

**J. R. R. TOLKIEN**

# **MORGOTH'S RING**

## **THE HISTORY OF MIDDLE-EARTH** *Volume 10*

The Later Silmarillion  
Part One  
The Legends of Aman

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Öäēñð ïðñēāīēðīāāī ñ īðēāēīāēā ē īāðāāāāāī ā ðāēñðīāōþ ōīðīō. ß ñðāðāēñý ēñīðāāēðū  
āñā īøēāēē, āīçīēēāþūēā īðē ēñīñēūçīāāīēē ðāōñēīāēē OCR, ñ īñēñē āāðāīðēē ā  
īðñōñðāēē ðāēīāūō āàðū fā īñāō.

Ä.Â.

In the last sentence of the original short version of text VII (p. 406) my father wrote that the Eldar believed that Morgoth bred the Orcs 'by capturing Men (and Elves) early' (i.e. in the early days of their existence). This indicates that his views on this subject had changed since the Annals of Aman. For the theory of the origin of the Orcs as it stood, in point of written record in the narratives,(1) at this time see AAm \$42 - 5 (pp. 72-4, and commentary p. 78), and \$127 (pp. 109 - 10, and commentary pp. 123 - 4). In the final form in AAm (p. 74) 'this is held true by the wise of Eressea':  
all those of the Quendi that came into the hands of Melkor, ere Utumno was broken, were put there in prison, and by slow arts of cruelty and wickedness were corrupted and enslaved. Thus did

Melkor breed the hideous race of the Orkor in envy and mockery of the Eldar, of whom they were afterwards the bitterest foes. For the Orkor had life and multiplied after the manner of the Children of Iluvatar; and naught that had life of its own, nor the semblance thereof, could ever Melkor make since his rebellion in the Ainulindale before the Beginning: so say the wise.

On the typescript of AAm my father noted against the account of the origin of the Orcs: 'Alter this. Orcs are not Elvish' (p. 80).

The present text, entitled 'Orcs', is a short essay (very much a record of 'thinking with the pen') found in the same small collection gathered in a newspaper of 1959 as texts III and VI. Like them it was written on Merton College papers of 1955; and like text VI it makes reference to 'Finrod and Andreth' (see pp. 385, 390).

### Orcs.

Their nature and origin require more thought. They are not easy to work into the theory and system.

(1). As the case of Aule and the Dwarves shows, only Eru could make creatures with independent wills, and with reasoning powers. But Orcs seem to have both: they can try to cheat Morgoth / Sauron, rebel against him, or criticize him.

(2). ? Therefore they must be corruptions of something pre-existing.

(3). But Men had not yet appeared, when the Orcs already existed. Aule constructed the Dwarves out of his memory of the Music; but Eru would not sanction the work of Melkor so as to allow the independence of the Orcs. (Not unless Orcs were ultimately remediable, or could be amended and 'saved'?)

It also seems clear (see 'Finrod and Andreth') that though Melkor could utterly corrupt and ruin individuals, it is not possible to contemplate his absolute perversion of a whole people, or group of peoples, and his making that state heritable.(2) [Added later: This latter must (if a fact) be an act of Eru.]

In that case Elves, as a source, are very unlikely. And are Orcs 'immortal', in the Elvish sense? Or trolls? It seems clearly

implied in The Lord of the Rings that trolls existed in their own right, but were 'tinkered' with by Melkor.(3)

(4). What of talking beasts and birds with reasoning and speech? These have been rather lightly adopted from less 'serious' mythologies, but play a part which cannot now be excised. They are certainly 'exceptions' and not much used, but

sufficiently to show they are a recognized feature of the world. All other creatures accept them as natural if not common.

But true 'rational' creatures, 'speaking peoples', are all of human / 'humanoid' form. Only the Valar and Maiar are intelligences that can assume forms of Arda at will. Huan and Sorontar could be Maiar - emissaries of Manwe.(4) But unfortunately in The Lord of the Rings Gwaehir and Landroval are said to be descendants of Sorontar.(5)

In any case is it likely or possible that even the least of the Maiar would become Orcs? Yes: both outside Arda and in it, before the fall of Utumno. Melkor had corrupted many spirits - some great, as Sauron, or less so, as Balrogs. The least could have been primitive (and much more powerful and perilous) Orcs; but by practising when embodied procreation they would (cf. Melian) [become] more and more earthbound, unable to return to spirit-state (even demon-form), until released by death (killing), and they would dwindle in force. When released they would, of course, like Sauron, be 'damned': i.e. reduced to impotence, infinitely recessive: still hating but unable more and more to make it effective physically (or would not a very dwindled dead Orc-state be a poltergeist?).

