



News From Bree



The Official *Middle-earth*™ PBM Newsletter
Issue 32, December '06

"Strange as News from Bree..."

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Middle-earth PBM

Middle-earth PBM is a turn-based strategic game set in the world of Tolkien's Middle-earth. For more details, please take a look at our website: www.middleearthgames.com

Featured Artist

Jeff, from Febleminds.

Visit his site at:

<http://www.febleminds-gifs.com/>

Attribution

The Rules of War article published last issue was by Chelsey Coughlin.

New Rules Released!

Well, it has been a long time coming. But, after several years hard (or at least, sporadic) work, we are proud to announce the release of a new comprehensive Middle-earth rulebook: the Middle-earth Guide.

Some thought that this day would never come. During the long hours of debate about just what should go where, the months of editing, and the periods when, well, it just had to sit in the back of the office because no one could face looking at the combat equation yet again, the task seemed an impossible one. But now, thanks to staff, players and copious quantities of coffee, the Guide is finally ready.

Why call it a Guide? Well, because it is more than just a rulebook. For as well as including the full rules for all modules, it also contains a wealth of new material and information, including:

- ❖ Starting Nation Information
- ❖ Fourth Age Design Rules
- ❖ Economic Advice
- ❖ Examples covering all aspects of play
- ❖ Detailed 'at a glance' charts and tables
- ❖ Much more!

Essentially, it is designed to be a single source, containing everything you need to play Middle-earth that was, previously,

scattered across a variety of modules, websites and information sheets. We have also designed it to be easily updatable, so that changes and additions can be made without alteration to the essential format and structure. Good news for us, and good news

for you in that, once you have found your way round it, you will not have to learn to do so again with every new version!

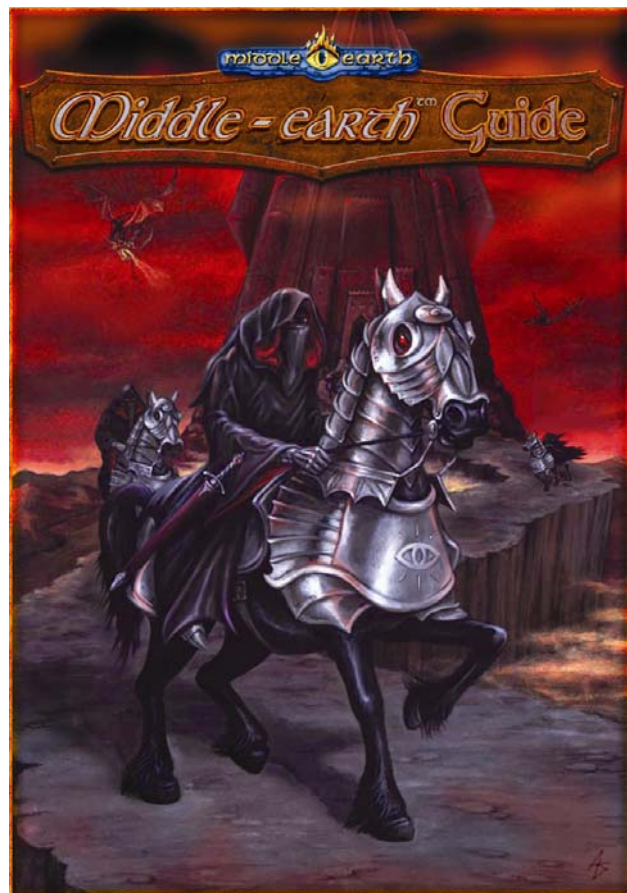
In addition, and arguably most importantly since it weighs in at well over 300 pages, it the Guide is designed to be viewed either online or on a computer, and is easily-navigable through comprehensive bookmarks. In addition, each section features

'further reading' advice, detailing where related information to the section can be found in the Guide.

The Guide is available for free from our website:

www.middleearthgames.com/materials.html
So please, take a look, and we hope you find it useful.

Finally, you will notice that there is one final, thankless task to be undertaken, namely that of turning the thousands of further reading suggestions into active hyperlinks. Now I cannot imagine why anyone would volunteer to help with this, but if you are willing to do so, please get in touch!



Picture This Part II: Middle-earth Circa T.A. 1650

By Michael Martinez

Preamble

Only J.R.R. Tolkien knew what he thought Middle-earth should look like. Most people associate Middle-earth with medieval Europe, but there is little agreement on which part of Europe at what period of time. This series of articles suggests some ways Tolkien might have depicted his Middle-earth Circa T.A. 1650. Tolkien often described himself as a Classicist, but in his view a Classicist was anyone concerned with history and literature from before the modern era (which began around the time Columbus reached America). By his own admission, Tolkien drew inspiration for Middle-earth from The Bible, ancient Egypt, Greek mythology, Anglo-Saxon poetry, Finnish poetry, Norse mythology, and events from his own lifetime. As numerous researchers have shown, Tolkien was probably also influenced by Babylonian traditions, Greek history, French history, Celtic history and folklore, and American ethnology.

"By wisdom the LORD laid the earth's foundations, by understanding he set the heavens in place"

--Proverbs 3:19, NIV

In the aftermath of the Great Plague, Arnor's culture would have been greatly diminished. Outside of Tharbad, there appear to have been few survivors among Cardolan's people. Cardolan had been closely allied with Arthedain since the War of 1409 because – presumably – the last of Cardolan's leaders had perished in that war. The Kings of Arthedain by the time of the Great Plague had reclaimed authority over both Cardolan and Rhudaur, which no longer existed as an independent kingdom.

Tharbad was a seat of royal authority, and housed a garrison of soldiers from both Arnor and Gondor. When the Great Plague struck the western lands in 1636, Gondor withdrew its garrisons from the borders it had long defended. Tharbad's southern forts were probably abandoned, perhaps at least partially dismantled, and the Gondorian soldiers either died or returned home. If the ancient bridge built by Valandil or his heirs was still standing, it would have made sense for Arnor to let it fall into disrepair or even to destroy it at this time.

Cardolan itself would have seemed desolate, and almost like a landscape denuded by war. Whole villages and farmsteads must have been wiped out by the Plague. However, the border defences Arnor maintained against Angmar must also have been weakened. For why else would Sauron or the Lord of the Nazgul have felt capable of sending evil creatures to inhabit the barrows of Tyrn Gorthad only at this time? Let us assume, therefore, that the border from Weathertop to Rhudaur was probably only poorly defended.

The Greenway from Tharbad to Bree would still have been maintained, and perhaps a few farms remained along this vital pathway. The most likely families to have survived the Plague would have followed the ancient lifestyle Tolkien described for the Folk of Haleth in Brethil. Like Beorn in the Vales of Anduin, these families would have maintained self-sufficient farms with little interaction with outsiders. They would have been reclusive, perhaps producing little or no surplus for sale in

distant city markets.

Tharbad itself would have to have had farms and orchards in the near vicinity, but the city may have experienced an exodus of people, both from fear of the Plague and for lack of food. As farms were emptied by death, Tharbad's citizens would have to face the choice of slow starvation or relocating to empty lands to start anew. Some support from the river itself would have been possible, but it seems obvious that Tharbad would have begun its long decline with the Great Plague.

In Minhiriath, where thousands of years before a great forest had once stood, the empty lands were now open plains. Tolkien indicates there were once settlements along the Baranduin river, but the region does not seem to have held any strategic or economic importance for mid-Third Age Arnor. Across the Baranduin in Eryn Vorn a few descendants of the ancient Gwathuirim still lived much as their ancestors would have done: isolated families eking out an existence on small farms, supplemented by hunting.

Dunland's situation must have been radically altered. It is probable that Tolkien envisioned small villages throughout Dunland for much of the Third Age. The Dunlendings were continually expanding and coming into conflict with their neighbours. By the time Eorl led his people to settle in Calenardhon, for example, Dunlendings had settled throughout the valley of the River Adorn in western Calenardhon. Post-Plague Dunlending culture probably expanded to include portions of Gondor near the Adorn, as well as portions of the Ered Nimrais.

The Dunlendings may have tolerated the Stoor community that had settled close to Tharbad, but after the Great Plague no more Hobbits lived in Dunland. When Gondor withdrew its troops from Tharbad, similar reductions in garrisons may also have been made at Angrenost and Aglarond. The fortresses on the western side of Calenardhon were almost certainly built to defend the region against incursions from Dunland and Enedwaith. The community at Aglarond would eventually move north to merge with the community at Angrenost, and in time the Dunlendings would infiltrate and seize Angrenost, using it as a base from which to attack Rohan.

Dunlendings probably had a clan- or family-based culture where local leaders met occasionally to set policy and work out disputes. This low level of cooperation would have resulted in the kinds of migratory expansions the Dunlendings experienced. As the Dunlending population grew, clans and families would pick up and leave, seeking new lands to settle. The Misty Mountains impeded eastward expansion, and Arnor's garrison at Tharbad impeded northward expansion. So the Dunlendings would have to migrate south.

Games Starting Soon

The following new games are filling up, so if you wish to play, get in touch! [Bracketed dates give the date the game started filling up.]

1650 2wk Gunboat [Game 54]:
4 duos available. [1/12/2006]

1650 2wk [Game 52]:
19 nations available. [16/11/2006]

2950 2wk [Game 27]:
17 nations available. [18/08/2006]

1000 2wk [Game 49]:
20 nations available. [07/08/2006]

Grudge Games

Perry Carlson:
2950 team

John Lamulle:
1650 FP 12 vs. 12 6 players

Face to Face Games

The Ninth UK Face to Face Game

This took place on the 1st weekend of December, in Cardiff. Full details of the event and its results will be available soon!

Other Face to Face Games

We are able to organise Face to Face Games between teams in separate locations. So if you live outside the UK, and have a group of friends interested in playing in a Face to Face Game, please get in touch and we will see if we can organise a game, perhaps against a team in the UK.

A Face to Face What?!

Face to Face Events are weekend-long games of Middle-earth which take place, as the name suggests, at a single location. Turns are run at regular intervals through the weekend, and teams are assigned their own private areas to plan and write orders.

A fixed cost is paid for the entire weekend instead of per turn, the pace is hectic, and it is great fun - virtually everyone who has played one of these games is dying to play another one as soon as they can. It's a great way to learn a lot about the game, to chat to fellow players, and to meet us. Sleeping space is always available, but don't expect much sleep.

