

Preface

Together with the Institute for English and American Studies of Friedrich Schiller University, Jena, and supported by *Walking Tree Publishers*, DTG held the second Tolkien Seminar, dealing with “Tolkien’s World View(s)”, April 2005 at Jena. The guiding thought behind this seminar was to follow up on the ‘outside perspective’, i.e., the look at Tolkien from the point of view of several disciplines from the first seminar, with an ‘inside perspective’, i.e. an attempt at analysing the different aspects that make up a world view.

It would appear that the speakers made good use of the great diversity of possible approaches and ways of interpretation already inherent in the title (and intended as such by the organisers) to treat the question of the unity of Tolkien’s world view or, rather, the diversity of his world views, of the various nuances found in his oeuvre, and of the closedness or openness of his overall conceptions. Another avenue pursued during the seminar was to find out whether Tolkien’s world views have actually left their mark on his writings.

Given the diversity of the topics addressed during the seminar – from history to biology, from philology to (political) philosophy –, we cannot hope to claim exhaustive treatment of the subject. Thus, the papers presented here – completed by two further papers approaching the topic from the position of ethics and cultural hermeneutics, respectively, which could unfortunately not have been presented at the seminar – can do no more than give a few tantalising glimpses on what is possible in this area of Tolkien studies. As such, they are intended to light the way to further discussion and analysis, not to impede or fence in such academic dispute.

Attentive readers may notice several small changes from our first issue. For instance, to make *Hither Shore* more accessible to the English-speaking world, now the German full-length papers are accompanied by English summaries. Furthermore, Rainer Nagel and Thomas Honegger have provided the first instalment of our “Notes” section, intended to feature less compact, but by no means less important, topics of a more specialised nature.

Saving the possibly most important, and most delightful, task for last: some words of gratitude. First of all, we would like to thank Prof. Dr. Thomas Honegger and his assistants for their substantial share in the organisation of the Tolkien Seminar at Jena; much of the success of the seminar is due to their efforts. Of course, we also want to thank all of the contributors to this issue, as well as the other members of the Board of Editors, who, as usually, have worked in their respective capacities competently and reliably. As regards the magazine proper, thanks go to Kathrin Bondzio for typesetting and to the publisher Susanne A. Rayermann.