But again - would Eru provide fear for such creatures? For the Eagles etc. perhaps. But not for Orcs.(6)

It does however seem best to view Melkor's corrupting power as always starting, at least, in the moral or theological level. Any creature that took him for Lord (and especially those who blasphemously called him Father or Creator) became soon corrupted in all parts of its being, the fear dragging down the hroa in its descent into Morgothism: hate and destruction. As for Elves being 'immortal': they in fact only had enormously long lives, and were themselves physically 'wearing out', and suffering a slow progressive weakening of their bodies.

In summary: I think it must be assumed that 'talking' is not necessarily the sign of the possession of a 'rational soul' or fea.(7) The Orcs were beasts of humanized shape (to mock Men and Elves) deliberately perverted I converted into a more close resemblance to Men. Their 'talking' was really reeling off 'records' set in them by Melkor. Even their rebellious critical words - he knew about them. Melkor taught them speech and as they bred they inherited this; and they had just as much independence as have, say, dogs or horses of their human masters. This talking was largely echoic (cf. parrots). In The

Lord of the Rings Sauron is said to have devised a language for them.(8)

The same sort of thing may be said of Huan and the Eagles: they were taught language by the Valar, and raised to a higher level - but they still had no fear.

But Finrod probably went too far in his assertion that Melkor could not wholly corrupt any work of Eru, or that Eru would (necessarily) interfere to abrogate the corruption, or to end the being of His own creatures because they had been corrupted and fallen into evil.(9)

It remains therefore terribly possible there was an Elvish strain in the Orcs.(10) These may then even have been mated with beasts (sterile!) - and later Men. Their life-span would be diminished. And dying they would go to Mandos and be held in prison till the End.

The text as written ends here, but my father subsequently added the following passage. The words with which it opens are a reference to text VI, Melkor Morgoth (p. 390).

See 'Melkor'. It will there be seen that the wills of Orcs and Balrogs etc. are part of Melkor's power 'dispersed'. Their spirit is one of hate. But hate is non-cooperative (except under direct fear). Hence the rebellions, mutinies, etc. when Morgoth seems far off. Orcs are beasts and Balrogs corrupted Maiar. Also (n.b.) Morgoth not Sauron is the source of Orc-wills. Sauron is just another (if greater) agent. Orcs can rebel against him without losing their own irremediable allegiance to evil (Morgoth). Aule wanted love. But of course had no thought of dispersing his power. Only Eru can give love and independence. If a finite sub-creator tries to do this he really wants absolute loving obedience, but it turns into robotic servitude and becomes evil.

#### NOTES.

1. In a long letter to Peter Hastings of September 1954, which was not sent (Letters no.153), my father wrote as follows on the question of whether Orcs 'could have "souls" or "spirits":  
... since in my myth at any rate I do not conceive of the making of souls or spirits, things of an equal order if not an equal power to the Valar, as a possible 'delegation', I have represented at least the Orcs as pre-existing real beings on whom the Dark Lord has exerted the fullness of his power in remodelling and corrupting them, not making them.... There might be other

'makings' all the same which were more like puppets filled (only at a distance) with their maker's mind and will, or ant-like operating under direction of a queen-centre.

Earlier in this letter he had quoted Frodo's words to Sam in the chapter 'The Tower of Cirith Ungol': 'The Shadow that bred them can only mock, it cannot make: not real new things of its own. I don't think it gave life to the orcs, it only ruined them and twisted them'; and he went on: 'In the legends of the Elder Days it p

is suggested that the Diabolus subjugated and corrupted some of the earliest Elves ...' He also said that the Orcs 'are fundamentally a race of "rational incarnate" creatures'.

2. In the Athrabeth (p. 312) Finrod declared:

But never even in the night have we believed that [Melkor] could prevail against the Children of Eru. This one he might cozen, or that one he might corrupt; but to change the doom of a whole people of the Children, to rob them of their inheritance: if he could do that in Eru's despite, then greater and more terrible is he by far than we guessed...

