

Discordia Concours in Tolkien's Musical Universe

By

Elizabeth McLean Renneisen

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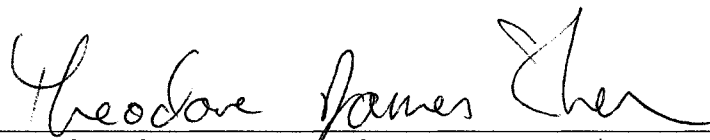
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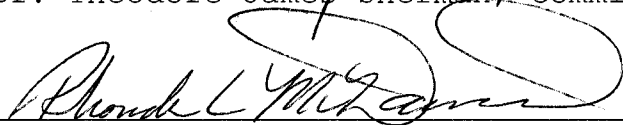
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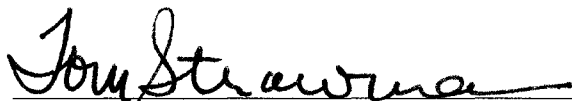
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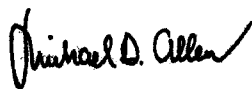
Dr. Theodore James Sherman, Committee Chair



Dr. Rhonda L. McDaniel, Committee Member



Dr. Tom Strawman, English Department Chair



Dr. Michael D. Allen, Dean, College of Graduate Studies

DEDICATION

For Eric, Rog, and Felfa
with all my love and appreciation.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

It would not be fair to say that Dr. Ted Sherman forced me to read Tolkien against my will, but without his prodding, I would never have opened The Hobbit, The Lord of the Rings, or The Silmarillion. What I found inside was an amazing world, a world that defied the stereotypes I once associated with Hobbits and wizards and Elves. Dr. Sherman has been instrumental in my exploration of Middle-earth, and his guidance throughout the dissertation process has been invaluable. From suggesting the title to challenging my essential arguments, he has continued to push me to transcend the expectations I had set for myself. Dr. Rhonda McDaniel has provided a tremendous amount of support during my writing, giving me detailed responses no matter how inane my queries might be. Working with these two scholars has been both a privilege and a pleasure.

While this process has at times been frustrating, these last four years were probably the most difficult for the people around me, including my parents, my friends, and my husband. However, without them I could not have continued to push myself. My parents gave me a place to

seclude myself in the summer and an abundance of love and encouragement (not to mention hot lunches!). My friends, especially Candice and Elisabeth, were my sounding board, the ones I would go to during my times of deep elation or even deeper depression. And my husband, Eric - well, he was with me through it all. He endured my long absences, listened patiently as I talked excitedly about literature, helped me as I took on far too much at once, and encouraged me to persevere. This dissertation has, indeed, been a group effort.

ABSTRACT

Discordia Concours in Tolkien's Musical Universe

In J. R. R. Tolkien's myth "The Ainulindalë," Ilúvatar constructs the world of Middle-earth through music. While the Ainur, Tolkien's idea of angelic beings, interweave melodies to reflect the beauty of the world, one Ainu, Melkor, interjects dissonance of his own that is responsible for the evil in Middle-earth. The act of creation through music seems to be Tolkien's own device; however, music as an essential component in cosmogony does have philosophical precedents, including ideas propounded by Pythagoras and Boethius. This interjection of discord has a significant effect on The Silmarillion as a mythology for England. All mythologies have some basis in reality, whether they explain the origins of customs, ideas, or even people. Melkor's influence can be traced throughout The Silmarillion and The Lord of the Rings. Ultimately it is Sauron, minion of Melkor, that is responsible for the emergence of Man as the dominant being in the Fourth Age, thus tying Middle-earth to our own history and lending Tolkien's stories credibility in terms of a national mythology - not as a fantasy.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Works of J. R. R. Tolkien

- Letters The Letters of J. R. R. Tolkien. Ed. Christopher Tolkien. New York: Ballantine, 1983.
- LotR I The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring. New York: Ballantine, 1982.
- LotR II The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers. New York: Ballantine, 1993.
- LotR III The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King. New York: Ballantine, 1983.
- Ring Morgoth's Ring: The Later *Silmarillion*, Part One. Ed. Christopher Tolkien. New York: Houghton-Mifflin, 1993.
- Road The Lost Road and Other Writings. Ed. Christopher Tolkien. New York: Ballantine, 1987.
- Tales The Book of Lost Tales I. Ed. Christopher Tolkien. New York: Ballantine, 1983.
- Silm The Silmarillion. New York: Ballantine, 1977.

CHAPTER I

TOLKIEN AND THE CRITICS

Not long after the publication of The Lord of the Rings, J. R. R. Tolkien began to receive letters from fans, critics, and scholars concerning a variety of aspects - narrative, historical, metaphysical, geographical, linguistic - of his work. Initially, Tolkien appeared to take pleasure in elucidating his text, and as a result he drafted extensive responses ranging from an explanation of the *Istari* (Letters 156) to a translation of one of Treebeard's songs (168). However, as a number of the queries were answered with evidence from The Silmarillion, many of Tolkien's replies seemed to be fraught with frustration over the reluctance of Allen & Unwin, his publishers, to print what he believed was an essential companion to The Lord of the Rings. As he told his publishers in 1952, The Silmarillion and The Lord of the Rings are one, and the latter "would be better far as part of the whole" (163). The publication of The Silmarillion would certainly have enhanced many readers' understanding of the history and cosmogony of Middle-earth, but the wide-ranging mythology might also have elicited even more questions.

In any case, after The Lord of the Rings began to increase in popularity and garner sometimes fanatical appreciation from readers, Tolkien's pleasure in responding to readers' queries appeared to wane. It seemed that for Tolkien, writing The Lord of the Rings was something he *had* to do, as the tales seemed naturally to exist in the realm of Middle-earth. He told C.S. Lewis, "I am *not* a critic. I do not want to be one. I think 'criticism' - however valid or intellectually engaging - tends to get in the way of a writer who has anything personal to say" (126). Perhaps it is because of his disinclination toward criticism that he did not understand why others would want to explore his work in a purely critical way. A woman who wrote to Tolkien to tell him about her academic study of The Lord of the Rings received this response: "Though it is a great compliment, I am really rather sorry to find myself the subject of a thesis" (257). In response to the news from W.H. Auden about a Tolkien Society in New York, Tolkien replied, "Yes, I have heard about the Tolkien Society . . . such things fill me too with alarm and despondency" (359). Often Tolkien would gently remind his fans that answering the deluge of letters prevented him from publishing more of his works. But as the

responsibilities and pressures of being a cult hero, as well as age and ill health, began to wear on Tolkien, his responses took on a sterner tone. To a reader who wanted Tolkien's assistance with a paper about The Lord of the Rings, Tolkien gave this reply:

I should not feel inclined to help in this destructive process, even if it did not seem to me that this exercise was supposed to be your own private work without assistance. I am sorry if this letter sounds grumpy. But I dislike analysis of this kind. (424)

Regardless of whether Tolkien himself was a proponent of criticism concerning his work, scholarly approaches to Tolkien are abundant and show no sign of diminishing. Much of the criticism, of course, concerns The Lord of the Rings, although papers about The Silmarillion seem to be appearing more frequently. Most critics who address The Silmarillion attempt either to trace the analogues from which Tolkien may have received creative inspiration or to focus on a character or plot line. Very little, however, is said about the Music of the Ainur. In fact, one of the most curious extra-textual aspects of Tolkien's "Ainulindalë" is the dearth of criticism related to the

moment of the creation of Middle-earth. Perhaps the most straightforward analysis of the "Ainulindalë" was written by Tolkien himself in a letter to Milton Waldman. In order to convince Waldman to publish The Silmarillion, Tolkien had to give him a "brief sketch" of the events that are connected to the "imaginary world" of Middle-earth.

Tolkien admitted to the publisher:

It is difficult to say anything without saying too much: the attempt to say a few words opens a floodgate of excitement, the egoist and artist at once desires to say how the stuff has grown, what it is like, and what (he thinks) he means or is trying to represent by it all. (144)

In other words, Tolkien, in writing a synopsis for Waldman, naturally assumed the role of a critic. He not only summarized The Silmarillion, but he also found himself analyzing, and perhaps justifying, his own text in order to convince Waldman to publish it.

Tolkien's own description and analysis of the "Ainulindalë" is worth repeating here in its entirety:

The cycles begin with a cosmogonical myth: the *Music of the Ainur*. God and the Valar (or powers: Englished as gods) are revealed. These

latter are as we should say angelic powers, whose function is to exercise delegated authority in their spheres (of rule and government, not creation, making, or re-making). They are 'divine,' that is, were originally 'outside' and existed 'before' the making of the world. Their power and wisdom is derived from their knowledge of the cosmogonical drama, which they perceived first as a drama (that is as in a fashion we perceive a story composed by some-one else), and later as a 'reality.' On the side of mere narrative device, this is, of course, meant to provide beings of the same order of beauty, power, and majesty as the 'gods' of higher mythology, which can yet be accepted - well, shall we say baldly, by a mind that believes in the Blessed Trinity. (146)

There are a few points that bear scrutiny in Tolkien's own analysis of the "Ainulindalë." First, like most critics, Tolkien does not mention that Ilúvatar created Middle-earth through music. Tolkien does state that the universe is first perceived and later realized, but in a letter that totaled around ten thousand words in length, he

omits perhaps the most unique aspect of his creation myth. Secondly, Tolkien does not discuss the manner in which evil is introduced into Middle-earth. In fact, even in a short conversation of the necessity of a fall of Angels in his myth, Tolkien makes no mention of Melkor except to say that the "Knowledge of the Creation Drama was incomplete" because of the Creator's need to "redress the evil of the rebel Melkor" (147). Finally, Tolkien sees a need to justify his mythology to a Christian audience, perhaps as a selling point for publication.

The most intriguing aspect of Tolkien's explanation and analysis of the "Music of the Ainur" is the omission of any discussion of the actual music as a component of creation. Perhaps Tolkien's omission set a precedent, because a number of recent critics have also disregarded what I feel to be the most important aspect of any mythology: the moment of conception. As mentioned before, many critics focus on possible analogues of The Silmarillion. For example, Håkan Arvidsson, not surprisingly, discusses the Norse, Celtic, and Anglo-Saxon influences on Tolkien's mythology and argues that with such powerful antecedents from which to work, Tolkien successfully created a credible and unfaltering

mythological world. However, Arvidsson also argues that evil is introduced into this mythological world only through the One Ring, thereby completely omitting any discussion of the true origin of evil in Middle-earth: Melkor's discord. The Ring, albeit a significant source of evil, is only a tangible symbol of the malevolence that was created by Melkor's dissonance in the singing of the Great Theme.

Arvidsson's unforgivable exclusion of Melkor is exacerbated by his one discussion of music as a source of creation: Tom Bombadil. Calling Tom Bombadil a character who is "frequently misinterpreted" by both critics and readers, Arvidsson argues that Tom is, in fact, the most important of all of Tolkien's characters. Tom's power comes from his song, which Arvidsson says is "fundamental to his being, suggesting he might cease to exist if he stops singing" (49). The inclusion of Arvidsson's analysis here is important because of his next piece of evidence concerning Tom's significance: Tom Bombadil, Arvidsson says, is one of the original Ainur, the makers of Middle-earth whose song resulted in the creation of the universe. Indeed, argues Arvidsson, Tom Bombadil is Aulë, and Goldberry is, of course, Yavanna, Aulë's wife. While

Arvidsson's concentration on Tom Bombadil's music is noteworthy, the argument itself is dubious. Arvidsson proposes, for example, that Tom Bombadil would never take the One Ring to Mordor because as Aulë, "he created the hobbits to run his errands" (49). This is problematic for three reasons. First, the creation of the hobbits is never mentioned in The Silmarillion. Furthermore, Gandalf, during the council of Elrond, clearly states the reason for not entrusting Tom Bombadil with the task of keeping the Ring:

. . . he would not understand the need. And if he were given the Ring, he would soon forget it, or most likely throw it away. Such things have no hold on his mind. He would be a most unsafe guardian . . . (LotR I.298)

Most importantly, Tolkien himself states that "Tom Bombadil is not an important person - to the narrative" (Letters 178). He explains that Bombadil is significant as a comment on "the rights and wrongs of power and control" (179), but that he is ultimately a pacifist. However, with so little written about the music of the Ainur, Arvidsson's attempt to link The Silmarillion and The Lord

of the Rings with music, albeit through a dubious connection, is nevertheless admirable.

Though criticism concerning Tolkien's creation through music is scant, there have been several attempts among scholars and musicians to reconstruct the music that would have been heard in Middle-earth. Eugene Hargrove explains that the music of Middle-earth should be reconstructed with "a single melody line without instrumental accompaniment" because polyphony - the combination of many melodies - was "at best rare in Middle-earth at the time of The Lord of the Rings" ("Music"). Hargrove's theory is mentioned here because its basis is Ilúvatar's use of polyphony in the "Ainulindalë" when he instructs the Ainur to sing, sometimes alone, sometimes in parts, and eventually as one. Ilúvatar's addition of the third theme, according to Hargrove, is the only evidence of polyphony in Middle-earth. While Hargrove does include this brief discussion of the Music of the Ainur, the bulk of his essay is devoted to the reconstruction of sounds in Middle-earth. Nevertheless, it is refreshing to see a strictly musical opinion concerning Tolkien's creation.

Other critics, as mentioned earlier, focus mainly on Tolkien's literary and historical influences. A renowned

Tolkien critic who goes a step further than most in tracing analogues is Verlyn Flieger, whose Interrupted Music: The Making of Tolkien's Mythology (2005) explores Tolkien's specific desire to create a mythology for England. Flieger's title is promising to someone searching for opinions about Tolkien's use of music, but the text itself does little to expand on that theme. She frames her approach with two questions that she intends to answer throughout the text: Why did Tolkien think England needed a mythology, and how would he make his mythology belong to England?

Flieger searches for the answer to the first question by conducting a biographical examination of Tolkien's pre-Lord of the Rings life, a process Tolkien himself admitted is futile. In a letter to Peter Szabó Szentmihályi, in response to a query concerning Tolkien as a "believer of moral didacticism," Tolkien stated that the

investigation of an author's biography is an entirely vain and false approach to his works - and especially to a *work of narrative art*, of which the object aimed at by the author was to be *enjoyed* as such. (Letters 414)

Yet Flieger moves from Tolkien's days at Oxford, where he became familiar with a number of foreign mythologies, to his involvement in World War I, an experience, Flieger says, that profoundly affected Tolkien's desire to create a lasting English mythology. Another element that inspired Tolkien, according to Flieger, was a resurfacing of the texts of Max Müller, George Dasent, and Andrew Lang, 19th century anthropologists and folklorists with whose theories about folklore Tolkien found fault. One point of contention was Lang's insistence that fairy stories arose out of "'savage' cultures and, therefore, the 'childhood' of human development," a statement that, according to Flieger, prompted Tolkien to create a serious fairy world, one that would appeal to adults (25).

Flieger then explores the models Tolkien might have used in creating his mythology, promising her readers a "less complicated subject for discussion" (27). Indeed, this part of the book is written in a more linear fashion, examining chronologically the sources that may have inspired Tolkien. As early as 1917, the Finnish Kalevala had prompted Tolkien, then an undergraduate at Oxford, to express his desire for "something of the same sort that belonged to England" (28). This line, taken from

Carpenter's biography, seems to be Flieger's strongest argument for offering the reconstructed Finnish mythology as one of Tolkien's models for The Silmarillion. Not surprisingly, she also cites as models Beowulf, a story that had a tremendous thematic impact on The Lord of the Rings, and, surprisingly, the Arthurian legends, stories that Tolkien argued could not be part of England's mythology because of their explicit Christian influences. Arguing against Tolkien himself, Flieger claims that a comparison of the Arthurian legends and The Silmarillion "show similarities closer than mere coincidence" (34). Both stories, she says, comprise connected legends that range from, in Tolkien's words, "large and cosmogonic to the level of fairy tale" (35).

This comparison offers the reader a glimpse into the rest of Flieger's text: her arguments concerning points of view, tradition, artificer, and foreconceit lose the strength and appeal of the first part of her analysis, which was written in a smooth, almost conversational style. The trail she follows to answer the question "Whose myth is it?" turns into a series of crossed paths and dead ends, a journey that could become frustrating to all but the most devoted Tolkien scholar. Instead of offering decisive

evidence, she begins to speculate, guess, and conjecture about Tolkien's intent behind The Silmarillion.

Verlyn Flieger's Interrupted Music, a reference to the creation myth in The Silmarillion, offers Tolkien scholars a detailed view of infrequently explored areas of the text: unpublished back stories that may have been intended as part of the larger work. If Flieger's purpose is to offer a definitive outline of Tolkien's brilliant attempt at an English mythology, she falls short of success. However, if Flieger's desire is to challenge readers to hypothesize about Tolkien's unfinished work, a mythology that is comparable in scope and vision to mythologies of entire nations, then she has exceeded her goals. The questions she raises are important to our understanding of The Silmarillion, but perhaps her most important argument is that The Silmarillion is "Tolkien's own 'Great Music,' his many voiced, often interrupted, never finished song of the history of Middle-earth" (xiii).

The idea of Tolkien as creator is not unique to Flieger. Margaret Hiley, as noted in chapter two, discusses Tolkien as a creator of a credible mythology for England, stating that "within the boundaries of Tolkien's world . . . the myth is not just believed to be true, it is true: it

is both the mythology and the history of Middle-earth at the same time" (844). Yet Hiley bases her argument on Tolkien's diction and syntax, mentioning only in passing that Middle-earth, and thus the basis of both the mythology and the history, was created through music.

Another scholar who focuses on Tolkien's credibility as a maker of a cosmological world is Jane Chance, who edited Tolkien and the Invention of Myth, a compilation of papers tracing the analogues of The Silmarillion and The Lord of the Rings. Two of the essays from this collection are worth noting here because of their discussions concerning the relationship between Tolkien and the ancients, a connection we will further explore in chapter four. Gergely Nagy, as mentioned in chapter two, describes Tolkien's mythology in terms of Plato's Republic. Nagy argues against the common perception that Plato was hostile toward myths, stating that

it is oral culture to which Plato was an enemy, not myth: oral culture as the epitome of the mythical imagination, mythical thought that is not any longer exact and systematic enough for the philosophers. (83)

He argues that both Plato and Tolkien use narrative devices to create a system, or a framework, for a mythology;

additionally, both Plato and Tolkien use the idea of a vision of creation "prior to worldly perception" (94). Plato's vision of the Forms "provides the souls with the knowledge they forget with their embodiment and later recall in anamnesis" (94). Tolkien's vision of creation, of course, is manifested in the foreshadowing of Middle-earth through the Music of the Ainur, a vision first *imagined* by the Holy Ones and then *realized* by Ilúvatar. The vision in both Plato's and Tolkien's systems is the framework for order. Although Nagy addresses neither Tolkien's use of music nor Melkor's dissonance, his ideas are significant here because of the foundation he builds for a link between Tolkien and Plato, a connection that, he notes, has not been thoroughly explored.

The second essay from this collection that merits attention is one written by Kathleen E. Dubs that investigates Boethian philosophy in The Lord of the Rings. As she mentions from the beginning, she is the first to suggest the importance of studying Tolkien's Middle-earth in terms of Boethius's Consolation of Philosophy, a text we will more fully explore in chapter six. She argues that as a medievalist, Tolkien would certainly be familiar with Boethius, especially King Alfred's translation of the

Consolation into Anglo-Saxon. Dubs further notes that a reading of Tolkien within a framework of Boethius's Consolation is important because Tolkien "deliberately eschewed any reference to Christianity in his works," and Boethius "does not depend on the Christian historical perspective" in his treatise (134).

Specifically, Dubs discusses Boethius's Lady Philosophy as a symbol of free will and autonomy. Through Lady Philosophy, Boethius "presents a universe created and governed by a benevolent providence, a universe of order and harmony in which everything - including fate and chance - has purpose" (136). Dubs convincingly uses this idea of free will to show the connection between Boethius and Tolkien, citing numerous examples from The Lord of the Rings. Though Dubs does not include a discussion of The Silmarillion, she lays the foundation for a reading of Tolkien's creation myth under the auspices of Lady Philosophy. In Tolkien's "Ainulindalë," Middle-earth is created under the supervision of a benevolent Providence, Ilúvatar, who makes his purpose known to the Ainur but allows them, under his guidance, the opportunity to make decisions according to their own thoughts. Melkor, of course, takes advantage of the free will given to him, and

it is obvious that the discord he introduces into the Great Theme is a component divine providence. A more detailed discussion of Boethian philosophy as it relates to the "Ainulindalë" is in chapter six.

Another collection of papers edited by Jane Chance, Tolkien the Medievalist, explores Tolkien's role as a medievalist, a role that most certainly influenced his creation of Middle-earth. Again, two of the essays in this collection are worth exploring here because of the association they suggest between Tolkien's works and the works of such ancients as Boethius and Augustine. Like Kathleen Dubs, Bradford Lee Eden explores Boethius's influence on Tolkien; unlike other critics, Eden's analysis focuses almost entirely on Tolkien's use of music. Indeed, the title of Eden's essay - "The 'Music of the Spheres': Relationships between Tolkien's The Silmarillion and Medieval Cosmological and Religious Theory" - seems to promise an interesting exploration of the three areas, but his first sentence is an indication of the incomplete and poorly written analysis that is to follow. He begins by stating quite generally that "as a medievalist, Tolkien knew and recognized the importance of music as an anthropomorphic reality and creational material in many

mythologies" (183). Yet instead of giving examples of where one might find music as "creational material" in other mythologies - a claim he never succeeds in supporting - Eden moves quickly to a brief explanation of the connection between the "music of the spheres" and ancient classical philosophy. Finally, he outlines the main points of his argument: the creational power of music in Middle-earth; the "decay and descent" of music in Middle-earth that follows Boethius's model of the three types of music (a theory which originated with the ancient Greeks, not Boethius, who merely readdressed the ideas from a more modern perspective); and the relationship between dragon lore and Tolkien's musical cosmology.

Perhaps as an attempt to explain the claim about music's creational role in many mythologies, Eden, before addressing his first main idea, gives a few examples of how music has been used in mythological stories. The problem, however, is that the roles he describes are not related in any way to creation. He discusses Orpheus, the Muses, the Sirens, and Circe from Greek mythology, none of whom were responsible for creating a universe; in fact, Circe and the Sirens were responsible for destroying men. Eden could conceivably fit the Muses into an argument about the

creation of the written word, but even that connection is a stretch. To complete his analysis of music as a creational force, Eden gives a few more examples of music in mythological roles that have nothing at all to do with creation, such as the power of music in the Psalms and Proverbs and "the fall of the walls of Jericho at the hands of Joshua's trumpets" (184).

Eden's next move is in the direction of his argument concerning the music of the spheres, but his first statement is so blatantly erroneous that it is difficult to believe anything else he has to say. He states:

Boethius was the first to state in his treatise *De institutione musica* that music was divided into three specific kinds, in order of priority and importance: the music of the universe, human music (vocal), and instrumental music. (184)

While it is true that Boethius was the first to outline the three types of music *in his treatise*, he was certainly not the first to discuss the divisions of music anywhere else. The delineation of sounds into *musica instrumentalis*, *musica humana*, and *musica mundana* originated with Pythagoras, as we will explore in chapter four.

Even though Eden's information concerning the origin of this division of music is incorrect, his attempt to assign music from The Silmarillion and The Lord of the Rings into these divisions is laudable. He begins by discussing the focus in the "Ainulindalë" on "music as the creative and omnipotent force" and how the Ainur's songs for Ilúvatar are reminiscent of "the medieval depiction of the various hierarchies of angels singing continuously around the throne of God" (185). Eden's point is that the Music of the Ainur, "the creational and binding force that sets in motion the entire drama of Middle-earth" (186), is an example of Boethius's first type of music, the music of the universe, which, according to Pythagoras, originates in the cosmos itself. However, Eden also notes that with the Music of the Ainur, Tolkien is bound "in the rest of his mythological work to construct and illustrate music's power through the other two types of music" (186), making it sound as if Tolkien is contractually obligated to fulfill this duty to medieval cosmology.

Eden continues his analysis of The Silmarillion in relation to the three types of music by discussing how Yavanna and Ulmo are further examples of the music of the universe. The second type of music, or human music, is

exemplified by Lúthien's singing. Eden explains that human music is best described as vocal music, yet according to Pythagoras, *musica humana* is the unheard resonance between one's body and soul (James 31). Nevertheless, Eden moves forward with his analysis, somehow conflating Beren and Lúthien, Thingol and Melian, Tolkien and Edith, and Catholicism.