Much like Scotland in ancient times and the early Medieval period, Dunland may have become divided into two sub-cultures. The deeper hills and highlands may have harboured insular clans with little interest in trade and commerce. The lowlands may have supported larger communities, small towns and villages, where occasional travellers were welcomed. That would explain how, a thousand years later, Dwarves from Erebor were able to settle in Dunland and find sufficient trade to maintain themselves.

By the year 1650, almost a generation after the Great Plague, Dunland would have been poised for growth. It's clans would have understood by this time that Gondor was not coming back. Arnor was not a threat. The region's economy would have been impacted by the departure of the soldiers and the loss of the Hobbit community. But new lands would be opening up, and Dunlendish clan leaders may have been looking south, anticipating the recovery of ancient lands their ancestors had once walked freely in.

Anyone familiar with traditional views of Celtic history should recall that it was widely believed the ancient Celts would relieve population pressure by dividing their tribes into two groups: one group which

stayed behind and one group which sought out new lands. In practice, Celtic migrations probably were led by charismatic figures who recruited followers from more than one tribe. The great migrations into Greece/Galatia (in Asia Minor), northern Italy, and Britain were comprised of Celts from many tribes.

Tolkien may have envisioned Dunlending expansion following a similar pattern. Every now and then a charismatic leader would recruit a few followers from various clans and lead them off to settle a new region. No clan leader became influential enough to become a king over the entire Dunlending nation. But their society must have recognized leaders, rules, and boundaries. These principles would have guided the relatively stable migration of the Dunlendings, who otherwise would have been constantly at war with each other.

In the next article, we'll examine northern Arnor.

Michael Martinez is a recognised authority on Tolkien and Middle-earth, and a published author on the subject.



Easterlings

The Patsy Neutral?

By Terry Wilson (Easterlings, game 32)

I must admit that I never wanted to play the Easterlings in 1650.. My reasons are the same as many players of the Neutrals - they seem so predestined to be a DS flunky nation by default. Easterlings are so spread out and vulnerable to both sides, so how could this nation be any fun to play? Well those were my initial thoughts on the Easterlings.

Starting Position

The Easterlings is one of the toughest and most challenging positions in the game. Yes, comparable to even the Dragon Lord. Your population centres are spread out all over entire eastern Middle-earth. There is no way to protect them all once you change allegiance to either side. Worse yet, most have no fortifications. You have no emissary skill at game start. Yeap, Patsy on turn 0 most definitely..

But then there are your strengths. You have the best military force of the neutrals. Yes, better than Rhador because you have two substantial effective cavalry forces, and then two mixed groups split both in Rhun and in Khand – great locations as you will see later. You can name 40 commanders, and the chance for higher challenge ranks is very useful for a military role. And that is what the Easterlings are: a military nation. So there is some hope for the Easterlings.

Characters are somewhat disappointing. Where you have decent commanders with several having agent skill, which is great. You have 3 mages, and Gorovod being rank 40 with agent skill is very useful. Another mage with command: again useful. Agent ranks: extremely low, and this has an effect on diplomacy and on how you choose your team. Emissaries: none. Your major problem

Diplomacy

For the Easterlings, diplomacy and communication is your life blood. You must communicate, and communicate well, with both the DS and FP, as well as the Corsairs and Harad. The other neutrals are of no consequence to your destiny, but on the other hand it is always useful to find out what the others are doing, and they may be looking at what you are doing.

So on Turn 0 you must make your email address available to all nations, and welcome diplomacy to all nations. You should have **no** preconditions about joining a particular alliance at game start. You should be most interested in their team play, and how well they are doing against the opposition. Of course, if artifacts are brought up, you should be interested in combat and command artifacts, although you are most likely to get the combat and weak ones. But really you need none of this. What you are most interested in is knowing how well the two teams are playing, and the quality of information being sent to you.

The Character War is your key as the Easterlings. If DS are really killing off FP characters early and taking their agent artifacts, such as the Ring of Impersonation, then you really have no choice but to go DS. If the FP cannot even protect their own characters early on, you would be dead meat going FP. But if they are holding their own, getting the Ring of Wind and the Ring of Curifin and slugging it out in the Character War, you could definitely go FP and have a real chance to be a rare

Easterling nation to finish in the top 3 nations at game end..

Now, reality check: this rarely happens. You could still go FP anyway, but if you choose that then you must wait until after turn 8, build plenty of command-agents, and have your characters do lots of practice. And even then, you will most likely still end up DS. It's the skill and teamplay of the FP that really determines your destiny, not so much the DS – they will be working together because they must!

Building your Nation

Characters

You must create an emissary on turn 1. You need at least 3 or 4, and you could also name another 40 commander to post camps. So you create an emissary on turn 1, he names another, and yes, moves to create a camp in the mountains, as you need steel for long-term potential. The second names another and moves to the same location as you first Emissary, to influence it higher because it will only be at 15 loyalty if he gets it (which is likely). Continue to make emissaries in this manner until you have 3 or 4, but no more. You are a military nation not an economic or character nation, so play to your strengths.

Future Characters after turn 5...If you are going DS you should know by now. In which case build lots of 40 commanders, with a few command-agents. If you are going FP, then go for command-agents with a few straight 40 commanders. But remember, if going FP you must downgrade against both LR and CL before you start any military acts against them!

Send all your mages home save for one, who should join one of the armies in Rhun, learn the best defensive mage spell on his list and practice it.. Your troops have no armour and this will help curb some of your loses, making you more effective for your future team.

Economics

Place camps in the four mountain hexes in your area as soon as you can. You will need both the gold and steel they produce. After that, continue to place camps until your steel production hits over 600, then start upgrading camps to villages.

On turn 2 you must raise your tax rate to 60! You are not going to leave it there, there but it will give you the gold you need to place camps and maintain a larger number of heavy cavalry. Drop it once you get to 600 steel and a loyalty of around 30 in all your new camps, which you can then improve to villages. Your new PCs will compensate for the PC losses, which you will take whether you go FP or DS, and will keep you as a military power.

Medium Tip

Stealing gold.

Agents can be a pain. But invariably in an individual game they will move off if there's nothing to steal, so running a zero economy (where you buy product from the market and/or change tax rates so that there's no gold available to steal) for a turn or two will sort out those pesky agents. If characters become a problem then save up and splurge out characters all in one turn, then run zero again.

Military

Your very first move is to send your cavalry army at your capital to 4228 with a command-agent as backup! You should then transfer by caravan mounts and leather enough to be able to recruit 800HC into that army, and that is all that you need there. This force is then capable of dealing a decisive blow to either the FP or DS if they try to attack you early. You can easily maintain both this and the additional forces if you use the economic suggestions I have made. Future HC recruitment after turn 3 should be at your capital, where 500 can be recruited with bronze weapons in steel armour.

On turn 1 your northern armies in Rhun must recruit 300HI each.. If you have a 40 command character in the infantry army, have him then move and post a few camps: remember to inform the DS and FP of your movements to avoid any misunderstandings.

Also inform both the FP and DS that you have a force at 4228 ready to assist them in your war against their enemy. The experienced players will know from this that you could hurt them, and it also lets them know that you are a competent player, so that they will be less likely to anger you. Also, by positioning your force here you can defend yourself should those Grudge team players attack you because they can. In which case you can retaliate on both of them simultaneously by taking out the Dragon Lord backup, eliminating him, and the NM capital, crippling him. Then watch and see who decides they want to be your friend (grins evilly)!

After you have built your 800 HC, witch to building in the south. 500HC br/st only down there. But continue to recruit at least 300HI in Rhun, and 600 when you're not posting camps up there. Let the swirl of battle rage around you. Pick which way you are going to go then hammer the opposition with a surprise attack when you are at the advantage. This is definitely ruthless, and will anger your opposition no end! And indeed, probably make a permanent enemy of the player attacked. But unfortunately, being the Easterlings you must do this. And indeed, if you are not willing to do so, you may not be cut out to play any Neutral nation. Acting honourably and giving a turn warning of your intent is foolish, and will only give your opponent – who is stronger by being prealigned with his teammates and with disliked relations towards the team you are going to join – time to prepare. So never promise this.

Conclusion

If you follow this guide you will find that whilst the Easterlings appear to be a patsy for the DS, you can actually turn the tide for whichever side you choose, and still remain military powerhouse long after their starting troops are dead and gone. Easterling players clearly must be the most ruthless and evil player in the game, but the effect of their choosing a side has potential for greater implications than, say Harad's economic one, from the ability to take NM capital or ensure Dragon Lord is eliminated.. No other position in the Game can deal such a blow so quickly. Patsy? NO! Easterlings can provide the greatest military Impact in the game.

Maiden Voyage Part II

The concluding part of a two-part article, originally printed in Shadis Magazine. Maiden Voyage describes the first PBM gaming experience of someone who has never participated in a Play-By-Mail game before. Readers should remember that the impressions of a seasoned gamer may differ.

Part II

Within the past few months I had my first experience with battle in Game Systems, Inc.'s Middle-earth PBM. What a fling!

As is par for the course for someone with an ego like my own, I was way over-confident.

While one of my armies, under Regent Amroth, was on its way down to take part in the siege of Dol Guldur along with the Woodmen and Noldo, I passed through a hex occupied by an army under Lieutenant Dûran of the Dog Lord's nation. I could have avoided it. Should have, in fact. However, I was too full of that new-player pride to heed the Woodmen's advice and my own better judgment. I marched straight on through to find that I was outclassed and outnumbered by about 200 troops. I still figured that with my troops' level of training, I'd be able to take him. Wrong. It wasn't a rout, exactly, but Amroth was a distinctly unhappy camper at the end of that turn. Commander Thranduil, on the other hand, was faring quite well in the north. Having learned something from Amroth's spectacular failure, I was more sensible with Thranduil and was successful in aiding in the overthrow of one of the Dog Lord's strongholds that was only a hex or two away from my capital.

No matter how well-trained your armies are, it's always a tense wait between turns, worrying about how your troops are, how

by Heidi Wolters
good the enemy troops are, and whether or not someone's going to make a move on your capital while your armies are away - not that I've ever left my capital unguarded. It's also a fun wait, kind of like waiting to open your Christmas presents. Anticipation does wonders for the workings of the mind.