3. In The Lord of the Rings Appendix F (I) it is said of Trolls:

In their beginning far back in the twilight of the Elder Days, these were creatures of dull and lumpish nature and had no more language than beasts. But Sauron had made use of them, teaching them what little they could learn, and increasing their wits with wickedness.

In the long letter of September 1954 cited in note 1 he wrote of them:

I am not sure about Trolls. I think they are mere 'counterfeits', and hence (though here I am of course only using elements of old barbarous mythmaking that had no 'aware' metaphysic) they return to mere stone images when not in the dark. But there are other sorts of Trolls beside these rather ridiculous, if brutal, Stone-trolls, for which other origins are suggested. Of course... when you make Trolls speak you are giving them a power, which in our world (probably) connotes the possession of a 'soul'.

4. See p. 138. - At the bottom of the page bearing the brief text V (p. 389) my father jotted down the following, entirely unconnected with the matter of the text:

Living things in Aman. As the Valar would robe themselves like the Children, many of the Maiar robed themselves like other lesser living things, as trees, flowers, beasts. (Huan.)

5. 'There came Gwaihir the Windlord, and Landroval his brother, greatest of all the Eagles of the North, mightiest of the descendants of old Thorondor' ('The Field of Cormallen' in The Return of the King).

6. At this point there is a note that begins 'Criticism of (1) (2) (3) above' (i.e. the opening points of this text, p. 409) and then refers obscurely to the 'last battle and fall of Barad-dur etc.' in The Lord of the Rings. In view of what follows my father was presumably thinking of this passage in the chapter 'Mount Doom':

From all his policies and webs of fear and treachery, from all his stratagems and wars his mind shook free; and throughout his realm a tremor ran, his slaves quailed, and his armies halted, and his captains suddenly steerless, bereft of will, wavered and despaired. For they were forgotten.

The note continues:

They had little or no will when not actually 'attended to' by the mind of Sauron. Does their cheating and rebellion pass that

possible to such animals as dogs etc.?

7. Cf. the end of the passage cited from the letter of 1954 in note 3.
8. Appendix F (I): 'It is said that the Black Speech was devised by Sauron in the Dark Years'.
9. See the citation from the Athrabeth in note 2. Finrod did not in fact assert the latter part of the opinion here attributed to him.
10. The assertion that 'it remains therefore terribly possible there was an Elvish strain in the Orcs' seems merely to contradict what has been said about their being no more than 'talking beasts' without advancing any new considerations. In the passage added at the end of the text the statement that 'Orcs are beasts' is repeated.

## IX.

This is another and quite separate note on the origin of the Orcs, written quickly in pencil, and without any indication of date.

This suggests - though it is not explicit - that the 'Orcs' were of Elvish origin. Their origin is more clearly dealt with elsewhere. One point only is certain: Melkor could not 'create' living 'creatures' of independent wills.

He (and all the 'spirits' of the 'First-created', according to their measure) could assume bodily shapes; and he (and they) could dominate the minds of other creatures, including Elves and Men, by force, fear, or deceptions, or sheer magnificence.

The Elves from their earliest times invented and used a word or words with a base (o)rok to denote anything that caused fear and/or horror. It would originally have been applied to 'phantoms' (spirits assuming visible forms) as well as to any independently existing creatures. Its application (in all Elvish tongues)

specifically to the creatures called Orks - so I shall spell it in The Silmarillion - was later.

Since Melkor could not 'create' an independent species, but had immense powers of corruption and distortion of those that came into his power, it is probable that these Orks had a mixed origin. Most of them plainly (and biologically) were corruptions of Elves (and probably later also of Men). But always among them (as special servants and spies of Melkor, and as leaders) there must have been numerous corrupted minor spirits who assumed similar bodily shapes. (These would exhibit terrifying and demonic characters.)

The Elves would have classed the creatures called 'trolls' (in The Hobbit and The Lord of the Rings) as Orcs - in character and origin - but they were larger and slower. It would seem evident that they were corruptions of primitive human types.

At the bottom of the page my father wrote: 'See The Lord of the Rings Appendix p. 410'; this is the passage in Appendix F concerning Trolls.

