity),

the purpose of suffering, our significance in the vastness of space, and the nature of work and art.

The title poem is one of only a few poems in the collection that retell or draw on a familiar myth. Even though many of the creatures and characters have been gathered from various traditions, the stories Youmans tells are primarily her own. I found many of these original narratives quite powerful and compelling, with moments from them now firmly impressed in my imagination: Hephaestus limping through the market, the young girl riding on the dragon through the sky, the woman gazing at the Northern Lights, and the bard toiling and singing alone on the forgotten shore. I thoroughly enjoyed the book, and I would recommend it to anyone interested in both imaginative fiction and poetry. ≡



China Miéville, *Kraken: An Anatomy* (Del Rey/Ballantine, 2010), 528 pp., \$16.00. Reviewed by Jason Fisher.

I have a confession to make. I have been avoiding China Miéville. I've been giving his books a wide berth for years, quite determined to have nothing to do with him. Ever since I learned that he had called Tolkien "a wen on the arse of fantasy literature", I have felt honor-bound as a Tolkien fan of the first order to deny him my reading custom. A bit silly, really. But when review copies of some of Miéville's newer books started crossing my desk, I felt I should at least read the jacket blurbs — *that* wouldn't be betraying Tolkien, would it? Almost against my will, my interest rose. When I read the publisher's summary for *Kraken*, a smile fought its way onto my face, and I couldn't keep from muttering, "gosh, that *does* sound good."

And boy, is it! It might just be the most entertaining new book I've read in the last few years. A review seemed the appropriate way to make amends for dismissing this author too hastily, as it seems I have done. I'm still smarting over *his* dismissal of Tolkien, but I see now there's plenty of room in the world of fantasy literature for both of them — and even more surprisingly, that both authors can find a fan in the same reader.

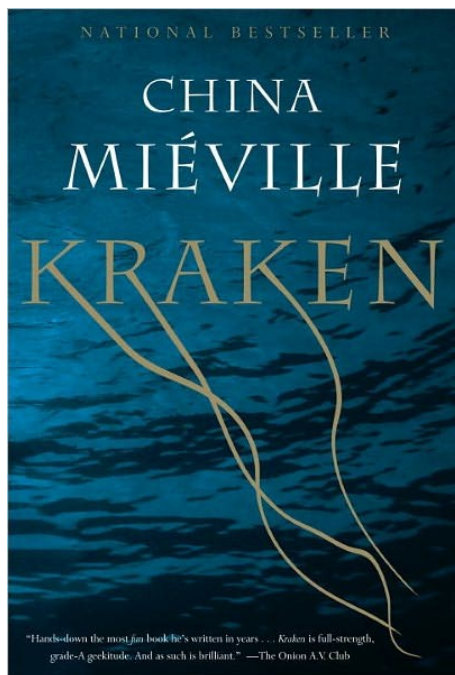
*Kraken* is a novel full of big ideas, written by a man with a *big* imagination. It's an rollicking urban fantasy set in London, the same London you and I know, but with a hidden undercurrent of magic — "knacking", in Miéville's patois; as in, working with fire is one person's *knack*, predicting the future by reading the entrails of the city is another person's *knack*, and so on. Recalling works by H.P. Lovecraft, Neil Gaiman, J.K. Rowling, Charles Williams, and others, Miéville's novel is a kind of fish-out-of-water story, in which the main character suddenly becomes aware of a supernatural world he never suspected could possibly exist. In this case, the "fish out of water" metaphor is almost literal, as the central concern in the novel is a giant squid, some eight meters in length, and quite dead. It's a specimen of *Architeuthis dux* housed in the Darwin Centre, curated by one Billy Harrow, our fish out of water. One of Billy's duties is to conduct visitors on a tour of the impressive facilities,

culminating in the giant squid, its most impressive specimen ("ooh", "aah"! ). One day, it's gone. The giant squid, its twenty-five-foot-long tank, thousands of gallons of preserving fluid — simply disappeared without evidence or explanation.

