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## Letters

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## Letters

# LETTERS

Readers' Letters are an important form of feedback and exchange, an opportunity to comment on past issues and to raise questions for others' comments. Each letter that is printed extends the writer's subscription by an additional issue. Letters by disk are most preferred (see elsewhere in the issue in the Submissions announcement for formatting information), but typewritten and handwritten letters are also welcome. Please send your letters directly to the Editor: Glen GoodKnight, 742 South Garfield Avenue, Monterey Park, CA 91754 USA

Patrick Wynne

Fosston, MN

In her letter in *Mythlore* 73 (p. 34), Rhona Beare wrote the following:

I admire the Center Spread by Patrick Wynne, but regret the absence of commentary. The 'little book with elvish letters' (I quote p. 22) does not say "Remember Taum Santoski." It seems to say "Taum Santoski enanlen" which makes no sense to me.



I'm delighted that Ms. Beare admired my cover for the Tolkien Centenary Conference souvenir book, reproduced as the center spread in *Mythlore* 71. Unfortunately, she misread the tengwar inscription on the "little book with elvish letters" tucked away

in a corner of that drawing. The inscription does not say "Taum Santoski enanlen," which makes no sense to me either. The correct reading is *Taum Santoski enyalien* (cf. the enlarged computer scan of the inscription at left). The word *enyalien* is Quenya, and it literally means 'for the recalling' (of someone or something). A looser translation would be 'in memory of,' or 'in memoriam.' So *Taum Santoski enyalien* = 'In memory of Taum Santoski.'

Three other points are worth mentioning: 1) *enyalien* is an attested Quenya word, not my own invention. Tolkien uses it in Cirion's Oath in *Unfinished Tales* (p. 305): *Vanda sina termarwa Elenwa-nórëo alcar enyalien*. This oath shall stand in memory of the glory of the Land of the Star. Note the word order, with the thing remembered, *alcar* 'glory,' placed in front of *enyalien*. This is why Taum's name precedes *enyalien* on the memorial inscription. 2) My inscription on the little book is in the standard

tengwar mode for Quenya, that used by Tolkien himself in his calligraphic transcription of *Namárië* in *The Road Goes Ever On* (p. 65). Arden Smith, the premier expert on Tolkien's writing systems, has confirmed that my spelling in the inscription is correct. 3) I'm sure Taum would be greatly amused to see that his memorial inscription has become the topic of linguistic debate in the pages of *Mythlore*!

While I'm at the Mac, I might as well answer another question posed by Rhona Beare, this one about Adunaic grammar. In *Mythlore* 71 (p. 37), she wrote:

*Sauron Defeated* gives us Adunaic. Do other readers agree that on p. 251 *Uríd yakalubim* = the two suns, they have fallen = the sun and moon have fallen? (But on p. 428 the dual form of sun is *úriyat*.)

No, *Uríd yakalubim* doesn't mean 'the two suns, they have fallen'; it means 'The mountains lean over.' Tolkien provides this translation in the text. What probably threw Ms. Beare off the track (and confused me as well when I first read *The Notion Club Papers*) is that the translation appears immediately before the Adunaic phrase and is given without quotation marks:

'Do you not see the wings of the Eagles, and their eyes like thunderbolts and their claws like forks of fire?' said Jeremy. 'See! The abyss openeth. The sea falls. The mountains lean over. *Uríd yakalubim*!'

Ms. Beare has correctly identified the verb *yakalubim* as a form of *KALAB* 'fall.' It is not in the past tense however, but in the *present continuative* tense, which in Adunaic is marked by the suffix *-i* (plural *-im*). Another example of the present continuative tense (also on p. 251 of *Sauron Defeated*) is *yanákhim* '[they] are at hand', from *NAKH* 'come, approach'. Both of these verbs begin with the pronoun prefix *ya-* 'they' (such prefixes are often left unexpressed in the translations). These verbs are also good examples of how free Tolkien's translations can be — *yakalubim* 'lean over' is literally 'they are falling,' and *yanákhim* 'are at hand' literally means 'they are approaching.'

The noun *uríd* 'mountains' does not appear anywhere else, but Lowdham's *Report on the Adunaic Language* notes that Adunaic had many words in common with Elvish (SD:414), and it's therefore probable that Adunaic *uríd* is related to Sindarin *orod* 'mountain', pl. *ered*, as in *Ered Luin* 'the Blue Mountains.' So *uríd* is entirely unconnected with Adunaic *Ūri* 'The Lady of the Sun' (SD:426), and the final *-d* in *uríd* is not a dual marker (which in Adunaic is always *-at*, never *-d*), or a plural marker. *Uríd* 'mountains'

appears to be a so-called "strong" noun, i.e. one in which the plural is formed, not with a suffix, but by replacing the second vowel in the word with *i*. Examples of strong plurals include *huzun* 'ear', pl. *huzin* 'ears', and *uruk* 'orc', pl. *urik* 'orcs' (SD:430, 436). Thus pl. *urid* 'mountains' probably has the singular form *\*urud* 'mountain'. In the singular the close relationship between Aduanaic *\*urud* and Sindarin *orod* 'mountain' is particularly clear.