As I mentioned in my previous article, if you don't want your characters to be batted around like helpless balls of yarn, it's important to keep in contact with your fellow players. They often have a lot of insight to offer. After all, how else would one find out where the best sieges are occurring? It also saves a lot of page-flipping when one of your allies can say, "okay, now before you join in the siege, it would be best if you downgraded relations with the Dog Lord. That's order number.." As I also mentioned before, it's also neat to hook up with other Tolkien fans across the country. It's nice to be able to assume that the people you meet are not only as intelligence and knowledgeable as you are, but also have at least one common interest. A word of caution, though: these friendships can wreak havoc on your phone bill!

Right now I am licking my wounds and working on building up my finances. Upgrading troops can be an expensive process. Things are beginning to heat up quite a bit for us dwellers in Mirkwood. The Dwarves have fallen, and the Eothraim and Northmen have disappeared into the mists. I know of only five Free Peoples nations in the game. I feel that I will be able to hold out for at least a while longer, though, as long as I can keep my armies fed. I am quite anxious to see what happens next, as I also have a feeling that the rest of the Dark Servants will be ganging up on us. That will be quite a feast! We'll at least have a few chunks of their flesh to nibble on the way down!

Tolkien's Parish

The Canonical Middle-earth

By [Steward Jensen](#)

J. R. R. Tolkien's Middle-earth is without question one of the most vividly realized imaginary worlds in all of literature. From its history to its languages to its inhabitants and beyond, it is vast in scope yet intricate in detail, rivalling even the mythologies of entire ancient cultures. A tremendous number of readers have deeply enjoyed Tolkien's stories about that world, and for many the heart of their enjoyment is a love of Middle-earth itself.

What makes Middle-earth such a joy to explore? There are many answers, but the most basic of all is that on some level, Middle-earth simply feels real. This is one of Tolkien's main points in his essay "On Fairy Stories", where he claims that no story can be successful without maintaining "the inner consistency of reality". An author, he says,

"makes a Secondary World which your mind can enter. Inside it, what he relates is 'true': it accords with the laws of that world...The moment disbelief arises, the spell is broken; the magic, or rather art, has failed."

Tolkien spent much of his life seeking to bring this level of consistency to his own "sub-created" world.

Achieving that goal is no easy task in a fantasy story! Tolkien goes on to admit that "it is easier to produce this kind of 'reality' with more 'sober' material". The countless drafts and revisions found in the "History of Middle-earth" books reveal Tolkien's long struggle to perfect his work, but they also make it clear that the process was far from complete. By the end of his life, some of his tales had approached a "finished" form or even become largely fixed by being published, but many remained in flux, and some existed only in outline.

Because of this, it is difficult to know how to think about Tolkien's Secondary World. In a very real sense, it exists only as an evolving creation that changed continuously throughout his life. In the Foreword to *The Silmarillion* Christopher Tolkien makes note of this, explaining that its content "was far indeed from being a fixed text, and did not remain unchanged even in certain fundamental ideas concerning the nature of the world it portrays." How then can we hope to find "the inner consistency of reality" in a world that was in such flux in its author's own mind? The answer, of course, is that we cannot: Middle-earth was never "finished", and knowing Tolkien's fondness for tinkering with his tales they might never have converged on a final form no matter how long he had lived.



However, that cannot be the end of the discussion: the positive experience of so many readers makes it clear that much of the inner consistency of reality is already there. This is due in part to Tolkien's own methods of developing his stories, in which he often "discovered" new details of his world while exploring the logical consequences of some particular historical or linguistic detail. It must also reflect his superb intuition for a good story. In any case, Tolkien's readers do get a sense that Middle-earth "exists" in the sub-creative sense, and many of them take great pleasure in exploring it themselves as best they can.

For this reason, readers who venture beyond *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* are quickly faced with ambiguity: which version of each story is "true" in Tolkien's Secondary World? And more fundamentally, how is it possible to define a version of that world that is stable enough to explore in this way at all? Those who want a full understanding of Middle-earth must read Tolkien's original writings and decide how much weight to assign to each one. In what follows, I discuss some of the issues involved in this process of defining the "canonical" Middle-earth, list some goals that a set of canonical texts should satisfy, and suggest a general approach to meeting those goals that I prefer.

The Oxford English Dictionary defines "canonical" in this context as "of admitted authority, excellence, or supremacy; authoritative." For most of Tolkien's readers, the choice of canonical texts is not a conscious one: they assume that the books are equally authoritative until they first encounter obvious ambiguities. Those assumptions can persist through *The Hobbit*, *The Lord of the Rings*, and *The Silmarillion*, but are quickly shattered by *Unfinished Tales* and the "History of Middle-earth" books.

Once a reader becomes aware of the question of "canonicity", several general responses are common. Some people abandon the idea of a "true" Middle-earth entirely and simply enjoy observing Tolkien's process of creation. That is a very reasonable choice, and I will not fault anyone who decides that reading this essay would be a waste of their time. Among those who still hope to explore a "true" Middle-earth, some treat Tolkien's latest version of any given story as the canonical one. Some choose one reference (typically *The Lord of the Rings*) as absolutely canonical and judge Tolkien's other writings by their consistency with it. And some choose canonical texts based on their personal impression of which "feel right". Each of these approaches has its own strengths and weaknesses, and there are probably as many variations and combinations of them as there are readers to discuss them.

Any attempt to define these strategies more clearly quickly leads to some fundamental observations about this issue. To begin with, it is clear that the canonicity of a text should be judged on a sliding scale rather than a simple yes or no: two choices would obviously not be enough to distinguish the trustworthiness of published books like *The Lord of the Rings*, well-developed texts like the "Annals of Aman" in *Morgoth's Ring*, and early explorations like *The Book of Lost Tales*. A continuous scale will give us the freedom we need.

Less clear at first is whether canonicity should be assigned text by text or detail by detail. Which is to say, if one part of a text is "wrong", should anything else in that text be trusted? It seems that the answer is somewhere between yes and no. Certainly if Tolkien bases a discussion on a "flawed" premise (one that contradicts firmly accepted information), the conclusions that

follow are not reliable. (The essay "The Problem of Ros" in *The Peoples of Middle-earth* is a classic example: Tolkien rejected most of its conclusions himself for this very reason.) On the other hand, one small mistake in a text should not immediately lead unrelated statements there to be rejected as untrustworthy (though twenty mistakes might). The best approach seems to be to make each decision carefully based on context.

Finally, we must address the role of personal preferences. Is it even reasonable to look for a universal definition of the Tolkien canon, or should everyone make their own choice? If we hope to discuss Middle-earth together, we need at least some common ground, but how much personal variation should the definition allow? A major goal of this essay is to seek as much common ground as possible while recognizing that each person's priorities in defining canon differ. No single strategy is right for everyone.

Having established what we mean by "canonical", the next logical step is to list a set of goals that we would like the canonical Middle-earth to satisfy. The list that follows inevitably reflects my personal preferences, but I hope that it will seem at least reasonable to most readers. These goals are listed roughly in order of precedence as I see it (and I suspect that that the order is more likely to be controversial than the contents). The goals are:

1) The inner consistency of reality

Above all, the accepted canonical facts about Middle-earth must describe an internally consistent world. That consistency must be natural, too: "acts of God" should be limited to those Tolkien described, and less complicated solutions are generally preferable.

2) Consistent with published texts

The writings that Tolkien completed and shared with the world should take precedence over those he did not. This seems to have been Tolkien's own strategy most of the time (yes, he made revisions, but not often, and we don't have that freedom). If those texts are themselves inconsistent, things get more complicated; most agree that *The Lord of the Rings* takes precedence over the others, but seeking a mutually consistent solution is best. Problems such as typographical errors are probably best solved by deducing Tolkien's intent from earlier notes and drafts (like those in the "History of *The Lord of the Rings*" books).

3) Preserves the general structure of the mythology

While details both large and small changed all the time, Tolkien's legendarium retained the same basic outline for most of his life. Although Tolkien occasionally considered radical changes to that structure, our only hope of constructing a complete picture of Middle-earth is to base it on the best developed version of the stories. Thus...

4) Based on Tolkien's latest and best developed statements

Tolkien spent most of his life trying to perfect his tales of Middle-earth, so the latest version of each tale or essay is our best guide to his vision. Note, however, that some of his early stories are also some of his most vivid: they may convey the "feel" of events in the history of Middle-earth more successfully than later versions, even when their details are entirely untrustworthy.

5) Makes a satisfying and enjoyable story

This certainly opens the door wide to personal preferences, but it is not a bad way to decide between variants that otherwise seem comparably reliable.

6) Provides as much information as possible:

As a general rule, err on the side of accepting information, even if only tentatively. Don't reject all of a detailed intermediate draft because a few parts of it contradict a later sketch.

With goals like these in mind, we as readers already have a general idea of how to choose a set of canonical texts that will be as satisfying as possible. But I will go one step further and outline a more specific vision of the canonical Middle-earth, which can provide a guiding philosophy to achieve the above goals. This is essentially a statement of my own personal approach, but I think it is worth sharing.

I envision the "true" Middle-earth as the result that Tolkien would eventually have achieved if he had been given unlimited and productive time in which to perfect it. I like to think of this as "Tolkien's Parish", his own version of the "picture made real" that became known as Niggle's Parish in his story "Leaf by Niggle". This is only a metaphor: I do not mean to imply that Tolkien wrote "Leaf by Niggle" with such a specific comparison to his own work in mind. Still, Tolkien's own experience and his thoughts on the nature of art must have contributed to all of his writings, and I would be amazed if the similarities between Tolkien and Niggle were entirely coincidental.

This approach satisfies all of the goals listed above quite naturally. Niggle, like Tolkien, struggled to perfect the details of his art, and when he explored the realization of his picture he found that "Nothing needed altering any longer, nothing was wrong, as far as it had gone, but it needed continuing up to a definite point." Tolkien's Parish would be the Secondary World of Middle-earth itself with all its history, and would of course have "the inner consistency of reality".