After the "squidnapping", a secret branch of the London police, the Fundamentalist and Sect-Related Crime Unit, pays Billy a visit. The FSRC suspect a giant-squid-worshipping cult as the culprits. But this cult is one of many, and no sooner is the curtain drawn back than Billy finds himself in the crossfire of these bizarre, conflicting religions, each run by its own kingpin. One of these, the Tattoo, is just that: a talking tattoo on an innocent man's back. Another, Grisamentum, may or may not be dead. Each of these mobbish cults has its thugs and acolytes, and their respective M.O.'s are among the strangest and most chilling I have read. From Gunfarmers — when they shoot their victims, the bullets remain inside like maggots and grow into new guns, hatching from within; to "Knuckleheads" — street fighters with giant fists instead of heads; to Chaos Nazis — who can torture you to the very point of death, then turn back time, healing you so they can do it again and again. There are also familiars, monsterherds, pyromancers, necromancers, and even Londonmancers. And then there are Goss and Subby. The less said of them, the better, but this pair of villains is among the creepiest I've ever encountered.

If this sounds like a complicated story with a huge cast of characters, it is — and then some! But Miéville handles it all masterfully, giving each group its own voices, and explaining their abilities, beliefs, and motives adeptly. At its heart, the tale is all about competing Armageddonim — "London had had to grow used to such arcane plural forms". Each cult wants to bring about its own particular end of the world; a matter of pride, really. The Londonmancers have foretold that the stolen squid will somehow bring about the *real* end of the world, a final end, once and for all. Not just the end of the world, but such an end as to make the world never *have been* in the first place. The prophecy sees London destroyed by *katachronophlogiston*, an uncontrollable substance that destroys by both fire and time, like this:

... its glow lit the pickled frogs within a jar. They shifted. They



shrank in the time-blistering warmth, tugged their limbs into their trunks. They became more paltry, ungainly long-tailed legless tadpoles. He held the flame so it licked the glass of the jar, and after a second of warming it burst into sand and sent the tadpoles spraying. They reversed and undid their having been and shrank as they fell, and never were, and nothing hit the floor.

Imagine *that* engulfing the entire city, and you begin to understand the panic spreading through London's undercircles. Even ordinary Londoners begin to feel an anxiety they can't explain as the prophesied end approaches. Billy and his allies, pursued from all sides and running out of time, have one aim: to prevent the end of the world. And the giant squid, no less than a stolen god, lies at the heart of the mystery.

The novel is equal parts chilling, hair-raising, starkly funny, and surreal. It's not a book for young people. No sex, but the language is quite adult, and the violence is sometimes gut-churning. Neither felt gratuitous to me. Having enjoyed this novel so much, I am ready to give Miéville another chance. One almost gets the feeling he has thrown into *Kraken* every last bit of oddball invention at his command. How could there be more? Yet this is Miéville's eighth novel. If the others are anything like this one, I may find myself among the converted!≡

### Greetings from the Tolkien Society!

We'd like to remind you about our 2012 event, 'Return of the Ring', to be held at Loughborough University, UK, 16-20 August 2012.

Our conference will be celebrating 75 years of 'The Hobbit' and it's going to be a truly diverse event. There'll be everything you would expect of a large scale Tolkien celebration – papers, panels and readings, workshops and demonstrations, a masquerade, banquet and ceilidh, art show and dealers' room. You can book online or download a form at [REDACTED]

There will be multiple programming strands – scholarly, creative and fan-based. We're encouraging proposals and programme items from throughout the international Tolkien community and you can see

our call for papers as well as our 'not the call for papers' at [REDACTED]

We are also offering a dedicated postgraduate symposium bringing together contemporary research from the field of Tolkien Studies. This is an exciting opportunity for postgraduate and early career stage researchers to come together, share scholarship and be mentored by leading academics in the field in interdisciplinary panels. The call for papers specific to the Symposium is here: [REDACTED]

Our list of confirmed guests is already an impressive one – Martin Barker, Janet Brennan Croft, Colin Duriez, Dimitra Fimi, Jason Fisher, Verlyn Flieger, Mike Foster, John Garth, Jef Murray, Ted Nasmith, Corey Olsen and Tom Shippey. We'll be announcing yet more guests in the coming months – you can watch for updates on the Return of the Ring website and the social media. Anglo Celtic folk trio Tinkerscuss and progressive folk group Metheglin have already been booked and we'll be arranging more musical and dramatic entertainment for the conference-goers delectation. For when you just want to mingle and chat, there's a bar area and even a Party Tree!

We're also thrilled to be welcoming a group of "re-enactors" representing the various peoples of Tolkien's world, complete with a fascinating array of camping and living equipment, crafts, costumes, arms and armour. And we'll have plenty of activities for younger participants to enjoy with their families.