Eden's discussion of the third type of music, the sounds created by instruments, is much briefer. He states that "in The Silmarillion, interestingly enough, there is no direct reference to the use of instruments" (190). However, he inexcusably overlooks the suggestion of musical instruments in a passage near the beginning of the "Ainulindalë":

Then the voices of the Ainur, like unto harps and lutes, and pipes and trumpets, and viols and organs . . . began to fashion the theme of Ilúvatar to a great music. (3-4)

Granted, the Ainur are not, in fact, playing the instruments, but the suggestion is clear. Another reference to instrumentation Eden neglects occurs during the third theme, when Melkor's dissonance resulted in a "clamorous unison as of many trumpets braying upon a few

notes" (5). Instead, Eden speculates about the use of instruments in the Second Age, stating that because there were minstrels - Daeron and Maglor - there must have been instrumental music. Eden states that "although instruments are not mentioned when referring to these two minstrels, they would obviously have been used, especially by a court musician such as Daeron" (190).

According to Eden, evidence of the three types of music in The Silmarillion is also evidence that "each theoretical step taken away from the 'Great Music,' which set everything into motion, is a slow descent away from 'the divine'" (191). Therefore, by the Third Age described in The Hobbit and The Lord of the Rings, during which the reader finds numerous references to both vocal and instrumental music, men and Elves have moved away from the "music of the spheres" and into a lower form of aural existence. Eden admits, however, that "without an understanding of the entire content of Tolkien's oeuvre," - and it is abundantly clear that Eden himself has not yet accomplished such an understanding - "it is difficult to see the line of thought through which he may consciously or unconsciously be leading the reader" (191). Similarly, it is difficult for the reader of Eden's paper to follow any

line of thought. The best evidence for this is in Eden's conclusion, in which he states that "the medieval philosophy of the 'music of the spheres' makes its appearance throughout Tolkien's Middle-earth, similarly to his conception and construction of dragon lore" (191). The brief discussion of dragon lore, and especially as part of a conclusion in a paper on the music of the spheres, is not only without merit, but it is entirely confusing. The most curious statement in his conclusion, though, is one in which he attempts to explain "the *only* difference between the dragon-lore of Middle-earth and the 'music of the spheres' philosophy," a declaration that is far too convoluted to review. (emphasis mine)

What Bradford Lee Eden is attempting to accomplish - connecting Tolkien's Middle-earth to the musical cosmological theory of the ancients - is both desirable and admirable, but his paper is so full of errors that one should be surprised by its inclusion in an otherwise scholarly collection of essays, especially a collection edited by a well-respected medieval scholar. The second paper from Jane Chance's anthology that is reviewed here is much worthier of scholarly notice. John William Houghton discusses the "Ainulindalë" as "asterisk cosmogony," a term

based on T. A. Shippey's idea of "asterisk-reality." Briefly, "asterisk-reality," as explained by Houghton, is Shippey's term for philologists' inclination to reconstruct, sometimes purely imaginatively, the "world-views" that lost words (marked by an asterisk) once described. Shippey calls Tolkien's creative process in the construction of Middle-earth "the production of asterisk-realities." According to Shippey, the "activity of re-creation - creation from philology - lies at the heart of Tolkien's invention" (22). Using Shippey's term as a basis for his argument, Houghton explains how the "Ainulindalë" is, in fact, an "asterisk-cosmogony," or "an imagined account of the creation of an asterisk-reality" (171).

The "Cottage of Lost Play" in Houghton's title refers to the initial framework Tolkien had provided for the transmission of the stories in The Silmarillion. In The Book of Lost Tales I, the first volume of Christopher Tolkien's compilation of The History of Middle-earth, the "Cottage of Lost Play" tells the story of Eriol, a traveler who would learn Elf-lore and subsequently pass it on for the benefit of succeeding generations. Christopher Tolkien explains that "Eriol came to Tol Eressëa from the lands to the East of the North Sea. He belongs to the period

preceding the Anglo-Saxon invasions of Britain" (Tales 15). J. R. R. Tolkien later revised the story, resulting in Eriol's becoming Ælfwine, an Anglo-Saxon mariner. In essence, Eriol was to have been the link between the tales of Middle-earth and the history of Britain, thereby giving credence to Tolkien's stories as a type of mythology for England.

Houghton argues that Eriol's tale of creation in the "Ainulindalë," a tale that would ostensibly be told by Eriol to an Anglo-Saxon audience, would not conflict with the medieval, Christian understanding of creation because an Anglo-Saxon audience would be familiar with Augustine's writings, and specifically his reworking of Genesis, De Genesi. The story of the double creation in the "Ainulindalë" - the universe foreshadowed in song and the subsequent realization by Ilúvatar - would be "reassuringly easy to fit into the schema of Augustine's Christian-Neoplatonist synthesis" (172).

Although Houghton makes several convincing arguments concerning the specific relationships between the "Ainulindalë" and Augustine's theories, I will focus only on the points pertaining to music. Unlike many critics, Houghton states from the beginning the importance of music

as the "overriding symbol" of Tolkien's whole cosmogony (177). He argues that "the predominant musical images function in the 'Ainulindalë' in the way that speech and light, taken together as intellectual illumination, do in Augustine's reading of Genesis" (178). This statement is one of the most compelling insights by any critic attempting either to link Tolkien's mythology to Christianity or to establish Tolkien's stories as a credible mythology for England. However, Houghton's argument falters when he admits that while Augustine does not use any musical images in De Genesi, he does incorporate them elsewhere. Like Eden's speculation concerning the instruments in Middle-earth, Houghton's attempt to maintain the connection between the "Ainulindalë" and Augustine's De Genesi through conjecture contributes nothing of value to an argument concerning Tolkien's use of music in the act of creation.

The goal of this chapter was to review the criticism available on Tolkien's Silmarillion, and specifically the criticism related to the "Ainulindalë," or to Tolkien's credibility as a mythmaker in his crafting the "Music of the Ainur." Tolkien's credibility as a mythmaker in general, however, has been under scrutiny ever since he

made the remark about desiring to compose a type of mythology for England. The following chapter is an examination of Tolkien's Silmarillion and its place in the realm of cosmogony.

CHAPTER II

THE MYTHOLOGY OF THE "AINULINDALÉ"

Nearly every scholar who discusses The Silmarillion mentions J. R. R. Tolkien's desire to create a mythology for England. Jane Chance writes:

It has become well known among scholars that Tolkien yearned to create a 'mythology for England' that would accomplish for his country what mythologies had done for other countries such as Greece, Italy, Iceland, and Norway: create a religious pantheon of the gods attached to a creational act of genesis that functioned as an expression of national origin and identity.

(Invention 1)

Tolkien, while writing The Lord of the Rings, expressed his original intention concerning what came to be called The Silmarillion. In an oft quoted letter to Milton Waldman, Tolkien states his desire:

Once upon a time I had a mind to make a body of more or less connected legend, ranging from the large and cosmogonic, to the level of romantic fairy-story [. . .] which I could dedicate simply to: to England; to my country. I would draw some

of the great tales in fullness, and leave many only placed in the scheme, and sketched. The cycles should be linked to a majestic whole, and yet leave a scope for other minds and hands, wielding paint and music and drama. Absurd.

(Letters 144)

Jane Chance's summary leads the reader to believe that Tolkien desired to create a mythology for England, presumably a cosmogonical history of modern man. Yet Tolkien states only that he would *dedicate* his cycle of stories to his country. The difference may seem petty, but in comparing Chance's perhaps misquoted summary to Tolkien's actual words concerning The Silmarillion, one thing becomes apparent: the story behind Tolkien's mythology has become a sort of legend itself. Verlyn Flieger explores this legend, concluding that Tolkien desired a mythology for England because the Arthurian legends are too Christianized, and therefore not adequate for a national mythology. In her exploration, Flieger attempts to reconstruct the processes that led to Tolkien's writing the Silmarillion, a unified collection of tales that gives England a "mythic identity of its own" (Interrupted 28).

Since the publication of The Silmarillion in 1977, scholars and fans alike have explored the origins, analogues, and antecedents for Tolkien's mythology, explorations that seek literary, philological, semiotic, and spiritual connections between Tolkien and our collective past. Moreover, numerous plausible correlations among the stories, language, and structure of The Silmarillion and those of other mythologies have been posited, but surprisingly little has been said about the actual moment of creation. In Tolkien's Silmarillion, his "body of more or less connected legend" (Letters 144), the world of Middle-earth is initially created through the singing of musical themes. Melkor, however, introduces a divergent theme, music that is discordant and, seemingly, contrary to what Eru, or Ilúvatar, had planned.

The act of creation through music seems to be Tolkien's own device; there is little evidence to show that this type of creation occurs in other mythologies, yet the musical theme as a means of creation is later adopted by C.S. Lewis in "The Magician's Nephew." In the story, Aslan sings a song that creates the land and inhabitants of Narnia. As the Lion sings, a "stretch of grassy land" is

"bubbling like water in a pot" and "swelling into humps" (Lewis 68). And from those humps

. . . the earth poured out of them, and from each hump there came out an animal . . . and now you could hardly hear the song of the Lion; there was so much cawing, cooing, crowing, braying, neighing, baying, barking, lowing, bleating, and trumpeting. (Lewis 69).

In essence, Aslan creates Narnia through his song, which in turn creates the songs of all the other animals. Yet Lewis's account of musical creation comes after Tolkien composed The Silmarillion. Musical creation in mythology seems not to exist before Tolkien.

However, music as an essential component in cosmogony does have philosophical precedents. The problem, then, becomes two-fold: from what sources might Tolkien have drawn in his creation of Middle-earth through music, and what effect does Melkor's discordant contribution have on The Silmarillion as a mythology for England?

To answer these questions, one must first look back to Pythagoras of Samos - the late 6th Century B.C.E. philosopher who is credited with articulating the idea of the Great Theme of the music of the spheres - and a time

before music truly employed *consonantia*. There is an anecdote involving Pythagoras and his hearing tones that resulted from hammers hitting pieces of iron. He discerned the concord of the octave, the fourth, and the fifth, but he realized that the sound between the fourth and the fifth was a dissonance that necessarily completed the greater sound (James 35). It is important to note that Pythagoras did not hear all the notes in the scale, only the three that were most easily heard by the (ancient) human ear; likewise, Ilúvatar introduces three themes in his creation of Middle-earth. Interestingly, the octave and the fifth, as well as the octave and the fourth, are perfect intervals; the resonance between the fourth and fifth, as stated, creates dissonance.

Just as Pythagoras noted the necessary dissonance in the greater sound within this scale, Tolkien understood the necessity of dissonance in his creation through music of Middle-earth. Melkor, while producing the theme given to him by Ilúvatar, begins to interweave his own contrary thoughts, causing the Great Theme to falter with his disharmony. But Ilúvatar makes it known that no theme exists, not even the discord introduced by Melkor, that did not originate with the One. Therefore, the Creator -

including Tolkien - perpetuates the necessity of dissonance, albeit a dissonance that derives from initial harmony.

Even so, the second part of the question remains: What effect does this discord have on The Silmarillion as a mythology for England? All mythologies have some basis in reality, whether they explain the origins of customs, ideas, or even people. Melkor's influence can be traced throughout The Silmarillion and The Lord of the Rings. Ultimately it is Sauron, minion of Melkor, that is responsible for the emergence of Man as the dominant being in the Fourth Age, thus tying Middle-earth to our own history and lending Tolkien's stories credibility in terms of a national mythology - not as a fantasy.

At this point, it may be helpful to review the organization of this work. After a brief summary of Tolkien's account of creation, the remainder of this chapter will examine Tolkien's "Ainulindalë," the story of the Music of the Ainur, in relation to other mythologies. Specifically, we will explore the key components of creation myths - the type of creation, the creator, and the other players involved in the myth - and determine the "Ainulindalë"'s place within established mythological

archetypes. The third chapter is a detailed comparative analysis of four accounts of Tolkien's "Ainulindalë": three versions as recorded in Christopher Tolkien's compilation, The History of Middle-earth, as well as the account in The Silmarillion. The implications of Tolkien's editorial decisions concerning his cosmogony will also be investigated. Chapter four will explore how the concept of music as a component of our cosmogony - the theme of the musical universe - was developed by such philosophers as Pythagoras, Aristotle, Plato, and Boethius, and how the ideas expressed by these philosophers contribute to Tolkien's mythology, especially the ideas concerning consonance and dissonance. Chapter five will consider the nature of evil and will determine whether, in Tolkien's cosmogony, malevolence is a necessary complement to benevolence. Finally, we will trace the effects of Melkor's dissonance in The Silmarillion and how that dissonance, as it is exhibited throughout both The Silmarillion and The Lord of the Rings, lends credibility to Tolkien's works as a national mythology for England.

THE CREATION OF MIDDLE-EARTH

To examine Tolkien's Silmarillion, and specifically the "Ainulindalë," as myth, one must first explore what the

idea of myth entails. Gergely Nagy describes Tolkien's "strategy" in terms of Plato's analysis of myth in the Republic. As Nagy quotes, in a discussion from the Republic, Socrates declares that myth "is authentic because it is true - true because it has always been told that way, because there is a tradition behind it" (92). To understand myth is to understand that behind it is a system that provides "a wider cultural foundation" for, in Plato's case, "philosophical discourses" (92). Nagy argues that Tolkien, in The Silmarillion, adopts a similar strategy:

. . . his texts do not simply "add up to" a mythology - the creation of that lies in the system. Without the system none of Tolkien's stories can be "mythic" in a definition that takes into account the essential cultural and functional context of myth. It is not the corpus, not the individual texts together, but the theoretical effect and context the whole generates. (92)

In essence, Tolkien's Silmarillion is a credible mythology because it is multi-faceted: it transcends time, yet it somehow fits within our own era; it is fantastical, yet it

explains the creation of a world that is archetypally familiar to us.

Nagy further argues, taking a cue from Socrates, that "the proliferation of texts is essential" because it is the proliferation that "leads to the authenticating system of mythology" (93). However, Nagy does not explore what could be the most important aspect in establishing credibility on this point: Christopher Tolkien's History of Middle-earth. In this twelve-volume set, the younger Tolkien surveys his father's numerous manuscripts, drafts, and revisions from writings as early as "The Ainulindalë" to his last workings on The Silmarillion before his death, as well as everything in between. Tolkien certainly provided an abundance of texts to authenticate his "system of mythology."

Although Gergely Nagy neglects to explore this "authenticating system," thereby leaving the reader to question whether Tolkien's stories are part of a greater cosmogony, Verlyn Flieger asserts that they are part of a grand scheme. The Silmarillion is, in fact, a mythology, complete with its oral tradition - as evidenced, she says, in the examination of Tolkien's *Notion Club Papers* and in the text of The Lord of the Rings, where the characters' songs hearken to stories told in The Silmarillion - and

with its cosmogony, the spiritual significance behind the stories. The cosmogony is what bears scrutiny.

To begin, we must examine the first part of The Silmarillion, "Ainulindalë: The Music of the Ainur," a story that explains the creation of everything. Tolkien initiates the creation process by establishing the Creator: the first words of "Ainulindalë" are "There was Eru, the One" (Silm 3). Eru, also known as Ilúvatar, made the Ainur, "the Holy Ones, that were the offspring of his thought" (3). At the beginning of the creation myth, Ilúvatar calls the Ainur together and reveals to them a "mighty theme," and the Holy Ones are "amazed" at the "glory of its beginning and the splendour of its end" (3). From this theme Ilúvatar wills the Ainur to make "in harmony together a Great Music," a song that will awaken the beauty of the world (3). As a result, "the music and the echo of the music went out into the Void, and it was not void" (4).

Yet one of the Ainur, Melkor, is dissatisfied at the flawless nature of the music, and as the theme progresses he begins to "interweave matters of his own imagining that were not in accord with the theme of Ilúvatar," thereby creating discord (4). To counteract the dissonance,

Ilúvatar conceives a second theme, but Melkor maintains the "sea of turbulent sound" (5). But the One arises a second time and creates a theme unlike the first two, rendering a sense of "two musics progressing at one time . . . and they were utterly at variance" (5). When Ilúvatar arises for the third time, "his face terrible to behold," he produces one final chord, with which Tolkien states simply, "the Music ceased" (5). To ensure that the fallen Ainu understands that the discord was neither unlooked for nor, perhaps, entirely unwelcomed, Ilúvatar says, "Thou, Melkor, shalt see that no theme may be played that hath not its uttermost source in me, nor can any alter the music in my despite" (6).

However, the music itself does not *at first* create the world; the music imagines the world according to Ilúvatar's plans. As Ilúvatar previously stated, everything has its "uttermost source in me" (6); therefore, Ilúvatar first allows the Ainur to hear and sing the world through music, and then he gives them a vision of that theme, setting before them "all those things which it may seem they [the Ainur] devised or added" (6). Ilúvatar is, ultimately, the only Creator. The Ainur are able to recognize the first two themes in "this vision of the World" that is "played

before them," but they are amazed by a vision of the Children of Ilúvatar, creatures of the third theme in which the Ainur had no part (7). In the end, Ilúvatar amplifies the vision by making it materially real.

Thus, the world of Middle-earth is, after Ilúvatar's plan, created through music. In archetypal fashion, the creation is followed by a Fall, a flood, and several stories in which history and mythology are made one, but my purpose is to examine only the first episode, the creation itself. In the process of examination, I will explore the creation in The Silmarillion in relation to other creation myths, specifically examining the type of creation, the essence of the creator, and the other players in the myth.

TYPE OF CREATION

Because of their archetypal nature, creation myths from different cultures will inevitably share certain elements. Many American Indian tribes, for example, share a myth in which their world is created by emergence. In these myths, the people emerge into their world from a type of underworld, a symbolic womb in Mother Earth. The ancient Greeks, of course, believed in creation from Chaos. In their case, Chaos was the personified progenitor of Gaia, or earth, who in turn gave birth to Uranus, or

heaven, and the first gods. The Japanese and Chinese also have creation myths involving Chaos, although in the Chinese version Chaos is contained within an egg. But for our purposes, we will examine three types of creation myths: *ex nihilo*, creation by word, and *deus faber*.

Ex nihilo creation, or creation from nothing, is particularly common among monotheistic cultures. It is similar to creation from chaos, as in Greek mythology, but chaos refers more specifically to "essential nonexistence" (Leeming 61). The Judeo-Christian creation story may be considered as part of the *ex nihilo* tradition because of God's presence when Genesis begins: He was already in existence and is therefore not designated as a product of chaos. Tolkien's "Ainulindalë" may be considered as a type of *ex nihilo* creation because the first words of the text tell us, "There was Eru, the One" (Silm 3). Like God in the Judeo-Christian myth, Eru is established as already existing at the beginning; how Eru *became* we never discover.

The idea of creation from nothing bears closer examination, especially in light of the "Ainulindalë"'s similarity to Genesis. Both stories feature a beginning

that is naturally associated with the notion of creation by word, thus described by David Leeming:

In this [the Judeo-Christian] version of creation *ex nihilo*, the supreme being speaks the Word, making the age-old connection between Logos or cosmic order (the Word) and the ordering principle, which is language (words). So it is that the Hebrew creator, Yahweh, instructs Adam and Eve . . . to be creative by "naming" the other creatures. (59)

The similarity of creators who speak is not the most critical similarity between Genesis and the "Ainulindalë": many readers are aware of the biblical language used in the "Ainulindalë," language that closely resembles the diction of the King James Bible. Yet Tolkien's choice of diction, instead of proving that his creation alludes to Christianity as some critics believe, merely adds mythical credibility to the story. Margaret Hiley argues that The Silmarillion is "authenticated by its use of biblical language and its use of other mythological fragments," such as the components explored here (848). She further compares the opening of Genesis with the beginning of the "Ainulindalë," noting that Tolkien's syntax, especially a

specific clause structure, and "old-fashioned diction" are "indebted to the Bible" (847). Hiley cites Ilúvatar's command "Let these things Be!" - a statement she says is "unmistakably taken from 'Let there be light!'" - as an example of the religious symbolism in Tolkien's text (848). She further remarks that both texts use the word *void*, another association between *ex nihilo* and creation by word.

But the "Ainulindalë" may also be considered as a type of *deus faber* creation story. *Deus faber*, according to David Leeming, is "the creator in his form as craftsman or artist" (56). Leeming suggests that "in *Deus faber* creations, God creates the world on the analogy of some skill or craft" (56). One example is from the Book of Job (38:4-5), when Yahweh, like a carpenter, recalls his having "laid the foundation of the earth" and determining its measurements (Leeming 58). Similarly, readers may see Ilúvatar as an artist, a craftsman who creates his world from music. After "propounding to them themes of music," Ilúvatar listens while the Holy Ones practice, sometimes together, sometimes alone (Silm 3). As an artist, Ilúvatar shapes the Ainur's understanding of music and of the themes created by that music. He subsequently tells his

offspring: "I will sit and hearken, and be glad that through you beauty has been wakened into song" (Silm 3).

THE CREATOR

Throughout mythological literature, a number of archetypal creators surface. In many civilizations whose religion was derived from agricultural practices, the creators are women, often a type of Earth Mother. Therefore, Native American cultures - such as the Keresan, the Hopi, and the Acoma tribes - have a matrilineal beginning (Leeming 29). But European cultures tend to maintain the idea of a male creator, a patriarch who designs and crafts the world in which we live.

Ilúvatar is, of course, the being who creates the world of The Silmarillion, but we should not ignore The Silmarillion's ultimate creator, J. R. R. Tolkien. In thinking of Tolkien as a creator, we may be reminded of Jane Chance's comment in which she discusses how Tolkien yearned to "create a mythology for England" (Chance 1). However, Tolkien himself never professed to be a creator of a national mythology. He merely wanted to write a series of connected stories, a cosmogony that he could dedicate to his country. Yet for many, The Silmarillion has, in fact, become a type of history for England.

Christopher Garbowski discusses Tolkien's creative process in The Silmarillion, and specifically his creation by word. For Tolkien, myth is related to the "origins of language and the human mind," an idea that bears resemblance to one posited by Ernst Cassirer (Garbowski 23):

Language and myth stand in an indissoluble correlation with one another, from which both emerge but gradually as independent elements. They are two diverse shoots from the same parent stem, the same impulse of symbolic formation, springing from the same mental activity . . .

(qtd. in Garbowski 23)

Tolkien himself said that "the incarnate mind, the tongue, and the tale are in our world coeval" ("On Fairy-Stories" 122). A brilliant philologist, Tolkien understood the power of language on myth. Thus, according to Tolkien, if one has a habit of creating languages in the world of fantasy, a "new form is made; Faërie begins; Man becomes a sub-creator" (122).

Michaela Baltasar agrees that for Tolkien, "language provided him with the tools he needed to create his secondary world," a world that brought into consciousness

something that already existed "as unconscious life" (23). Baltasar explains this process of sub-creation as "the crafting of a secondary world to exist on its own plane" (23), elaborating on Tolkien's insistence that sub-creation is preferable to "either representation or symbolic interpretation of the beauties and terrors of the world" ("On Fairy-Stories" 122). Tolkien, then, becomes a sub-creator by imagining and, in a sense, crafting an entire universe.

But the one God is important, and Tolkien crafts Ilúvatar, also known as Eru - which means "The One" or "He that is alone," - as the bearer of ultimate power (Silm 397). We discover from the first words of The Silmarillion that "there was Eru, the One, who in Arda is called Ilúvatar; and he made first the Ainur, the Holy Ones, that were the offspring of his thought" (3). Ilúvatar is a benevolent creator, teaching the Great Music to the Ainur, his offspring, and allowing them to adorn the theme, "each with his own thoughts and devices" (3). Even after Melkor weaves "thoughts of his own unlike those of his brethren" into the music, Ilúvatar seems to smile: he merely "lifted up his left hand, and a new theme began amid the storm" (5). Yet when Melkor counters with discord "more violent

than before," Ilúvatar becomes stern (5). Finally, Ilúvatar had allowed Melkor's intrusion long enough and arises with a face that is "terrible to behold" (5). Ilúvatar - etymologically the "Father of All" and the Creator of Middle-earth - allows his children to learn and explore on their own, and he even permits them to disobey and rebel; but ultimately, the creator is the One, and he reminds his children that they can contribute nothing to the theme that did not originate in him (406).

Mary E. Zimmer argues that both Ilúvatar and his absolute power are influenced by Neoplatonic thought, specifically the "transcendent nature common to both the Neoplatonic god and The Silmarillion's god, Eru" (52). She discusses Ilúvatar's act of creation as an "act of self-consciousness, an act by which all creation is known" (52). This may explain why Ilúvatar first allows the Ainur only to imagine the creation they produced through song: Ilúvatar is able to demonstrate the ultimate power - his power to control every aspect of the creation - merely through his thoughts, which he then transmits to the Ainur. Marjorie Burns's description of Ilúvatar is in agreement with Zimmer's, but Burns argues for a more decidedly Christian version of Ilúvatar, or Eru. She calls Eru "a

single creating god, 'Father-of-all,' a god quite compatible with Christian values and Christian attitudes" (Burns 166).