It seems possible that his opening words in this note 'This suggests - though it is not explicit - that the <Orcs> were of Elvish origin

actually refer to the previous text given here, VIII, where he first wrote that 'Elves, as a source, are very unlikely', but later concluded that 'it remains therefore terribly possible there was an Elvish strain in the Orcs'. But if this is so, the following words 'Their origin is more clearly dealt with elsewhere' must refer to something else.

He now expressly asserts the earlier view (see p. 408 and note 1) that the Orcs were in origin corrupted Elves, but observes that 'later' some were probably derived from Men. In saying this (as the last paragraph and the reference to The Lord of the Rings Appendix F suggest) he seems to have been thinking of Trolls, and specifically of the Olog-hai, the great Trolls who appeared at the end of the Third Age (as stated in Appendix F): 'That Sauron bred them none doubted, though from what stock was not known. Some held that they were not Trolls but giant Orcs; but the Olog-hai were in fashion of body and mind quite unlike even the largest of Orc-kind, whom they far surpassed in size and power.'

The conception that among the Orcs 'there must have been numerous corrupted minor spirits who assumed similar bodily shapes' appears also in text VIII (p. 410): 'Melkor had corrupted many spirits - some great, as Sauron, or less so, as Balrogs. The least could have been primitive (and much more powerful and perilous) Orcs'.

## X.

I give here a text of an altogether different kind, a very finished essay on the origin of the Orcs. It is necessary to explain something of the relations of this text.

There is a major work, which I hope to publish in The History of Middle-earth, entitled *Essekenta Eldarinwa* or *Quendi and Eldar*. It is extant in a good typescript made by my father on his later typewriter, both in top copy and carbon; and it is preceded in both copies by a manuscript page which describes the content of the work:

Enquiry into the origins of the Elvish names for Elves and their varieties clans and divisions: with Appendices on their names for the other Incarnates: Men, Dwarves, and Orcs; and on their analysis of their own language,

Quenya: with a note on the 'Language of the Valar'.

With the appendices *Quendi and Eldar* runs to nearly fifty closely typed pages, and being a highly finished and lucid work is of the utmost interest.

To one of the title pages my father subjoined the following:

To which is added an abbreviation of the *Osanwe-kenta* or

'Communication of Thought' that *Pengolodh* set at the end of his *Lammas* or 'Account of Tongues'

This is a separate work of eight typescript pages, separately paginated, but found together with both copies of *Quendi and Eldar*. In addition, and not referred to on the title-pages, there is a further typescript of four pages (also found with both copies of *Quendi and Eldar*) entitled *Orcs*; and this is the text given here.

All three elements are identical in general appearance, but *Orcs* stands apart from the others, having no linguistic bearing; and in view of this I have thought it legitimate to abstract it and print it in this

book together with the other discussions of the origin of the Orcs given as texts VIII and IX.

As to the date of this complex, one of the copies is preserved in a folded newspaper of March 1960. On this my father wrote: "Quendi and Eldar" with Appendices'; beneath is a brief list of the Appendices, the items all written at the same time, which includes both Osanwe and Origin of Orcs (the same is true of the cover of the other copy of the Quendi and Eldar complex). All the material was thus in being when the newspaper was used for this purpose, and although, as in other similar cases, this does not provide a perfectly certain terminus ad quem, there seems no reason to doubt that it belongs to 1959 - 60 (cf. p. 304).

Appendix C to Quendi and Eldar, 'Elvish Names for the Orcs', is primarily concerned with etymology, but it opens with the following passage:

It is not here the place to debate the question of the origin of the Orcs. They were bred by Melkor, and their breeding was the most wicked and lamentable of his works in Arda, but not the most terrible. For clearly they were meant in his malice to be a mockery of the Children of Iluvatar, wholly subservient to his will, and nursed in an unappeasable hatred of Elves and Men.

The Orcs of the later wars, after the escape of Melkor-Morgoth and his return to Middle-earth, were neither spirits nor phantoms, but living creatures, capable of speech and of some crafts and organization, or at least capable of learning such things from higher creatures or from their Master. They bred and multiplied rapidly whenever left undisturbed. It is unlikely, as a consideration of the ultimate origin of this race would make clearer, that the Quendi had met any Orcs of this kind, before their finding by Orome and the separation of Eldar and Avari.