The conference takes place in a compact part of an accessible university campus, with the bar and eateries right by the events rooms. Also on campus is a huge range of lodgings for all pockets, from a luxury hotel complex with spa to basic but comfortable single rooms in student dorms.

To find out more, to register interest or to sign up for this event please visit [REDACTED] The registration fee goes up £10 and the cost of university (dorm) rooms increases by 5% on December 1st, 2011, so this autumn is a good time to book.

**You can also find us on Facebook, Twitter, LiveJournal and Google+**



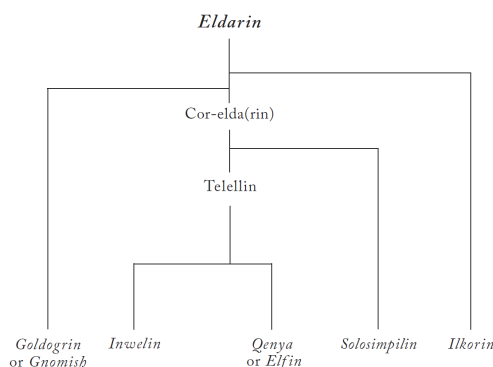
# The Words of Middle-earth

## An External History of the Elvish Languages — Part One. By Edward J. Kloczko.

Tolkien's Elvish languages stand as the most extraordinary artistically constructed objects I have ever encountered. To grasp their magnificence, I believe it is important to know how Tolkien worked. And those who actually want to *use* them should get the right picture of what they are dealing with so that they can stop torturing and *misusing* them.

Tolkien preserved most of his linguistic documents relating to Elvish, even though they ended up in some disarray, scattered in many boxes and folders. Here, I will try to untangle their complex "External History" (or ExH) which describes their many conceptual stages. At each of these stages, Tolkien imagined several related languages with a set of grammatical rules. He did not conceive new names for the languages every time. I can't tell you everything, not only for lack of space but because I don't *know* everything. Tolkien's linguistic papers have not yet been published in their entirety, and there is no catalog of them. Sadly, he threw away some papers as well. But let us press on with what we do know.

From the start, in the years 1910–1911, Tolkien conceived a group of Elvish languages related by descent from a common ancestor. Just as English, German, and Dutch are related, all deriving from a lost language usually called Proto-Germanic, so Tolkien constructed first a Proto-Elvish tongue with several daughter languages.



Tolkien used as his main tools *Comparative Philology* and the *Tree Model*. Usually, a realistic reconstruction of an unrecorded Proto-Language is made on the basis of evidence from its recorded dialects. In a similar way, Tolkien developed rules to lead to the precise phonological correspondences he had in mind for his "recorded" Elvish tongues. This is why Tolkien

always struggled so hard with the phonological rules of his Proto-Elvish. He had in mind the sound and "feel" of the daughter languages. The complex mechanisms of sound change he needed for them were truly amazing. This is how Tolkien worked, not only when he created the Elvish Languages but also when he constructed Adûnaic, Khuzdul, and Sôval Phârë (the true "Common Speech"). The phonological rules were very important. They had to feel real, and to be just as intricate as those in the natural languages Tolkien studied and taught.

The Tree Model of languages is analogous to the phylogenetic tree used in biology. Languages are treated as species and varieties with ancestors and descendants. Comparative Philology, rather like biology, is concerned with comparing languages in order to reconstruct their evolution. Today it is usually called "Comparative Linguistics", and many other approaches to language (less "biological" in nature) do exist.

Tolkien's constructed Elvish languages underwent from about five to maybe as many as seven major revisions in grammar (mostly in conjugation and the pronominal system) but I will split my short exposition into four major phases. I begin with the first of these below, and I will continue with the others in future installments of this essay.

### The First Conceptual Phase: From c.1910 up to the mid-1920s

The first stage spanned about fifteen years. During that time Tolkien composed two grammars for the three languages he was developing: the primitive speech of the Elves, then called simply "Eldarin", "Qenya" and "Goldogrin". The first two, he called Elfin and Gnomish in English. These grammars have Elvish names: the *Qenyaqetsa* and the *Lam na Ngoldathon*. They are supposed from an internal point of view to have been written by Men, not Elves, and so might contain errors.