Determining whether Ilúvatar is based on Christian theology is not our current intention. Instead, it is important to analyze the nature of Tolkien's creator and to examine the type and amount of power he has. We know that he created Middle-earth with words, but it is also necessary to understand that Ilúvatar is, according to Elizabeth Whittingham

. . . the source of all things, that he is ultimately in control, and that he will turn any defiant or destructive act to his own purposes. As creation continues to unfold, Ilúvatar further demonstrates his supremacy through his control of the process. (216)

Specifically, Ilúvatar maintains control of the music of the Ainur despite Melkor's subversive attempts. But in order to fully understand Ilúvatar's power, it is necessary to examine his words to Melkor after "the One" had successfully thwarted the rebel's effort to create discord:

. . . I am Ilúvatar, those things that ye have sung, I will show them forth, that ye may see

what ye have done. And thou, Melkor, shalt see that no theme may be played that hath not its uttermost source in me, nor can any alter the music in my despite. For he that attempteth this shall prove but mine instrument in the devising of things more wonderful, which he himself hath not imagined." (Silm 6)

Whittingham calls Ilúvatar's speech "one of the most important passages in the creation myth because it establishes his sovereignty" and shows his power over Melkor (216).

Ultimate power is essential in a Creator, and although Ilúvatar allows Melkor to counter the Great Theme with discordant intrusions, there is no question that Ilúvatar is the One. After showing the Ainur the vision of the world that was created by their music, giving them sight where before was only hearing, he suddenly takes it away, and the image is "hidden from their sight" (Silm 9). In a further demonstration of his power, he then "send[s] forth into the Void the Flame Imperishable" and declares, "Eä! Let these things Be!" (9). Ilúvatar allows the Ainur to take part in constructing the vision, but they understand

that their music was merely a manifestation of his power.

After Ilúvatar's words, the Ainur

saw afar off a light, as it were a cloud with a living heart of flame; and they knew that this was no vision only, but that Ilúvatar had made a new thing: Eä, the World that Is (9)

Though there is no direct evidence to link Tolkien to the Mesopotamian story of Gilgamesh, it may be surmised that he, as a scholar of other world mythologies, was familiar with the epic in which the water god Ea, also known in Babylonian mythology as Enki, was the giver of life. Tolkien's use of Eä to give being to his world is perhaps coincidental, but his meticulousness as a linguist should indicate otherwise. In the Babylonian myth, Ea was "the source of all fertility and organic life," and because of his ability to invoke magic spells, he was "regarded as wise among the gods" (Cotterell 17). Yet just as Ea could create life, he could also take it away: in the epic story of Gilgamesh, it is Ea who is responsible for the archetypally devastating flood. He gives a warning to one man only, Utnapishtim, who thereafter holds the secret of eternal life. Ea tells him:

Arise and hear my words:

Abandon your home and build a boat.

. . . Reject the corpse-like stench of wealth

. . . choose to rise above and give back

what you yourself were given.

Take the seed of all you need aboard

With you . . . (Gilgamesh XI.I.25-36).

Ea's warning was not to be taken lightly: the subsequent flood was so violent that "even the gods cowered like dogs" (Cotterell 22). If Tolkien had used the reference to the Mesopotamian god intentionally, then perhaps he meant to imply that Ilúvatar's use of *Eä*, while creating the "World that is" could also, if necessary, take away the world (Silm 9).

OTHER PLAYERS

While Ilúvatar is the Creator, the Ainur also play important roles in Tolkien's creation. Secondary players have, in fact, always played a part in creation myths. In Genesis, God first created Adam and then Eve. Adam and Eve, then, are the progenitors of the rest of the human race, thus becoming, in a sense, sub-creators. In Norse mythology, often regarded as a strong influence on Tolkien's creation, the High One surrounds himself with the *Æsir*, gods who live in Asgard. While this may initially

sound similar to Tolkien's creative scheme involving Ilúvatar and the Ainur, Tolkien deviates drastically from the Norse myth. For one thing, one of the main players in the version from the Prose Edda involves the Ice Giant, Ymir, whose body was responsible for the creation of the world (Leeming 133). Ymir, after having given birth to man and woman from his armpits, began to melt the ice around him, creating the cow giant Auohumla. Subsequently, the cow licked the ice blocks around her, revealing yet more men. Thus, the Norse creation myth is a veritable chain of players who work below the High One (135).

But the Æsir may need closer examination. While Tolkien's secondary players, the Ainur, are generally peaceful and beneficent, the Æsir assume a contrary role. Marjorie Burns assesses the Norse deities in this way:

There is little question that much of what is fairly common behavior for an Asgard god is reprehensible by the standards of today. It is not just slaughter, trickery, deception, and indifference to another's pain that mark most of these Northern deities but *delight* in slaughter, *pride* in trickery or deceit, and such moments as

the all-around amusement the Æsir enjoy . . .

(166)

Needless to say, with the possible exception of Melkor, the Ainur are clearly not wholly influenced by the secondary players in the Norse myth.

The other mythology generally thought to be a strong influence on Tolkien is the Finnish Kalevala, but if there is a connection between the moment of creation in the "Ainulindalë" and that of the Finnish epic, it is certainly vague. The Finnish myth begins with the primeval waters and Sky, who had a daughter named Ilmatar, a name similar to Ilúvatar. But the similarity of names is the strongest connection. In the Kalevala, Ilmatar floats on the waters for 700 years and entertains only one other player, a bird that subsequently laid eggs on her knee (Leeming 94).

If the Finnish, Norse, and Christian myths are not precursors to Tolkien's structured creation story, where did he find his inspiration? Perhaps a closer look at the Ainur may help. The Ainur, "the offspring of his [Ilúvatar's] thought" (Silm 6), are, according to Marjorie Burns, "a far tidier, far more complimentary creation than what the Norse conceived" (166). Clyde Kilby describes the Valar, a sub-sect of the Ainur:

Our best conception of them is perhaps as angels. They are, with at least one powerful exception, joyfully subject to Eru, and they volunteer to assist in the making of Arda according to the vision. Though the Valar are pure spirits, they appear substantively, being "self-incarnated" usually in the "shape of the bodies of Elves and Men." (66)

Furthermore, explains Kilby, the Valar have particular characteristics and abilities, most of which are peaceful and beneficial. There is, however, the dissenter Melkor, "one of the most resplendent and mighty of them" (66), who attempts to dominate the creation process by introducing dissonance into Ilúvatar's music.

Melkor is himself worth further examination. As mentioned above, Melkor is quite possibly the only one of the Valar whose origins might be directly traced to the Northern gods. Marjorie Burns explores how Odin's negative traits, such as trafficking in wolves and promoting war, surface in Melkor (169). As "destroyer and betrayer," Melkor could also be analogous to Loki, playing the role "with far more intensity and consistency" than does the Norse trickster god (170).

But Tolkien does not ignore his Christian beliefs in the characterization of Melkor, later named Morgoth. Indeed, Melkor, like Satan, betrays his maker by introducing discord into the world and consequently experiences a great Fall. Melkor's Fall, the sins of the inhabitants of Middle-earth, and the flood that decimates all but the holiest, are, of course, closely related to the Judeo-Christian creation stories. Certainly, those parallels are evident and have been much discussed by Tolkien scholars, but what about Tolkien's inclusion of music as a key aspect of creation? Is there an analogue in already-established mythologies, or has Tolkien, indeed, become a creator of something new?

At this point in the exploration, it seems that if the music has an antecedent, a parallel in other mythologies, it is illusive. Tolkien, in the preface to The Silmarillion, mentions that he "had the sense of recording what was already 'there', somewhere: not of 'inventing'" (xv). Interestingly, the origin of The Silmarillion is, in fact, based on invented languages that Tolkien devised to shape Middle-earth, languages that he had already established before conjuring the mythical stories. These languages had a history in Tolkien's vast knowledge of Old

Welsh, Old Norse, Old Icelandic, and Old English (Middle-earth, for example, comes from Old English *middangarde*), so they are technically re-workings of something that was already 'there'. Andreas Gloge perhaps best addresses the importance of Tolkien's invention:

By clever and deliberately unconventional usage of old and reshaped words, Tolkien triggers his readers' unconscious familiarity with the roots of their own language in order to find their way around in Middle-earth and at the same time makes them feel emotionally safe and intellectually challenged. (51)

Furthermore, Gloge states that Tolkien's inventions were a "necessity of human life to revert to old things in order to create something new out of them" (51).

C. S. Lewis maintained the same position concerning mythology, stating that the virtue of a myth is "that it takes all the things we know and restores to them the rich significance which has been hidden by the veil of familiarity" (qtd. in Gloge 51). As Gloge argues in his exploration of the origins of Tolkien's myth,

it is still unclear about many parallels to old legends in Tolkien's Middle-earth whether he put

them in on purpose or whether they crept into the stories unperceived due to Tolkien's academic knowledge. (51)

One point is clear: Tolkien's Silmarillion, with its type of creation, Creator, and other players, fits into the archetypal patterns of other mythologies. And though a clear musical antecedent is not apparent in terms of creation, Tolkien's creation follows a cosmological and musical pattern that was developed by the ancients, a pattern of rhythm and harmony that is present within us all.

CHAPTER III

VARIATIONS ON A THEME

It should come as no surprise that the act of creation published in The Silmarillion is not the only version Tolkien drafted, even though he seems to have settled on the idea of music as the creational catalyst from the very earliest stage. Other accounts of Tolkien's "Ainulindalë" exist, as published in Christopher Tolkien's voluminous editions of his father's notes, The History of Middle-earth. The Silmarillion was begun long before Tolkien wrote The Lord of the Rings, and it was a life-long project for the author. Tolkien argued that publishing The Silmarillion with The Lord of the Rings was crucial for a reader's fuller understanding of the latter text. So desperate was he for the publication of The Silmarillion, he sought a different company than Allen & Unwin, the publishers that had controlled the rights to The Hobbit. However, when negotiations with Collins, the publisher that had originally agreed to publish The Silmarillion in conjunction with The Lord of the Rings, fell through, Tolkien resigned himself to the publication of The Lord of the Rings without its companion piece. He told Rayner

Unwin, "Better something than nothing! Although to me all are one, and the 'L of the Rings' would be better far . . . as part of the whole, I would gladly consider the publication of any part of this stuff" (Letters 163). And while Tolkien continued to revise and rework The Silmarillion throughout his long life, it was published only posthumously. Not surprisingly, it was also never quite finished.

Because J. R. R. Tolkien was long dead when Christopher Tolkien made editorial decisions concerning The Silmarillion, the other versions of Tolkien's creation myth in the "Ainulindalë" necessitate examination. The evolution of the "Ainulindalë," especially in terms of Tolkien's use of music as a tool for creation, are indicative of the great care Tolkien took with his work, ensuring that every piece of the cosmogony fit and that inconsistencies were either altered or omitted. The earliest published version of his creation myth is from a manuscript Tolkien wrote between 1918 and 1920 and was printed posthumously as part of The Book of Lost Tales, (henceforth referred to as Tales) in 1983; the second version, written about ten years after the first and containing a number of alterations, was published in The

Lost Road (henceforth referred to as Road) in 1987.

Christopher Tolkien offers yet another adaptation of the creation myth in Morgoth's Ring (henceforth referred to as Ring), published in 1993, which is the one closest in structure and diction to the account published in The Silmarillion.

That varying accounts exist is not surprising; Tolkien, in a letter to Milton Waldman in 1951, admits that he cannot "remember a time when [he] was not building" this world of Middle-earth (Letters 143). He further notes that "such an overweening purpose did not develop all at once" (143). Accordingly, he drafted and redrafted throughout his life - an "absorbing, though continually interrupted labour" - and as Tolkien "improved in theory [. . .] and craft" (143), his mythology, as a matter of necessity, was dynamic, leaving his literary heir with the daunting task of ensuring that each piece of the mythology fit as seamlessly as possible into the cosmogonic whole. What follows is a detailed examination of the differences among the accounts of creation in four versions of the "Ainulindalë" and the implications of those editorial decisions.

Perhaps the most efficient method to compare the four accounts is to divide the story itself into sections, divisions that will illuminate the evolutionary process of the creation of Middle-earth. Immediately following each table is the commentary concerning the significance of the changes within each section. Italicized words within the tables and throughout the commentary indicate my own emphasis unless otherwise noted.

TABLE 3.1: FRAMEWORK FOR CREATION

The Book of Lost Tales I	The Lost Road	Morgoth's Ring	The Silmarillion
<p>1. Begins with "Then said Rúmil . . ." (49)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The story Rúmil proceeds to tell was originally from Manwé, whispered to "the fathers of my [Rúmil's] father in the deeps of time" (49) <p>2. Ilúvatar dwelt alone (49)</p>	<p>1. Begins with "These are the words Rúmil spake to Ælfwine concerning the beginning of the World" (171)</p>	<p>1. Begins with "These are the words Pengoloð spake to Ælfwine concerning the beginning of the World" (8)</p>	<p>1. Begins with "There was Eru, the One, who in Arda is called Ilúvatar" (3)</p>
<p>2. Ilúvatar dwelt alone (49)</p>	<p>2. Ilúvatar is called the "All-father" (171)</p>	<p>2. Same as Road</p>	<p>2. Omit reference to "All-father"</p>

COMMENTARY

One of the reasons Tolkien's works have been so wildly successful both with the general public and with scholars is because of the realism that permeates the stories, a feat not easily achieved within a universe filled with monsters and magic and a multiplicity of diverse creatures. It is obvious that Tolkien's great care to ensure consistency among the stories is one of the factors contributing to this sense of realism, a sense one feels even in what is clearly a creation *myth*. Tolkien was certainly aware of the importance of language as a means to perpetuate stories within a culture; accordingly, it seems natural that his mythology of Middle-earth would, at least initially, be perpetuated within the framework of an oral tradition.

Originally Tolkien's stories about the beginnings of Time were to be reported by a mariner named Eriol, later named Ælfwine, whose visit with Rúmil in Tol Eressëa resulted in his learning the Elvish tales which would then be perpetuated in his own language, presumably Anglo-Saxon English. As Christopher Tolkien says, his father's "primary intention" in creating the stories that would become The Silmarillion "was to satisfy his desire for a

specifically and recognizably *English* literature of 'faerie'" (Tales 12). He also notes that in his father's earliest stories, "the mythology was anchored in the ancient legendary history of England" (12). Naturally, the beginning of "The Music of the Ainur" from The Book of Lost Tales I is situated within the framework of an oral tradition, with Rúmil narrating a story originally told by Manwë to the fathers of his father - a veritable chain of orality. Interestingly, though the character Rúmil is omitted from the later "Ainulindalë," his role as a storyteller is consistent with his appearance in the published Silmarillion, in which Rúmil is called "the loremaster who first achieved fitting signs for the recording of speech and song" (Silm 64). By the second draft of "The Music of the Ainur," Eriol had changed to Ælfwine, a name with a dual purpose: it seems more appropriate linguistically for an Anglo-Saxon mariner, and it translates literally into "elf-friend." This back story provides evidence that Tolkien intended his mythology to be grounded within an *English* oral tradition, and it offers a suitable position from which to begin our commentary.

FRAMEWORK FOR CREATION

To give the creation story the highest degree of credibility, Tolkien frames Rúmil's account in Tales by explaining that it came to him originally from Manwë, the Ainu closest to Ilúvatar. By the time the "Ainulindalë" had reached the point of publication within The Silmarillion, J. R. R. Tolkien - or his son Christopher in the role of editor - had abandoned the idea of the oral framework, beginning The Silmarillion simply with, "There was Eru, the One" (4). The designation of "the One" leaves no doubt in the reader's mind that Tolkien's universe is monotheistic, a trait that makes his cosmogony better suited for a predominantly Christian English audience.

TABLE 3.2: THE MAKING OF THE AINUR

<i>The Book of Lost Tales I</i>	<i>The Lost Road</i>	<i>Morgoth's Ring</i>	<i>The Silmarillion</i>
<p>1. Ilúvatar first "sang into being" the Ainur, called the greatest in power and glory (49)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Iluvatar created dwellings for the Ainur in the void, and he lived among them (49) • He taught them all kinds of things, but the greatest was music (49) 	<p>1. Ilúvatar first made the Ainur, called the holy ones, who were the "offspring of his thought." The Ainur "were with him before Time" (171)</p>	<p>1. Ilúvatar first made the Ainur, called the Holy Ones, who were the "offspring of his thought." The Ainur "were with him before aught else was made" (8)</p>	<p>1. Same as <u>Ring</u></p>
<p>2. He "propounded to them themes of song and joyous hymn" that revealed to them the great things that he devised in his mind and heart (49)</p>	<p>2. He spoke to them, "propounding to them themes of music" (171)</p>	<p>2. Same as <u>Road</u></p>	<p>2. Same as <u>Road</u></p>

THE MAKING OF THE AINUR

The most logical point with which to commence commentary in Tales is Ilúvatar's singing the Ainur into existence, proof that Tolkien had from the beginning settled on music as the creational force of Middle-earth. Throughout Tales, the focus seems to be on Ilúvatar and his almost fatherly relationship with the Ainur: he crafted dwellings for them and even lived among them; he taught them music, which, from the beginning, is the "greatest" thing they could learn; and he revealed to them "great and wonderful things that he devised ever in his mind and heart" (Tales 49). In Road, however, several changes have occurred. The details concerning Ilúvatar's fatherly relationship with the Ainur are omitted, though he is still referred to as the "all-father" (171). Furthermore, no longer does Ilúvatar sing the Ainur into existence; they are now "holy ones" - later promoted in Ring to *Holy Ones* - who are the "offspring of his thought" (8). We also learn that his method of teaching the Ainur the themes of music is speech, and that these themes no longer reveal Ilúvatar's heart and mind, a point that becomes essential later in the story. A final change is that the concept of when the Ainur came into being is reworked: in Road they

were created "before Time" (171), yet by Ring the Ainur
were with Ilúvatar "before aught else was made" (8).

TABLE 3.3: THE ORIGINAL SINGING OF THE AINUR

The Book of Lost Tales I	The Lost Road	Morgoth's Ring	The Silmarillion
<p>1. Then the Ainur made music</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The "voices of their instruments" rose around his throne (49) 	<p>1. Then the Ainur "sang before him" and Ilúvatar was glad (171)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For a long time the Ainur sang either alone or a few together while the rest listened (171) • Each of the Ainur understood only that part of Ilúvatar's mind from which he came (171) • They were slow to understand their "brethren" (171) • "Yet ever as they listened they came to a deeper understanding, and grew in unison and harmony" (171) 	<p>1. Same as Road</p>	<p>1. Same as Road</p>

THE ORIGINAL SINGING OF THE AINUR

Though Tolkien understood from the beginning of his creation the importance of music, he had not yet decided what kind of music would best fit into his creational scheme. We see in Tales that the Ainur seemed originally to have had literal instruments with which to produce sound: "The *voices of their instruments*" rose "about his throne" (49). This is an interesting point for a number of reasons, not the least of which is the obvious connection to Pythagoras's idea of *musica instrumentalis*, which is the ordinary music made by plucking a lyre or blowing a pipe (James 31). It is possible, as Bradford Lee Eden points out, that Tolkien's original idea for the Ainur's use of instruments came from medieval depictions of heavenly angels playing harps and horns around the throne of God (185). The similarity of the images is striking. Yet by Road, the Ainur no longer have instruments; they simply sing before Ilúvatar.

In fact, several changes occur in Road that relate to the music. In Tales, there is a stronger focus on what Ilúvatar does; in Road, however, the focus has shifted to the experiences of the Ainur, and especially those experiences that pertain to their singing. From Road we

first learn that, for a long time, the Ainur practiced their music either alone or in small groups while the others listened; furthermore, they each understood only the part of Ilúvatar's mind that he had shown to them individually (hence a move from Tales in which Ilúvatar revealed *all* in his heart and mind); and finally, though they were slow to understand their "brethren," listening to one another afforded them a deeper perception, resulting in their growth "in unison and harmony" (Road 171). Beginning in Road, this singing of the Ainur makes Ilúvatar "glad" (171). Though it is not directly stated, we can assume that at this point, Melko - changed to Melkor by Ring, and hereafter called Melkor unless used in a quotation - is in accord with the other Ainur. In the broad design of Tolkien's cosmogony, evil was not in existence from the beginning. However, we will see later that the seeds of Melkor's malevolence were sown from the earliest stage of creation.

TABLE 3.4: DESIGN OF THE "GREAT THEME"

The Book of Lost Tales I	The Lost Road	Morgoth's Ring	The Silmarillion
1. "Ilúvatar propounded a mighty design of his heart to the Ainur" (49)	1. Ilúvatar called all the Ainur together and "declared to them a mighty theme" (172)	1. Same as <u>Road</u> throughout this section	1. Same as <u>Road</u> throughout this section
2. He "unfolded" a history that was unmatched in vastness and majesty (50)	2. He "unfolded" things that were "greater and more wonderful than he had yet revealed" (172)		
3. The Ainur were amazed by the "glory of its beginning and the splendour of its end" (50)	3. Same as <u>Tales</u>		
4. The Ainur bowed and were speechless (50)	4. Same as <u>Tales</u>		

TABLE 3.4: DESIGN OF THE "GREAT THEME"

The Book of Lost Tales I	The Lost Road	Morgoth's Ring	The Silmarillion
<p>5. He told the Ainur that the "great region of beauty" that he described for them was only on outline and that the empty spaces are not yet filled (50)</p>	<p>5. Omitted</p>		
<p>6. He has not yet told them all of the adornments and loveliness in his mind (50)</p>	<p>6. Ilúvatar tells the Ainur that the theme is "incomplete and unadorned" (172)</p>		

DESIGN OF THE "GREAT THEME"

After a long while, during which the Ainur practiced their music, Ilúvatar called them together and "propounded a mighty design of his heart" (Tales 49), which later turned into the "great theme" (Road 172). As we saw above, Tolkien omitted any reference to Ilúvatar's heart after Tales. Tolkien seems to have been satisfied with much of this section, though, retaining the part that describes the theme as having a beginning and an end, as well as the depiction of the Ainur's being so awed by the theme that they "bowed and were silent" (Tales 50). Yet the specific details about the theme that appear in Tales are omitted in subsequent drafts. For one thing, Ilúvatar unfolds a "history" in Tales, which is changed in Road to the much more general "things," most likely because we learn later in The Silmarillion that the "history was incomplete and the circles of time not full-wrought" (9). Tales, which seems in general to be more descriptive and conversational - probably due to its original designation as an oral narrative - contains Ilúvatar's statement that the theme is merely an "outline" that does not include all of the "adornments and loveliness" of his mind (Tales 50). By Road, the description of the theme is changed to

"incomplete and unadorned" (172). To maintain consistency within the mythological world of Middle-earth, Tolkien had to remove *loveliness*. To leave it in would be an indication that "adornments and loveliness" were all that remained in Ilúvatar's heart and mind concerning the universe (Tales 50); as shown later, Middle-earth is not all adornments and loveliness. Tolkien needed a way to ensure that evil could make an entrance, and Ilúvatar's description of the theme as "incomplete" leaves room for the inclusion of those aspects of the universe that are, as we see later, hideous: because of Melkor, the theme will change to reach "a depth of gloom and ugliness" (Tales 51). It is Melkor's discord that mars the physical landscape of Middle-earth, but not without Ilúvatar's understanding that it will happen.

TABLE 3.5: TASK OF THE AINUR

The Book of Lost Tales I	The Lost Road	Morgoth's Ring	The Silmarillion
1. Ilúvatar desires the Ainur to "make a great and glorious music and a singing of this theme" (50)	1. Ilúvatar desires the Ainur to make "in harmony together a great music" (172)	1. Ilúvatar wills the Ainur to make "in harmony together a Great Music" (8)	1. Same as <u>Ring</u>
2. He has already set the Secret Fire within them (50)	2. He has already kindled them with the Fire (172)	2. He has already kindled them with the Flame Imperishable (9)	2. Same as <u>Ring</u>
3. He tells the Ainur to "exercise your minds and powers in adorning the theme to your devising" (50)	3. Same as <u>Tales</u>	3. He wants them to "show forth [their] powers in adorning this them, each with his own thoughts and devices, if he will" (8)	3. Same as <u>Ring</u>
4. He'll sit, listen and be glad (50)	4. Same as <u>Tales</u>	4. Same as <u>Tales</u>	5. Same as <u>Tales</u>

TASK OF THE AINUR

After the Ainur have been exposed to Ilúvatar's great music, he tells them in Tales that he desires them to create a "great and glorious music and a singing of this theme" (50). In Road, Tolkien omits the reference to singing and instead has Ilúvatar tell the Ainur that he wishes them to "make in harmony together a great music" (172), emphasizing the importance of the harmony that will soon be disrupted. By Ring, "great music" is capitalized - a change that Tolkien makes to several of the most important words in this version - to illustrate its ultimate power. A curious change Tolkien makes in this section is to the concept of fire. In Tales, Ilúvatar tells the Ainur that he has "set" the "Secret Fire" within them (50), though by Road *set* is changed to *kindled* (172), and "Secret Fire" changes by Ring to "Flame Imperishable" (9). Later we will see that Melkor begins to wander off alone in search of this fire that has already - albeit unbeknownst to him - been kindled within his being. Another notable change is the replacement of the Ainur's *minds* with *powers*: we all have minds, but only the Holy Ones have powers that can affect the creation of the universe. Finally, by Ring Ilúvatar seems to give the Ainur

a choice in embellishing this theme: he says that each of them will show his powers in adorning the theme, but adds at the end, "if he will," as if their adding to the theme is optional. Of course each of the Ainur contributes his or her powers, and throughout all four versions, Ilúvatar sits and listens joyfully, much like a craftsman would enjoy his own design.