But it is known that Melkor had become aware of the Quendi before the Valar began their war against him, and the joy of the Elves in Middle-earth had already been darkened by shadows of fear. Dreadful shapes had begun to haunt the borders of their dwellings, and some of their people vanished into the darkness and were heard of no more. Some of these things may have been phantoms and delusions; but some were, no doubt, shapes taken by the servants of Melkor, mocking and degrading the very forms of the Children. For Melkor had in his service great numbers of the Maiar, who had the power, as had their Master, of taking visible and tangible shape in Arda.

No doubt my father was led from his words here 'It is unlikely, as a consideration of the ultimate origin of this race would make clearer, that the Quendi had met any Orcs of this kind, before their finding by Orome' to write that 'consideration' which follows here. It will be seen that one passage of this initial statement was re-used.

Orcs.



The origin of the Orcs is a matter of debate. Some have called them the Melkorohini, the Children of Melkor; but the wiser say: nay, the slaves of Melkor, but not his children; for Melkor had no children.<sup>(1)</sup> Nonetheless, it was by the malice of Melkor that the Orcs arose, and plainly they were meant by him to be a mockery of the Children of Eru, being bred to be wholly subservient to his will and filled with unappeasable hatred of Elves and Men.

Now the Orcs of the later wars, after the escape of Melkor-Morgoth and his return to Middle-earth, were not 'spirits', nor phantoms, but living creatures, capable of speech and some crafts and organization; or at least capable of learning these things from higher creatures and from their Master. They bred and multiplied rapidly, whenever left undisturbed. So far as can be gleaned from the legends that have come down to us from our earliest days,<sup>(2)</sup> it would seem that the Quendi had never yet encountered any Orcs of this kind before the coming of Orome to Cuivienen.

Those who believe that the Orcs were bred from some kind of Men, captured and perverted by Melkor, assert that it was impossible for the Quendi to have known of Orcs before the Separation and the departure of the Eldar. For though the time of the awakening of Men is not known, even the calculations of the loremasters that place it earliest do not assign it a date long before the Great March <sup>(3)</sup> began, certainly not long enough before it to allow for the corruption of Men into Orcs. On the other hand, it is plain that soon after his return Morgoth had at his command a great number of these creatures, with whom he ere long began to attack the Elves. There was still less time between his return and these first assaults for the breeding of Orcs and for the transfer of their hosts westward.

This view of the origin of the Orcs thus meets with difficulties of chronology. But though Men may take comfort in this, the theory remains nonetheless the most probable. It accords with all that is known of Melkor, and of the nature and behaviour of Orcs - and of Men. Melkor was impotent to produce any living thing, but skilled in the corruption of things that did not proceed from himself, if he could dominate them. But if he had indeed attempted to make creatures of his own in imitation or mockery of the Incarnates, he would, like Aule, only have succeeded in producing puppets: his creatures would have acted only while the attention of his will was upon them, and they would have shown no reluctance to execute any command of his, even if it were to destroy themselves.

But the Orcs were not of this kind. They were certainly dominated by their Master, but his dominion was by fear, and they were aware of this fear and hated him. They were indeed so corrupted that they were pitiless, and there was no cruelty or wickedness that they would not commit; but this was the

corruption of independent wills, and they took pleasure in their

deeds. They were capable of acting on their own, doing evil deeds unbidden for their own sport; or if Morgoth and his agents were far away, they might neglect his commands. They sometimes fought [> They hated one another and often fought] among themselves, to the detriment of Morgoth's plans.

Moreover, the Orcs continued to live and breed and to carry on their business of ravaging and plundering after Morgoth was overthrown. They had other characteristics of the Incarnates also. They had languages of their own, and spoke among themselves in various tongues according to differences of breed that were discernible among them. They needed food and drink, and rest, though many were by training as tough as Dwarves in enduring hardship. They could be slain, and they were subject to disease; but apart from these ills they died and were not immortal, even according to the manner of the Quendi; indeed they appear to have been by nature short-lived compared with the span of Men of higher race, such as the Edain.