Just as the heart of Niggle's country was the Tree, the heart of Tolkien's Parish would be the stories of *The Lord of the Rings* and the other writings Tolkien published while he lived, but perfectly executed, "as he had imagined them rather than as he had made them". The place of Niggle's Tree relative to the rest of his country also has a clear parallel in Tolkien's works. We read that "The Tree was finished...but in the Forest there were a number of inconclusive regions, that still needed work and thought." In the same way, the *Silmarillion* and the other early tales were envisioned but not yet completed. The special appeal of their distant history even matches the special appeal of Niggle's "distant Forest" that one could approach and even enter "without its losing that particular charm". (Some people choose not to read *The Silmarillion* out of the fear that its stories will lose this mystique of distance.)

Because some of Tolkien's latest writings included attempts to remove all references to a flat earth before the sun and moon, it is less clear that Tolkien would have chosen in the end to "preserve the general structure of the mythology". However, he might well have done so: after all, he had seriously considered the same idea years earlier before abandoning it. Tolkien considered these changes in order to make Middle-earth's nature

and history closer to that of the real world, but he might have reconsidered once he realized that no realistic connection to true history was possible.

The connections between this concept of Tolkien's Parish and the final three goals are clear. Naturally, Tolkien's latest writings give good hints about the mythology's ultimate form (and this framework provides guidance on choosing between them). His works, finished and unfinished, are deeply enjoyable to a great many people, and in most ways they only improved as he put more thought and effort into them. And finally, as a full sub-created Secondary World, Tolkien's Parish would be "complete" in its history and content.

Of course, fully understanding Tolkien's Parish in this sense would be impossible, as Tolkien did not in the end achieve it. What value, then, does this concept have for us as fans and readers? First, it provides a common framework for discussions about Middle-earth that makes the role of personal preference clear. Many heated debates could be more polite and productive if the participants understood each other's assumptions.

Second, it guides our efforts to extrapolate beyond those facts directly stated in Tolkien's writings. By trying to fill in gaps in our knowledge in the way Tolkien would have done, searching for answers that bring Middle-earth closer to being a complete and consistent Secondary World, we can gain new insight into his vision. Naturally, however, we have less freedom of choice in this than Tolkien had, so where he could make a final decision we can only make educated guesses.

In the end, though, the greatest benefit of imagining Middle-earth as Tolkien's Parish is the joy of exploring a true Secondary World. Very few authors can equal Tolkien in their ability to portray a world so different from our own and yet so real and alive. By treating that world seriously, as having true existence on an artistic plane, we come as close as is possible to experiencing it as Tolkien himself did, as close as we can to sharing his delight and love of Middle-earth.

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Simple Tip

Moving to your capital.

If your capital is under heavy attack moving back to your capital (810 move char) to get the important orders done is very effective way of getting product/gold out (948 nat transfer). Changing capital seems to be a hard order (from my experience) but if all else fails it can be attempted.

Hall of Fame: Game Winners

Game 5

*1650 module, Individual Game,
Ended on turn 18, 14/09/06*

Victory went to the Free Peoples

Woodmen	Michael Absolom
Northmen	Darren Beyer
Eothraim	Guy Roppa
Arthedain	Alan Jeffrey
Cardolan	Ian Madden
Northern Gondor	Steve Muller
Southern Gondor	Thomas Mcnamara
Dwarves	Andy Farmer
Sinda Elves	Alan Jeffrey
Noldo Elves	Michael Absolom
Haradwaith	Michael Seneca
Easterlings	Darren Beyer

Game 105

*BOFA module, Beginner's Game,
Ended on turn 10, 06/10/06*

Victory went to the Dark Servants

Goblins	Su Austin
Warg Riders	Ed Lane

Game 21

*2950 module, Individual Game,
Ended on turn 17, 01/09/06*

Victory went to the Dark Servants

Witch-King	Frederick Young
Dragon Lord	James Mcisaac
Dog Lord	Brad Brunet
Cloud Lord	Joseph Williams
Blind Sorcerer	Drew Vahrenkamp
Ice King	Tom Francis
Quiet Avenger	Brad Brunet
Fire King	John Briggs
Long Rider	Frederick Young
Dark Lieutenants	James Mcisaac
Rhun Easterlings	Rick Dorsey
Dunlendings	John Briggs
Khand Easterlings	Tom Francis

Game 91

*1650 module, Gunboat Game,
Ended on turn 33, 12/09/06*

Victory went to the Dark Servants

Witch-King	James Howl
Dragon Lord	Mick Johncock
Dog Lord	Mick Johncock
Cloud Lord	Alain Deurwaerder
Blind Sorcerer	Mick Johncock
Ice King	John Devlin
Quiet Avenger	Simon Proctor
Fire King	Alain Deurwaerder
Long Rider	James Howl
Dark Lieutenants	James Howl

Game 6

*1650 module, Grudge Game,
Ended on turn 24, 03/10/06*

Victory went to the Dark Servants

Witch-King	Mike Sankey
Dragon Lord	Kim Andersen
Dog Lord	Kim Andersen
Cloud Lord	Marcin Dylewski
Blind Sorcerer	Edward Mills
Ice King	Kenneth Weed
Quiet Avenger	John Seals
Fire King	Kenneth Weed
Long Rider	Edward Mills
Dark Lieutenants	Marcin Dylewski
Haradwaith	John Seals
Rhudaur	Mike Sankey

Game 95

*1650 module, Individual Game,
Ended on turn 28, 02/10/06*

Victory went to the Dark Servants

Witch-King	Kevin O'keefe
Dragon Lord	Wade Buhr
Dog Lord	Bettina Wagner
Cloud Lord	Bettina Wagner
Blind Sorcerer	Mike Grundy
Ice King	Joseph Williams
Quiet Avenger	Joseph Williams
Fire King	Guy Roppa
Long Rider	Ricard Pitarque
Dark Lieutenants	Guy Roppa
Corsairs	Mike Grundy
Easterlings	Wade Buhr

Game 14

*1650 module, Individual Game,
Ended on turn 14, 13/10/06*

Victory went to the Dark Servants

Witch-King	Stephen Fortson
Dragon Lord	John Wall
Dog Lord	Ian McCulloch
Cloud Lord	James Mcisaac
Blind Sorcerer	Stephen Fortson
Ice King	Paul Roberts
Quiet Avenger	Andy Farmer
Fire King	Tony Ackroyd
Long Rider	Lars Bagge Nielsen
Dark Lieutenants	Stephen Pickering
Dunlendings	Michael Seneca
Rhudaur	Mark Stuckey
Easterlings	Quinton Santini

Game 32

*1650 module, Individual Game,
Ended on turn 18, 07/11/06*

Victory went to the Dark Servants

Witch-King	Charles Bryant
Dragon Lord	Ricard Pitarque
Dog Lord	Guy Roppa
Cloud Lord	Bettina Wagner
Blind Sorcerer	Jason Roberts
Ice King	Darrell Swoap
Quiet Avenger	Douglas Scholz
Fire King	Keith Bowen
Long Rider	Bob Chronley
Dark Lieutenants	Richard Wilson
Haradwaith	Mike Bateman
Rhudaur	Brad Brunet
Easterlings	Terence Wilson

Game 107

*BOFA module, Beginner's Game,
Ended on turn 10, 07/11/06*

Victory went to the Free Peoples

Elves	Kenneth Weed
Dwarves	Derek Hall
Men	John Hall

Game 13

*1650 module, Individual Game,
Ended on turn 18, 05/10/06*

Victory went to the Free Peoples

Woodmen	Wolfgang Geyer
Northmen	Michael Grazebrook
Eothraim	Gareth Gillingham
Arthedain	Michael Grazebrook
Cardolan	Bettina Wagner
Northern Gondor	Skage Hem
Southern Gondor	Nic Tall
Dwarves	Ian Etchells
Sinda Elves	Rick Dorsey
Noldo Elves	Michael Goetzl
Haradwaith	Rob Bresnen

Complex Tip

Products.

At the end of the game I regularly see team-mates with lots of stuff around. Too much bronze or similar. It's not being used then what's the point of having it? Get it used - steel/bronze can be used to upgrade troops. Leather and Mounts can be used for cavalry, and Food for moving armies fed.

Gandalf the Grey

Gandalf the Grey, later Gandalf the White, was a Wizard of the Third Age and the greatest force of good of his time. His tireless work against the Dark Lord Sauron saved Middle-earth from his malice and was the basis for *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*.

Inspiration

Gandalf appears in the list of dwarves in the *Völuspá* of the Elder Edda, the name means "cane-elf". Tolkien took the name along with the other dwarves' names when he wrote *The Hobbit* in the 1930s. He came to regret the creation of this "rabble of eddaic-named dwarves, [...] invented in an idle hour" (HoME 7:452), since it forced him to come up with an explanation of why Old Norse names should be used in Third Age Middle-earth. He solved the dilemma in 1942 by the explanation that Old Norse was a translation of the language of Dale. The figure of Gandalf has other influences from Germanic mythology, particularly Odin in his incarnation as "the Wanderer", an old man with one eye, a long white beard, a wide brimmed hat, and a staff: Tolkien states that he thinks of Gandalf as an "Odinic wanderer" in a letter of 1946 (Letters no. 107).

Tolkien had a postcard labelled *Der Bergeist* ("the mountain spirit"), and on the paper cover in which he kept it, he wrote "the origin of Gandalf" at some point. The postcard reproduces a painting of a bearded figure, sitting on a rock under a pine tree in a mountainous setting. He wears a wide-brimmed round hat and a long cloak and white fawn is nuzzling his upturned hands. Humphrey Carpenter in his 1977 biography said that Tolkien had bought the postcard during his 1911 holiday in Switzerland. However, Manfred Zimmerman (1983) discovered that the painting was by German artist Josef Madlener and dates to the late 1920s. Carpenter concluded that Tolkien was probably mistaken about the origin of the postcard himself. Tolkien must have acquired the card at some time in the early 1930s, at a time when *The Hobbit* had already begun to take shape.

The original painting was auctioned at Sotheby's in London on 12 July 2005 for 84,000 GBP [1]. The previous owner had been given the painting by Madlener in the 1940s and recalled that he had stated the mountains in the background of the painting were the Dolomites.

On the Fourth Age

Two articles offering advice on different aspects of the Fourth Age module.