TABLE 3.6: FIRST PLAYING OF THE GREAT MUSIC

The Book of Lost Tales I	The Lost Road	Morgoth's Ring	The Silmarillion
<p>1. "Then the harpists, and the lutanists, the flautists and the pipers, the organs and the countless choirs of the Ainur began to fashion the theme of Ilúvatar into great music" (50)</p>	<p>1. "Then the voices of the Ainur, like unto harps and lutes, and pipes and trumpets, and viols and organs, and like unto countless choirs singing with words" began to fashion the theme of Ilúvatar into great music (172)</p>	<p>1. Same as <u>Road</u></p>	<p>1. Same as <u>Road</u></p>
<p>2. There were "mighty melodies changing and interchanging, mingling and dissolving amid the thunder of harmonies greater than the roar of the great seas" (50)</p>	<p>2. A sound "arose of endless interchanging melodies, woven in harmonies, passed beyond hearing both in the depths and in the heights" (172)</p>	<p>2. Same as <u>Road</u> except harmonies is changed to harmony (9)</p>	<p>2. Same as <u>Ring</u></p>

TABLE 3.6: FIRST PLAYING OF THE GREAT MUSIC

<i>The Book of Lost Tales I</i>	<i>The Lost Road</i>	<i>Morgoth's Ring</i>	<i>The Silmarillion</i>
<p>3. Every place was filled to overflowing with music and the "echo of music and the echo of the echoes of music," even the dark, empty spaces (50)</p>	<p>3. Every place was filled to overflowing; the music and the echo "went into the Void, and it was not void" (172)</p>	<p>3. Same as <u>Road</u></p>	<p>3. Same as <u>Road</u></p>
<p>4. Never before and never since has there been such music of "immeasurable vastness of splendour" (50)</p>	<p>4. Never before and never since has there been "music so immeasurable" (172)</p>	<p>4. Never since have the Ainur made music like this (9)</p>	<p>4. Same as <u>Ring</u></p>

TABLE 3.6: FIRST PLAYING OF THE GREAT MUSIC

The Book of Lost Tales I	The Lost Road	Morgoth's Ring	The Silmarillion
<p>5. There will be even mightier music "woven before the seat of Ilúvatar by the choirs of both Ainur and the sons of Men after the Great End" (50)</p>	<p>5. Greater music will be made before Ilúvatar "by the choirs of the Ainur and the Children of Ilúvatar after the end of days" (172)</p>	<p>5. Same as <u>Road</u></p>	<p>5. Same as <u>Road</u></p>
<p>6. At that point the Ainur and the Men will know Ilúvatar's heart and mind and intent; then the mightiest of all themes will be played (50)</p>	<p>6. Then the themes will be "played aright, and take being in the moment of their playing" because everyone will know his part and Ilúvatar, being "well pleased," will give to their thoughts the secret Fire (172)</p>	<p>6. Same as <u>Road</u> except being is capitalized; fire is made lower case; playing is changed to utterance (9)</p>	<p>6. Same as <u>Ring</u></p>

FIRST PLAYING OF THE GREAT MUSIC

This is the reader's earliest opportunity to examine a vivid description of the music that creates Tolkien's world. Given Tolkien's usual attention to consistency, it is completely unexpected in Tales that the Ainur seem to play musical instruments as well as sing. In Tales we hear only of the "voices of their instruments" (49), not of any tangible instruments. Yet the theme begins when "the harpists, and the lutanists, the flautists, and pipes, the organs and the countless choirs of the Ainur" begin to style Ilúvatar's theme into "mighty melodies" that mingle and dissolve amid "the thunder of harmonies greater than the roar of the sea" (Tales 50). Several things are worth noting in this passage besides the Ainur's use of instruments. In a time "before aught else was made" (Silm 3), the use of any instruments is problematic. Yet Tolkien wrote Tales in the oral tradition, and it can be inferred that the loremaster Rúmil lived during an era in which such basic instruments as harps, lutes, flutes, and pipes were part of the society. It could be argued that Rúmil, for effect, added the instruments. However, the addition of a machine - an organ - is quite the anachronistic shock. Most likely, Tolkien simply made a mistake and remedied it

in subsequent versions. Another prominent attribute in Tales is Tolkien's use of both *melodies* and *harmonies*, especially harmonies that are described using sea imagery, which will be a rather significant addition to the cosmogony later in the "Ainulindalë" and beyond. To maintain consistency with a choice he makes later in the "Ainulindalë" - a choice to use sea imagery to evoke awe and terror - Tolkien, in Road, removes from this section the reference to the seas and says instead that the sounds "passed beyond hearing both in the depths and in the heights" (172).

As mentioned before, the Ainur's use of instruments evokes thoughts of Pythagoras's *musica instrumentalis* (James 21); yet Tolkien removes the instruments, and seemingly the words too, in Road. The voices of the Ainur in Road, an alteration that undergoes no further changes, are "like unto harps and lutes, and pipes and trumpets, and viols and organs, and like unto countless choirs singing with words" (172). Tolkien uses instruments here merely to complete the simile that describes the voices of the Ainur. Yet we are also to understand that the music of the Ainur is made without words, a concept that now evokes Pythagoras's *musica mundana*, the music of the spheres:

music that is created with neither voice nor instrument, but instead originates in the cosmos (James 21). Ever the perfectionist, Tolkien seems to have imagined the ideal circumstance for using music as a force for creation, a circumstance that fits neatly into the cosmic realm.

As before, the text of Tales maintains a more conversational style, employing in this section the technique of repetition that is frequently found in tales stemming from the oral tradition. Furthermore, in Tales the echoes of the music overflow even into the "dark and empty spaces" (50), while in Road and beyond, the music and the echo go "into the void, and it was not void" (172), a phrase that is reminiscent of language found in Genesis. We learn in Tales that "never before, never since" has there been "such music of immeasurable vastness of splendour" (50); in Road, the more descriptive phrase is replaced by "music so immeasurable" (172), while in Ring Tolkien states simply, "never since have the Ainur made any music like this" (9). The simplification of the description of the music is secondary in importance to the removal of "never before" in Ring. Obviously the Ainur have never before made such music because until this point, their efforts have been, in effect, merely practice. This

is the first great theme given to them. Yet Tolkien retains the idea that there has "never since" been such music made: after this point, Melkor will introduce dissonance to the melodies and harmonies, thereby utterly reworking the original theme.

Yet we are told in Tales that a "mightier" theme will be made "before the seat of Ilúvatar by the choirs of both Ainur and the sons of Men after the Great End" (50). The change from *mightier* to *greater* in Road is inconsequential; what is of consequence is that in Tales, Tolkien indicates that the Elves will no longer be in existence after the "Great End," which changes in Road to "end of days" (172). Tolkien subsequently amends "sons of Men" (Tales 50) to read "Children of Ilúvatar" (Road 172), which include, as we later discover, both Elves and Men. (Hobbits and Dwarves are not specifically mentioned as children of Ilúvatar, presumably because their creation did not originate with Ilúvatar in the third theme.) But I will argue that the "sons of Men," the phrase in Tales, may be a more consistent fit. We know that the Elves "will not die until the world dies" (Silm 35), and then they will retreat to the halls of Mandor in Valinor. Men, however, have been endowed with freedom by Ilúvatar, meaning they are not

bound to the world and, with their gift of death, will depart, though "wither the Elves know not" (35). Because Tolkien never reveals to us *where* men go after they die, we must assume that Men and Elves do not go to the same place at the end of their days; therefore, it does not seem probable that Ilúvatar would call them together to make a second great music. To group Men with Elves would mean that the tales as a type of mythology for England would lose some credibility: after all, there must be some semblance of truth, and for most English readers, English history involves a Christian connection. Furthermore, we discover this important information in the *Quenta Silmarillion*:

Of old the Valar declared to the Elves in Valinor that Men shall join in the Second Music of the Ainur; whereas Ilúvatar has not revealed what he purposes for the Elves after the World's end . . . (Silm 36)

To maintain consistency, then, Tolkien might have kept the first version, omitting the inclusion of the Elves in the Second Music. Yet another reason we may assume that the Elves will not be part of the Second Music is because after Sauron is defeated and the One Ring destroyed in The Lord

of the Rings, the Elves diminish and the Fourth Age - the age of Man - begins in Middle-earth.

Nevertheless, Tolkien does make, and keep, the change. What remains the same is that the Second Music will be even greater than the first. The final emendation in this section involves some changes we have seen before. In Tales, for example, Tolkien states that the "Ainur and Men will know Ilúvatar's heart and mind and intent," and as a result will play the "mightiest themes" (50). The reference to Ilúvatar's heart and mind are, of course, omitted in Road. But there are two additions to Road that are of interest. Instead of the participants knowing Ilúvatar's intention, they inexplicably know their own part, and because of this "the theme will be played aright and *take being in the moment of their playing*" (172). In The Silmarillion, the Music of the Ainur merely foreshadows the creation of the world; after Ilúvatar "showed to them a vision, giving to them sight where before was only hearing" (Silm 6), he took the image away and hid it from their view. The realization of the Ainur's vision does not occur until Ilúvatar says, "Eä! Let these things Be!" (8). The italicized phrase, then, fits seamlessly into The Silmarillion, where the instantaneous realization of the

Music had not originally occurred. Yet in Road and Ring, the world is created at the moment the Music is played, thereby rendering this phrase futile. In Road, "Ilúvatar will give to their thoughts the Secret Fire" (172). It was already noted that the Ainur had been kindled with the Flame Imperishable in Ring, but now their *thoughts* have the Fire, emphasizing the symbolic power of the ideas they are forming with their theme of creation. Finally, an unsurprising change occurs from Road to Ring with the replacement of "the moment of their *playing*" (Road 172) with "the moment of their *utterance*" (Ring 9). We have already seen that Tolkien was moving away from the idea of the Ainur playing instruments (though *utterance* indicates words, which Tolkien had also eliminated).

TABLE 3.7: MELKOR AND THE FIRST THEME

The Book of Lost Tales I	The Lost Road	Morgoth's Ring	The Silmarillion
<p>1. Ilúvatar sat and listened and the music seemed good and had few flaws; it seemed the Ainur had learned much and learned it well (50)</p>	<p>1. The "All-father" sat and listened and the music seemed good and had few flaws (172)</p>	<p>1. Same as <u>Road</u>, except there were no flaws (9)</p>	<p>1. Same as <u>Ring</u></p>
<p>2. As the theme developed "it came into the heart of Melko to interweave matters of his own imagining that were not fitting" to Ilúvatar's theme (50)</p>	<p>2. As the theme developed "it came into the heart of Melko to interweave matters of his own imagining that were not in accord" with Ilúvatar's theme because he wanted to "increase the power and glory of the part assigned to himself" (172)</p>	<p>2. Same as <u>Road</u>, except <u>Melko</u> is changed to <u>Melkor</u> throughout (9)</p>	<p>2. Same as <u>Ring</u></p>

TABLE 3.7: MELKOR AND THE FIRST THEME

The Book of Lost Tales I	The Lost Road	Morgoth's Ring	The Silmarillion
<p>3. Melko, of all the Ainur, "had been given some of the greatest gifts of power and wisdom and knowledge" (51)</p> <p>4. Melko often went alone "into the dark places and the void" in search of the Secret Fire that gives Life and Reality because he had a burning desire to "bring things into being on his own" (51)</p>	<p>3. Melko had been given the "greatest gifts of power and knowledge," and he also had a share in the gifts of the other Ainur (172)</p> <p>4. He often went alone in the "void places to find the secret Fire that gives life" because he wanted to "bring things into being on his own" Add: It seemed to Melko that Ilúvatar had not given much thought to the Void, and Melko was "impatient of its emptiness" (172)</p>	<p>3. Same as <u>Road</u></p> <p>4. Same as <u>Road</u>, except "secret Fire" is changed to "Imperishable Flame" (9)</p>	<p>3. Same as <u>Road</u></p> <p>4. Same as <u>Ring</u></p>

TABLE 3.7: MELKOR AND THE FIRST THEME

The Book of Lost Tales I	The Lost Road	Morgoth's Ring	The Silmarillion
<p>5. Melko did not know this until afterward, but the Fire was kept by Ilúvatar, so it could never be found (51)</p>	<p>5. Melko couldn't find the fire because it was with Ilúvatar, but "he knew it not" (173)</p>	<p>5. Simply, Melkor "found not the Fire, for it is with Ilúvatar" (9)</p>	<p>5. Same as <u>Ring</u></p>
<p>6. In those dark places, Melko had "fallen to thinking deep cunning thoughts of his own" that he did not show even to Ilúvatar (51)</p>	<p>6. Because he was alone, Melko had begun to have thoughts of his own that were different than the other Ainur (173)</p>	<p>6. Same as <u>Road</u></p>	<p>6. Same as <u>Road</u></p>
<p>7. He began to weave those thoughts into his music, and "straightway harshness and discordancy rose about him" (51)</p>	<p>7. Same as <u>Tales</u> (but omit <i>harshness</i>)</p>	<p>7. Same as <u>Road</u></p>	<p>7. Same as <u>Road</u></p>

TABLE 3.7: MELKOR AND THE FIRST THEME

<i>The Book of Lost Tales I</i>	<i>The Lost Road</i>	<i>Morgoth's Ring</i>	<i>The Silmarillion</i>
8. Many of the Ainur who were near him "grew despondent and their music feeble, and their thoughts unfinished and unclear" (51)	8. Many of the Ainur who were near him "grew despondent and their thought was disturbed and their music faltered" (173)	8. Same as <u>Road</u>	8. Same as <u>Road</u>
9. Some of the Ainur began to attune their own music to Melko's (51)	9. Same as <u>Tales</u>	9. Same as <u>Tales</u>	9. Same as <u>Tales</u>

TABLE 3.7: MELKOR AND THE FIRST THEME

The Book of Lost Tales I	The Lost Road	Morgoth's Ring	The Silmarillion
<p>10. "The mischief of Melko spread darkening the music" because Melko's thoughts "came from the outer blackness" where Ilúvatar had not "turned the light of his face" (51)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Because Melko's dark thoughts had no "kinship" with the beauty of Ilúvatar's grand design, the harmonies of the great music were "broken and destroyed" (51) 	<p>10. Same as <u>Tales</u> (but <i>mischief</i> is changed to <i>discord</i>); the bulleted section is not included in <u>Road, Ring, or Silmarillion</u></p>	<p>10. Melkor's discord spread, "and the melodies that had been heard at first foundered in a sea of turbulent sound" (9)</p>	<p>10. Same as <u>Ring</u></p>

TABLE 3.7: MELKOR AND THE FIRST THEME

The Book of Lost Tales I	The Lost Road	Morgoth's Ring	The Silmarillion
<p>11. Ilúvatar allowed Melko's discord to continue and listened until it reached "a depth of gloom and ugliness unimaginable" (51)</p>	<p>11. Ilúvatar allowed Melko's discord to continue until "all that could be heard was like unto a storm, and a formless wrath that made war upon itself in endless night" (173)</p>	<p>11. Ilúvatar allowed it to continue until it seemed as if a raging storm were surrounding his throne, "as of dark waters that made war one upon the other in an endless wrath that would not be assuaged" (9-10)</p>	<p>11. Same as Ring</p>

MELKOR AND THE FIRST THEME

For a while Ilúvatar sits and listens to the Music of the Ainur, and in Tales he seems pleased in a somewhat fatherly way that they have "learned much and well" (50), though in Road that phrase is omitted. In Tales and Road, the music has "few flaws" (50; 172); by Ring there are "no flaws" (9), a more appropriate choice for three reasons. First, this is the Music of the Ainur, the angels who are the offspring of Ilúvatar's thought. The music they produce is the music that, in essence, creates the universe. We should expect the Ainur as an offspring of Ilúvatar's thoughts to be perfect, at least initially. Furthermore, from a purely narrative perspective, Melkor's imminent dissonance is particularly harsh because it intrudes on the most ideal melodies and harmonies. To intrude on a flawed performance would lose potency. Finally, this is the last time we know for certain that Melkor is in accord with the other Ainur, at least musically. To retain "few flaws" would indicate, perhaps, that Melkor's music had already begun to falter.

The music changes in Tales when "it came into the heart of Melko to interweave matters of his own vain imagining that were not *fitting*" to the Music of the Ainur

(50). *Fitting* is changed in Road to specify that Melkor's matters were not "in accord" (172), a term that corresponds musically and one that has a much more serious connotation than matters that simply do not quite *fit*. Also added to Road is the reason behind Melkor's sudden discord: he was not satisfied with the part assigned to him and desired "to increase the power and glory" of his contribution to the Music (172). At this point Tolkien begins to lay the foundation for Melkor's general dissatisfaction: in Tales, he "had been given some of the greatest gifts of power and wisdom and knowledge" (51), though in Road he "had been given the greatest gifts of power and knowledge" (172). Tolkien's decision to remove *some of* will be consistent with later descriptions of Melkor in The Silmarillion, where Melkor is, in fact, the "mightiest" of the Ainur (Silm 6), retaining the superlative modifier. Also fitting is the removal of *wisdom*. Power and knowledge can be used for ill purposes, while wisdom is a positive trait.

Tolkien then provides the reader with some of Melkor's back story: in Tales, Melkor "often went alone into dark places and voids to seek the Secret Fire that gives Life and Reality" because he desired "to bring things into being

on his own" (51). As before, Secret Fire is changed to Imperishable Flame by Ring, and *reality* is removed in Road, either because it is redundant (life and reality) or because the Fire does not, in fact, give reality; Ilúvatar does. Tolkien expresses Melkor's desire to be a Creator from the earliest draft and does not waver on that idea, and later in The Silmarillion Melkor does, in a perverted sense, create Orcs (Silm 47). Nor is Melkor the only Ainu to become a Creator; Aulë, impatient for the coming of the Children of Ilúvatar, creates Dwarves without the consent of Eru (Silm 37-8). Similarly, in Road Melkor feels that Ilúvatar has not given enough thought to the Void, and he becomes "impatient of its emptiness" (172), one reason he sought the Secret Fire. Once again, the idea of the Secret Fire / Imperishable Flame is the source of possible inconsistency. Melkor seeks the fire but cannot find it because it dwells with Ilúvatar. In Tales, Melkor does not find out that Ilúvatar has the Fire until afterward, though after what we never know (51); in Road, Melkor seems never to know that Ilúvatar has the Fire (172); yet in Ring, the idea of Melkor's knowing is dropped completely (9).

Tolkien foreshadowed Melkor's descent in Tales when he explained that the mightiest of the Ainur "had *fallen* to

think deep cunning thoughts of his own" (51), thoughts not derived from Ilúvatar. We know, of course, that Melkor will be the fallen angel, and it could be that Tolkien thought his initial word choice was unfortunate: he changed the wording to "but being alone he had begun to conceive thoughts of his own unlike his brethren" (Road 173). This emendation is an example of Tolkien's subtle brilliance in constructing character: that Melkor had *fallen* to have independent thoughts is obvious; that he is *alone* provides both a source and a result of his discontent. We again see that Melkor, by venturing into dark places by himself, is not in accord with the other Ainur, and the thoughts that came to Melkor while he was isolated were added to the Music, resulting in "harshness and discordancy" (Tales 51). To maintain consistency with the musical diction that permeates the "Ainulindalë," *harshness* is omitted in Road. Also consistent with the cosmogonic whole is omitting the idea in Road that the Ainur have a choice in showing their thoughts to Ilúvatar. It is emphasized throughout the *Quenta Silmarillion* that Iluvatar is all-powerful and all-knowing, though he is not necessarily all-controlling.

For the remainder of the first theme, only a few changes emerge among the four versions, but the editorial

decisions have a great effect on Tolkien's world. After Melkor introduces discord in Tales, some of the Ainur "grew despondent and their music feeble, and their thoughts unfinished and unclear" (51), though in Road "their thought was disturbed and their music faltered" (173). It is significant that the Ainur's thoughts change from being *unfinished* and *unclear* to *disturbed*. The first two words signify that Melkor had immediate mastery over the Ainur, that their music will be forever *not* finished and *not* clear; a disturbance - etymologically an agitation - implies that the interruption is temporary, that the disruption will eventually settle. Tolkien retains the idea from Tales that some of the Ainur, like many weaker singers in a choir, begin to "attune their own music to Melkor's" (Ring 9), showing for the first time that the Ainur are susceptible to the temptation of evil. This theme, in fact, runs throughout both The Silmarillion and The Lord of the Rings: the allure of wickedness can overpower anyone. Boromir's uncontrollable desire to take the Ring is a perfect example of the consequences of the Ainur's actions during this first theme. In fact, every part of this musical theme is related to a narrative theme throughout the successive stories.

Tolkien then introduces the juxtaposition of light and dark imagery that will serve as a constant reminder throughout the tales of the unrelenting struggle between good and evil. In Tales, "the *mischief* of Melko spread darkening the music" (51), a mischief that originated in the "outer blackness" where Ilúvatar had not "turned the light of his face" (51). Originally Tolkien followed this idea with yet another reference to Melkor's dark thoughts: because they had "no kinship with the beauty of Ilúvatar's design its harmonies were broken and destroyed" (Tales 51). This last statement is fraught with a sense of inescapable despondency. If the harmonies - the hopes for the Children of Ilúvatar - are *broken* and *destroyed*, they cease to exist. It is important in the world of Middle-earth that optimism, even in the darkest times, is possible; therefore, Tolkien's removal of this phrase in Road was crucial to the well-being of his universe. Also necessary was the replacement of *mischief* with *discord*. What Melkor introduces to the theme is far more serious than mere *mischief*, a word that carries with it a sense of childlike playfulness. Melkor introduces *discord*: literally in the sense that the music is no longer pleasing to the ear, and symbolically in the sense that the universe will be laden

with dissension. By Ring, Tolkien added that the "melodies that had been heard at first foundered in a sea of turbulent sound" (9). This is the first time in the "Ainulindalë" that Tolkien brings in the image of the sea to evoke awe and, possibly, terror.

In all accounts Ilúvatar allows the dissonance to continue, though to what point is considerably different from one draft to the next. Ilúvatar listens in Tales until the theme "reached a depth of gloom and ugliness unimaginable" (51), an uninspired phrase to describe a most terrible occurrence. In Road, however, Tolkien introduces the image of a storm, "a formless wrath that made war upon itself in endless night" (173). As before, Tolkien adds yet more imagery in the next draft to suggest the terror of the sea by changing "formless wrath" into "dark waters" (Ring 10), foreshadowing the destruction of Númenor by the flood. Later in the "Ainulindalë," the sea will itself become a source of music.

TABLE 3.8: THE SECOND THEME

The Book of Lost Tales I	The Lost Road	Morgoth's Ring	The Silmarillion
<p>1. Ilúvatar "smiled sadly and raised his left hand" (51)</p>	<p>1. Although "grieved," Ilúvatar smiled and lifted his left hand (173)</p>	<p>1. Ilúvatar arose; he smiled and lifted his left hand (10)</p>	<p>1. Same as <u>Ring</u></p>
<p>2. At once, "though none clearly knew how," a new theme, which was "like and yet unlike the first" started amid the clash (51)</p>	<p>2. A new theme, which was "like and yet unlike the former," began amid the storm (173)</p>	<p>2. Same as <u>Road</u></p>	<p>2. Same as <u>Road</u></p>
<p>3. This second theme "gathered power and sweetness" (51)</p>	<p>3. This new theme "gathered power and had new sweetness" (173)</p>	<p>3. Same as <u>Road</u>, except <i>sweetness</i> is changed to <i>beauty</i> (10)</p>	<p>3. Same as <u>Ring</u></p>

TABLE 3.8: THE SECOND THEME

The Book of Lost Tales I	The Lost Road	Morgoth's Ring	The Silmarillion
<p>4. The "discord and noise that Melko had aroused started into uproar against it," resulting in a "war of sounds" in which a "clangour arose" and little could be distinguished (51)</p>	<p>4. The "discord of Melko arose in uproar" against the new theme, and "there was a war of sound in which music was lost" (173)</p>	<p>4. The "discord of Melkor arose in uproar and contended with" the new theme, resulting in "a war of sound more violent than before, until many of the Ainur were dismayed and played no longer, and Melkor had the mastery" (10)</p>	<p>4. Same as Ring, except <i>played</i> is changed to <i>sang</i> (5)</p>

THE SECOND THEME

Tolkien, from the first draft, intended Ilúvatar to smile in response to Melkor's discordant intrusion, though in Tales he "smiled sadly" (51), and in Road he smiled amid grief (173). By Ring, however, Tolkien removes any indication that Ilúvatar is disappointed by this interruption of the Great Theme, signifying that Ilúvatar had anticipated Melkor's desire to garner power and glory of his own. By Ring, Tolkien adds that "Ilúvatar arose" (10), a statement that both recalls the likeness of a god on his throne and provides Ilúvatar with an anthropomorphic form. In all accounts, Ilúvatar raises his left hand to begin a new theme. Maintaining the oral nature of Tales, Tolkien's speaker says that the new theme began, but interjects "though none clearly knew how" (51). This interjection is fittingly removed: not only is it unnecessary, but it also calls into question the Ainur's perception of Ilúvatar. Of course they would know that Ilúvatar originated the new theme, and they would not question its inception. Tolkien continues the storm imagery he introduced after Melkor's intrusion by stating in Road that the new theme "began amid the storm, like and yet unlike the former" (173). Though *former* replaces the

first of Tales, the idea that this second theme is something entirely new is retained throughout each account. Unlike the first theme, this second theme "gathered power and sweetness" (Tales 51), changed in Ring to "power and beauty" (10), thus foreshadowing the beauty that will surface in the third theme.

