

OTHER MINDS

The Unofficial Role-Playing Magazine for J.R.R. Tolkien's Middle-earth and beyond

OTHER MINDS Magazine Issue II, January 2011

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The next Issue of *Other Minds* is not themed, every contribution is eligible!
Submission deadline is April 1 2011

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Editorial: A belated Christmas and New Year's present

As announced (and probably suspected) *Other Minds, Issue 11* is significantly late. Due to numerous delays this Issue should be seen as a Christmas and New Year's present, especially as it has become our biggest Issue so far with 125 pages (surpassing our previous record-holder Issue 6 with its 77 pages). Well, that's the way it goes when real life demands its fair (or more than that) share of your available time. To compensate for the delay and reward your patience, we have assembled a very wide variety of different submissions that will make for hours of good reading and gaming!

To polish up this Issue of *Other Minds*, we have a plea to you our readers. We feel that it is time to get a more objective picture about the state of *Other Minds* than we have received so far, so we have decided to start a survey. You'll find more detailed information on that in the *Inside Information* section on page 4.

Concerning artwork, *Other Minds* has been fortunate again with renowned artist John Howe (yes—**THE** John Howe) giving us permission to use his art within the pages of our magazine. We are very proud of that. Please check out his webpage at <http://www.john-howe.com> for more information about John and his work.

As announced previously, *Other Minds* strives to be a magazine not bound to specific game mechanics, but open to any system. For us it's the magnificent setting that is the focus of our gaming interests, not any specific rules. In previous contributions, game stats for various systems have been provided. Now, it would be fortunate to have these translated into others as well so that users of other game systems may enjoy it too.

Such "translations"—and other smaller gaming content—shall have its own category within *Other Minds*. See this Issue's *Inside Information* for more information on this topic.

We also introduce a new system of categorizing *Other Minds*' content, quite different from the previous one. Again, see *Inside Information* for more information on this.

Content

The most important part of each Issue—the content—is again something that speaks for itself. This time we have a balanced selection of content useful for both the gamer and the scholarly-minded reader. For the passionate gamers among you, prepare your character sheets and dice for what lies ahead!

First comes the *magnum opus* of this issue. 'Isildur's Heir' has produced **Agazlam**, a stunning description (complete with images and floorplans) of a really grand Second Age-era border fortress complex of Mordor. From a few lines in *The Lord of the Rings* he derived the inspiration for this great work of Middle-earth architecture that is perfect for use with any campaign set in the 'Dark Years' when Sauron dominated almost all of the continent. Agazlam is much more than a simple site description for a dungeon-crawl or wargaming scenario though. It is designed and detailed as a believable fortification within the greater economical and military context of Sauron's rule in the Second Age.

The next contribution is by well-known *Other Minds* contributor José Enrique Vacas de la Rosa. His piece **Roleplaying Battles in Middle-earth** deals with mechanisms for large-scale

battles or smaller skirmishes that cannot be handled by the normal individual combat rules. It focuses on the area in which the characters are fighting, and offers them the chance to influence the outcome on their part of the battlefield.

Daniel “Vaco” Vacaflores has done it again! He’s progressing with his vision of appropriate rules for roleplaying in Middle-earth. His **Simplified System—Chronicles of Middle-earth** gives you manageable rules to handle gaming in a carefully-researched spirit appropriate to this great setting, without going into excessive details or “realism”. Enjoy his great work!

Next comes our new category of **Game Aids** with a contribution by—again—José Enrique where he provides game stats for Decipher’s *Lord of the Roleplaying Game* for the “Giant Armored Moldewarp” from *Other Minds Issue 4* which only had MERP/RM stats in it.

Thomas Gießl returns to us with a scholarly piece. Now his interest has touched on the **Tale of Years** found in the Appendix B of *The Lord of the Rings*. Thomas analyzes the problems associated with the Tale of Years as published and offers a suggestion to improve it for both the Second and Third Age, basing his analysis solely on Tolkien’s own information.

Tom Davie also returns, with a piece for practical gaming. His contribution titled **Things a PC should know** addresses some common knowledge for Player Characters. It is designed as an aid for gamers to orientate themselves if they are not extremely familiar with Tolkien’s world and get a quick overview what their characters are likely to know. It is designed as a two-page hand-out which can be found as Appendix A of this Issue.