The Kingdoms

By David Crane

I've been asked to write an article about playing the Kingdoms in Fourth Age. I understand that this is on the premise that I know something about it – what utter folly. Nonetheless, here goes. I take no responsibility. If you use some of this and get squished, **hell mend you!**

Which Kingdom?

The Kingdoms are fun. You get extra characters, extra armies, extra pop centres, extra SNAs, extra artefacts and extra gold. All of this gives you a chance to seize the initiative, so important in war games, including ME; but which Kingdom to choose?

The North Kingdom tends to be remote from the fighting, which can make it difficult to get involved but might give you extra time to build and plan. On the other hand you may have a small number of enemies or fellow neutrals near you that you can bully and either squash or force to join the same side that you do.

The South Kingdom is usually right in the centre of the action, which can be tough because it's very exposed, its borders are practicably undefendable and everyone knows where its pop centres are. Of course, staying neutral for a long time can allow time to plan and build but, once you've declared, you can still find yourself being attacked from 6 directions at once.

Economy

There's a tendency to think that building up the Kingdoms' economies is not necessary because they both start with good economies. However, when it comes to camp placement, etc. the Kingdoms are the same as all other nations. Place/create as many camps as you can. If nothing else, you'll stop other people placing/creating them.

Characters

The really big advantage that both of the Kingdoms have is that they can hire the maximum number of characters (21) from the start of the game. So if you are playing either of the Kingdoms, don't mess about, get yourself 21 characters – on turn 1 if you can manage it! (This may be a bit optimistic, but no later than turn 2.)

The question is: what characters? Emissaries should allow you to create loads of camps and to be influencing away your enemies' pop centres long before they are ready to influence away

yours. Or you can have trained agents swarming all over your enemies' pop centres whilst theirs are much less effective; you can have mages weakening your enemies' characters long before they are in any position to defend themselves; or you could mix and match.

Personally, I prefer to concentrate on a particular skill. Although at present I'm having a fair bit of success with the North Kingdom using mages and emissaries.

Take care when hiring all these characters that you still have enough commanders. Your characters give you a big advantage, especially early in the game, but you will still need armies.

Pop Centres/Fortifications

Both Kingdoms have pop centres that are practicably undefendable because they are too far from their capitals and main areas of operations.

I usually take the view that these pop centres are sources of gold in the early part of the game but are not worth army or character actions to try to defend them. On the basis that I can use emissaries to build up pop centres that are close to my capital and main area of operations, I usually put towers or forts on the far flung pop centres and increase them to towns, in the hope that they will survive long enough for the income to be worth it.

Armies

In this respect the Kingdoms are not significantly different from other neutrals. As I've already said earlier, initiative is very important, so if you plan to declare early, take all of the troops and war machines that you can and hit your enemies before they can hit you.

If you plan to declare late, you can probably start with just a few troops and use the extra gold for naming characters. However, be careful with your negotiations. If one side decides that you are going to join their enemy, they just might attack you before you can build up your position.

Dawning of the Fourth Age

By Gavin Kenny

The first description of Gandalf, then, is preserved in the first pages of *The Hobbit*, dating to the early 1930s. Gandalf's fame is alluded to even before his physical description ("Tales and adventures sprouted up all over the place wherever he went, in the most extraordinary fashion."), directed by the author to the reader, while the protagonist's ("unsuspecting Bilbo") impression is that of an old man with a staff. He had a tall pointed blue hat, a long grey cloak, a silver scarf over which a white beard hung down below his waist, and immense black boots.

Origins

Gandalf is the best-known of the Maiar of the people of Valinor. He was known as Olórin who dwelt in the gardens of Irmo and was the pupil of Nienna. When the Valar decided to send the order of the Wizards to Middle-earth, Olórin was proposed by Manwë, in order to counsel and assist all those in Middle-earth who opposed Sauron. He is said to be one of the wisest of that order, rivalling Saruman, with whom he had a strained, competitive relationship.

Role in The Hobbit

In *The Hobbit*, Gandalf the wizard appears to the Hobbits of the Shire, where he spent a great deal of time, as little more than a vain, fussy old conjurer who entertained children with fireworks during festivals and parties. He (partially) reveals his true nature and power to Bilbo Baggins, when he arranges and partially accompanies a band of thirteen Dwarves to regain the Dwarvish treasure of the Lonely Mountain that was stolen many years before by the dragon, Smaug. It is on this quest that Gandalf finds his sword, Glamdring, and that Bilbo finds the One Ring (though at the time it is mistaken for a lesser ring).

Unknown to the Dwarves or Bilbo, Gandalf had joined the quest in order to investigate what he suspected to be Sauron's resurgence in Mirkwood; he frequently vanishes to "attend to other pressing business"—the nature of which he refuses to discuss. Some years before, he had encountered Thráin II, father of the quest's leader, Thorin Oakenshield, dying in Dol Guldur, and the Dwarf king entrusted him with a map to Erebor. As Dol Guldur had once been one of Sauron's strongholds, Gandalf feared that Sauron's agents were at large again. He met Thorin years later and agreed to go on the quest as a way to investigate further. He insisted, however, on bringing Bilbo along as a "burglar", someone who could sneak into places Dwarves couldn't access and gather information.

The Fourth Age scenario has undergone its second facelift in a few years, which has not only dramatically improved the scenario, but also changed the traditional ideas and strategies that dominated the game when it first came out. This article attempts to discuss the changes in set-up and strategies as a result of these alterations.

Starting Location

My old article on this issue was very definite about this issue – the best place to be was the South, with the only disadvantage being that it might be a bit crowded down there. Two things have changed since that was written. Firstly there is a new regional system for determining where you start. There are now 25 regions that players can choose, giving four preferences for regions that you want to start in. Getting your first choice loses you 5K in gold, your second makes no difference, your third nets you 3K in gold, and your fourth nets you 7K in gold. There is another choice that is popular amongst many players, and that is to leave your region choice to fate (or at least ME Games) and that nets you 10K in gold.

The first strategic choice you need to make, therefore is whether you want an extra 10K in cash in exchange for a random place to start, or whether you want to give up 5K for a location of choice. The reason this is very important is that the difference of 15K can mean seven new camps or 3 new mono ability characters or a mixture of the two. Strategic location CAN be very important, particularly if you are joining with a team, but the economic advantage of the extra camps may prove to be a real winner in keeping your economy going. The thing to look at when making this decision is which region would be the worst region you could get, and whether it would still fit your nation design. Now this may be subjective (there are bound to be those that disagree with me), but I am going to name some of the regions I believe to be the less popular ones (thus most likely to be left to you if you do not specify a region) and explain why I think they are not as popular.

Lorien is a region that contains a real challenge for both evil and neutral nations. The Skinbark Ents still occupy Fangorn and are a real issue for armies travelling through there. Since they will only join FP armies, this is a problem for the other allegiances. There are nice places you can locate within the region but you will be relatively open to three other regions.

Ironically Mordor (North and South) is now much less popular than it formerly was in the older days. There are perhaps for three reasons for this. Firstly the region attracts no regional bonuses to population centres, which makes the economy much worse. Secondly, as there is also no opportunity to get a road bonus in these regions, this makes the economy even less appetising. And the third nail in the coffin is that if you take advantage of the wonderful mountains for defence, your economy is hit even further with the triple whammy of the lack of a non-mountain bonus.

The third area I would highlight as a potential area you might get with a lucky dip is Eriador. With nothing but plains the region is very open to attack from Dunland, North Kingdom, Rhudaur and from the sea. There is no good place to build and you really want friends around you or big fortifications to stop you being wiped out. You get an extra town and 1000 gold to spend on SNAs to compensate, but the trade off for the very poor location is not a great deal.

Finally Mirkwood (north or south) is another region you might expect if you go in for the lottery. You get a fairly decent economy in both regions but start off in locations that are surrounded by potential enemies. North Mirkwood borders six regions and South Mirkwood borders five. With so many places that attacks can come from strategically you need either friends as neighbours and/or a good defence. Fortifications within the forest are a good solution, as the terrain will slow down enemy cavalry coming in at you. With strategically-placed fortified camps the entrances to your domain can be blocked for little loss.

Having looked at what you might get if you take the lottery I will now look at some of the regions that can be used for different nation designs should you select them as a choice.

Rhovanion, Rhun, Iron Hills and Northern Wastes all can lend themselves to Horse Mage nations. As a block they can form an awesome military threat and are good for nations that are going to attack early.

Conversely, locations like Angmar, Harlindon, Forlindon, Rohan and Enedwaith are potentially much better locations for a character-based nation. Agent and emissary builds work so much better in these locales, although as usual they will require other support. All these locations offer something

When Bilbo finds the One Ring, Gandalf is immediately suspicious of the Hobbit's story of evading the Goblins through "being invisible." He privately confronts Bilbo and forces the truth out of him, and is deeply troubled by his story of the ring's powers, as they seem eerily familiar.

He disappears when the company reaches Mirkwood, and does not reappear again until the Battle of Five Armies breaks out, when he brings an army of Eagles to help save the Dwarves and Bilbo. He accompanies Bilbo back to the Shire.

Pre-War of the Ring

Gandalf spends the years between Third Age 2941 and 3001 travelling Middle-earth in search of information on Sauron's resurgence and Bilbo's mysterious ring. He spends as much time as he can in the Shire, however, strengthening his friendship with Bilbo and befriending Bilbo's heir, Frodo. It is also at about this time that he first begins to be suspicious of Saruman. In 3001 he attended Bilbo's "Eleventy-First" (111th) birthday party, bringing many fireworks and a giant flying firework 'dragon', indicating his knowledge of chemistry as well as magic. At the end of the party Bilbo puts on the ring and disappears at the end of his speech, as a prank on his neighbors. Troubled by this, Gandalf confronts his old friend and tries to persuade him to leave it to Frodo. Bilbo becomes hostile and accuses him of trying to steal the ring—which he calls "my precious," much as Gollum, the creature Bilbo had taken the ring from, had. Horrified, Gandalf stands to his full height and almost orders Bilbo to leave it behind. Bilbo returns to his senses, and admits that the ring had been troubling him lately. He then leaves, the only Ring-bearer in history to have left it voluntarily.