Yet Melkor again counters with his own music, and in Tales the "discord and noise Melko aroused started into uproar against" Ilúvatar's theme, resulting in a "war of sounds" from which a "clangour arose" (51). Perhaps because it was redundant, or perhaps because Tolkien wanted to maintain the focus on musical diction, and noise was omitted from Road. To break from language that is more fitting for the oral tradition, Tolkien also omits the onomatopoeic *clangour* from Tales and instead continues the idea that the cacophonous sound is like a war, a comparison that will be used again in the third theme and a recurring motif that will progress throughout The Silmarillion and The Lord of the Rings, a motif that originates here with Melkor's dissonance. Tolkien's use of *aroused* in Tales seems to indicate that the discord was already present and only needed prodding by Melkor, a suggestion that clearly clashes with the design of Melkor as the originator of

evil. And in both Tales and Road, Melkor's discord arose *against* the second theme of the Ainur; by Ring, his discord *contended* with it (10). With each succeeding draft, Tolkien seems to give Melkor even more power. His contrary theme cannot be merely *against* that of the Ainur because to be against something does not ensure hope of victory. But to be a contender is to be a competitor, and ultimately Melkor does, indeed, compete with both the Ainur and Ilúvatar in this second theme to the point of "mastery" (Ring 10).

Two alterations occur in Road and Ring that illuminate this musical struggle between Melkor and the rest of the Ainur and foreshadow the implications of that struggle. Tolkien wrote in Road that "the music was lost" in the uproar that occurred as a result of Melkor's intrusion (173). Yet for the music to be lost entirely would mean, as mentioned before, that hope would also be lost. Tolkien's alteration - "there was again a war of sound more violent than before, until many of the Ainur were dismayed and *played* no longer" (Ring 10) - ensures that the music does, at least in some sense, continue. Moreover, this alteration reiterates the earlier suggestion that not all of the Ainur are faultless, and we discover later in The

Silmarillion that some are stronger than others and are able to withstand even the most alluring temptations. Finally, to maintain consistency, Tolkien replaced *played* with *sang* in The Silmarillion, omitting any reference to musical instruments.

The purpose of this second theme is never directly stated in the "Ainulindalë," but it is implied that both the first and second themes create the natural world which the Children of Ilúvatar, the subject of the third theme, will inhabit. We also learn that while the Ainur were imagining their assignments within the natural world during the first and second themes, Yavanna, whose dominion includes forests, envisioned that the trees "might speak on behalf of all things that have roots, and punish those that wrong them" (Silm 40), thereby creating the Shepherds of the Trees, called Ents in The Lord of the Rings. Another thing is certain about the second theme: we discover in The Silmarillion that Ilúvatar employed one of the Ainur, Manwë, as "the chief instrument . . . against the discord of Melkor" (16). In Ilúvatar's mind, Manwë is the brother of Melkor and closest to Ilúvatar in thought; yet Manwë uses his might to propound the glory of Ilúvatar and eventually becomes the Chief of the Valar, the name later

given to those Ainur who descend into the world "to be within it fore ever, until it is complete, so that they are its life and it is theirs" (10). The construction of the "habitation of the Children of Ilúvatar" (10) was achieved primarily through Manwë, Aulë, and Ulmo, but Melkor, through his discord, "meddled in all that was done, turning it if he might to his own desires and purposes" (10). As the Ainur work to build the world they imagined in the Great Music, Melkor mars their labor:

Green things fell sick and rotted, and rivers were choked with weeds and slime, and fens were made rank and poisonous, the breeding place of flies; and forests grew dark and perilous, the haunts of fear; and beasts became monsters of horn and ivory and dyed the earth with blood.

(29)

Yet as we see in the aftermath of the third theme, even Melkor's most destructive actions have a designated purpose in Ilúvatar's grand scheme.

TABLE 3.9: THE THIRD THEME

The Book of Lost Tales I	The Lost Road	Morgoth's Ring	The Silmarillion
<p>1. Ilúvatar raised his right hand and "no longer smiled but wept" (51)</p> <p>2. "and behold a third theme, and it was in no way like the others, grew amid the turmoil" (51)</p>	<p>1. Same as <u>Tales</u></p> <p>2. Same as <u>Tales</u>, except the third theme was "more powerful than all," and turmoil is changed to <i>confusion</i> (173)</p>	<p>1. Ilúvatar arose; he raised his right hand, but his "countenance was stern" (10)</p> <p>2. "and behold, a third theme grew amid the confusion," that was unlike the others, "for it seemed at first soft and sweet, a mere rippling of gentle sounds in delicate melodies, but it could not be quenched"; it grew in "power and profundity" (10)</p>	<p>1. Same as <u>Ring</u></p> <p>2. Same as <u>Ring</u>, except <i>behold</i>, is changed to <i>behold!</i> (5)</p>

TABLE 3.9: THE THIRD THEME

The Book of Lost Tales I	The Lost Road	Morgoth's Ring	The Silmarillion
<p>3. Eventually it seemed as if there were "two musics progressing at one time about the feet of Ilúvatar," and the two musics were "utterly at variance" with one another (51)</p>	<p>3. Same as A, except "about the feet of Ilúvatar" is changed to "before the seat of Ilúvatar" (173)</p>	<p>3. Same as <u>Road</u></p>	<p>3. Same as <u>Road</u></p>
<p>4. One of the themes was "great and deep and beautiful," but it was "mingled with an unquenchable sorrow" (51)</p>	<p>4. One of the themes was "deep and wide and beautiful but slow and blended with unquenchable sorrow, from which its beauty chiefly came" (173)</p>	<p>4. Same as <u>Road</u>, except <u>unquenchable</u> is changed to <u>immeasurable</u> (10)</p>	<p>4. Same as <u>Ring</u></p>

TABLE 3.9: THE THIRD THEME

The Book of Lost Tales I	The Lost Road	Morgoth's Ring	The Silmarillion
<p>5. The other theme "was now grown to unity and a system of its own" (51)</p> <p>6. The second theme was "loud and vain and arrogant, braying triumphantly against the other as it thought to drown it" (51)</p>	<p>5. The other theme "had grown now to a unity and system, yet an imperfect one, save in so far as it derived still from the eldest theme of Ilúvatar" (173)</p> <p>6. The second theme was "loud, and vain, and endlessly repeated, and it had little harmony, but rather a clamorous unison as of many trumpets braying upon one note" (173)</p>	<p>5. The other theme "had now achieved a unity of its own" (10) - the rest omitted</p> <p>6. Same as <u>Road</u></p>	<p>5. Same as <u>Ring</u></p> <p>6. Same as <u>Road</u></p>

TABLE 3.9: THE THIRD THEME

The Book of Lost Tales I	The Lost Road	Morgoth's Ring	The Silmarillion
<p>7. The second theme tried to clash but found itself "in some manner supplementing or harmonizing with its rival" (51)</p>	<p>7. The second theme tried to "drown the other music by the violence of its voice," but it seemed as if its "most triumphant notes were taken by the other and woven into its pattern" (173)</p>	<p>7. Same as <u>Road</u>, except <u>solemn</u> now modifies <u>pattern</u> (10)</p>	<p>7. Same as <u>Ring</u></p>
<p>8. At the "midmost of this echoing struggle" between the two themes, "the halls of Ilúvatar shook and a tremor ran through the dark places" (52)</p>	<p>8. Same as <u>Tales</u>, except in "midmost of this echoing struggle" is changed to "midst of this strife" (173)</p>	<p>8. Same as <u>Road</u>, except the tremor "ran out into the silences yet unmoved" Add: "Ilúvatar arose a third time, and his face was terrible to behold" (10)</p>	<p>8. Same as <u>Ring</u></p>

TABLE 3.9: THE THIRD THEME

The Book of Lost Tales I	The Lost Road	Morgoth's Ring	The Silmarillion
<p>9. Ilúvatar raised both of his hands, and "in one unfathomed chord, deeper than the firmament, more glorious than the sun, and piercing as the light of Ilúvatar's glance, the music crashed and ceased" (52)</p>	<p>9. Ilúvatar raised both of his hands, and "in one chord, deeper than the abyss, higher than the firmament, more glorious than the sun, and piercing as the light of the eye of Ilúvatar, the music ceased" (173)</p>	<p>9. Same as <u>Road</u>, except <u>Abyss</u>, <u>Firmament</u>, <u>Sun</u>, and <u>Music</u> (capitalized) (10)</p>	<p>9. Same as <u>Ring</u>, except omit "more glorious than the Sun"</p>

THE THIRD THEME

Though Melkor gains the mastery in the second theme, he does not ultimately win the war of themes. After many of the Ainur became dismayed and stopped singing, Ilúvatar in Tales and Road "raised his right hand and no longer smiled but wept" (51; 173). Eschewing either sorrow or weakness, Tolkien changed Ilúvatar's reaction in Ring: he still raised his right hand, but now "his countenance was stern" (10). During the first and second themes in Tales and Road, Ilúvatar must have been seated, because in Ring he "arose" before propounding this last theme (10). The third theme Ilúvatar introduces is related to the creation of Elves and Men, and the evolution of Tolkien's editorial decisions indicates that he struggled with this process. Every component of this theme must be accounted for in the characterization of the inhabitants of Middle-earth; because he was fashioning both life and death, Tolkien could leave nothing to chance. As a result, this section will require careful, and perhaps tedious, scrutiny.

Tolkien originally stated in Tales that the third theme grew "amid the *turmoil*" of Melkor's discord (51), which he changes in Road to "amid the confusion" (173). The words may seem synonymous, but *confusion*, with its

slightly less negative connotation, is a better fit with what Ilúvatar says later concerning Melkor's disruption of the theme. Ilúvatar explains to the Ainur that everything they contribute originates in some way with him, and that every contribution only adds to the glory of the entire creation. To describe Melkor's discord as *turmoil* would be to assign undue negativity to it.

Though the reason the third theme is different changes drastically from one draft to the next, Tolkien seems to have decided from the beginning that this third theme would be "in no way like the others" (Tales 51), though by The Silmarillion the third theme was, simply, *unlike* the others (5). Yet even this seemingly trivial revision has significant consequences in the scheme of Tolkien's creation. To state that the third theme was "in no way like the others" would indicate that no sympathy - no similarity of feeling - exists between the Children of Ilúvatar and the world in which they live. On the contrary, all the Elves are, in fact, quite attuned to their natural environment and are in some ways inseparable from the world that was created by the second theme. Therefore, the third theme must share some sense of unity with the second, and for Tolkien to call it *unlike* the

former theme leaves slightly more room for interpretation. Tolkien added to Road the statement that the third theme was "more powerful than all" (173), a claim that was necessarily omitted in subsequent drafts because the Children of Ilúvatar cannot possibly be more powerful - either in strength or significance - than the universe itself.

The third theme can be divided into two parts: the first part, the music that is "unlike" the others, is not described until Ring, where it seems at first "soft and sweet, a mere rippling of gentle sounds in delicate melodies, but it could not be quenched and grew in power and profundity" (10). If this is Ilúvatar's theme to introduce his Children into the universe, the description indicates that Elves and Men are inherently temperate creatures, yet with time they have the capacity to cultivate strength and depth of character. The second part of the theme occurs when Melkor reacts to Ilúvatar's new musical contribution: the result is a discordant cacophony described as "two musics progressing at one time" (Tales 51), though "utterly at variance" (51). Here Tolkien takes great care to ensure that the two musics would fit the characterization of Elves and Men. In Tales, the first

music, unquestionably the part contributed by Ilúvatar, is "great and deep and beautiful," but it is "mingled with an unquenchable sorrow" (51). The *unquenchable sorrow* could signify, again, a dearth of hope, so Tolkien replaces it with "immeasurable" in Ring to ensure that the lives of both Men and Elves will have meaning (9). The first music, then, becomes in Road "deep and wide and beautiful but slow and blended with immeasurable sorrow, from which its beauty chiefly came" (173). The concept of beauty stemming from sorrow is reminiscent of the Elves, whose "love of the Earth and all the world is [so] single and poignant" that "as the years lengthen" they become "ever more sorrowful" (Silm 36). Yet the description can also be applied to Men, such as the men of Númenor whose denunciation of evil and corruption caused them to become outcasts from their own land, or even Aragorn, whose faith in the goodness of Men spurred him, against all hope, to fight. Their feats are certainly "deep and wide and beautiful" (Road 173), yet their fate is mingled with a sense of sorrow.

For Tolkien, getting the second music within the third theme right, the dissonance supplied by Melkor, is more difficult and ultimately more important, for this second music is what determines the sense of evil that pervades

The Silmarillion and The Lord of the Rings. This evil must be fitting for both Elves and Men; it must be potentially terrible enough to envelop the world in perpetual darkness; and it must be powerful enough to be a realistic and deadly foe in its struggle against good. And, in fact, good is not always triumphant in Middle-earth. There are many dark years in the history of Tolkien's world when this force of evil introduced by Melkor was too strong to be overcome by the proponents of good, and, as a storyteller, Tolkien knew that it is the dark side that makes a story engaging. Years after The Lord of the Rings was published, Tolkien admitted that Aragorn and the "King's Peace would contain no tales worth recounting; and his wars would have little interest after the overthrow of Sauron" (Letters 419). Bad men are one thing; cosmic malevolence is something else entirely. And because this dissonance originates with the Creator, it must necessarily be a force that no ordinary will can overpower. As a result, Tolkien seemed himself to struggle in its creation.

To fully comprehend the implications of the evolution of evil in Middle-earth, it is necessary to dissect Tolkien's editorial decisions in small segments. The

second music, as it is written in Tales, is described as having a "unity and a system of its own" (51); the "system" in Road becomes "imperfect [. . .] save in so far as it derived still from the eldest theme of Ilúvatar" (173); and by Ring, the second music has achieved "a unity of its own" (10), but the suggestion of any type of system is omitted.

Tolkien originally described the second music as "loud and vain and arrogant, braying triumphantly against the other as it thought to drown it" (Tales 51), and he had retained most of these ideas with few changes into The Silmarillion. In Road, Tolkien omitted *arrogant* but added that the music was "loud and vain, and endlessly repeated, and it had little harmony" (173). That it had any harmony comes as a surprise, because Tolkien also added that it had a "clamourous unison as of many trumpets braying on one note" (Road 173), which would certainly not result in a harmonic sound. The idea that the second music was in some positive way assimilated into the first is common to all versions, though with a couple of notable emendations. Initially Melkor's dissonance attempted to "clash but found itself in some manner supplementing or harmonising with its rival" (Tales 51), a description that retains the musical diction that acts as a cohesive element throughout the

"Ainulindalë." But Tolkien makes the decision to omit *harmonising* and instead states that Melkor's dissonance tried to "drown the other music by the violence of its voice, but it seemed that its most triumphant notes were taken by the other and woven into its pattern" (Road 173), which in Ring is modified to read "solemn pattern" (10).

As a metaphor describing the evil that will descend upon Middle-earth, this second music in the revised form makes clear a couple of points. First, Melkor's dissonance will never *harmonize* with Ilúvatar's great music, because harmony indicates tonal compatibility; the two musics, remember, are "utterly at variance" with one another (Tales 51), and, as symbols of good and evil, they will both exist in the world, though not necessarily symbiotically. Moreover, Tolkien incorporates the idea that Melkor's dissonance attempts to "drown" Ilúvatar's music "by the violence of its voice" (Road 173). The metaphorical reading of this statement is clear: evil will inevitably try violently to overpower good. While there are numerous examples from Tolkien's world to support this idea, the most obvious is the One Ring, the definitive symbol of Sauron's malice that ultimately corrupts whoever carries it, if they carry it long enough. Finally, the most

"triumphant" of Melkor's notes are assimilated by Ilúvatar's music, thereby becoming part of the "solemn pattern" (Ring 10). Again, Tolkien has provided the foundation for one of the most important themes in his works: malevolence as a complement to benevolence. Tolkien's grand scheme is incomplete without the evil that Melkor introduces. Certainly Melkor has the free will to introduce that dissonance, but that dissonance is a necessary component in Middle-earth; without it, there would be no link to the emergence of Man as the dominant creature in the Fourth Age.

In the midst of the "struggle," changed in Road to *strife*, "the halls of Ilúvatar shook and a tremor ran through the *dark places*" (Road 173); the "dark places" become in Ring "the silences yet unmoved" (10). Once again, Ilúvatar rises in Ring, and his face was "terrible to behold" (10). It is unclear when Ilúvatar reseats himself during the symphony of the three themes, and more than likely Tolkien gave no thought to such a seemingly trivial point. It is probable that Ilúvatar's act of rising is a deliberate effort to increase the dramatic tension and to supplement his already awesome power. After the halls shake, Ilúvatar in all three versions raises both

of his hands, and "in one unfathomed chord" (Tales 52), changed in Road to an unmodified chord (173), he stops the music. In Tales, the music actually "crashed and ceased" (52), though Tolkien omitted *crashed* in subsequent drafts. If the music crashes, it is most likely destroyed; and because the "Ainulindalë" is the framework for the world, it is more fitting for the music to stop, thereby remaining intact. The chord with which Ilúvatar stops the music is laden with description, but we will examine only two of the comparisons. In Tales, Road, and Ring, the chord is "more glorious than the sun" (52; 173; 10), yet Tolkien by necessity excludes mention of the sun in The Silmarillion because it has not yet been made. The chord is also "piercing as the light of Ilúvatar's glance" (Tales 52), but Tolkien replaces *glance* with *eye* in Road (173), creating an eerily reminiscent image of the eye of Sauron that haunts Frodo in The Lord of the Rings.

Tolkien makes a curious choice to craft Melkor as a passive participant in Great Music. Melkor actively interweaves "matters of his own imagining" into his music (Silm 4), but after that the action is attributed to his discord. During the first theme, "the discord of Melkor spread ever wider" (4); in the second theme, "the discord

of Melkor rose in uproar and contended with it [the new theme]" (5); and by the third theme, Melkor's discord is called "the other" and "it" (5). As he becomes increasingly evil, he loses his anthropomorphic qualities.

TABLE 3.10: THE IMMEDIATE AFTERMATH

The Book of Lost Tales I	The Lost Road	Morgoth's Ring	The Silmarillion
<p>1. Ilúvatar says, "Mighty are the Ainur, and glorious, and among them Melko is the most powerful in knowledge" (52)</p>	<p>1. "Mighty are the Ainur, and mightiest among them is Melko" (173)</p>	<p>1. Same as <u>Road</u></p>	<p>1. Same as <u>Road</u></p>
<p>2. Ilúvatar indicates that the things the Ainur have "sung" and "played" he has caused to be; he has given them "shape and reality" (52)</p>	<p>2. Same as <u>Tales</u></p>	<p>2. Ilúvatar says, "Those things that ye have sung and played, lo! I will show them forth, that ye may see what ye have done" (11)</p>	<p>2. Same as <u>Ring</u>, but <i>played</i> is omitted</p>

TABLE 3.10: THE IMMEDIATE AFTERMATH

The Book of Lost Tales I	The Lost Road	Morgoth's Ring	The Silmarillion
<p>3. Melko and the other Ainur will see that "no theme can be played save it come in the end of Ilúvatar's self, nor can any alter the music in Ilúvatar's despite" (52)</p>	<p>3. "No theme may be played that has not its uttermost source in me, nor can any alter the music in my despite" (174)</p>	<p>3. Same as Road</p>	<p>3. Same as Road</p>
<p>4. Whoever tries to alter the music will see that he has merely aided Ilúvatar "in devising a thing of still greater grandeur and more complex wonder" (52)</p>	<p>4. Whoever tries to alter the music will see that he has merely aided Ilúvatar "in devising things yet more wonderful, which he has not imagined" (174)</p>	<p>4. Same as Road, but with more elevated language (ie: has is changed to hath)</p>	<p>4. Omitted</p>

TABLE 3.10: THE IMMEDIATE AFTERMATH

The Book of Lost Tales I	The Lost Road	Morgoth's Ring	The Silmarillion
<p>5. From Melko came "terror as fire, and sorrow like dark waters, wrath like thunder, and evil as far from [Ilúvatar's] light as the depths of the uttermost of the dark places" (52)</p>	<p>5. Same as <u>Tales</u></p>	<p>5. Omitted</p>	<p>5. Omitted</p>
<p>6. From the "clash of overwhelming musics" came "pain and misery" (52)</p>	<p>6. Omitted</p>	<p>6. Omitted</p>	<p>6. Omitted</p>

TABLE 3.10: THE IMMEDIATE AFTERMATH

The Book of Lost Tales I	The Lost Road	Morgoth's Ring	The Silmarillion
<p>7. From the "confusion of sound" came "cruelty, and ravening, and darkness, loathly mire, and all putrescence of thought or thing, foul mists and violent flame, cold without mercy . . . and death without hope" (52)</p>	<p>7. From the "confusion of sound" came "pain and cruelty, devouring flame and cold without mercy, and death without hope" (174)</p>	<p>7. Omitted</p>	<p>7. Omitted</p>
<p>8. All of these terrors are through Melko, not by him (52)</p>	<p>8. Omitted</p>	<p>8. Omitted</p>	<p>8. Omitted</p>

TABLE 3.10: THE IMMEDIATE AFTERMATH

The Book of Lost Tales I	The Lost Road	Morgoth's Ring	The Silmarillion
<p>9. All of these terrors only make the theme "more worth the hearing, life more worth the living, the World so much the more wonderful and marvelous" (52)</p>	<p>9. Because of these terrors, "this world shall be called of all the deeds of Ilúvatar the mightiest and most lovely" (174)</p>	<p>9. Omitted</p>	<p>9. Omitted</p>

THE IMMEDIATE AFTERMATH

After the cessation of the Great Music, Ilúvatar originally says, "Mighty are the Ainur, and glorious, and among them Melko is the most powerful in knowledge" (Tales 52). But as mentioned before, Tolkien revises Ilúvatar's statement in Road to affirm unwaveringly that Melkor is the "mightiest" of the Ainur (Ring 10). Though it is clear that Ilúvatar's first words must address the discord of Melkor, it seems that Tolkien was unclear about what the immediate consequences should be after Ilúvatar stops the music. In Tales and Road, Ilúvatar tells the Ainur, "those things that you have sung and played I have caused to be" (52; 173). In Ring he adds, "I will show them forth, that ye may see what ye have done" (10). The same idea is kept in The Silmarillion, but *played* is again omitted. As we have already seen, the Music of the Ainur in The Silmarillion foreshadows what Ilúvatar will later call into being; however, Tolkien's early plan in Tales was for Ilúvatar to cause the things "to have shape and reality" at the same time the Ainur create the music (Tales 52).

Tolkien is also certain about Ilúvatar's next statement, which undergoes only slight modifications from one draft to the next. He tells the Ainur that "no theme

can be played" that did not in some way originate with him, "nor can any alter the music in Ilúvatar's despite" (Tales 52). It must be clear - both to the Ainur and to the readers of the cosmogony - that Ilúvatar has the supreme power in Middle-earth and that every aspect of Middle-earth is dependent on him. Though it may seem as if Melkor had the mastery during the Great Music, Ilúvatar states unequivocally that nothing happens unless it ultimately originates with him. He further adds that anyone who tries to add "matters of his own imagining" will see that he has merely aided Ilúvatar in "devising a thing of still greater grandeur and more complex wonder" (Tales 52), which is changed in Road to "things yet more wonderful which he has not imagined" (173). This statement continues the central theme concerning Melkor's dissonance: the goodness that results from his fall illustrates the foreknowledge of Ilúvatar.

We have already seen that Tales, owing perhaps to its designation as part of an oral tradition, is more conversational and much more detailed. But Tales is also Tolkien's first drafting of the creation of the universe, so many of these early ideas were discarded or altered in favor of something more appropriate or consistent. Tolkien

omits about half of his original text in this section of the "Ainulindalë," and while the omissions are understandable, it is curious to read Tolkien's preliminary thoughts concerning Melkor. Though the aftermath of Melkor's discord will become clear later in The Silmarillion, Tolkien felt a need to tell the readers specifically the outcome of the three themes. From the "clash of overwhelming musics" that resulted from Melkor's discord arise a number of things: terror, sorrow, wrath, evil, pain, misery, cruelty, ravaging, darkness, loathly mire, "all putrescence of thought," foul mists, violent flame, cold without mercy, and death without hope (Tales 52). Instead of outlining each item that resulted from Melkor's discord, Tolkien decides to omit this entire section. We learn later in the "Ainulindalë" that Melkor has disrupted the Ainur's original imagining of nature, so this description of consequences is excessive and somewhat redundant.