If anyone is interested in learning more about the nuts and bolts of Aduanaic grammar, I would refer them to the article "Verbs, Syntax! Hooray!" A Preliminary Assessment of Aduanaic Grammar in *The Notion Club Papers* by Patrick Wynne and Carl F. Hostetter, which appeared in *Vinyar Tengwar* No 24 (July 1992), pp. 14-38.

## Alexei Kondratiev

## Flushing, NY

Todd W. Jensen's letter in the last issue wrongly creates the impression that there is a consensus among Celtic scholars that the Pagan Celts did not believe in reincarnation. In fact, the verdict is still out on this matter. There is simply too little hard evidence to go on, and when scholars make categorical statements one way or the other on the subject, they are usually expressing their own attitudes towards reincarnation rather than reflecting the facts. Certainly the evidence of folk-custom in Celtic-language communities generally suggests a belief that one will reincarnate in one's descendants (a common belief in peasant societies around the world). Many systems that believe in reincarnation also believe in an "Isles of the Blessed"-type paradise (the place one goes to between incarnations). There may also have been a difference between the beliefs of the general population and those of initiates in "mystery circles", as the Druids presumably were. We simply cannot know at this stage. So, while Marion Zimmer Bradley's portrayal of pre-Christian Celtic religion in *The Mists of Avalon* is, on the whole, quite inaccurate, she is not necessarily wrong on this point. By this time I think most people realize that Bradley's novel does not come close to representing historical fact. It does, however, have roots in earlier fantasy literature. Diana Paxson recently pointed out to me that Bradley was strongly influenced by the image of Avalon in Dion Fortune's works. It thus reflects not the past revealed by archaeology and historical record, but the "secret past" of British esotericism. One should also ask why the novel met with such enthusiastic response when it first came out. The reason, I think, is that it deals with the spiritual, moral, and psychological problems of the contemporary world in a mythic framework, much as the Mediaeval romances themselves did in their day (with no more success at being "historically" accurate). Although its historical errors and its literary deficiencies are alike glaringly obvious, *The Mists of Avalon* has created a new way of looking at the Arthurian mythos and a new tradition of fantasy literature, and for that reason cannot be ignored.

The following was written as a tribute to The Mythopoeic Society on its 25th anniversary, which we belatedly share with you here.

## Joan Marie Verba

## Minnetonka, MN

I read my first Tolkien and Lewis before I was out of high school. *The Hobbit* was required reading when I was in eighth grade; *Out of the Silent Planet* was a high school assigned text, and I read the *Chronicles of Narnia* on the recommendation of fellow students.

I did not read *The Lord of the Rings* until I was in college, but once I did, I wanted to know everything and anything about the author, and was eager to compare impressions with other readers. I was already active in science fiction fandom at this time, and was able to discuss the text with other fans, but that was still not enough.

In 1976, when I was at the World Science Fiction Convention in Kansas City (MidAmeriCon), I saw an ad for the Mythopoeic Society in the program book. I wrote for information and upon receiving it, ordered all the back issues of the Mythopoeic Society's publications. Reading them, I found this was presumably the sort of discussion and analysis I was seeking.

Then I discovered there was also a local Mythopoeic Society discussion group in my area (Rivendell), some of whose members I already knew from local sf fandom. Here again was a chance not only for further analysis and discussion for the primary texts of Tolkien and Lewis, but also for comparing notes on current fantasy novels of interest.

I was not able to attend a Mythopoeic Conference until 1987, but when I did, I found it a delightful experience. I shared a room with a fan researching Tolkien's handwritten texts, engaged in several fascinating conversations, and met a number of fans whose names I had seen in Mythopoeic Society publications. I flew to Milwaukee on the same plane as artist Patrick Wynne, I had a chance to talk to the late John Bellairs, and I heard Christopher Tolkien speak of his and his father's work.

In all of this time, I have never tired of discussing analyzing, or reading about the texts that I have enjoyed. I hope I never will. Meanwhile, I am having a lot of fun, and I anticipate remaining in the Mythopoeic Society for many years to come.

## ART SUBMISSIONS

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