The other Elvish languages, Solosimpilin and Ilkorin, were only names. For Solosimpilin, the tongue of the Elves of the Third Clan (the Shoreland-elves), Tolkien had in mind a few rules and some words, that's all. Inwelin was "an older and more archaic manner [of speech]"<sup>1</sup> only used by a fraction of the First Tribe of Elves, the royal clan called the Inwir. Yet Solosimpilin, Elfin, and Inwelin are said to be "alike and intelligible, for the most part readily, one to the other" (ibid.). All three were dialects, distinc-

<sup>1</sup> "Qenyaqetsa", *Parma Eldalamberon* No. 12, p. 1.



tive varieties identified by a particular set of words and grammatical structures, of one tongue, Cor-eldarin. The Ilkorindi was then a name with a broad meaning, used of all Elves who “never saw the light of Kôr”, and Ilkorin, literally meaning “not of Kôr”, was a general name for their many tongues.

Tolkien wrote only two major texts in Elfin, of which one is a poem called “Narqelion”. It was completed in March, 1916. A facsimile was published in *Vinyar Tengwar* No. 40. The other text bears no title, and like “Narqelion”, Tolkien left behind no English translation. This text was published in *Parma Eldalamberon* No. 15. Elfin and Gnomish differ greatly from late Quenya and Sindarin, with different internal histories, vocabularies, and grammars. Elfin and Gnomish are not “primitive” languages. Tolkien made several lists of proper names with some explanations. The beginning of the “Name-list of the Fall of Gondolin” gives good examples of both Gnomish and Elfin names:

“Here is set forth by Eriol at the teaching of Bronweg’s son Elfrith or “Littleheart” (and he was so named for the youth and wonder of his heart) those names and words that are used in these tales from either the tongue of the Elves of Kôr as at the time spoken in the Lonely Isle, or from that related one of the Noldoli their kin whom they wrested from Melko. Here first are they which appear in the *Tale of Tuor and the Exiles of Gondolin*, first among these those ones in the Gnome-speech (*lam Goldrin*).

**Ainon** now these were great beings who dwelt with Ilúvatar as the Elves name Him (but the Gnomes **Ilador** or **Ilathon**) ere the world grew, and some of these dwelt after in the world and ere the Gods or **Ainur** as say the Elves.”<sup>2</sup>

Around 1917–8, Tolkien conceived his first Elvish script. He used it primarily in his diary (unpublished). He named it the “Alphabet of Rúmil” but wrote very few Elvish texts in it. It might be true that Tolkien made his alphabet first for his diary only and gave it a place in his Secondary World later. It was much inspired by the Devanagari, the alphabet used for Sanskrit; both have a characteristic line that runs along the top of letters, and both are alphasyllabic. The “Alphabet of Rúmil” has only consonants. The vowel notation is secondary, with all full letters having an *a* understood. ≡

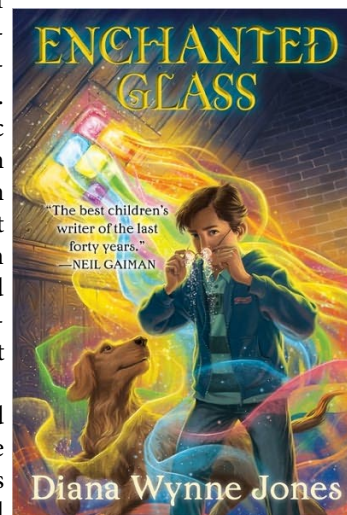
Diana Wynne Jones, *Enchanted Glass* (Greenwillow, 2010), 292 pp., \$16.99. Reviewed by Pauline J. Alama.

When Andrew Hope, a thirty-something academic, inherits his grandfather’s stately old home, he also inherits a more nebulous trust, a magical “field of care.” Andrew is just exploring his new inheritance, and rediscovering memories of magic that he had suppressed for years, when an unexpected refugee comes to Melstone House. Aidan, a 12-year-old orphan pursued by strange specters, follows the dying advice of his grandmother to seek protection from the master of Melstone. Together, Andrew and Aidan each discover the powers they hold within themselves, and the powers in the peculiar colored glass window in the back door of Melstone House. They join forces to battle mysterious forces determined to take over the field of care.

*Enchanted Glass* is classic Diana Wynne Jones fantasy, portraying a world where magic inhabits ordinary things and seemingly ordinary people. Comic scenes with the cranky staff of Melstone House are deftly interwoven with glimpses of a world of wonder. Contemporary and mythic elements intertwine in whimsical ways, as when Andrew magics his car out of a ditch by meditating on Einstein and relativity, and a mysterious Midnight Visitor is delighted with a gift of clothes that zip.