Also omitted is the last declaration in Tales: all of these results make the Theme "more worth the hearing, life more worth the living, the World so much the more wonderful and marvelous" (52). Tolkien changes this statement in Road, announcing simply that "this world shall be called of

all the deeds of Ilúvatar the mightiest and most lovely" (173). But by Ring, Tolkien simplifies this section considerably (10). There seems to be a paradoxical effort on Tolkien's part both to simplify and to heighten the style of the text with each successive draft. The text is in one sense simplified because much of the superfluous description of Tales has been omitted; yet it is also heightened because the language of The Silmarillion seems more attuned with the language found in the Bible.

The intent of this chapter was to provide a detailed comparative analysis of the act of creation in Tolkien's myth with the hope that such a laborious task might grant the reader insight into the reasons behind Tolkien's use of music. What is evident is that Tolkien's decisions were not arbitrary; he took great care to ensure that a sense of consistency was maintained throughout the tale. As a result, the "Ainulindalë" is a credible mythology that provides not only the back story for Tolkien's world of Middle-earth, but quite possibly for Tolkien's own world of England.

CHAPTER IV

TOLKIEN, MUSIC, AND THE ANCIENTS

Tolkien's creation myth begins like many others: there is an all-powerful deity who first devises a beautiful universe and then creates the plans for the children who will inhabit the universe. There are angels who work together to please the deity, and there is the fallen angel who attempts to mar all that is created. The difference between Tolkien's myth and all others, however, is striking: Tolkien's universe is foreshadowed through the music of the Ainur, the angel figures who each have a part in shaping the landscape of Middle-earth through the melodies and harmonies they make with one another. During the music, the fallen angel, Melkor, interjects discordant elements, causing the melodies of the Ainur to falter, thereby tarnishing the perfection imagined through song. Though Ilúvatar later gives being to the universe by saying *Eä*, every physical aspect of Middle-earth is initially fashioned through the music of the Ainur.

Scholars have spent decades researching relationships between Tolkien's works and such mythologies as the Kalevala and the Poetic Edda. There are parallels among them made convenient even by Tolkien himself, who as a

young man was fascinated by the Finnish and Nordic languages of the tales. But what are scholars to do when parallels are not so easy to discern? Are there, in fact, any original ideas? As with Jung's collective unconscious, do we merely dip into the archetypal well, or do we add ingredients of our own? Perhaps the question should be, must every idea originate from something else? As noted, little scholarly study exists that pertains to the origins of Tolkien's creation myth, and specifically to his use of music.

In writing the "Ainulindalë," it was natural that Tolkien did not rely overtly on other mythologies; his had to be able to stand alone as a mythology for England. It could not be too closely associated with other creation myths: to be reminiscent of mythologies involving non-human creatures could diminish its credibility; however, to be too reminiscent of Christianity could be viewed as heretical. Yet if one must name an antecedent to Tolkien's "Ainulindalë," the Judeo-Christian account of creation might be the closest fit. But the music itself is the area that deserves the closest concentration and, yes, speculation because music is unquestionably archetypal. Regardless of age, culture, or ethnicity, humans tend to

respond in a similar way when listening to a particular rhythm or chord or melody because music is deeply ingrained in the human psyche.

For centuries composers have used music as a means to manipulate the emotions of their audience. Mozart, for example, prepares his audience at the climax of Don Giovanni for the entrance of the supernatural statue by moving towards the key of D minor and by introducing trombones, instruments that were often used in church music in the 18th century to symbolize the immortal world. The audience members would not necessarily know the exact technical reasons for their change in emotions, but their collective anticipation of some dramatic event was made real by the music. Much earlier in history, according to James, there is an anecdote involving the followers of Pythagoras of Samos - the late 6th Century B. C. E. philosopher and mathematician - and their use of gentle music to "heal" a man's troubled mind. The man had been incited to violence by a series of unfortunate events, but the followers used soothing music to produce in him a more tranquil emotional state. As a result, hostility was prevented (32). In modern times, of course, filmmakers practically command moviegoers when to feel sad or scared

or buoyant simply by the use of a soundtrack. The archetypal nature of music cannot be denied, and perhaps it is one of the simplest explanations for Tolkien's use of music as a means of creation.

As Pythagoras noted, music is within us and around us; it is in our bones, in the air we breathe, and within our universe. The purpose of this chapter is simple. I intend to review briefly the concept of the music of the spheres from Pythagoras to Boethius as it relates to Tolkien's "Ainulindalë," a connection that is essential in arguing that Tolkien's use of music is both literal - the Ainur create melodies that fashion the realm of Middle-earth - and figurative - Melkor interjects discordant notes that symbolize the dissonance that the Third Age must necessarily overcome in order for the Fourth Age of Man to emerge, thereby establishing The Silmarillion as a mythology for England. However, Tolkien's knowledge of the Great Theme, as well as the musical suggestions propounded by the philosophers following Pythagoras, does not necessarily precede his construction of the "Ainulindalë"; while there seem to be no other antecedents with musical components, music is fundamentally archetypal. And Tolkien himself seems to argue that the stories are necessarily

archetypal. In a letter to Stanley Unwin describing The Silmarillion, Tolkien states:

These tales are 'new,' they are not directly derived from other myths and legends, but they must inevitably contain a large measure of ancient wide-spread motives or elements. After all, I believe that legends and myths are largely made of 'truth,' and indeed present aspects of it that can only be received in this mode; and long ago certain truths and modes of this kind were discovered and must always reappear. (Letters 147)

Yet regardless of the possible archetypal nature of musical creation, the possible connections between Tolkien and the ancients should be explored.

Unquestionably Tolkien would have been familiar with both the ancients and Boethius. Humphrey Carpenter, Tolkien's biographer, notes that from an early age, "Tolkien had an aptitude for languages," and with his mother's encouragement his aptitude flourished at King Edward's school in Birmingham (41). Carpenter further adds, "The study of Latin and Greek was the backbone of the curriculum there, and both languages were taught

particularly well" (41). It follows, then, that Tolkien was probably introduced at an early age, and in the original languages, to the teachings of Pythagoras, Plato, Aristotle, and Boethius.

Pythagoras was credited with articulating the idea of the Great Theme, summarized succinctly by James as "the belief that the cosmos is a sublimely harmonious system guided by a Supreme Intelligence" in which "man has a place preordained and eternal" (19). Even without further exploration, one may easily see how Tolkien's "Ainulindalë" fits into Pythagoras's representation of our universe. From the beginning, of course, the music of the Ainur, as conducted by the One, is "sublimely harmonious," and while its main purpose is to create all that exists materially, Ilúvatar later reveals that the theme also contained the design for his children, both Elves and Men. Tolkien, though, takes the idea of a harmonious universe and interjects disharmony through the discord of Melkor, an essential discord that is responsible for the evil in Middle-earth. Another fairly substantial difference is that in Pythagoras's theory, the music of the spheres is ongoing, while in the "Ainulindalë," the literal melodies and harmonies of the Ainur cease. Music lingers throughout

Middle-earth, however, both in the melodies of nature, as in the music of the waters, and in the songs of the children of Ilúvatar.

For Pythagoras, the cosmos was music, but more importantly, music was number. We observed earlier the anecdote involving Pythagoras's hearing tones that resulted from hammers hitting a piece of iron. He discerned the concord of the octave, the fourth, and the fifth, but he realized that the sound between the fourth and the fifth was a dissonance that necessarily completed the greater sound. But for Pythagoras the mathematician, there was an exact correspondence between the musical sounds and the conceptual world of numbers, a correspondence that necessitated exploration. As James relates the story, Pythagoras went into the brazier's shop from which the noises emerged and discovered that the musical intervals produced by the hammers were equivalent to the ratios between the hammers' weights. The sound of the six-pound hammer and the twelve-pound hammer, with a ratio of 1:2, created a perfect octave; the eight-pound and twelve-pound hammers, with a ratio of 2:3, created a major fifth; and the nine-pound and twelve-pound hammers, with a ratio of 3:4, created a perfect fourth (35). Though interesting,

the mathematical intricacies of Pythagoras's discovery are not as important for our purposes as their influence on theology, and subsequently, on Tolkien's creation of Middle-earth. The Greek word for ratio is λόγος (*logos*), which also means word, order, arrangement, reason, or thought. *Logos*, then, is the link between the Christian Gospel of John - "In the beginning was the Word [*logos*], and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (John 1.1) - and the pagan philosophy of Pythagoras. Thus, Pythagoras's association of ratio (*logos*) "with the divine principle of universal order harmonized with the gospel's identification of *logos* with God" (James 36-7). It is this acceptance of the musical universe into Christian thought that allows Boethius to explore these issues centuries later.

As noted before, some scholars argue that Tolkien's "Ainulindalë" was clearly influenced by Christian texts, an argument that could, and at some point should be explored in greater detail. In just the first three verses of the Gospel of John are numerous parallels to Tolkien's creation myth. As in verse one of the Gospel, the beginning of the "Ainulindalë" establishes the existence of the One, the God of Middle-earth. In the Gospel there is a focus on *logos*,

or word; in the "Ainulindalë," the One speaks the word Eä, without which there is nothing. The Gospel reminds us in verse three that "all things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made."

Accordingly, Ilúvatar reminds the Ainur that "no theme may be played that hath not its uttermost source in me" (Silm 6). Tolkien was a profoundly religious man, so Christian parallels should not surprise any reader of The Silmarillion. Carpenter notes:

Any close scrutiny of his life must take account of the importance of his religion. His commitment to Christianity and in particular to the Catholic Church was total . . . His religion was one of the deepest and strongest elements in his personality. (133)

Indeed, were the focus broader here, one might scour spiritual texts for Christian analogues to Tolkien's mythology. But the primary concern here is music, as well as the consequences of the discord Tolkien injected into the music through Melkor.

Pythagoras believed that because the universe was in motion, because the spheres move in revolutions, harmonious musical sound was produced. The sound made by the cosmos

itself, *musica mundana*, is one of the three designations Pythagoras assigned to music (James 31). In the "Ainulindalë," the voices of the Ainur are "like unto harps and lutes, and pipes and trumpets, and viols and organs, and like unto countless choirs singing with words" (Silm 3-4). Though Tolkien lists musical instruments, they are present only to complete the simile that describes the voices of the Ainur. Yet the last part of the list, "like unto countless choirs singing with words" (3-4), indicates that the Ainur were not truly using voices either, at least as we might comprehend them. Therefore, Tolkien's concept of the heavenly, angelic-type beings creating music without voices or instruments may be described in terms of *musica mundana*.

Musica humana is the term used for the continuous but unheard resonance between one's body and soul, the harmonious (or, perhaps, inharmonious) music created within each human (James 31). *Musica instrumentalis* is, of course, the music one makes using an apparatus that is not part of the body, such as a literal pipe or a harp (James 31). While scholars such as Eugene Hargrove and Bradford Lee Eden have attempted to make the connection between Tolkien's music in Middle-earth and *musica instrumentalis*,

it is the first designation, *musica mundana* that is the most significant for a study of the "Ainulindalë."

Tolkien's adherence to the idea of *musica mundana*, the music of the cosmos, is evident in The Silmarillion even after the Great Theme ceases. Yet Tolkien extends the concept of cosmic music to the natural realm, creating a truly musical universe. Within Middle-earth, nature retains the echoes of the Great Theme, especially in the voices of the waters. But unlike Pythagoras's harmonious music of the spheres, the natural music in Middle-earth does not heal the troubled mind. On the contrary, the Sea, wherein lived "yet the echo of the Music of the Ainur more than in any substance else that is in this Earth," caused the Elves to feel "a great unquiet" (Silm 8). In The Lord of the Rings, the Elf Legolas senses the Sea and hears the "wailing of the gulls" (LotR III.156) while at Pelargir. He tells his friends, "Alas for the wailing of the gulls! Did not the Lady tell me to beware of them? And now I cannot forget them" (156). The Sea for Legolas, as for all other Elves, symbolizes his departure from Middle-earth. Another example of Tolkien's modification of *musica mundana* - the extension of cosmic music to the natural realm - is evident with the Ainu Ulmo. Again, this music is

associated with the Sea, over which Ulmo presides and in whose "deep places he gives thought to music great and terrible" (34). With enormous power, "the echo of [Ulmo's] music runs through all the veins of the world in sorrow and in joy" (34).

Interestingly, in these two examples the song of the sea evokes, at least partially, a sense of unquiet or sorrow; indeed, the voice of the sea for the Elves is not a source of creation but a signal for their departure from Middle-earth. Even for Melkor, the Ainu who attempted to thwart Ilúvatar's creational design by imposing his own discordant music into the Great Theme, the music of the sea evokes abhorrence. Quite simply, "Melkor hated the Sea, for he could not subdue it" (22).

Manwë, who was Melkor's brother "in the thought of Ilúvatar," was the Ainu who most closely understood Ilúvatar's purposes in the design of the Great Theme, though not even to Manwë was everything revealed (Silm 16). Therefore, it is not surprising that Manwë, long after the Great Theme had ceased, is able once again to hear the music. Unlike the voice of the Sea, which was merely an echo, this new music "rose once more about him, and he heeded now many things therein that though he had heard

them he had not heeded before" (41). The result of this reemergence of the Great Theme is once again the creation of life: the Shepherds of the Trees, later called Ents.

While music creates life in Middle-earth, it also represents the qualities of the inhabitants of Tolkien's universe. To apply Pythagoras's musical categories to Middle-earth, one must make some allowances. As we have seen, *musica mundana*, the music of the cosmos, may be applied to inhabitants of the heavens and to their realms, which in turn become their voices. Sometimes the Ainur have actual instruments with which they create music, such as the great horns of Ulmo and the trumpets of Manwë, and their sounds may be categorized as *musica instrumentalis*. Even *musica humana* has a place in Middle-earth, though it may not be quite as evident as the others. The Children of Ilúvatar, and specifically the Elves, seem to have a type of music all their own, though it may be better explained as an aura or reverberation. If the resonance of the Elves' bodies and souls were heard, it might be described as soft, yet both beautiful and sorrowful. Such a description, in fact, comprises the sketch of the second theme of the Great Music, the theme modified by Melkor that was "deep and wide and beautiful, but slow and blended with

an immeasurable sorrow, from which its beauty chiefly came" (5). It was from this second theme that the Elves were created. As Sam says after his first meeting with the Elves, they seemed "so old and young, and so gay and sad" (LotR I.97). But delineating Pythagoras's designations of music with examples from throughout The Silmarillion and The Lord of the Rings is not the goal. Pythagoras is only the beginning; other philosophers' views of music may offer insight into Tolkien's decisions in composing the "Ainulindalë."

Plato was a proponent of music education as an essential component in training good citizens. In his Republic, he explores the benefits of music education in an imaginary dialogue between Socrates and Glaucon. Naturally, if a man allows music to encompass him in a gentle and rationally passionate way, he will become a useful member of society. But if a man begins to "practice without remission and is spellbound," thereby becoming completely immersed in and obsessed by the music, he becomes "choleric and irascible" and "peevish and discontented" (Plato 645). Furthermore, such a man becomes a misologist and a stranger to the Muses. He no longer makes any use of persuasion by

speech but achieves all his ends like a beast by violence and savagery, and in his brute ignorance and ineptitude lives a life of disharmony and gracelessness. (656)

Though Plato has much more to say about music, it is this quotation that most captivately relates to Tolkien's creation myth as it so closely parallels the events involving Melkor. Even before Ilúvatar introduced music to the Ainur, Melkor was isolated from the others. We learn that before he sought individual power, Melkor sought the company of Varda, later called Elbereth, the Lady of the Stars. Whether Varda's early rejection of Melkor was the cause or the result of his self-isolation, we do not know. Nevertheless, he had begun to wander alone, "seeking the Imperishable Flame; for the desire grew hot within him to bring into Being things of his own" (Silm 4). Because he was the mightiest of the Ainur, Melkor became spellbound by his gifts of power and, like Plato's irascible man who practiced without remission, began to achieve his ends with violence and savagery. The events we will explore in chapter six, after Melkor becomes Morgoth, will without a doubt prove that he has forever lost all sympathy with others and can rule only by the use of fear and torture.

Undeniably, Melkor did "live a life of disharmony," both literally through his music and figuratively through the evil he perpetuated first in introducing discord into the music and later in Valinor and Middle-earth. Melkor also has an "inharmonious soul" and not the necessary "spirit of harmony" that is required to recognize the beauty in our world (Republic). Because of this inherent deficiency, Melkor will never be able to achieve the necessary concord with the other Ainur.

Plato furthermore discusses music in terms of its archetypal nature. He speaks of "harmonies expressive of sorrow," or the Lydian; the Lydian harmonies, along with the Ionian, are also "relaxed" (Republic). Finally, there are the Dorian and Phrygian, which are inherently military in nature. While Aristotle will delineate these musical categories by analyzing their relationships to human emotions, Plato discusses them as they are related to education. He maintains that

. . . beauty of style and harmony and grace and good rhythm depend on simplicity, -- I mean the true simplicity of a rightly and nobly ordered mind and character, not that other simplicity which is only a euphemism for folly. (Republic)

Plato concludes that if the youth are to succeed in life, the "graces and harmonies" must be their "perpetual aim" (Republic).

While Plato argued that music education was essential to good citizenship, Aristotle, in On Music, explored other reasons music should be learned. If learned for amusement, for example, then music provides relaxation, easing the pain of difficult labor. If learned for intellectual enjoyment, then music will help us judge others more correctly (Aristotle 44). Aristotle argued that music naturally gives men pleasure, but it may also have "some influence over the character and the soul" (45).

Pythagoras's followers practiced the notion of music's power over character when they used gentle melodies to heal the man's troubled mind, but Aristotle goes a step further by stating that rhythms and melodies actually imitate our emotions, and that our feelings move in sympathy with them. It is this aspect of Aristotle that most closely relates to Tolkien. Aristotle explains that "even in mere melodies there is an imitation of character" because the musical modes differ from one another significantly (46). Of the modes Aristotle says

. . . some of them make men sad and grave,
like the so-called Mixolydian; others enfeeble
the mind, like the relaxed modes; another, again,
produces a moderate and settled temper, which
appears to be the peculiar effect of the Dorian;
the Phrygian inspires enthusiasm. The whole
subject has been well treated by philosophical
writers on this branch of education, and they
confirm their arguments by facts. (46)

Indeed, Pythagoras's followers in the anecdote claimed that the troubled man had originally been incited to violence because of too much Phrygian music (James 32). Aristotle further notes that the same principles apply to rhythms: "some have a character of rest, others of motion, and of these latter again, some have a more vulgar, others a nobler movement" (Aristotle 46).

The comparative analysis in chapter three explored the care with which Tolkien crafted the Great Theme that would shape the world of Middle-earth. Every component of the music - every description of every note - must be accounted for in the characterization of the inhabitants as well as the conflicts that emerge from the stories of their lives. Whether Tolkien consciously drew upon Aristotle's modes is

uncertain, but what is certain is that in the three themes within the Music of the Ainur, all of the modes must make an appearance in order for Middle-earth to be realistic. The initial music was flawless, an interchanging of melodies and harmonies that resulted in beauty and perfection; yet without Melkor's contribution, which attempted to disorder all that was ordered, there would not exist "the glory of the clouds, and the everchanging mists . . . the fall of the rain upon the Earth" (Silm 9). Therefore, Melkor's discordant intrusion is a necessary complement to the concord of the Ainur. Too much of any mode - whether Dorian or Phrygian - can be detrimental. Though Melkor's contribution is not melodious, it does provide a crucial balance.

Boethius, who was undoubtedly one of history's most influential teachers of music, maintained a similar point of view. His Fundamentals of Music, a musical treatise that addressed music as a mathematical subject, was used at Oxford University as late as the eighteenth century (Mark 25). The philosophical ideas in Boethius's more widely known Consolation of Philosophy seem to precede many of the thematic designs in Tolkien's works, suggesting that Boethius's influence was more than just musical, as we will

explore in chapter five. However, even though Fundamentals of Music is overshadowed now by The Consolation of Philosophy, it is an important text that continues the argument begun by Plato that music is innately related to us and can either "ennoble or debase our character" (Mark 25). Like Aristotle, Boethius discusses the modes of music and explains, logically, that a man will find pleasure in the mode that most resembles his own character and find displeasure in the mode that is most unlike him. Yet he also hearkens to Plato's warning concerning the caution we should take if music should sully a man's moral character. Boethius tells us that according to Plato:

. . . there is no greater ruin for the morals of a community than the gradual perversion of a prudent and modest music. For the minds of those hearing the perverted music immediately submit to it, little by little depart from their character, and retain no vestige of justice or honesty.

(Mark 26)

Nowhere is this more evident in Tolkien's work than in the first theme of the Music of the Ainur.

From the beginning, the Ainur were, indeed, a community, and as Ilúvatar submitted to them themes of music, they "increased in unison and harmony" (Silm 3). After the first theme began, "Ilúvatar sat and hearkened, and for a great while it seemed good to him" (3). But it gradually came into the heart of Melkor to pervert the theme and to "interweave matters of his own imagining that were not in accord with the theme of Ilúvatar" (4). As Plato had predicted, some of the Ainur around Melkor "grew despondent" and submitted to his music, thereby departing from their own natures (4). At the point when many of the Ainur submitted to Melkor, the moral character of Middle-earth was defiled, even before it was physically created. Similarly, Boethius notes that

. . . if some melody or mode is altered in some way, even if this alteration is only the slightest change, the fresh change will not be immediately noticed; but after some time it will cause a great difference and will sink down through the ears into the soul itself. (Mark 26)

Boethius argues that "there is no greater path whereby instruction comes to the mind than through the ear," and as a result, "when rhythms and modes enter the mind by this

path, there can be no doubt that they affect and remold the mind into their own character" (Mark 26). Melkor's alteration of the Great Theme, then, is more than mere aural maneuverings; the alteration will infect and remold the figurative soul of Middle-earth. It must be remembered, though, that this modification of the theme occurs with Ilúvatar's consent. Therefore, if the figurative soul of Middle-earth has been infected and remolded by Melkor's dissonance, then it is ultimately part of Ilúvatar's divine purpose.

Finally, Boethius indirectly acknowledges Pythagoras's contributions to the music of the spheres by further delineating the ancient philosopher's three categories: *musica mundana*, *musica humana*, and *musica instrumentalis*. David Chamberlain explores Boethius's classifications in terms of The Fundamentals of Music, but we will examine only one aspect of Boethius's *musica mundana* and how it affects the greater themes in the "Ainulindalë." Chamberlain explains that Boethius separates *musica mundana* into three forms: "the motions of the spheres, the binding of the elements, and the variation of the seasons" (81). It is the last form that is most intriguing in terms of the music in the "Ainulindalë." According to Chamberlain,

Boethius's variation of the seasons produces a consonance in which "no part is either useless or able by its excess to destroy another part" (82). The passage to which Chamberlain refers is from a poem in The Consolation of Philosophy in which Lady Philosophy explains to Boethius the ordering of the universe. Chamberlain quotes the philosopher: "What winter binds, spring loosens, summer heats, and autumn matures, and the seasons alternately either bring forth their own fruits or aid those that do" (82). The parallel in Tolkien's "Ainulindalë" is obvious: as already noted, Melkor's contribution, like the seasons, is essential to the symphony; furthermore, his dissonance, like the seasons, helps to maintain equilibrium in the universe. Though his intention, presumably, is to destroy the Great Theme, he merely aids Ilúvatar in designing a more balanced Middle-earth. Boethius recognized the musicality in the seasons; Tolkien, as we will see in chapter six, assimilated and emulated his ideas.

The most fascinating aspect of Tolkien's "Ainulindalë" is that the Creator, in this case Tolkien himself, seems to have devised something entirely new. Certainly Tolkien seemed to have been influenced by the ancient and medieval concept of the music of the spheres; the concept of a

musical universe is hardly unique to Tolkien. Yet using music as the tool to imagine the creation of a universe seems to stand alone among mythologies. As Boethius noted in The Fundamentals of Music: "It appears to be beyond doubt that music is so naturally a part of us that we cannot be without it, even if we so wished" (Mark 27). Indeed, music is a part of us. And in Tolkien's world, music - both harmonious and discordant - is the life force of every living thing.

CHAPTER V

TOLKIEN AND THE NATURE OF EVIL

J. R. R. Tolkien's biographer, Humphrey Carpenter, is not the only person to recognize the difficulty in reconciling "how a devout Roman Catholic," such as Tolkien, "could write with such conviction about a world where God is not worshipped" (99). But Carpenter's opinion seems to reflect the view of many when he states that Tolkien's Silmarillion "is the work of a profoundly religious man. It does not contradict Christianity but complements it. There is in the legends no worship of God, yet God is indeed there . . ." (99). Tolkien desired to create a mythology that would parallel the myths he had studied and revered as a child, yet he could not refrain from instilling his tales with "his own moral view of the universe" (99). Carpenter explains that Tolkien crafted his mythology in such a way that "while God is present" in the universe, "He remains unseen" (99). In The Silmarillion, of course, God is seen during the moments of creation; yet curiously, after the making of the Great Theme, Ilúvatar all but disappears from the world of Middle-earth and leaves the Ainur, the angelic beings, to oversee the world.