Last but not least comes a valuable piece by *Other Minds* co-editor Neville Percy. His essay on **Únati and Axani** deals with the laws and boundaries set by

Eru which apply to all individuals within Arda, be they the greatest of the Valar or a simple Hobbit. This excellent treatment of the matter will give you a good grasp of the peculiarities of Middle-earth and how even with “magic” many Fantasy RPG clichés are not possible when you respect the Tolkien sources.

RPG news

There is even some news on the new *The One Ring: The Lord of the Rings Roleplaying Game* from Cubicle 7 (in case you haven’t heard it already). Its Italian designer, Francesco Nepitello, gave a bit of info on it in an interview in Italian (see link at bottom of the page). Italian speaker Gabriele Quaglia was so kind as to give us a short summary of the content. According to the current schedule it will be published in early 2011 and come in a box with two books, each about 60 pages strong. It will focus on being the “good guys”, e.g. actively fighting against the Shadow in its many incarnations. That sounds reminiscent of Decipher’s *LotRRPG* game’s focus on being “good and faithful”. The rules seem to be geared toward being simple with a strong focus on game-flow and Tolkienistic feeling rather than gritty realistic detail. It will feature a system of corruption (called “Shadow” here) that is used as a measure of a character’s integrity and faithfulness. It will also follow a novel approach to the nature of the campaign not suggested in *MERP* or *LotRRPG*: Its intended use of “campaigning seasons” with times of rest/recuperation and “civilian life” at home is reminiscent of *RuneQuest 3*, *Ars Magica*’s and *Pendragon*’s style of play. The latter’s idea of a dynastic and/or multi-generational campaign seems to play a role here as well. Concerning the temporal and regional setting it will also follow a new path different from *MERP* or *LotRRPG*. The game will be set in the Rhovanion/Mirkwood area just after the death of Smaug and focus on the actions of the PC’s as local inhabitants of the region fighting against the

Shadow. In the initial core box no attempt will be made to present the greater history of Middle-earth, the Númenóreans, the Noldor or the age-old background to the current conflict in which the game is set. Subsequent publications may cover other regions in the same timeframe—the Late Third Age—presenting us with Eriador or Gondor at the times of the books. Other supplements with other temporal settings may be published as well.

Personally I deem these novel ideas (“campaign seasons” and multi-generational play) a good thing for the Middle-earth setting. Also, the concept of the core box being strictly regional without the “greater picture” has advantages. That way you can avoid the core book/box becoming too big and unwieldy. In addition, by concentrating on a manageable scope, there is no risk of getting the frame out of hand by people wanting to play only the high-powered races. From a business point of view they can also sell additional supplements, but since every company has to cover its costs (and make a profit) one cannot really blame them for that. And be honest, buying additional Middle-earth gaming supplements is half the fun (remember the MERP regional modules!)—if these publications provide genuinely new information and don’t just re-tell *The Lord of the Rings* and/or *The Hobbit* in game terms. The latest release news from Cubicle 7 Entertainment tell us that they look for a publication of the first book in late August 2011 to tie-in with Gen Con in Indianapolis.

See you all in *Other Minds, Issue 12!*

For the *Other Minds* team
Thomas Morwinsky
December 2010

Inside Information

Release schedule

It isn't hard to see that this Issue is long overdue. An increasing workload and demands of real life have delayed the publication time and again.

Unfortunately, this situation is unlikely to change soon, and OM is—after all—a volunteer-run project for which we spend a considerable amount of our free time.

To achieve a better balance of all these demands, the release schedule of *Other Minds* will be changed to bi-annual until further notice. This will bring a relief to the team's time schedules as well as giving you, our readers, a greater reliability concerning the meeting of publication deadlines.

I am sure you all will welcome the latter, even if this unfortunately means greater gaps between Issues.

The next Issue will then be published on May 31, with the second (in fact third) for 2011 on November 31.

Game & OM Aids

We strongly encourage everyone to send us contributions. It is absolutely **not** necessary to produce lots of pages. Small submissions of up to one page can be tremendously valuable: Small site descriptions, a NPC, item description etc. take up limited space, can be quickly written (in English or not; remember our translation service!) and enrich people's games to a great degree. Let your imagination run free! I am sure that the myriads of adventures and campaigns our readers have participated in have created tons of such small "game snippets" waiting to enter the spotlight in an international magazine! Send us your NPC's, items, sites or whatever else along these lines!