Devoted fans will find few surprises here: the themes of discovering one’s hidden inner powers and assuming responsibility for the proper governance of magic are familiar from Jones’s popular *Chrestomanci* series. But it is noteworthy that here Jones chronicles the self-discovery not just of an adolescent, but also of a mature character who has ignored his heritage and his talents for too long. Like many of Jones’s previous works, *Enchanted Glass* is accessible enough for middle-grade readers, but never talks down to them; adults, too, can read it for pleasure without condescension.

Diana Wynne Jones has always been a delight; her death is a sad loss to fantasy literature. If *Enchanted Glass* proves to be her last work, it is very worthy of her legacy. ≡



<sup>2</sup> “Name-list of the Fall of Gondolin.”, *Parma Eldalamberon* No. 15, p. 20.

Kevin Hearne, *The Iron Druid Chronicles: Hounded; Hexed; and Hammered* (Ballantine Books, 2011), \$7.99 each. Reviewed by Berni Phillips Bratman.

If you wander into an Irish pub in Tempe, AZ or visit the local occult bookstore, you may run into a misplaced surfer dude, Atticus O'Sullivan. Don't be deceived by the casual charm of this young slacker. He claims to be 21; what he fails to mention is that he is 21 centuries, not years, old. Atticus is the last of the Druids, and he has met Galileo, Genghis Khan, and Jesus.

Atticus has carved out a comfortable life for himself in modern Arizona. He has a faithful Irish wolfhound, Oberon, with whom he can speak telepathically. He owns his own home, being on good terms with his neighbor, the Widow MacDonagh, and not so good terms with another, more paranoid, neighbor. Atticus's legal team consists of the local head vampire, alpha werewolf, and the alpha's second. Some lawyers may be sharks, but Atticus's are wolves and literally blood-suckers.

As *Hounded* begins, Atticus's peaceful existence is disturbed by a variety of personages from the Celtic pantheon. The Morrigan is evidently a frequent visitor who sometimes pops in just for a booty call. This time, however, she has come to warn him that Aenghus Óg has come to kill him. Oh, and she would like Atticus to make her a necklace of amulets similar to his own.

Aenghus Óg wanting to kill him is nothing new — it's the reason Atticus is keeping a low profile in Arizona to begin with. Centuries ago, Atticus stole an enchanted sword, Fragarach, and Aenghus Óg wanted revenge. Atticus's necklace, on the other hand, took him centuries to forge. It allows him to store up strength, spells, and protection in the various amulets. He will guide her, but she has to make her own.

This being a fantasy novel, of course Aenghus Óg does come to Tempe for Atticus. The events in *Hounded* sets off a chain of events which are continued in the two following novels. As *Hounded* is centered on the Celtic pantheon, *Hexed* revolves around covens of witches, good, bad, and indifferent, with Bacchantes thrown in for good measure. As you might guess from the title of the third book, *Hammered*, Atticus goes up against Thor and the Norse gods. Hearne's Thor is not the cuddly good god seen in Marvel comics (and which Hearne refers to in his book). No, everyone wants to kill Thor, and they need Atticus to get them to Asgard.

These books were published in close succession — May, June, and July of 2011 — and they are really



one continuous story with three major sections. And the end of the third book seems to be leading into a fourth.

These books are fun. If you're tired of "chick" fantasies and want something featuring a guy but you've already read all the Harry Dresden books, you should check these out. While Atticus is considerably older than the local vampire and werewolves, he has made it a point to stay up to date with pop culture to allow him to blend in better. He is constantly correcting the idiomatic usage of Leif and Hal, the respective vamp and wolf who are not as with-it. This is fun now, but I fear they will not age well because of this.

Leif and Gunnar craned their heads around once we were stopped and saw Bacchus trying to deal with a very annoyed pair of large cats.

"Oh noes, kitteh haz major angriez!" I said. I turned around to share a laugh with my companions and found them glaring at me. "What?" I asked.

Leif shook a finger and said in a low, menacing tone, "If you tell me I have to talk like an illiterate halfwit to fit into this society, I will punch you."

"And I'll pull out your goatee," Gunnar added.