The world of Middle-earth would not pose such a problem to scholars, perhaps, if not for the intrusion of the discordant element into the Great Theme: Melkor's literal dissonance and consequent malevolence. Why is such evil allowed to exist in Tolkien's world? Is Melkor's dissonance a product of Ilúvatar's plan to permit evil into the world, or is it a byproduct of Melkor's own free will? A survey of the changing theories of evil and how they may have influenced Tolkien's construction of Middle-earth will indicate that Carpenter's argument is accurate: The Silmarillion, while not adhering to one particular theologian's ideas, is complemented by Christian themes.

Carpenter admits that "no account of the external events of Tolkien's life can provide more than a superficial explanation of the origins of his mythology" (98), but a brief examination of Tolkien's early Catholic beginnings might provide a framework from which to start. When Tolkien was quite young, his mother Mabel made the decision to move from the Anglican Church to the Catholic Church, a move that incurred the wrath of her family (31). Nevertheless, Mabel remained resolute and brought up both of her boys under the spiritual auspices of the Birmingham Oratory, where she met family friend and Tolkien mentor

Father Francis Xavier Morgan, who became "an indispensable part of the Tolkien household" (34-5). Tolkien's mother worked extremely hard to maintain their household financially and spiritually; after her death, Tolkien credited her with his close association with the Catholic Church. Carpenter notes: "Indeed it might be said that after she died his religion took the place in his affections that she had previously occupied" (38). Even in his later years at Oxford his faith played a profound role in his life, though in his first terms he admitted that he, like many young college men, practiced little religion (66). So essential was the Catholic Church to Tolkien's existence that he insisted Edith, his future wife, convert. It was more than just a matter of his church blessing their marriage; it was also, as Carpenter notes, a test of her love for him (74).

Tolkien's spiritual life is no secret. The question is, how much of a did does it play in the construction of the mythology of Middle-earth? For example, to answer the question concerning the necessity of Melkor's dissonance, must one delve into Tolkien's own faith to find an answer? Tolkien himself might have responded to that question. He says in a letter from 1971:

One of my strongest opinions is that investigation of an author's biography is an entirely vain and false approach to his works - and especially to a *work of narrative art*, of which the object aimed at by the author was to be enjoyed as such: to be read with literary pleasure. (Letters 414)

A follow-up question may then concern the nature of The Silmarillion itself: is it a "work of narrative art" whose sole purpose is to be enjoyed, or is it, in fact, a type of mythology for England, a series of tales that must also retain enough semblance of truth to be thought credible? If The Silmarillion is the framework for a mythology for England - a fantastical history of sorts - then a sense of credibility must be maintained; and in order for credibility to be maintained, then there must be recognizable elements. Gergely Nagy quotes, in a discussion from Socrates' Republic, that a myth "is authentic because it is *true* - true because it has always been told that way, because there is a tradition behind it" (92). That sense of tradition is what Tolkien achieved in writing The Silmarillion. As Carpenter notes, "Tolkien cast his mythology in this form because he wanted it to be

remote and strange, and yet at the same time *not to be a lie*" (99). It is this statement - this adherence to the truth - that is essential to Tolkien's faith: he could not deviate too far from what he believed, but he could also not compose a strictly Catholic or even Christian text. The following survey of several theodicies will show that, perhaps, Tolkien used elements from many Christian ideologies to complement his mythology.

The Silmarillion is an unusual text in a number of ways. The creation account through music is, as noted, unique; but it is also unique in its portrayal as the product of the relationship or conflict between good and evil. In Tolkien's other two longer texts, The Hobbit and The Lord of the Rings, good defeats evil, but in The Silmarillion there is little sense of final victory for the faithful; instead, there is an ongoing struggle against the forces of evil. Of course there is the last chapter, a synopsis of the events leading up to and including those detailed in The Lord of the Rings, but it seems almost tacked on to the end, a quick twenty-four pages to summarize the entire Third Age. Tolkien gives us those details in The Lord of the Rings, so their inclusion would have been redundant, but the point is that in The

Silmarillion itself - the stories that comprise the First and Second Ages - there is no happy ending; evil is not ultimately thwarted. At the end of the "Akallabêth," Sauron's "spirit arose out of the deep and passed as a shadow and a black wind over the sea, and came back to Middle-earth and to Mordor that was his home" (Silm 336), and Men "longed ever to escape from the shadows of their exile" (337). This is hardly the victory of good over evil. It must be inferred, then, that Tolkien has a reason for allowing this evil to prevail.

In most religious traditions, good will triumph over evil, but evil clearly does exist. This is particularly problematic in monotheistic religions in which an omnipotent God, such as Ilúvatar, *could* impede evil but does not. Some societies relied on dualism to explain the relationship between good and evil, a practice in which a good god and an equally powerful evil god struggle against one another for eternity. Joseph F. Kelly, in his book The Problem of Evil in the Western Tradition, explains that these "two independent beings each strive to achieve their goals, sometimes succeeding, sometimes failing," but always in a kind of "cosmic gridlock" (5). Though Tolkien designed Melkor to be the embodiment of evil in Middle-

earth, he did not design any of the Ainur to be gods; Ilúvatar is the all-powerful creator, the One. Another theory is the coincidence of opposites, or "the belief that God can reconcile in his person all that there is" (5). To apply this to Tolkien's world would mean that Ilúvatar embodies both good and evil, "not because he is essentially evil but because he is God" (5). But it is clear that Ilúvatar is not the source of evil in the "Ainulindalë"; Melkor introduces the discordant theme, even though it is seemingly permitted by Ilúvatar.

What exactly is evil? The most damning type is moral evil, the disobeying of divine will. Terry Eagleton explains that "evil is not simply a matter of immorality, but of an active, sadistic delight in human misery and destruction which apparently indulges in such self-destructiveness as an end in itself" (412). Accordingly, Melkor, as the embodiment of evil, does not merely disobey divine will. In fact, he does not disobey Ilúvatar at all but follows his instructions exactly. Ilúvatar tells the Ainur to adorn the Great Theme "each with his own thoughts and devices" (Silm 4), thereby giving each Ainu the free will to add to the music what he chooses. Melkor then, as Eagleton notes, is not simply immoral; he is sadistic and

destructive with his contribution, a contribution that mars the landscape and the creatures of Middle-earth.

To contend with the changing threat of moral evil in Western civilization, prophets had to change the nature of good and evil. As above, evil was still the disobeying of the divine will, but since "prophets emphasized the total goodness of God, they hesitated to picture the deity savagely avenging every violation" of the moral code (Kelly 15). Satan, then, became the punisher, the angel who would enforce God's rule. Yet in the book of Job, Satan begins to act independently of God (Kelly 17), a theme we see reflected in the "Ainulindalë" as Melkor acts autonomously during the creation of the Great Theme and not in accord with the other Ainur.

In apocalyptic Jewish literature, during the second century B.C.E., this idea of Satan - the "punishing angel" who has taken "the first few steps away from God" (Kelly 21) - is enhanced further by the idea that there is an inflexible separation between good and evil. Evil will never attain the power of the goodness of God; it is clear that Satan acts independently of God and, unlike his position as an angel before, not as his emissary (Kelly 21). In some apocalyptic literature, evil seems to be the

focus, but God is always on the periphery. God allows wickedness to occur and permits the malevolence to multiply, but at some point, when he deems it time, God will let good regain the victory. The important point is that God is never losing the battle; he merely allows evil to thrive for reasons known to him (Kelly 25).

This is not unlike the tales in The Silmarillion. After the creation of Middle-earth, Ilúvatar recedes to the background and allows his Ainur - now Valar - to watch over the Children. Even with the Ainur, Ilúvatar allows disobedience to breed while he stays on the periphery until it is time to announce his judgment. One example of this is when Aulë secretly labors to make the Dwarves, thinking he is keeping his task from Ilúvatar. Once Aulë is finished with his own clandestine creation, Ilúvatar merely asks, "Why hast thou done this? Why dost thou attempt a thing which thou knowest is beyond thy power and thy authority?" (Silm 37). Aulë's disobedience is proof that even the Ainur have been instilled with free will: though he was not committing a blatant act of evil, Aulë was choosing a path that was not in accord with Ilúvatar's desire. Nevertheless, because Ilúvatar "gave being to the thoughts of the Ainur at the beginning of the World," he

will give Aulë's handiwork a place within that World
(Silm 38).

Ilúvatar is, without a doubt, a benevolent God. To reconcile evil in a good world where a benevolent God reigns, Clement of Alexandria (150-210) propounded two theodicies. Because only God can be perfect, according to Clement's ideas, everything else must be imperfect; as a result, anything capable of rational thought is susceptible to evil and must use its free will to fight against urges to commit evil (Kelly 41). Clement's second theodicy is the "privation theory of evil" explained thus by Joseph Kelly:

Since God created all and since God is completely good, he could not have created evil. But if God did not create evil, then it cannot exist. Evil, therefore, does not exist in a positive way but rather in a negative one - evil is the lack of good. (Kelly 42)

Clement's two theodicies would be important for his student, Origen, whose ideas concerning Satan's sin of pride are still accepted today. Essentially, in Origen's view the nature of evil is putting oneself in the place of God (Kelly 45), a mistake Melkor makes when he disrupts the

Great Theme, Ilúvatar's music that creates Middle-earth. But without Melkor's discordant theme, there would be no evil in Middle-earth; without evil, argued Lactantius (240-320), humans could not understand the good (45).

Whether Tolkien knew of these early theologians and their theodicies is inconsequential; the purpose in reviewing their theories is to examine their influence on the religious philosophers who most likely did have a profound spiritual influence on Tolkien. Augustine of Hippo (354-430) is perhaps best known for his Confessions, the autobiographical account of his quest for spiritual meaning and his subsequent conversion to Christianity. Yet Augustine's most significant contributions to Western religion are his writings concerning evil. In City of God, Augustine avows that there is only one true, blessed God, and that "the things he made are good because they were made by him; but they are subject to change, because they were made not out of his being but out of nothing" (Augustine 472). This declaration is the basis of Augustine's stance on evil: Evil exists, but it cannot exist on its own. And even though there is no good in evil, God will find a way to ensure that good will arise

even out of sin. From Augustine, then, Western thought inherits the idea of *felix culpa*, or the fortunate fall.

Augustine continues the idea that the beginning of all sin is pride, and he states that with angels, their misery is the "result of their turning away from him who supremely is, and their turning towards themselves, who do not exist in that supreme degree" (477). Instead of existing in the "highest degree," they "chose a lower degree of existence" (477). Tolkien seems to adapt Augustine's idea of sin among angels when he designs Melkor as the evil Ainu. To begin, the name Melkor means "He who arises in Might" (Silm 23), already a potential source of pride for one who is susceptible to a fall. But Tolkien also points out that Melkor made a habit of turning toward himself:

He had gone often alone into the void places seeking the Imperishable Flame; for desire grew hot within him to bring into Being things of his own, and it seemed to him that Ilúvatar took no thought for the Void, and he was impatient of its emptiness. (4)

Instead of trusting that the Creator would make the best decisions, Melkor "chose a lower degree of existence" (Augustine 477).

Melkor makes a similar choice when he decides to "interweave matters of his own imagining that were not in accord with the theme of Ilúvatar" during the creation of the Great Music (Silm 4). However, Ilúvatar reminds him that "no theme may be played that hath not its uttermost source in me, nor can any alter the music in my despite" (6). Similarly, Augustine states that "God foreknew everything, and therefore could not have been unaware that man would sin" (Augustine 568). Even though Melkor's dissonance is responsible for the evil in Middle-earth, Ilúvatar was aware that such dissonance would disrupt the Great Theme. As Augustine affirms:

In spite of man's sin, the good things overcome the evil; so much so that [. . .] evil things are allowed to exist in order to show how the righteousness and foreknowledge of the Creator can turn even those very evils to good account . . . (569)

In other words, Augustine advocates the idea of the fortunate fall; and in Tolkien's world, Melkor's dissonance in this Great Theme is essential: without it there would be no link between the mythology and the Fourth Age of man. As we will explore in chapter six, this one act of musical

disruption can be tied directly to the defeat of Sauron and to the emergence of Aragorn at the end of The Lord of the Rings. The result of Melkor's dissonance is, as Augustine calls it, an impending "perversion of nature" (Augustine 472). Because of the literal discord Melkor interjects, both Middle-earth and the Children of Ilúvatar would have potential perversions that are contrary to good. This is where a strict Augustinian reading of The Silmarillion becomes difficult, not because any particular theodicy varies drastically from Augustine's, but because subsequent views concerning the relationship between good and evil seem to build upon Augustine's theories.

Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274) continues Augustine's idea that "God is the first and most perfect Being" (Aquinas 63). With reference to evil, Aquinas affirms that "what all beings desire is good" and that "no nature is of itself an evil" (126). To elaborate:

Since good is that which all desire, and evil, on the contrary, is that which all shun, we must conclude that for any nature existence is in itself good, and non-existence is evil. To be evil, however, is not good; in fact, not to be

evil is included in the notion of good.

Therefore, no nature is an evil. (126)

Like Augustine with his idea of the fortunate fall, Aquinas explains that nothing, at its core, can be fundamentally evil "since evil must always have as its foundation some subject, distinct from it, that is good" (Aquinas 129). Melkor, as one of Ilúvatar's Holy Ones, was essentially good; however, his pride turned him away from his original goodness. But even the malevolence that resulted from his discord was turned into something positive: while much of Middle-earth was literally destroyed because of his ill will, much more was gained. Without the dissonance, there would be no emergence of Man in the Fourth Age, and there would be no Middle-Earth that so clearly resembles our own world.

Though God is the cause of all things in the world, Aquinas points out that "He is not the cause of evil as evil" (159). Furthermore, "God's permission of evil" is "not inconsistent with the divine goodness" (159). He explains that

The perfection of the universe requires the existence of some beings that are not subject to evil and of other beings that can suffer the

defect of evil in keeping with their nature.

If evil were completely eliminated from things, they would not be governed by Divine Providence in accord with their nature . . . (159)

In Tolkien's universe, then, Melkor clearly suffers the defect of evil. Aquinas further explains that this evil is necessary, because "the good of one cannot be realized without the suffering of evil by another" (159). Had Tolkien designed the Great Theme without the intrusion of Melkor's dissonance, then evil would not be allowed to proliferate in Middle-earth; and without the proliferation of evil in Middle-earth, the goodness that comes from the ultimate defeat of Sauron at the end of the Third Age - not to mention the many other victories gained by benevolent inhabitants along the way - would not have been possible. Hence, the dissonance of Melkor is necessary. It is a necessary dissonance - a necessary evil - governed by Ilúvatar, the Creator, the Divine Providence of Middle-earth. Aquinas argues that "the generation of one being does not take place without the corruption of another being" (159); the initial corruption, then, was essential for this generation of the Fourth Age.

But, as noted, conducting a strictly Christian reading of Tolkien's world after the "Ainulindalë" is a bit difficult: Ilúvatar, the God-figure of Middle-earth, disappears except for his one interaction with Aulë after the creation of the Dwarves. Instead, the Valar, the holiest of the Ainur, rule Middle-earth, and their leader is Manwë, "the vicegerent of Ilúvatar, King of the world of the Valar and Elves and men, and the chief defence against the evil of Melkor" (Silm 33). When the Valar need help during a battle against Melkor, Ilúvatar does not intervene; Manwë simply understands the counsel of the All-father in his heart (48). Throughout the tales - including The Lord of the Rings - Ilúvatar's name is never invoked. In fact, there is little sense of worship or prayer - just a sense of hope, albeit a type of Christianized hope that some Divine Providence will arbitrate when evil seems to be victorious.

Boethius (480-524) responds to the question of Divine Providence and free will in his Consolation of Philosophy, a dialogue between Boethius and Lady Philosophy in which the latter attempts to delineate several theological ideas. But while Augustine undertook the problem of good and evil, Boethius focused mainly on the role of Divine Providence in

human life. Through Lady Philosophy, Boethius affirms the idea propounded by Clement of Alexandria that evil is the absence of good. Yet he also explains God's role in the universe. Though Lady Philosophy is the counselor whose dialogue with Boethius gives him spiritual strength when he is substantially weakened by a sense of injustice, she is merely the emissary; God is the governor who is ultimately the One in whom Boethius must have faith. In a prayer, Lady Philosophy says to God:

You bind the elements in harmony so that cold and heat, dry and wet are joined, and the purer fire does not fly up through the air, nor the earth sink beneath the weight of water. (Book III, Poem 9, 60)

In the world of Middle-earth, Ilúvatar's responsibilities to his Children are similar: though deliberate acts of prayer are few, there seems to be an inherent belief that the One will ultimately maintain harmony within the world, that no matter how desperate things may seem, there is always hope. Tolkien makes this idea absolute; otherwise, good would give up entirely to evil. Yet sometimes Divine intervention, of sorts, arrives when it is most needed. Unlike the Greek gods, the Valar do not blatantly intervene

in the affairs of Middle-earth. In The Silmarillion, after the men of Númenor were seduced by Sauron and broke the ban of the Valar, their lands were swallowed by the sea, and "Valinor and Eressëa were taken from it [Middle-earth] into the realm of hidden things" (Silm 335). Accordingly, the Valar made the decision to sever contact with the Children of Ilúvatar, yet they still dwell in Valinor and "watch the unfolding of the story of the world" (338). Ostensibly they send Gandalf back to Middle-earth, after his battle with the Balrog, to help restore peace, but Tolkien takes care never to mention directly any of the Valar in The Lord of the Rings except Varda, whose name alone gives Sam enough courage to defeat, against all hope, the spider Shelob.

During Frodo's darkest moment, in the lair of Shelob, he hearkens to a forgotten time, an era about which he had known only in song. With the Phial of Galadriel in his hand, "hope grew in Frodo's mind" and the phial "began to burn . . . as though Eärendil had himself come down from the high sunset paths with the last Silmaril upon his brow" (LotR III.372). Yet Shelob was no mere villain; she was the child of Ungoliant, the spider who had formed an alliance with Melkor during the First Age in order to

destroy the light in the Trees of Valinor. Clearly, Melkor's discord in the Great Theme ensured that suffering was an unavoidable part of existence. While the Phial of Galadriel was not powerful enough to defeat the terror of Shelob, the invocation of Varda ("A Elbereth Gilthoniel"), one of the original Valar, through a scrap of remembered song, is. In the moment of abject fright, a time when only something otherworldly might restore the balance between good and evil, hope and despair, Sam's "tongue was loosed and his voice cried in a language which he did not know:

A Elbereth Gilthoniel

o menel palan-kiriel,

le nallon sí di'nguruthos!

A tiro nin, Fanuilos!" (LotR II.383)

The language and subsequent courage were given to Sam in this dark moment without his asking; the equilibrium of benevolence and malevolence was reestablished by some unseen force.

Yet it seems that throughout the tales in The Silmarillion, there is no parity: evil is triumphant over good. Once the Valar leave the Children of Middle-earth to fight Morgoth's malevolence on their own, many of the Elves and Men are drawn into the allure of evil and succumb to

wickedness. Others spend their lives fighting against such wickedness, only to suffer tremendously in their labors. It is not until the Valar return to Middle-earth to fight Morgoth that the Elves and Men have a possibility to squelch the iniquity of the darkness. Tolkien's design may at first seem strange: he eliminates the deity from Middle-earth and leaves the Children to fight against evil on their own. Yet the Children would not fight against evil without a sense of hope: even without the presence of Ilúvatar and the Valar, they know that they cannot give up. The Creator is aware of the evil in Middle-earth and does not intervene because he knows that it will come to a good end. From the beginning of the "Ainulindalë," Ilúvatar knows that Melkor's dissonance will create wickedness; yet he also knows that without the wickedness, goodness will not be allowed to flourish.

Because of Tolkien's comprehensive Catholic upbringing, and because of the importance faith played in his life, there is an inclination to read his works from a Christian perspective. Yet scholars must be reminded of Tolkien's own words concerning this issue: "Affixing 'labels' to writers, living or dead, is an inept procedure, in any circumstances: a childish amusement of small minds:

and very 'deadening' . . ." (Carpenter 414). To label Tolkien's Silmarillion a Christian text simply because Tolkien was a Christian would be an outrageous claim; to state, like Carpenter, that it is complemented by the author's Christian background is much more acceptable. The Silmarillion has undeniable elements of Christianity, but like all of Tolkien's works, it also has a number of unique qualities that make it almost indefinable. As it is, there is no identifiable history, and there are few identifiable analogues; as a result, The Silmarillion stands on its own as a mythology.

CHAPTER VI

MELKOR AND THE FOURTH AGE OF MAN

Earlier, Tolkien's "Ainulindalë" was examined in terms of common characteristics found in most mythologies; indeed, the "Ainulindalë" is a creation myth in a greater mythology, but can it be called a mythology for England? Could it be a reasonable explanation for the beginnings of the world and for man's place in the world? Could it be an account of man's beginnings that, while different from the Christian myth, does not necessarily clash with the theological doctrine of the Bible? The answer, of course, stems from everything we have observed thus far. We have scrutinized Tolkien's deliberate choices as he crafted the "Ainulindalë," choices that he knew would affect not just the immediate story, but also the entire Silmarillion and beyond. We have established that Tolkien's use of music as a source of creation has its antecedent in the ancient concept of the music of the spheres. Yet music is also archetypal, and it is possible that Tolkien's distinctive use of music to fashion an entire universe has developed not from any one idea in particular, but from the collective human tendency to respond to song. All of this has been leading to one thing: how is Melkor's dissonance

in the "Ainulindalë" necessary in order to prepare Middle-earth for the dominion of Man and, thereby, to establish Tolkien's work as a credible mythology for England? By tracing the symbolic effects of Melkor's literal musical discord, we will arrive at the answer.

First, it must be noted that Tolkien intended from the beginning for Melkor to be the odd man out in the literal sense. Melkor was the pariah of the Valar: even before the music began he took to solitary wandering after having been rejected by Varda. Yet in the "Valaquenta" there is even more evidence of Melkor's fate as the outcast: of the Valar there are seven Lords and seven Queens, making an even fourteen. "Melkor," who would have been number fifteen, "is counted no longer among the Valar," leaving the ranks of the gods even (Silm 17). Certainly it is a small detail: all of the Valar have partners, save Ulmo and Nienna who have reasons to be alone, and all have a specific realm to shape and nurture. Had Melkor remained, he still would have been alone, the odd Vala with no companion. The meaning of his name also foreshadows his ultimate purpose as a dissenter in Middle-earth: "He who arises in Might" (Silm 23). And, in fact, it is his desire to be the mightiest, his desire to have power and glory

over all, that shapes the discord he interjects into the Great Theme and the dissension that subsequently pervades Middle-earth.

The passage that precedes Melkor's disruption of the Great Theme bears repeating a last time here as it will be the basis of the discord that leads to the emergence of Man in the Fourth Age:

As the theme progressed, it came into the heart of Melkor to interweave matters of his own imagining that were not in accord with the theme of Ilúvatar; for he sought therein to increase the power and glory of the part assigned to himself. To Melkor among the Ainur had been given the greatest gifts of power and knowledge . . . (4).

Three things are important in this description. First, Melkor is not in accord with Ilúvatar. Later in The Silmarillion, the Elves and Men who perpetuate dissension are blatantly rebellious against the Valar. Second, Melkor desired to increase his own power and glory. Accordingly, the same Elves and Men who continue the destruction of the first three ages are often eager for increased supremacy over others. And finally, Melkor is innately powerful and

intelligent, much like the rebels whose actions portend the dominion of Men.

Once Ilúvatar causes the Great Theme to cease, Melkor's contribution is finished; unlike the other Ainur, he did not initially play a role in shaping any particular aspect of Middle-earth. On the contrary, his dissonance served to tarnish all the Valar helped to create. Even after Ilúvatar speaks the world into being and the Valar work to shape the physical realm to match their musical imaginings, Melkor had nothing of his own. What Melkor wanted most was Light, "but when he could not possess it for himself alone, he descended through fire and wrath . . . into Darkness" (23). From his realm of darkness, "the evil of Melkor and the blight of his hatred" marred the beauty created by the Valar (29): "Green things fell sick and rotted, and rivers were choked with weeds and slime [. . .] and forests grew dark and perilous, the haunts of fear; and beasts became monsters . . ." (Silm 29). Though none of this information is particularly new, what must be noted is that Tolkien has ingeniously begun two thematic threads. By stating that Melkor desired to possess the light of Arda for his own, Tolkien has laid the groundwork for another important character: Fëanor, the creator of the Silmarils

who experienced a similarly tragic downfall. Yet we also begin to see the effects of the necessary discord. Melkor's marring of Arda was essential for four reasons: the world would have remained unnaturally perfect and not at all like the world we now inhabit, thereby discrediting Tolkien's tales as a type of mythology for England; the Valar would have remained in Middle-earth instead of retreating to their own holy realm; Yavanna would not have made the Two Trees of Valinor, the trees of renown which tie the Eldar Days to the Fourth Age of Man; and Melkor would not have had the opportunity to prepare a sense of dread and darkness for the Quendi, the Eldar Children of Ilúvatar. This last act seems particularly harsh as it is such a blatant act of evil, yet it is this necessary evil that eventually results in the emergence of Mankind. From Melkor's one act of rebellious discord during the making of the Great Theme, we can trace all evil in Middle-earth; and from this evil in Middle-earth comes the downfall of the Elves and the rise of Man.