Over the next seventeen years, Gandalf travels extensively, searching for answers. Having long sought for Gollum near Mordor, he meets with Aragorn in Mirkwood, who had captured the creature. Gandalf interrogates the wretched creature and learns that Sauron had forced him to tell what he knew about the ring under torture, adding to his suspicions that Bilbo carried The One Ring.

Role in The Lord of the Rings

Upon returning to the Shire, in Chapter 2 of The Fellowship of the Ring, he confirms his suspicions by throwing the Ring into Frodo's hearth fire and reading the writing. He tells Frodo the full history of the Ring, urging him to leave with it and make for Rivendell, the home of the elves, knowing he is in grave danger if he stays at home. Gandalf, while riding near the Shire, is requested by Radagast the Brown to seek out Saruman because the Nazgûl

more to the economy (although the production in Angmar is truly dreadful – trust me).

Agent Builds

There are several builds for agent nations, as follows:

- 1 +20 Kidnap / Assassin
- 2 Agents at 40 / Stealth / +20 Scout
- 3 Agents at 40 / Double Scout / one other SNA

There are pluses and minuses to all the above, but they all work as nation builds. The kidnap/assassination is only for aligned nations and requires a build with a number of starting agents to make good use of it. The more higher-powered agents you have at game start, the sooner you can get them going. Later agents will start at 30 and will be slow to get up to speed. With the second option you ironically want to start with fewer agents (one or two forty pointers), so that you can name more in the first few turns. The more agents you can name the better chance of gaining from stealth. Therefore you want to have most of your non-agents at game start as you will only get one bonus at game start and it is likely to be stealth and go to your agent. The third option is great for a team and you want to have a more rounded nation with more agents - 3 or 4 at game start. As some of your agents will be spending time scouting you need a bigger variety of agents. It is also worth investing in a couple of command agents at game start as they will cost you 10K later. These will later form your company commanders for your two agent companies.

Economic Builds

Economic builds tend to rely around Emissaries at 40 and Buy / Sell at 20%, although you can mix and match them in to other part builds. I used to like taking emissaries at 40 but I no longer do so, and I'll explain why. I usually start the game with 4-5 emissaries who are something like 60, 40, 40, and 30. I find I usually don't need more than an additional one or at most two in the later game, and so this option doesn't net you much benefit. I haven't yet tried an extreme nation set-up with only commanders and emissaries at game start. With a potential 8 emissaries at game start that could really be an interesting theoretical build.

Mage Builds

I know that Clint likes using mages in Fourth Age for other stuff apart from summoning horses, but I really rarely find good other uses for them. I like to have one or two who can do a scry area and maybe

hunt the occasional artefact. However as artefact hunting tends to be a bit of a lottery I often find that my emissaries going for camps have more chance on a random pickup than mages being dedicated to the task. Note that this is a personal opinion on artefact hunting based on the fact that many games of Fourth Age don't last more than 20 turns, and with randomised artefacts it makes hunting them a lot more of a hit-and-miss affair. I know people who think it's a good tactic, but I'd personally rather have an agent stealing, an emissary improving or a commander bringing death to my enemies.

Boat-raiding

Boat raiding nations can be built both all along the shoreline of the sea, and also on the rivers running into Rhun. I rarely see focussed naval nations these days, but I think there is now a good opportunity to have a good sub-theme with the ability to get extras from having a port. With the northern regional bonuses this makes Forlindon, Harlindon and Eriador ideal places in which to include a navy as a sub theme. The North Kingdom has sea access at 0909, and also has a major river which can have a major town on it at 1211. Both these will enable the North Kingdom to have a navy which could prove to be a major surprise.

Hidden Pop Centres

I have never started with a hidden pop centre, but I do have a piece of solid advice about them. Do not make your capital hidden, but instead make your back-up the hidden pop centre. You can have your back-up three hexes away from your capital, and the Kingdoms (who get a free scry of everyone's capitals) will know roughly where your capital is within a hex or two. Making a hidden back-up will ensure that your enemies will have trouble finding your nation if they take out your capital.

Emissaries

On my builds I never have less than four emissaries, and usually have five. Having five emissaries means that I probably won't need to name any more emissaries throughout the course of the game. I can't stress enough how important camping is in Fourth Age. The average time that the camp limit is reached in a Fourth Age game is turn 4. Even with the recent changes, if you get to create a camp in turn five, consider yourself lucky. Camps make production, which you can use or sell to keep your economy going. Prices in Fourth Age tend to be around the minimal, with the exception of mounts that usually get bought out. If you produce a lot of mounts and are not using them then it would be best to sell them within your team rather than selling them to the market. This means that the other team

had come forth and crossed the River Anduin. Gandalf leaves a note for Frodo with Butterbur, an inn-keeper in Bree, and heads towards Isengard. Once there, he is betrayed and held captive by Saruman, who had already come under the influence of Sauron due to his use of the palantír. Eventually rescued by Gwahir the eagle, he only reaches the Shire after Frodo has set out and does not meet up with him until Frodo reaches Rivendell on October 20. Taking leadership of the Fellowship (nine representatives of the free peoples of Middle-earth "set against the Nine Riders"), he and Aragorn lead the hobbits and their companions on an unsuccessful effort to cross Mount Caradhras in winter. Then they take the "dark and secret way" through the Mines of Moria, where they meet an ancient demon, a Balrog, one of the Maiar corrupted by Melkor in the First Age. Since Gandalf and the Balrog were both Maiar, they were beings of the same order. As they faced each other, Gandalf broke the Bridge in front of him, but as the Balrog fell it wrapped its whip around Gandalf's ankle, which dragged him down to hanging onto the edge. As the Company looked in horror, Gandalf cried, "Fly, you fools!" and let go. Neither he nor the Balrog was killed by the fall, and Gandalf pursued the creature for eight days until they climbed to the peak of Zirakzigil. Here they fought for two days and nights. In the end, the Balrog was cast down and it broke the mountain-side as it fell. Gandalf himself died following this ordeal. Gandalf is "brought back" (either resurrected or reincarnated), returning as a more imposing white-clad figure, Gandalf the White. In Fangorn forest he encounters the Three Walkers (Aragorn, Gimli, and Legolas) who were tracking Fellowship members (and Frodo's cousins) Merry and Pippin. Arriving in Rohan, Gandalf finds that its king, Théoden, has been weakened by Saruman's agent, Gríma Wormtongue. He breaks Wormtongue's hold over Théoden, and convinces the king to join them in fighting Sauron. They then go on to prosecute the war against Isengard and Barad-dûr (The Two Towers). After the overthrow of Saruman, Gandalf breaks his staff and banishes him from the Order of Wizards. He then takes Pippin with him to Gondor to aide in the defense of the city. Gandalf buys the city precious time by facing off against the Witch-king of Angmar, the Lord of the Nazgûl, giving the Rohirrim enough time to reach the city during the Battle of Pelennor Fields. Gandalf leads the final battle against Sauron's forces at the Black Gate, waging an all-out battle to distract the Dark Lord's attention away from Frodo and Sam, who were at the very same moment scaling Mount Doom to destroy the Ring. Without his efforts, Sauron

will not be able to access those mounts and make cavalry to use against you.

Turn One

There are several things that you can do on turn 1, and you need to balance the various needs. One of the first things I look at is how many command orders I have, and note how many of them are over 40 (likely to succeed). The potential first turn orders break down as follows:

Move your tax rate

There are two choices here for changing your tax rate. Either you can increase your tax rate to 60% or decrease it to 39%. Decreasing it will ensure you go down to the next boundary whereby your pop centres will gain 0-2 loyalty per turn. This will help you later when you want to increase your pop centre sizes without losing much tax. Increasing to 60% will increase tax yield for a slight loss of loyalty. However you will not have put down camps yet, so if you later lower the tax rate the new camps you create during turns 2 to 4 will then gain in loyalty.

Create Characters

Having only eight characters at game start is really limiting, and with all the things you need to do, creating new characters will let you do them quicker. As you need to have characters at the capital to do this, the first turn when you have them all there is perfect for creating new characters. Some tactics call for creating four characters on turn 1, some create two on turn 1 and two on turn 2.

Pick up Artefacts

There is no point in paying for artefacts if you are not going to use them. With most of the characters moving out of the capital on turn 1, you want to pick up the artefacts and use them. Obviously you can pick them up with the characters that you create on turn 1, but the earlier you do this the better.

Increase Capital to a City

A commonly employed tactic is to improve your capital to a city on turn 1 by influencing your capital up with your emissaries (before they depart to go camping) and improving with your best emissary. Your capital starts at 75 loyalty and four improves should bring it to around 80. With a 60-point emissary you shouldn't fail to improve it. This will give you additional revenue per turn and allows you to begin recruiting 500 troops per turn. The disadvantage is that it will cost you 10,000 gold, and that will drastically reduce your starting money. If you plan to do this ensure that you work out your economy to account

for all the things you plan to do.

Pick up Ships

If you have a navy at your capital you may well want to pick up the ships so that you can create a bigger navy.

Downgrade

If you are anticipate attacking immediately then you may want to downgrade on the first turn. It depends on what your relations are, but if you are aligned and wanting to attack a neutral or vice versa, then you need to downgrade on the first turn so that when your army lands on turn 2 you can do a second downgrade for maximum effect. A FP vs. DS battle only requires one downgrade for maximum effect and this one can be done on turn 2 before the attack.

Recruit and/or move army

If you are looking at attacking or creating a defensive army, you may look at recruiting and moving that army off. If you've created a very aggressive start-up with a big army and you have a target in your sights then a quick attack can really knock a nation down, particularly a co-ordinated attack on a major town.

Sell Product

Any character can perform this, but often prices are the best they will be all game on turn 1. Therefore a quick tactical sell of food whilst it is at 2 gold per unit may be a good for maintaining an early treasury at a good rate.

Buy Product

At game start there are often mounts in stock at a reasonable price. If you don't make mounts yourself either from production or horse mages, then a quick tactical buy of them from the market may be a good move. Even if you don't use them the price should have gone up a lot in a couple of turns, so that you can actually make a profit from selling them. If you have the Buy/Sell +20% advantage then it will be even better.

And Then...