This last point was not well understood in the Elder Days. For Morgoth had many servants, the oldest and most potent of whom were immortal, belonging indeed in their beginning to the Maiar; and these evil spirits like their Master could take on visible forms. Those whose business it was to direct the Orcs often took Orkish shapes, though they were greater and more terrible.<sup>(4)</sup> Thus it was that the histories speak of Great Orcs or Orc-captains who were not slain, and who reappeared in battle through years far longer than the span of the lives of Men.<sup>\*(5)</sup>

Finally, there is a cogent point, though horrible to relate. It became clear in time that undoubted Men could under the domination of Morgoth or his agents in a few generations be reduced almost to the Orc-level of mind and habits; and then they would or could be made to mate with Orcs, producing new breeds, often larger and more cunning. There is no doubt that long afterwards, in the Third Age, Saruman rediscovered this, or learned of it in lore, and in his lust for mastery committed this, his wickedest deed: the interbreeding of Orcs and Men,

(\* [footnote to the text] Boldog, for instance, is a name that occurs many times in the tales of the War. But it is possible that Boldog was not a personal name, and either a title, or else the name of a kind of creature: the Orc-formed Maiar, only less formidable than the Balrogs.)

producing both Men-orcs large and cunning, and Orc-men treacherous and vile.

But even before this wickedness of Morgoth was suspected the Wise in the Elder Days taught always that the Orcs were not 'made' by Melkor, and therefore were not in their origin evil. They might have become irredeemable (at least by Elves and Men), but they remained within the Law. That is, that though of necessity, being the fingers of the hand of Morgoth, they must

be fought with the utmost severity, they must not be dealt with in their own terms of cruelty and treachery. Captives must not be tormented, not even to discover information for the defence of the homes of Elves and Men. If any Orcs surrendered and asked for mercy, they must be granted it, even at a cost.\* This was the teaching of the Wise, though in the horror of the War it was not always heeded.

It is true, of course, that Morgoth held the Orcs in dire thralldom; for in their corruption they had lost almost all possibility of resisting the domination of his will. So great indeed did its pressure upon them become ere Angband fell that, if he turned his thought towards them, they were conscious of his 'eye' wherever they might be; and when Morgoth was at last removed from Arda the Orcs that survived in the West were scattered, leaderless and almost witless, and were for a long time without control or purpose.

This servitude to a central will that reduced the Orcs almost to an ant-like life was seen even more plainly in the Second and Third Ages under the tyranny of Sauron, Morgoth's chief lieutenant. Sauron indeed achieved even greater control over his Orcs than Morgoth had done. He was, of course, operating on a smaller scale, and he had no enemies so great and so fell as were the Noldor in their might in the Elder Days. But he had also inherited from those days difficulties, such as the diversity of the Orcs in breed and language, and the feuds among them; while in many places in Middle-earth, after the fall of Thangorodrim and during the concealment of Sauron, the Orcs recovering from their helplessness had set up petty realms of their own and

(\* [footnote to the text] Few Orcs ever did so in the Elder Days, and at no time would any Orc treat with any Elf. For one thing Morgoth had achieved was to convince the Orcs beyond refutation that the Elves were crueller than themselves, taking captives only for 'amusement', or to eat them (as the Orcs would do at need).)

had become accustomed to independence. Nonetheless Sauron in time managed to unite them all in unreasoning hatred of the Elves and of Men who associated with them; while the Orcs of his own trained armies were so completely under his will that they would sacrifice themselves without hesitation at his command.\* And he proved even more skilful than his Master also in the corruption of Men who were beyond the reach of the Wise, and in reducing them to a vassalage, in which they would march with the Orcs, and vie with them in cruelty and destruction.

It is thus probably to Sauron that we may look for a solution of the problem of chronology. Though of immensely smaller native power than his Master, he remained less corrupt, cooler and more capable of calculation. At least in the Elder Days, and before he was bereft of his lord and fell into the folly of imitating him, and endeavouring to become himself supreme

Lord of Middle-earth. While Morgoth still stood, Sauron did not seek his own supremacy, but worked and schemed for another, desiring the triumph of Melkor, whom in the beginning he had adored. He thus was often able to achieve things, first conceived by Melkor, which his master did not or could not complete in the furious haste of his malice.

We may assume, then, that the idea of breeding the Orcs came from Melkor, not at first maybe so much for the provision of servants or the infantry of his wars of destruction, as for the defilement of the Children and the blasphemous mockery of the designs of Eru. The details of the accomplishment of this wickedness were, however, left mainly to the subtleties of Sauron. In that case the conception in mind of the Orcs may go far back into the night of Melkor's thought, though the beginning of their actual breeding must await the awakening of Men.

