



Splintered Light: Logos and Language in Tolkien's World

Verlyn Flieger

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J.R.R. Tolkien is perhaps best known for "The Hobbit" and "The Lord of the Rings", but it is in "The Silmarillion" that the true-depth of Tolkien's Middle-earth can be understood. "The Silmarillion" was written before, during and after "The Hobbit" and "The Lord of the Rings". A collection of stories, it provides information alluded to in Tolkien's better known works and, in doing so, turns "The Lord of the Rings" into much more than a sequel to "The Hobbit", making it instead a continuation of the mythology of Middle-earth. Verlyn Flieger's expanded and updated edition of "Splintered Light", a study of Tolkien's fiction first published in 1983, examines "The Silmarillion" and "The Lord of the Rings" in light of Owen Barfield's linguistic theory of the fragmentation of meaning. Flieger demonstrates Tolkien's use of Barfield's concept throughout his fiction, showing how his central image of primary light splintered and refracted acts as a metaphor for the languages, peoples and history of Middle-earth.

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