After the first turn the possibilities are endless. A piece of general advice, though is to talk to the neutrals – they appreciate good communication from a team. also, do something to help your team out. If everyone does something to help the team then the team will tend to do better. Far too often I have seen one or two people doing most of the work in a team, and the team's performance each turn relies on how much work the workers on the team put in. If everyone puts in the work then the team's performance will be more consistent.

may well have learned where the two Hobbits were and killed them before they could complete their task.

Three years later, Gandalf, now having spent over 2,000 years in Middle-Earth, departs with Frodo, Galadriel, Bilbo, and Elrond across the sea to the Undying Lands.

Appearance

Gandalf initially appears as an old man with a grey beard, a grey cloak and a large, pointed blue hat. Although some of the Wise know his true nature, others mistake him for a simple conjuror. After he is resurrected the change of his signature colour from grey to white is significant, for he has been sent back to replace the corrupt Saruman as the chief of the Wizards. In the book he says that he has himself become what Saruman should have been.

Círdan the Shipwright seemed to have foreseen this, for he entrusted the care of Narya, the ring of Fire, one of the Three Rings of the Elves to Gandalf rather than Saruman.

Names and Titles

* Olórin, his name in Valinor and in very ancient times. "Olórin was my name in my youth in the West that is forgotten." It is Quenya and its meaning is associated with dreams (perhaps "dreamer" or "of dreams"), from the root ÓLOS-

* Mithrandir, his Sindarin name, used in Gondor and meaning "Grey Pilgrim"

* Incánus, his name in the South, of unclear language and meaning. Tolkien several times changed his mind about it, varying between the Latin word Incanus meaning Grey, a possible Westron invention meaning Greymantle, or even an Elvish word Ind-cano meaning "Mind Ruler"

* Tharkûn, his name to the Dwarves, probably meaning "Staff Man"

* The White Rider, his name while riding the great horse Shadowfax

* Gandalf Greyhame, given to him by Gríma Wormtongue

* Stormcrow, a reference to his arrival being associated with times of trouble

Within the legendarium, "Gandalf" translates an unknown name of the meaning "Elf-of-the-wand (or cane/staff)", or more literary "Wand-elf", in old northern Mannish. Most denizens of Middle-earth incorrectly assumed Gandalf was a Man (human), although he was really a Maia spirit (approximately equivalent to an angel). However, a less common misconception that occurred during the beginning of his career in Middle-earth was that for someone to be immortal and use as much magic as he did, he must have been an Elf. Although it soon became apparent to all that he couldn't be an Elf, as he was old and Elves don't generally age, the nickname stuck with him. He later gave it as his name to others he met who didn't know its original meaning.

J.R.R. Tolkien – Part II: Writing

Taken from tolkiengateway.net

Beginning with *The Book of Lost Tales*, written while recuperating from illness during World War I, Tolkien devised several themes that were reused in successive drafts of his legendarium. The two most prominent stories, the tales of Beren and Lúthien and that of Túrin, were carried forward into long narrative poems (published in *The Lays of Beleriand*). Tolkien wrote a brief summary of the mythology these poems were intended to represent, and that summary eventually evolved into *The Silmarillion*, an epic history that Tolkien started three times but never published. The story of this continuous redrafting is told in the posthumous series *The History of Middle-earth*. From around 1936, he began to extend this framework to include the tale of *The Fall of Númenor*, which was inspired by the legend of Atlantis.

Tolkien was strongly influenced by Anglo-Saxon literature, Germanic and Norse mythologies, Finnish mythology, the Bible, and Greek mythology. The works most often cited as sources for Tolkien's stories include *Beowulf*, the *Kalevala*, the *Poetic Edda*, the *Volsunga saga* and the *Hervarar saga*¹. Tolkien himself acknowledged Homer, Oedipus, and the *Kalevala* as influences or sources for some of his stories and ideas. His borrowings also came from numerous Middle English works and poems. A major philosophical influence on his writing is King Alfred's Anglo-Saxon version of *Boethius' Consolation of Philosophy* known as the *Lays of Boethius*. Characters in *The Lord of the Rings*, such as Frodo, Treebeard and Elrond make noticeably Boethian remarks.

In addition to his mythological compositions, Tolkien enjoyed inventing fantasy stories to entertain his children. He wrote annual Christmas letters from Father Christmas for them, building up a series of short stories (later compiled and published as *The Father Christmas Letters*). Other stories included *Mr. Bliss*, *Roverandom*, *Smith of Wootton Major*, *Farmer Giles of Ham* and *Leaf by Niggle*. *Roverandom* and *Smith of Wootton Major*, like *The Hobbit*, borrowed ideas from his legendarium. *Leaf by Niggle* appears to be an

autobiographical work, where a "very small man", Niggle, keeps painting leaves until finally he ends up with a tree.

Tolkien never expected his fictional stories to become popular, but he was persuaded by a former student to publish a book he had written for his own children called *The Hobbit* in 1937. However, the book attracted adult readers as well, and it became popular enough for the publisher, George Allen & Unwin, to ask Tolkien to work on a sequel.

Even though he felt uninspired on the topic, this request prompted Tolkien to begin what would become his most famous work: the epic three-volume novel *The Lord of the Rings* (published 1954–55). Tolkien spent more than ten years writing the primary narrative and appendices for *The Lord of the Rings*, during which time he received the constant support of the Inklings, in particular his closest friend C.S. Lewis, the author of *The Chronicles of Narnia*. Both *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* are set against the background of *The Silmarillion*, but in a time long after it.

Tolkien at first intended *The Lord of the Rings* as a children's tale like *The Hobbit*, but it quickly grew darker and more serious in the writing. Though a direct sequel to *The Hobbit*, it addressed an older audience, drawing on the immense back story of Beleriand that Tolkien had constructed in previous years, and which eventually saw posthumous publication in *The Silmarillion* and other volumes. Tolkien's influence weighs heavily on the fantasy genre that grew up after the success of *The Lord of the Rings*.



Tolkien continued to work on the history of Middle-earth until his death. His son Christopher, with some assistance from fantasy writer Guy Gavriel Kay, organized some of this material into one volume, published as *The Silmarillion* in 1977. In 1980 Christopher Tolkien followed this with a collection of more fragmentary material under the title *Unfinished Tales*, and in subsequent years he published a massive amount of background material on the creation of Middle-earth in the twelve volumes of *The History of Middle-earth*. All these posthumous works contain unfinished, abandoned, alternative and outright contradictory accounts, since they were always a work in progress, and Tolkien only rarely settled on a definitive version for any of the stories. There is not even complete consistency to be found between *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit*, the two most closely related works, because Tolkien was never able to fully integrate all their traditions into each other. He commented in 1965, while editing *The Hobbit* for a third edition, that he would have preferred to completely rewrite the entire book.

The John P. Raynor, S.J., Library at Marquette University in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, preserves many of Tolkien's original manuscripts, notes and letters; other original material survives at Oxford's Bodleian Library. Marquette has the manuscripts and proofs of *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit*, and other manuscripts, including *Farmer Giles of Ham*, while the Bodleian holds the *Silmarillion* papers and Tolkien's academic work.

The Lord of the Rings became immensely popular in the 1960s and has remained so ever since, ranking as one of the most popular works of fiction of the twentieth century, judged by both sales and reader surveys. In the 2003 "Big Read" survey conducted by the BBC, *The Lord of the Rings* was found to be the "Nation's Best-loved Book". Australians voted *The Lord of the Rings* "My Favourite Book" in a 2004 survey conducted by the Australian ABC. In a 1999 poll of Amazon.com customers, *The Lord of the Rings* was judged to be their favourite "book of the millennium". In 2002 Tolkien was voted the ninety-second "greatest Briton" in a poll conducted by the BBC, and in 2004 he was voted thirty-fifth in the SABC3's Great South Africans, the only person to appear in both lists. His popularity is not limited just to the English-speaking world: in a 2004 poll inspired by the UK's "Big Read" survey, about 250,000 Germans found *The Lord of the Rings* (*Der Herr der Ringe*) to be their favourite work of literature.

Languages

Both Tolkien's academic career and his literary production are inseparable from his love of language and philology. He specialised in Greek philology in college, and in 1915 graduated with Old Icelandic as special subject. He worked for the Oxford English Dictionary from 1918. In 1920, he went to Leeds as Reader in English Language, where he claimed credit for raising the number of students of linguistics from five to twenty. He gave courses in Old English heroic verse, history of English, various Old English and Middle English texts, Old and Middle English philology, introductory Germanic philology, Gothic, Old Icelandic, and Medieval Welsh. When in 1925, aged 33, Tolkien applied for the Rawlinson and Bosworth Professorship of Anglo-Saxon, he boasted that his students of Germanic philology in Leeds had even formed a "Viking Club".

Privately, Tolkien was attracted to "things of racial and linguistic significance", and he entertained notions of an inherited taste of language, which he termed the "native tongue" as opposed to "cradle tongue" in his 1955 lecture *English and Welsh*, which is crucial to his understanding of race and language. He considered west-midland Middle English his own "native tongue", and, as he wrote to W.H. Auden in 1955 (*Letters*, no. 163), "I am a West-midlander by blood (and took to early west-midland Middle English as a known tongue as soon as I set eyes on it)".

Parallel to Tolkien's professional work as a philologist, and sometimes overshadowing this work, to the effect that his academic output remained rather thin, was his affection for the construction of artificial languages. The best developed of these are Quenya and Sindarin, the etymological connection between which are at the core of much of Tolkien's legendarium. Language and grammar for Tolkien was a matter of aesthetics and euphony, and Quenya in particular was designed from "phonæsthetic" considerations. It was intended as an "Elvenlatin", and was phonologically based on Latin, with ingredients from Finnish and Greek (*Letters*, no. 144). A notable addition came in late 1945 with Númenórean, a language of a "faintly Semitic flavour", connected with Tolkien's Atlantis myth, which by *The Notion Club Papers* ties directly into his ideas about inheritability of language, and via the "Second Age" and the Eärendil myth was grounded in the legendarium, thereby providing a link of Tolkien's 20th-century "real primary world" with the mythical past of his Middle-earth.

Tolkien considered languages inseparable from the mythology associated with them, and he consequently took a dim view of auxiliary languages. In 1930 a congress of Esperantists were told as much by him, in his lecture *A Secret Vice*, "Your language construction will breed a mythology", but by 1956 he concluded that "Volapük, Esperanto, Ido, Novial, &c &c are dead, far deader than ancient unused languages, because their authors never invented any Esperanto legends" (*Letters*, no. 180).