We are also happy about everyone who is willing to take part in OM's production. Contact us; you might be the one we're looking for!

Other Minds categories

Until now, contributions to the magazine have been categorized according to their perceived 'Tolkien content', and this can be debatable in some cases. Feedback has pointed out that we call ourselves a gaming magazine, but submissions addressing gaming interests are—naturally—often those with a low 'Tolkien content' since a lot has to be invented for the purposes of gaming, resulting in a "low" categorization under the current system.

We are now planning to renovate our rating system to address this. This is also a topic in the survey (see below for more details on that), please give us ample feedback on this subject! Until now, we have thought of the following as possible major categories:

- Gaming content
- Background (e.g. campaign- or sourcebook-style)
- Tolkien scholarly content
- Fan-fiction
- Reviews
- Humour/satire etc.

These could be supported by further sub-categories, providing a more fine-grained information. These could, for example, comprise:

- Temporal focus (e.g. First Age, Second Age, etc.)
- Specific people (e.g. Elves, Dwarves, Men, Hobbits etc.)
- Regional focus (e.g. Rohan, Gondor, Mordor, Shire, etc.)
- Gaming style (e.g. Gritty realism, Epic heroism etc.)
- Whatever else is appropriate and we have not yet thought of

It is planned to still classify some articles as combining categories e.g. game-content with a strong scholarly background.

We believe that this way of rating things is less prone to personal judgement than the former system, but as already pointed out, would like to see your opinion on this before implementation.

Survey

Other Minds has now reached its eleventh Issue and almost three and a half years have passed since our first one. A lot of articles with a wide variety of themes and foci have seen the light of the day.

The idea of making a survey for *Other Minds* has hovered on the fringes of several Issues, but we now have a respectable number of contributions giving a better overview of what *Other Minds* stands for than would have been possible a year or two ago.

We know that filling out a questionnaire can be a laborious job. It is however a tremendous chance for both of us: You—our readers—can precisely voice your view about what, in your opinion, is going well—and what not. In addition you can raise your voice to make suggestions for the further improvement of the magazine. For us as OM's staff, your feedback gives us some concrete information on what can be improved in the way *Other Minds* is put together. Concerning content, it gives us the chance to



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adjust our own contributions (the editorial team itself having written a good deal of the content) towards those that might need more room or are in greater demand. For example, from individual communications we have heard that up to now the “academic” or “purely Tolkien” contributions may be a bit over-represented for something that calls itself a “gaming” magazine, even if the new subtitle widens the remit. In Issue 12 of *Other Minds* we will publish a detailed (and of course anonymous!) evaluation of the feedback received, and begin encouraging contributions in line with the preferences you’ve expressed.

As a result of the survey, we may introduce a new subtitle. Currently we

state ourselves to be a magazine solely for roleplaying interests in Tolkien’s world. Recognizing that a broader focus (e.g. including boardgames, miniature wargaming as well as scholarly contributions) might better describe our intent. An appropriate question is included in the survey file, please tell us what you think of the idea.

Some technical notes

This survey comes in two sheets (marked with a red oval below): The first one with general questions (designated “1” below) and a second one (the “detailed” tab; designated “2” below) where you can rate each individual article. Please answer as many questions as

possible on both sheets to help us to improve OM! The screenshot below shows the layout with the two tabs to avoid overlooking one.


Most of the questions can be answered simply by choosing the drop-down menu option that fits best. Where a drop-down offers a scale from 1 to 10, 1 is the worst, e.g. “don’t you dare do anything like that again”, and 10 means the best, excellent beyond expectation. For some questions you may also add answers of your own if the menu does not have the option you would choose; just type into the yellow field on the right. Any other comments can also be typed into the extra field below the “general” questions.

Please save the spreadsheet file to your hard drive (**version Office 2003 or older, not Office 2007 or 2010 format!**), fill it out and send the filled-out version to feedback@othermindsmagazine.com.