When Melkor was made captive, Sauron escaped and lay hid in Middle-earth; and it can in this way be understood how the breeding of the Orcs (no doubt already begun) went on with increasing speed during the age when the Noldor dwelt in Aman; so that when they returned to Middle-earth they found it already infested with this plague, to the torment of all that dwelt

(\* [footnote to the text] But there remained one flaw in his control, inevitable. In the kingdom of hate and fear, the strongest thing is hate. All his Orcs hated one another, and must be kept ever at war with some 'enemy' to prevent them from slaying one another.)

there, Elves or Men or Dwarves. It was Sauron, also, who secretly repaired Angband for the help of his Master when he returned;(6) and there the dark places underground were already manned with hosts of the Orcs before Melkor came back at last, as Morgoth the Black Enemy, and sent them forth to bring ruin upon all that was fair. And though Angband has fallen and Morgoth is removed, still they come forth from the lightless places in the darkness of their hearts, and the earth is withered under their pitiless feet.

This then, as it may appear, was my father's final view of the question: Orcs were bred from Men, and if 'the conception in mind of the Orcs may go far back into the night of Melkor's thought' it was Sauron who, during the ages of Melkor's captivity in Aman, brought into being the black armies that were available to his Master when he returned.

But, as always, it is not quite so simple. Accompanying one copy of the typescript of this essay are some pages in manuscript for which my father used the blank reverse sides of papers provided by the publishers dated 10 November 1969. These pages carry two notes on the 'Orcs' essay: one, discussing the spelling of the word orc, is given on p. 422; the other is a note arising from something in the essay which is not indicated, but which is obviously the passage on p. 417 discussing the puppet-like nature inevitable in creatures brought into being by one of

the great Powers themselves: the note was intended to stand in relation to the words 'But the Orcs were not of this kind'.

The orks, it is true, sometimes appear to have been reduced to a condition very similar, though there remains actually a profound difference. Those orks who dwelt long under the immediate attention of his will - as garrisons of his strongholds or elements of armies trained for special purposes in his war-designs - would act like herds, obeying instantly, as if with one will, his commands even if ordered to sacrifice their lives in his service. And as was seen when Morgoth was at last overthrown and cast out, those orks that had been so absorbed scattered helplessly, without purpose either to flee or to fight, and soon died or slew themselves.

Other originally independent creatures, and Men among them (but neither Elves nor Dwarves), could also be reduced to a like condition. But 'puppets', with no independent life or will, would simply cease to move or do anything at all when the will of their maker was brought to nothing. In any case the number of orks that were thus 'absorbed' was always only a small part

of their total. To hold them in absolute servitude required a great expense of will. Morgoth though in origin possessed of vast power was finite; and it was this expenditure upon the orks, and still more upon the other far more formidable creatures in his service, that in the event so dissipated his powers of mind that Morgoth's overthrow became possible. Thus the greater part of the orks, though under his orders and the dark shadow of their fear of him, were only intermittently objects of his immediate thought and concern, and while that was removed they relapsed into independence and became conscious of their hatred of him and his tyranny. Then they might neglect his orders, or engage in

Here the text breaks off. But the curious thing is that rough drafting for the second paragraph of this note (written on the same paper bearing the same date) begins thus:

But Men could (and can still) be reduced to such a condition. 'Puppets' would simply cease to move or 'live' at all, when not set in motion by the direct will of their maker. In any case, though the number of orks at the height of Morgoth's power, and still after his return from captivity, seems to have been very great, those who were 'absorbed' were always a small part of the total.

The words that I have italicised deny an essential conception of the essay.

The other note reads thus:

Orcs.

This spelling was taken from Old English. The word seemed, in itself, very suitable to the creatures that I had in mind. But the Old English *orc* in meaning - so far as that is known - is not suitable.<sup>(7)</sup> Also the spelling of what, in the later more organized linguistic situation, must have been a Common Speech form of a word or group of similar words should be *ork*. If only because of spelling difficulties in modern English: an adjective *orc* + *ish* becomes necessary, and *orcish* will not do.<sup>(8)</sup> In any future publication I shall use *ork*.

In text IX (the brief writing in which my father declared the theory of Elvish origin to be certain) he spelt the word *Orks*, and said 'so I shall spell it in *The Silmarillion*'. In the present essay, obviously later than text IX, it is spelt *Orcs*; but now, in 1969 or later, he asserted again that it must be *Orks*.