The popularity of Tolkien's books has had a small but lasting effect on the use of language in fantasy literature in particular, and even on mainstream dictionaries, which today commonly accept Tolkien's revival of the spellings *dwarves* and *elvish* (instead of *dwarfs* and *elfish*), which had not been in use since the mid-1800s and earlier. Other terms he has coined, like legendarium and eucatastrophe, are mainly used in connection with Tolkien's work.

Works Inspired by Tolkien

In a 1951 letter to Milton Waldman, Tolkien writes about his intentions to create a "body of more or less connected legend", of which:

"The cycles should be linked to a majestic whole, and yet leave scope for other minds and hands, wielding paint and music and drama."

– *The Letters of J.R.R. Tolkien*, #131

The hands and minds of many artists have indeed been inspired by Tolkien's legends. Personally known to him were Pauline Baynes (Tolkien's favourite illustrator of *The Adventures of Tom Bombadil* and *Farmer Giles of Ham*) and Donald Swann (who set the music to *The Road Goes Ever On*). Queen Margrethe II of Denmark created illustrations to

The Lord of the Rings in the early 1970s. She sent them to Tolkien, who was struck by the similarity to the style of his own drawings.

But Tolkien was not fond of all the artistic representation of his works that were produced in his lifetime, and was sometimes harshly disapproving.

In 1946, he rejects suggestions for illustrations by Horus Engels for the German edition of the *Hobbit* as "*too Disnified*",

"*Bilbo with a dribbling nose, and Gandalf as a figure of vulgar fun rather than the Odinic wanderer that I think of.*"

– *The Letters of J.R.R. Tolkien*, #107

He was sceptical of the emerging fandom in the United States, and in 1954 he returned proposals for the dust jackets of the American edition of *The Lord of the Rings*:

"*Thank you for sending me the projected 'blurbs', which I return. The Americans are not as a rule at all amenable to criticism or correction; but I think their effort is so poor that I feel constrained to make some effort to improve it.*"

– *The Letters of J.R.R. Tolkien*, #144

And in 1958, in an irritated reaction to a proposed movie adaptation of *The Lord of the Rings* by Morton Grady Zimmerman:

"*I would ask them to make an effort of imagination sufficient to understand the irritation (and on occasion the resentment) of an author, who finds, increasingly as he proceeds, his work treated as it would seem carelessly in general, in places*

recklessly, and with no evident signs of any appreciation of what it is all about."

– *The Letters of J.R.R. Tolkien*, #207

He went on to criticise the script scene by scene ("yet one more scene of screams and rather meaningless slashings"). But Tolkien was in principle open to the idea of a movie adaptation. He sold the film, stage and merchandise rights of *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* to United Artists in 1968, while, guided by scepticism towards future productions, he forbade Disney should ever be involved:

"*It might be advisable [...] to let the Americans do what seems good to them — as long as it was possible [...] to veto anything from or influenced by the Disney studios (for all whose works I have a heartfelt loathing).*"

– *The Letters of J.R.R. Tolkien*, #13

United Artists never made a film, though at least John Boorman was planning a film in the early seventies. It would have been a live-action film, which apparently would have been much more to Tolkien's liking than an animated film. In 1976 the rights were sold to Tolkien Enterprises, a Saul Zaentz company, and the first movie adaptation (an animated rotoscoping film) of *The Lord of the Rings* appeared only after Tolkien's death (in 1978, directed by Ralph Bakshi). The screenplay was written by the fantasy writer Peter S. Beagle. This first adaptation, however, only contained the first half of the story that is *The Lord of the Rings*. In 1977 an animated TV production of *The Hobbit* was made by Rankin/Bass, and in 1980 they produced an animated film titled *The Return of the King*, which covered some of the portion of *The Lord of the Rings* that Bakshi was unable to complete. In 2001-3 *The Lord of the Rings* was filmed in full and as a live-action film as a *trilogy of films* by Peter Jackson.



Cover design for the three volumes of *The Lord of the Rings* by J.R.R. Tolkien

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- *Finding God in the Lord of the Rings'*. Kurt D. Bruner and Jim Ware (2003), ISBN 084238555X
- *Tolkien and C.S. Lewis: The Gift of Friendship*. Colin Duriez (2003), ISBN 1587680262

Player Ratings

For more information on how these ratings are calculated, and what each means, please take a look at our website:

www.middleearthgames.com

Valar Rating

Ranking	Rating	Player
1	2078	John Seals
2	1839	Mike Sankey
↑3	1821	Andrew Jones
↑4	1797	Clint Oldridge
↑5	1755	Sam Roads
↓6	1745	Robert Turkot
↑=7	1729	Jason Vafiades
↑=7	1729	Jeppe Skytte Spicker
↑9	1726	Richard Wilson
↓10	1716	David Ruzic

Maia Rating

Ranking	Rating	Player
1	1989	Ernest Hakey
↑2	1869	Alan Jeffrey
↓3	1856	Mike Mulka
↑4	1855	Andrew Jones
↓5	1854	Jeff Glover
=6	1844	Randall Brady
↑=6	1844	John Briggs
↓8	1842	Mike Barber
↑9	1829	Clint Oldridge
↑10	1827	Richard Wilson

Istari Rating

Ranking	Rating	Player
1	2296	Steven Mcabee
↑2	2118	Clint Oldridge
↓3	2099	Ernest Hakey
4	2034	Chesley Coughlin
↓5	1963	Phillip Vogel
↑6	1939	Frederick Young
↑7	1934	Kim Andersen
↑8	1867	Andrew Jones
↓9	1831	Mike Sankey
10	1817	Peter Kessler

Nazgul Rating

Ranking	Nazgul	Player	Games Played	Games Won	Games Dropped
↑1	100%	Jeppe Skytte Spicker	10	10	
↓=2	100%	Rober Turkot	7	7	
↓=2	100%	James Adams	7	7	
↓=2	100%	David Ruzic	7	7	
↑=5	100%	Michael Childs	6	6	
↓=5	100%	Rick Halvorsen	6	6	
↑=7	100%	Mick Johncock	5	5	
↑=7	100%	Marcin Dylewski	5	5	
↓9	92%	Mike Sankey	12	11	
↑10	91%	Sam Roads	11	10	2

Ainur Rating

Ranking	Rating	Team Name Or Captain
1	1832	David Ruzic
2	1781	Us 2
↑3	1776	The Sarumen - Retired
↓4	1769	Aussie
↓5	1761	GM
↓6	1728	Andraste
7	1720	US 1
8	1718	John Simpson
9	1704	Jerry Mellerick
10	1691	Marc Pinsonneault

Council of the Wise - Enemy Player

Ranking	Votes	Player
1	11	Michael Reisfeld
2	8	Ricard Pitarque
↑=3	7	Paul Brandon
↑=3	7	Clint Oldridge
↑=3	7	R. Kevin Given
=3	7	John Briggs
↓=7	6	Guy Roppa
↑=7	6	Steve Muller
↓=9	5	David Holt
=9	5	Skage Hem
↓=9	5	Harry Nikokavouras
↑=9	5	Alain Deurwaerder
↓=9	5	Ernest Hakey
↑=9	5	Michael Welsch

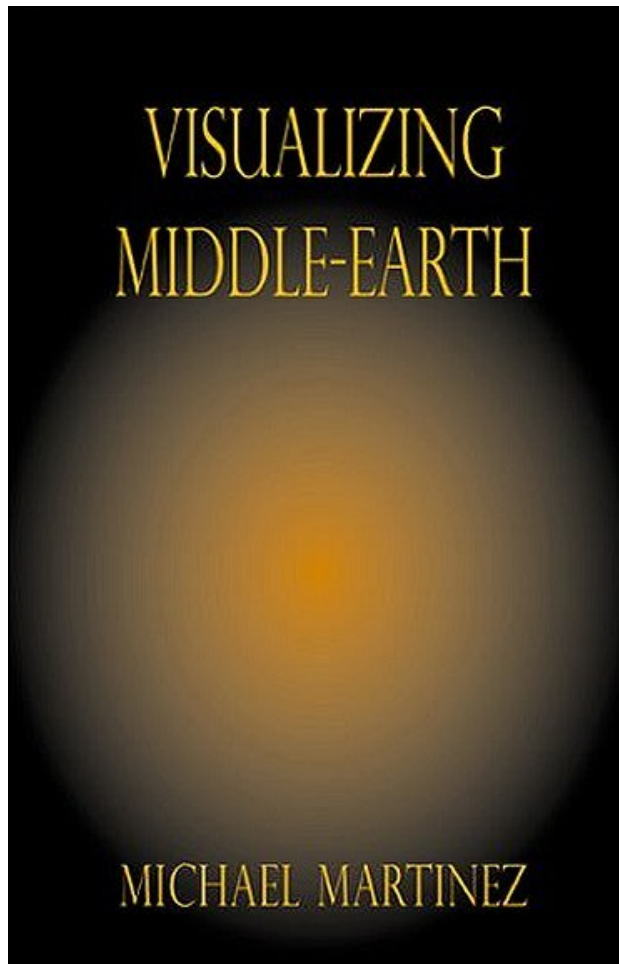
Council of the Wise - Individual Player

Ranking	Votes	Player
1	26	Ernest Hakey
2	25	Ricard Pitarque
↑3	21	Brad Brunet
↑4	20	Clint Oldridge
↑5	17	Michael Welsch
↓6	16	Harry Nikokavouras
↑7	15	Darren Beyer
↑=8	14	Matt Ashley
↓=8	14	David Holt
↑=10	13	Jeffrey Horne
↑=10	13	Jesper Lyster

Council Of the Wise - Team Player

Ranking	Votes	Player
=1	22	Ricard Pitarque
=1	22	Ernest Hakey
=3	21	Manolis Perakis
↑=3	21	Brad Brunet
↑5	18	Michael Welsch
↓=6	16	David Holt
↓=6	16	Ian Etchells
↓=6	16	John Briggs
↑=9	14	Matt Ashley
↑=9	14	Mike Barber
↑=9	14	Panayatois Mertikopoulos





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