Topic/question	Select an option in the drop-down menu	Field to fill out when choosing "Other:"
Country where you live	Please select	
Area of interest	Please select	
GM/player	Please select	
Primary interest in OM (why you're reading it)	Please select	
Secondary interest in OM (why you're reading it)	Please select	
Tertiary interest in OM (why you're reading it)	Please select	
Your preferred rule system(s) for Middle-earth gaming	Please select	
Preferred temporal setting	Please select	
Rating of essays/scholarly pieces in general	Please select	
Rating for adventures/scenarios in general	Please select	
Rating for other gaming supplements (NPC's, places etc.) in general	Please select	
Rating for rule ideas in general	Please select	
Overall rating for Editorial	Please select	
Rating for community info	Please select	
What would you like to see more in OM (first choice)?	Please select	
What would you like to see more in OM (second choice)?	Please select	
What would you like to see more in OM (third choice)?	Please select	
What do you think about changing our subtitle to a broader scope (scholarly and gaming interest in general rather than only roleplaying)	Please select	
Would you welcome a change in our rating system towards a system less prone to subjective judgement (e.g. new categories like "gaming", "scholarly" etc.)?	Please select	
Comments:		

Aragorn

...where the shadows lie

by Severin, Isildur's Heir
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Agazlam—the Tongue of Blood A Second Age fortress of Mordor

In the year 302 of the Lord of the World (1912 of the Second Age as the Infidels say) I was granted by his Lordship, Shakburz, Ziq run the Highest and Fairest, the powerful whose name should be praised, the assignment to fortify the borders of Mordor—to the dismay of his enemies. HE saw the N men reans sailing to the coasts of Middle-earth, founding fortified settlements in the process. In his infinite wisdom HE also foresaw war looming in the future between HIM and the blinded lackeys of the West.

So HE honored me and talked to me—no, he planted HIS thoughts into my mind with a flash of power, and I record them humbly, aware that my limited mind cannot represent their greatness and wisdom. Neither can I adequately describe the beauty of HIS face that moves everyone to tears.

"Tar-Pharagn, you have always been a capable architect, working here on the completion of my royal tower. Build me fortresses upon the borders of my realm, in order to prevent the deluded West from assailing me here, should they try to question my power."

I threw myself before his throne and pleaded:

"Great Shakburz, my lord and master! Full of humility will your servant do whatever is in his limited power and life to satisfy your desire. But this aging fool is afraid that his dwindling life will fade away before this task is completed and enter the Great Dark.

Then HE spoke:

You are old indeed, but you may also have another century of life, for your race is long-lived. This time will not suffice to bring my designs to completion though. But I am also called Annatar, the Lord of Gifts. Behold my gift for you!

HE stretched out HIS noble hand and opened it. In it was a simple golden ring with a black stone.

HE nodded to me and spoke:

"This is my gift to you! It will help you to fulfill all of your desires. Will you accept my gift?"

My body trembled with fear and longing. HE offered me a gift which the so-called "Lord of the West" would never be willing to give to their "Faithful"—or even be able to if they had the mind.

Eternal life, never-ending virility and vigour beyond even the span of Elros himself—together with the possibility to achieve all of my dreams seemed within reach.

This must be one of the Rings, of which there circulated vague rumours—whispered behind closed doors by the highest of HIS captains and servants. One of the Rings that had been crafted by the Witches under HIS tutelage. A Ring of Power!

"How may I refuse such a great gift, which would aid me in serving you even better with all my might? With utter humility I accept your generous offer!"

"Just as I taught you the skills of stone and steel, I will show you how to use this gift. Take my hand!"

In that moment when I unworthy servant was allowed to touch HIM, his blessing and the knowledge how to use this gift hit me with its full might. I passed out and awoke later in my chambers. My slave girls gave me some light wine and mopped the sweat from my brow since I was feverish and my mouth dry like sand. HE had shown me his thoughts! For the fulfillment of HIS wishes I would give everything. The ring was still in my clenched fist. I took him on—now I knew how to fully use it and decided to make a test. Power ran through my body, so that I rose immediately from my bed and went straight on to my changing room. My slave girls were full of fear, since for a moment they could not see me, and even now I seemed translucent for them—almost as if of glass.