"Lolcat iz new happheh wai 2 talk," I explained to them. "U doan haz 2 be kitteh 2 speek it." [*Hammered*, p. 148]

One thing Hearne does very well is integrate his expository lumps so they do not seem lumpish. He takes on an apprentice, an Irish bar maid who is possessed by a Hindu witch, in *Hounded*, and this allows him to have a sensible reason to explain various technicalities such as who's who among the ancient gods of Ireland. *Hammered* opens with discussion of a giant squirrel, Ratatosk, and between the conversations with the druid's apprentice and the rodent of unusual size, we are up to speed on Norse legends.

My only complaint about the books would be that the breakneck pace comes to a screeching halt at the end of each volume so it feels very abrupt — as if you’ve narrowly averted a car wreck. This is a minor quibble, however, about a series of fresh, new fantasy from a very promising author. ≡

Kim Harrison, *Pale Demon* (Harper Voyager, 2011), 439 pp, \$26.99. Reviewed by Sarah Beach.

This novel is actually one in a series (volume nine of a projected twelve). But I came to it cold, with no previous awareness of Harrison’s world-building. On the one hand, not having knowledge of previous volumes was a little bit of a problem, since once I was into the tale it was obvious that the current events were built on what went before. There was also an underlying presumption that the reader already knows the world (an alternate contemporary, mostly urban setting) and the relations between its vampires, werewolves, elves, pixies, and witch-folk (not to mention the demons). On the other hand, Harrison is a competent storyteller and she makes these aspects inherent in the way the characters interact.

The story launches with Rachel Morgan, our principal character, accused of using demon-tainted black magic, a crime which could get her banished from prime reality to the demon dimension, a fate she wants to avoid. She has three days to get herself from Cincinnati to San Francisco where her trial is supposed to be held. She has been banned from using commercial transportation, so it will be a road trip. Along for the ride are her best friend Ivy (a living vampire), Jenks (a pixie), and Trent (an elf). The relationship between Trent and Rachel is prickly at best.

For some reason not given in this volume,

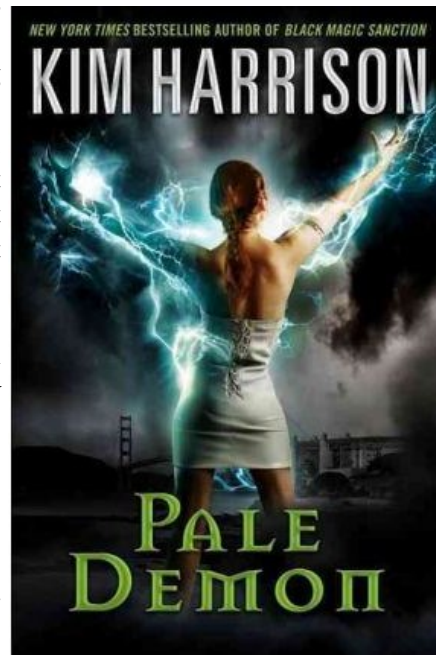
Trent cannot travel across country on his own, in spite of being a wealthy businessman. I suspect the reason for the prohibition may exist in a previous volume, but unfortunately it is not given in *this* book, even though it is crucial to the plot. Another one of the presumptions that all readers would know the previous volumes.

This motley crew have a cascading sequence of adventures, precipitated by two factors: the Coven (the governing body for witches) doesn’t really want Rachel to arrive on time, and elf-assassins that are after Trent for some unexplained reason (revealed near the climax). Their route is punctuated by stops in St. Louis, the Painted Desert/Petrified Forest area, and Las

Vegas, with each stop complicated by the apparently inexplicable presence of a day-walking demon, Xu’Sox. Xu’Sox has a fascination in Rachel (as she somehow has demon blood in her), while Rachel blames Trent for releasing the day-walking disaster.

All things considered, Harrison tells an engaging story that will keep you turning the pages to the end. But I wasn’t so entranced that I want to go back and read all the previous volumes. However, that may be more because pseudo-contemporary fantasy laden with vampires, werewolves, and witch-

es is not quite my thing. I found the character of Rachel to be overly screechy (she’s always *shouting* at someone), but she is generally genuinely concerned about what is happening to others around her and she tries her best to do no harm. Her attraction to Trent is written very heavily-handedly, since it seems that almost every time Harrison has Rachel even just *look* at Trent she’s thinking about how sexy his body is. That got tiresome quickly and could have been toned down a bit. But if this sort of everything-and-the-kitchen-sink type of modern fantasy appeals for you, Harrison does give you your money’s worth. ≡





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