#### NOTES.

1. See text VII, p. 406. - On one copy of the text my father pencilled against this sentence the names *Eruseni*, *Melkorseni*.
2. 'legends that have come down to us from our earliest days'; this purports then to be an Elvish writing. Sauron is spoken of subsequently as a being of the past ('This servitude to a central will ... was seen even more plainly in the Second and Third Ages under the tyranny of Sauron', p. 419); but in the last sentence of the essay the *Orcs* are a plague that still afflicts the world.
3. The time of the Awakening of Men is now placed far back; cf. text II (p. 378), 'The March of the Eldar is through great Rains? Men awake in an Isle amid the floods'; 'The coming of Men will therefore be much further back'; 'Men must awake while Melkor is still in [Middle-earth] - because of their Fall. Therefore in some period during the Great March' (see p. 385 note 14). In the chronology of the *Annals of Aman* and the *Grey Annals* the Great March began in the Year of the Trees 1105 (p. 82), and the foremost companies of the Eldar came to the shores of the Great Sea in 1125; Men awoke in Hildorien in the year of the first rising of the Sun, which was the Year of the Trees 1500. Thus if the Awakening of Men is placed even very late in the period of the Great March of the Eldar it will be set back by more than 3500 Years of the Sun. See further p. 430 note 5.
4. Cf. text IX, p. 414: 'But always among them [*Orcs*] (as special servants and spies of Melkor, and as leaders) there must have been numerous corrupted minor spirits who assumed similar bodily shapes'; also text VIII, p. 410.
5. The footnote at this point, stating that 'Boldog, for instance, is a name that occurs many times in the tales of the War', and was perhaps not a personal name, is curious. Boldog appears several times in the *Lay of Leithian* as the name of the Orc-captain who led a raid into Doriath (references in the Index to *The Lays of Beleriand*); he reappears in the *Quenta* (IV.113), but is not mentioned thereafter. I do not know of any other reference to an Orc named Boldog.

6. On the later story that Angband was built by Melkor in the ancient days and that it was commanded by Sauron see p. 156, §12. There has been no reference to the repairing of Angband against Morgoth's return, and cf. the last narrative development in the Quenta Silmarillion of the story of his return (p. 295, §14): Morgoth and Ungoliant 'were drawing near to the ruins of Angband where his great western stronghold had been.'
7. See p. 124.
8. 'orcish will not do': because it would be pronounced 'orsish'. The

Orkish language was so spelt in The Lord of the Rings from the First Edition.

## XI.

This concluding text, entitled Aman, is a clear manuscript written with little hesitation or correction. I had regarded it as an independent essay, and in doubt where best to place it had left it to the end; but when this book had been fully completed and prepared for publication I realised that it stands in fact in very close relationship to the manuscript of Athrabeth Finrod ah Andreth.

That manuscript opens with an introductory section (given in the typescript version that my father subsequently made, pp. 304 - 5), beginning with the statement that some Men believed that their hroar were not by nature short-lived, but had become so by the malice of Melkor. I had not observed the significance of some lines at the head of this first page of the Athrabeth, which my father had struck through: these lines begin with the words 'the hroa, and it would live on, a witless body, not even a beast but a monster', and end '... Death itself, in either agony or horror, would with Men enter into Aman itself.' Now this passage is virtually identical to the conclusion of the present text, the last page of which begins at precisely the same point.

It is clear, therefore, that Aman originally led into the Athrabeth, but that my father removed it to stand alone and copied out the concluding passage on a separate sheet. At the same time, presumably, he gave the remainder (the Athrabeth and its introduction) the titles Of Death and the Children of Eru, and the Marring of Men and The Converse of Finrod and Andreth.<sup>(1)</sup>

It might have been preferable to place Aman with the Athrabeth in Part Four; but I thought it unnecessary at such a late stage to embark on a major upheaval of the structure of the book, and so left it to stand separately here.

## Aman.

In Aman things were far otherwise than in Middle-earth. But they resembled the mode of Elvish life, just as the Elves more nearly resemble the Valar and Maiar than do Men.

In Aman the length of the unit of 'year' was the same as it was for the Quendi. But for a different reason. In Aman this length