Though Melkor actively wages war against the Valar and, later, Elves and Men, he does not have to be present for evil to fester. Because his discord was injected into the Great Theme, it is ever present; as such, "he that sows

lies in the end shall not lack of a harvest, and soon he may rest from toil indeed while others reap and sow in his stead" (Silm 70). Melkor does not forget that the Valar wage war against him because of the Eldar Children of Ilúvatar; nor are they brought into a world without strife. Consequently, even without external provocation dissension begins within the world of the Elves, and specifically with Fëanor.

While Melkor is being punished by the Valar for his crimes against the Elves, the Three Kindreds of the Eldar begin to flourish. During this time the wife of Finwë bore him a son she called Fëanor, meaning Spirit of Fire, but because "strength that would have nourished the life of many [had] gone forth into Fëanor" (65), she chose to depart from the world after his birth. Again, at this time Melkor is imprisoned by the Valar and has no contact with the Elves. Furthermore, Fëanor is not considered to be an evil being; yet the early parallels between Melkor and Fëanor are striking. Melkor's name means "he who arises in Might" (23), and Fëanor was given by his mother the might of several Elves (66). Both are connected with fire: Melkor seeks the Imperishable Flame, and Fëanor is the "Spirit of Fire" (66). When Fëanor becomes older and

marries, his wife at first is able to restrain him "when the fire of his heart grew too hot" (66), but his later deeds become too grievous for her and they become estranged, leaving him with his seven sons. One of these later deeds is his secret fashioning of the Silmarils, the gems that contain the glory of the Blessed Realm: the light from the Trees of Valinor.

Melkor is released by the Valar during Fëanor's greatest feat of fashioning the Silmarils, and the purveyor of darkness loses no time in revealing hidden knowledge to Fëanor's people. Fëanor himself, however, hated Melkor and "took no counsel from him" as his kindred did (68). Fëanor, in fact, ". . . was driven by the fire of his own heart only, working ever swiftly and alone; and he asked the aid and sought the counsel of none that dwelt in Aman, great or small" (68). Though Fëanor does not seek counsel, he does not at this point blatantly reject the Valar; his most egregious transgression against the Valar will occur later as a result of both Melkor and the Silmarils.

Melkor, who before was denied the light of Arda, "lusted for the Silmarils, and the very memory of their radiance was a gnawing fire in his heart" (70). Yet with the power of the Silmarils - whose light he shared with

none but his father and seven sons - Fëanor had an "eager heart" that "burned" with a "new flame of desire" for "wider realms," and he began to feel an unnatural, "greedy love" for the gems that contained the light that was not his own (71). The two powers, Melkor and Fëanor, were in opposition, both seething with hatred and both trying to undermine the other with secret plans. Melkor began to plant new lies that caused the Elves to question the intentions of the Valar and caused Fëanor to question the allegiance of his half-brothers. Fëanor, out of fear and greed, created a secret arsenal of weapons in preparation for a war, possibly against the Valar or even his own family. And, in fact, Fëanor "began openly to speak words of rebellion against the Valar" (72). As noted, Melkor does not have to be present in order for evil to occur, but his personal proliferation of lies augments Fëanor's paranoia concerning the Valar, his family, and ultimately the Silmarils.

Melkor's propagation of evil throughout Middle-earth occurs, of course, as a result of the dissonance he interjects into the Great Theme. When many of the Ainur are swayed by Melkor's discord, the moral character of Middle-earth becomes defiled even before it was physically

created. As Boethius noted in his Fundamentals of Music, "if some melody or mode is altered in some way [. . .] it will cause a great difference and will sink down through the ears into the soul itself" (Mark 26). This alteration is what infects Fëanor and creates his unnatural lust for the Silmarils. Thus far we have reviewed only the excerpts from Boethius that most closely relate to Tolkien's use of music in the "Ainulindalë." Those passages showed that if Tolkien was not directly aware of the music of the spheres, then at least he was subconsciously alert to the idea of our innate connection to music. But Boethius's non-musical Consolation of Philosophy had a significant impact on Tolkien's construction of Middle-earth, and specifically Melkor's discordant element that affects the events leading to the emergence of Man in the Fourth Age. The Consolation of Philosophy, a philosophical dialogue in which Boethius explores how fortune is the oppressor of men while philosophy (Divine truth) is the healer of men, is seemingly not about music; yet David Chamberlain argues that "the work may be said to have a main theme that is musical and to embody a more complete philosophy of music than De Musica itself" (80). However, it is the non-

musical aspect of The Consolation of Philosophy that is perhaps most closely related to the consequences that arise from Tolkien's use of discord in the "Ainulindalë."

Simply, if the melodies of the Ainur create the beauty and goodness of Middle-earth, then the dissonance of Melkor creates the unsightliness and evil; and with the advent of bad comes the necessity of good, or at least a need for a ubiquitous sense of divine providence. We as readers may wonder, as Boethius does, why wickedness is able to flourish while the virtuous are unrewarded, and the sentiments of Lady Philosophy supply Tolkien's works with a promise of justice:

God assigns to every season its proper office;
and He does not permit the condition He has set
to be altered. Every violent effort to upset His
established order will fail in the end. (Book I,
Poem 6, 17)

Ilúvatar, in the "Ainulindalë," assures the Ainur with a similar sentiment: though Melkor seemed to have had mastery over Ilúvatar during the making of the Great Theme, the One reminds them:

. . . no theme may be played that hath not its
uttermost source in me, nor can any alter the

music in my despite. For he that attempteth
this shall prove but mine instrument in the
devising of things more wonderful, which he
himself hath not imagined. (Silm 6)

The cacophony was both temporary and necessary; the reward will come when yet a greater music is made "before Ilúvatar by the choirs of the Ainur and the Children of Ilúvatar after the end of days" (4). What we must understand is that through the disruption of the Great Theme, Tolkien, as the Creator of Middle-earth, established the possibility of malevolence in a benevolent world. Throughout the first three ages the two states coexist, though sometimes it seems as if evil is strong enough to emerge victorious. Certainly Melkor meddles in Fëanor's affairs with the Silmarils; yet Fëanor, in creating the Silmarils, had already begun to allow himself to turn inward, a sure sign of evil.

The Silmarils were extraordinary gems made by Fëanor that contained the light of the Trees of Valinor. Lady Philosophy might say that Fortune had allowed Fëanor to possess the Silmarils briefly, only to take them away. Indeed, a ravenous, greedy love of the Silmarils begins to destroy Fëanor, whose family was already rent by his

father's remarrying. Fëanor, losing himself to the jewels, "grudged the sight of them to all save to his father and his seven sons," and "he seldom remembered now that the light within them was not his own" (71). On the topic of material possessions, Lady Philosophy instructs Boethius:

When you act as though such external goods are your own, you are deluded by foolish satisfaction. Fortune can never make things yours which nature made foreign to you. (Book II, Prose 5, 31)

Fëanor is, in fact, deluded by his own lust, but he is not the only one for whom the Silmarils become an obsession. Melkor desires the gems for his own, even extinguishing the lights from the Trees of Valinor, the source of brightness in the Silmarils, to enhance the value of the gems.

Before Melkor had a chance to steal the Silmarils, Fëanor could have given them to the Valar to replace the light from the Trees of Valinor that was extinguished. The words of Lady Philosophy may have enlightened Fëanor during that time:

It ought to be clear that none of these things which you are inclined to take credit for really

belong to you. And if there is no desirable beauty in these things, why should you regret losing them, or be particularly elated to possess them? If they are beautiful by nature, what is that to you? They would be pleasing to you even if they belonged to someone else. They are not precious because you have them; you desire to have them because they seem precious. (Book II, Prose 5, 32)

Because Fëanor mistakenly thought the Silmarils to be entirely his, and because his greed left him skeptical of even the Valar, he kept the Silmarils and their light.

The results, of course, are tragic but necessary for the eventual emergence of Man in the Fourth Age. In short, Melkor wages war against the Valar and destroys the Trees, leaving Arda in utter darkness. Fëanor, who could have healed the injuries caused by Melkor, selfishly denies the light of the Silmarils to the Valar, light that originated not with him but with the Trees of Valinor. Instead, Fëanor keeps the gems and swears an oath by the name of Ilúvatar,

vowing to pursue with vengeance and hatred . . .
Vala, Demon, Elf or Man as yet unborn, or any

creature, great or small, good or evil, that time should bring forth unto the end of days, whoso should hold or take or keep a Silmaril from my [Fëanor's] possession. (Silm 90)

Fëanor's seven sons are bound to this terrible oath, an oath that shapes the future of Middle-earth and is responsible for the dominion of Man in the Fourth Age. Of course, Melkor steals the gems, Fëanor rebels against the Valar and is banished, Elves slay one another, and the Doom of the Noldor is prophesied. Elves will no longer have access to Valinor; in fact, the Valar are shut off so completely from the Noldor because of their treachery that "not even the echo of [their] lamentation shall pass over the mountains" (Silm 95). Furthermore:

On the House of Fëanor the wrath of the Valar lieth . . . and upon all that will follow. Their Oath shall drive them, and yet betray them, and ever snatch away the very treasures that they have sworn to pursue. The Dispossessed shall they be for ever. (Silm 95-6)

Indeed, the Noldor will become the dispossessed, yet their Doom will eventually affect all of the Elves and lead to their demise. Such is the nature of Tolkien's brilliance

as a mythmaker: his one act of infusing the Great Theme with dissonance establishes the necessary link between the moment of creation and the dominion of Men.

Ilúvatar planned from the beginning for Men to be different from Elves. The subjects of the third theme within the Music of the Ainur, Men were designed

to seek beyond the world and find no rest therein; but they should have a virtue to shape their life, amid the powers and chances of the world, beyond the Music of the Ainur, which is as fate to all things else. (35-6)

That Men are not subject to the Music of the Ainur suggests that Tolkien may have been leaving this part of his myth open to a different - perhaps more Christian - theological interpretation. If the Music of the Ainur established only the fate of the Elves, then Men were not at all under the guidance of the gods, the Valar; instead, they would be subject only to Ilúvatar, the all-father who will lead them in the Second Music. Though it is not clear where Men go once they depart Middle-earth, it is clear that they, and not the Elves, will be part of the Second Music, "whereas Ilúvatar has not revealed what he purposes for the Elves after the World's end" (36). Ensuring that the mythology

establishes and encompasses only the first three ages leaves room for a modern interpretation of the Fourth Age, an age that would fit more conveniently and credibly into the history books.

The Children of Ilúvatar were entirely Ilúvatar's design. Because the Ainur "understood not fully that theme by which the Children entered into the Music, none of the Ainur dared to add anything to their fashion" (Silm 35). Yet Melkor's dissonance, though perhaps not deliberately, did seem to affect the disposition of the Children, and Men in particular. To Men Ilúvatar gave the gift of freedom, the ability to depart the earth through death; however, Ilúvatar knew that men "would stray often, and would not use their gifts in harmony" (36). To the Elves it seemed that Men most resembled Melkor, though "he has ever feared and hated them, even those that served him" (36). Even though Melkor would later have dealings with Men, he at first knew little of them, "for engrossed with his own thought in the Music he had paid small heed to the Third theme of Ilúvatar" (71). But Melkor is quick to discover that many Men are easily seduced.

The Men from the Three Houses of the Atani were, perhaps, more difficult for Morgoth to sway. These Men

were Elf-friends, and not coincidentally tied both to the Silmarils and to the dominion of Man in the Fourth Age, especially the House of Bëor from whom come all the Kings of Númenor. Not surprisingly, the most famous tale concerning Man is fraught with suffering; yet as Lady Philosophy tells Boethius, one should not be daunted by suffering because it is inevitable in life:

The joy of human happiness is shot through with bitterness; no matter how pleasant it seems when one has it, such happiness cannot be kept when it decides to leave. (Book II, Prose 2, 29)

Indeed, The Silmarillion is full of tales in which happiness is marred by extreme sorrow, but perhaps the most tragic story is notable because of the juxtaposition of benevolence and malevolence. The tale of Beren and Lúthien is described in The Silmarillion as one in which "amid weeping there is joy, and under the shadow of death light endures" (Silm 190). Beren, a mortal from the House of Bëor, swore an oath of vengeance upon Sauron, already in the service of Morgoth, for slaughtering the Men of Dorthonion. After a long time of wandering, both hunter and hunted, Beren found his way to the forbidden Elf-land of Doriath, weary with hunger and sorrow and "many years of

woe" (Silm 193). Upon seeing Lúthien, daughter of Thingol and Melian, "all memory of his pain departed from him, and he fell into an enchantment" (194). Many clandestine meetings ensured that Lúthien returned the love Beren felt, but the king's discovery of Beren would mean certain death. Before Beren was brought to King Thingol, Lúthien made her father promise neither to slay nor imprison the man she loved; Beren's fate, however, was worse than either death or confinement. While Beren asks for Lúthien's hand in marriage, Thingol agrees if Beren will consent to the price. He tells Beren:

I too desire a treasure that is withheld. For rock and steel and the fires of Morgoth keep the jewel that I would possess against all the powers of the Elf-kingdoms . . . Bring to me in your hand a Silmaril from Morgoth's crown. (197)

Though Thingol believes he is merely ridding himself of a mortal who was defiant enough not only to disregard the ban on entering his kingdom, but also to request his daughter's betrothal, Thingol is truly dooming himself, his family, and his country.

Lady Philosophy's wisdom in this area is not lacking; she allows Fortune to explain to Boethius:

Ravenous greed would devour everything and then discover other wants. No bridle can restrain man's disordered desires within reasonable bounds. Even when he is filled with great favors, he burns with thirst for more.

(Book II, Poem 2, 25)

Thingol does, in fact, have a bountiful life "filled with great favors," but when he fears he may lose one of his treasures, his daughter Lúthien, he becomes unreasonable and desires the one thing to which he has no claim, and the one thing which would be nearly impossible to obtain: a Silmaril. Perhaps because of the unparalleled splendor of the Silmarils, Thingol - knowing of the oath Fëanor swore concerning the gems if they were in possession of someone other than himself - would not yield the gem Beren and Lúthien took from Morgoth. In fact, "every day he [Thingol] looked upon the Silmaril the more he desired to keep it for ever; for such was its power" (Silm 224). The Elves, then, were not immune to the lure of possession.

Beren, a Man who suffers greatly from the effects of Melkor's dissonance for the benefit of Mankind, is tied to the Silmaril because of Thingol; by requesting the gem, however, Thingol invokes both the Doom of the Noldor and

the Oath of Fëanor. Yet the consequences of his demand ensure a series of essential events from the permanent removal of Morgoth from Middle-earth to the crowning of Aragorn as King Elessar.

Once the Silmaril is given to Thingol, Beren and Lúthien become the first of the two Kindreds to join, a union that occurs only twice more in Middle-earth. But the Silmaril, a gem cursed by the Oath of Fëanor, indirectly causes Thingol's death. When Fëanor's sons, constrained by their oath, ask Thingol to "yield the Silmaril, or become their enemy," Thingol refuses, thinking of "the anguish of Lúthien and the blood of Beren whereby the jewel had been won" (224). The result is a war that lays waste to Middle-earth and sunders many of the relationships between Elves and Men, enemies who were no longer united against Morgoth. But it was not the sons of Fëanor who killed Thingol. Through the years, "Thingol's thought turned unceasingly to the jewel of Fëanor and became bound to it," and his thought was to have it set into a dwarf-made necklace (280); but the "lust of the Dwarves" for the Silmaril provoked them to slay the king (280).

However, it is not Thingol's death but Beren and Lúthien's union that affects the dominion of Men. The

Silmaril is eventually passed down from Thingol's heir to Elwing, wife of Eärendil, the child of the second union of the two Kindreds. Since the rebellion of Fëanor, the Valar had refused to aid the Noldor of Middle-earth, even during their darkest times, and even when persuaded by one of their own. Ulmo was the only Vala who continued to help both Elves and Men in their fight against Morgoth, and when it seemed as if Middle-earth would be annihilated, Ulmo "called on them [the Valar] to forgive them [the Elves], and rescue them from the overmastering might of Morgoth" (Silm 293). Yet the Valar would not be moved until ". . . the sons of Fëanor relinquished the Silmarils, upon which they had laid their ruthless claim. For the light which lit the Silmarils the Valar themselves had made" (293). Therefore, it is only by returning the Silmarils that the Elves can be forgiven, and it is Eärendil who bravely accomplishes the task.

Yet before Eärendil has the opportunity to return the light of the Silmaril to whence it came, the sons of Fëanor committed "the cruelest of the slayings of Elf by Elf" (296), a battle that left only two of the sons alive. Also left alive are the sons of Eärendil and Elwing, Elrond and Elros, whose parents made the sacrifice to end the dominion

of Morgoth. Once the Valar intervened, Morgoth was defeated and captured within days. The Silmarils, too, were taken by the Valar and guarded, yet the Oath of Fëanor was not discharged. The two sons, "though now with weariness and loathing," had to attempt "in despair the fulfillment of their oath; for they would have given battle for the Silmarils, were they withheld, even against the victorious host of Valinor" (303). With their deaths, the curse was laid to rest. Such was the nature of the curse of the House of Fëanor, and such was the necessity: because the sons stole the remaining Silmarils, the light of Valinor was lost forever. Two more necessary consequences arise from this final act with the Silmarils. The first is that Eärendil's sons are given their choice of Kindred. Elrond, whose role in the Third Age is unquestionably significant, becomes Half-elven; Elros, however, chooses the Doom of Man and becomes first in the line of the kings of Númenor. The second necessary consequence is that Morgoth is captured and forever "thrust through the Door of Night beyond the Walls of the World into the Timeless Void; and a guard is set for ever on those walls" (306). Yet the absence of Morgoth does not mean the absence of evil:

The lies that Melkor, the mighty and accursed
[. . .] sowed in the hearts of Elves and men are
a seed that does not die and cannot be destroyed;
and ever and anon it sprouts anew, and will bear
dark fruit even unto the latest days. (306)

Indeed, Melkor's dissonance remains at work even after he is no longer a physical force. The Valar, though not originally concerned with the lives of Men, reward the faithful from the Three Houses of Men with the land of Númenor, an idyllic island. In the *Quenta Silmarillion*, it is said that Men, "being set amid the turmoils of the powers of the world, would stray often, and would not use their gifts in harmony" (36). Númenor, being set apart from those turmoils, should have resulted in harmony, not disharmony. But Melkor's dissonance during the Great Theme resulted in a prevailing sense of discord for Man. It seemed to the Elves that Men most resembled Melkor, which is perhaps why they were so easily seduced by him. Lady Philosophy explains to Boethius not only the allure of power, but also the consequences of it, consequences that are felt tragically in Númenor. She says: "When the evil sword of power is joined to the poison of passion, the commonwealth must groan under an intolerable burden!" (Book

II, Poem 6, 36). In Númenor, these two factions, the "evil sword of power" and the "poison of passion," collide when Sauron is able to exploit with flattery and false promises the already growing desire for power among the kings of Númenor. The target of Sauron's malice was Ar-Pharazôn, who even as a young man was "more restless and eager for wealth and power than his father" (Silm 322). But as Lady Philosophy reminds Boethius: "The man who wishes to be powerful must check his desires; he must not permit himself to be overcome by lust, or submit to its foul reins" (Book III, Poem 5, 52). And Ar-Pharazôn, after becoming king, commanded that Sauron swear fealty to him, insisting that it was better to keep the powerful Sauron as a hostage in Númenor where he might be of some use. Yet confidence was Ar-Pharazôn's worst enemy: Sauron seduced him and persuaded Ar-Pharazôn to turn back to the dark side and worship Melkor. Lady Philosophy, of course, warns against this:

They are in utter slavery when they lose
possession of their reason and give themselves
wholly to vice. For when they turn away their
eyes from the light of supreme truth to mean and
dark things, they are blinded by a cloud of

ignorance and obsessed by vicious passions.

(Book V, Prose 2, 104)

After Númenor is destroyed by water to cleanse the sins of the Númenoreans, Sauron, like Melkor before him, loses his ability to assume mortal form. Similarly, when discussing wickedness with Boethius, Lady Philosophy explains how man ceases to be human.

And it follows from this that whatever loses its goodness ceases to be. Thus wicked men cease to be what they were; but the appearance of their human bodies, which they keep, shows that they once were men. To give oneself to evil, therefore, is to lose one's human nature. (Book IV, Prose 3, 82)

While the parallel is evident, there is one notable difference between Lady Philosophy's idea of the consequences of evil and the events in The Silmarillion. Lady Philosophy explains to Boethius that the wicked maintain their human form, but in Tolkien's mythology the opposite occurs. Melkor was initially allowed to take shape "after that manner which they [the Ainur] had beheld in the Vision of Ilúvatar" (Silm 11), but after the darkening of Valinor, when Melkor's wickedness was

seemingly at its most reprehensible, he lost that power. Sauron, too, "could never again appear fair to the eyes of Man," after the fall of Númenor (336). For them, to give oneself entirely to evil meant to lose one's physical form.

However, Lady Philosophy does imply that all wicked men were once good. It is true that in the beginning of the "Ainulindalë," there is no indication that Melkor is initially not in accord with the other Ainur. In fact, as they grew to understand the mind of Ilúvatar, the Ainur "increased in unison and harmony," which suggests that Melkor was not yet tainted by evil (3). Yet we also discover two important details about Melkor's early life as an Ainu: he was wont to wander "alone into the void places seeking the Imperishable Flame" (4), and he was rejected by Varda even before the Great Theme was played (16). Because of Varda's rejection, Melkor "hated her, and feared her more than all others whom Eru made" (16).

Thus, Melkor's self-isolation and hatred were signs of his early inclination toward evil. Though Melkor feels that he has mastery over the other Ainur, a passage from De Philosophiae might strengthen the argument that he did not:

. . . but he who is burdened by fears and desires
is not master of himself. He throws away his

shield and retreats; he fastens the chain by which he will be drawn. (Book I, Poem 4, 9)

Melkor does, in fact, attach himself to a metaphorical chain to which he is fettered for the rest of his existence. But he is not alone.

Because Melkor's power is so awesome, many of the Maiar were "drawn to his splendour in the days of his greatness, and remained in that allegiance down into his darkness" (23). The most cunning of these followers was Sauron, who eventually "rose like a shadow of Morgoth and a ghost of his malice, and walked behind him on the same ruinous path down into the Void" (24). The more power Morgoth garnered, the more he was able to delegate his evil tasks to others. But Lady Philosophy asks Boethius:

Do you think a person mighty who is always surrounded by bodyguards, who is more afraid than those whom he intimidates, who puts himself in the hands of his servants in order to seem powerful? (Book III, Prose 5, 51)

As Melkor had Sauron, Sauron grew an army of terror throughout the Second and Third Ages that he was sure would reign victorious. To ensure his victory - or perhaps out

of fear that good may, in fact, defeat evil - he forged the Rings of Power, as well as the One Ring to rule them.

Yet we must remember that Tolkien designed the world of Middle-earth to be a balanced state: though it seems at times as if malevolence may have mastery over benevolence, ultimately good will reign. Though Melkor seemed to have temporary mastery over the Great Theme, Ilúvatar never relinquished control; the music was a balance of harmony and dissonance, a necessary dissonance that completed the greater sound, just as Pythagoras noted when listening to the octave so many centuries ago. With that one interjection of dissonance, Tolkien creates a credible mythology for England while adhering to his own Christian beliefs; and with that one interjection of dissonance, Tolkien establishes a link between Melkor and Sauron, a connection between the fantastical First Age and the more realistic Fourth Age. Ultimately, Sauron is defeated and the Fourth Age of Man begins. Tolkien leaves his readers with the same sense of hope that Lady Philosophy leaves with Boethius:

. . . know always, the good are always powerful
and the evil always weak and futile, that vice
never goes unpunished nor virtue unrewarded, that

the good prosper and the evil suffer
misfortune. (Book IV, Prose 1, 75)

From the beginning of Tolkien's world, from the first melodies of the "Ainulindalë," the words of Lady Philosophy are echoed. In Middle-earth, good is certainly powerful, and evil can be weak and futile; yet evil can also contend with good and, at times, overpower it. Just as Ilúvatar regains control of the Great Theme, Tolkien restores the balance to Middle-earth. The result is a world much like our own, a world dominated by Men in which inherent goodness must rival sources of evil. In J. R. R. Tolkien's carefully crafted universe, Middle-earth is a reflection of our our own society; as such, Tolkien's stories earn credibility in terms of a national mythology - not as a fantasy.

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