I ordered my frightened slave girls to dress me and I went to my study. For the first time in many years my mind was again full of plans, dreams and ideas for new buildings. My intellect seemed more keen than ever and I took a great piece of parchment and began hastily with drawings. In my mind I could still hear the words of the MASTER—and I can hear them still:

"This is my will! Build me a fortress on the D ath-pass. It shall be defensible by only a few and yet able to accommodate a great host both for attack and defence. Build it on this end of the pass, so that any enemy first has to master the pass and then despair at the might of the fortifications. Build it in secrecy, that it shall not at first be recognizable as a fortress, but only later when the enemy descries it and despairs. It shall withstand the assault of the mightiest of armies from the west and deny them any entry into my land. It is its duty to guard the way over the pass, the path over Cirith Ungol, both ways along the Morgai and the eastern road. It shall not hinder the movement of my armies and allow them an easy attack from the east, denying advantage to the enemy, should he take any part of the fortress. It must not afford the enemy any means of blocking my roads or the access to the Anduin, should he be able to storm the fortress by whatever means. It must be easy to attack from my land. Put forth all your skill to make it overwhelmingly strong to the west!"

Thus I began anew with a great work, long after the last stones of the Great Tower were set, to draw the first plans. Thirty years later I should earn great praise from the MASTER for my service. Seeing my work, HE was the first to name it the "Tongue of Blood" for its color of the bridge

—Written by Tar-Pharagn in the Year of the Lord 350

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Background

An online discussion in a German forum¹ about possible details concerning the War of the Last Alliance and the Siege of Barad-dûr led—amongst other things—to the question of whether the Last Alliance of Elves and Men laid siege to and destroyed other fortresses within Mordor. All the Mordorian fortifications that appear in *The Lord of the Rings* (e.g. the Teeth of Mordor, Durthang and the Tower of Cirith Ungol) were of Gondorian origin, built for the watch over Mordor in the Third Age; having been modified by Sauron where necessary.

Since Mordor has only a few westward facin passes— all of which are easily defensible by blocking fortresses— there arose the question of whether Sauron fortified these during his reign as well. Here the *History of Middle-earth* provides us again with valuable information:

“And Ar-Pharazôn landed at Umbar, and so great was the splendour and might of the Númenóreans at the noon of their glory that at the rumour of them alone all men flocked to their summons and did obeisance; and Sauron’s own servants fled away. The land of Mordor he had indeed fortified and made so strong that he need fear no assault upon it; but he was in doubt now, and even the Barad-dûr seemed no longer secure.”

HoMe 12, The Tale of Years of the Second Age; my emphasis

It is therefore clear that there must have been strong fortifications to protect the points of access into his realm. But how could the Last Alliance overcome these extremely well situated gateways (e.g. like at the Dúath pass)? Unfortunately Tolkien does not give us any such details for the period of the Last Alliance. For example, we have no reports of any significant sieges beside that of the Dark Tower. There is only the brief passage that tells of the victory at Dagorlad and the subsequent siege of Barad-dûr.

We have to make up our minds to solve this riddle, and one possible explanation is that the defences had a significant weak point, that Sauron was either unaware of or that he had intentionally accepted. By exploiting these, the Alliance was able to overcome the defences of Mordor with relative ease. A suggestion for such a weak spot is detailed below.

Use of the fortress description in roleplaying games

As is often the case, the majority of readers won’t run a game in this setting, but will read it out of interest in this aspect of world-building within Tolkien’s framework. For this reason the text is not designed as a pure adventure or sourcebook for a specific game system. It is intended to offer a view into this little-described region of Middle-earth for the interested reader, and stimulate his own imagination for devising RPG material or fan-fiction, in the profusion of little details each mentioned only briefly in this text. I have tried to focus on a realistic and believable description of a big fortress that is not set in the middle of nowhere, but embedded into a logical economic and demographic context. In many commercial RPG products there is an unfortunate tendency to neglect even basic things that leave the whole package somewhat artificial. Miss-

ing toilets are a classic, but also things like kitchens and adequate quarters are not safe assumptions. A fortress should be described realistically and as fitting for its context, so that it could “function” even in the real world. This description is primarily designed for experienced— or more imaginative—GM’s, who will use the descriptions presented here to develop their own adventures and campaigns.

You will find no gaming stats for any system (e.g. MERP or LotRRPG). An experienced GM will adapt stats to his preferred (house-) system in any case and not slavishly use the provided game stats. Some may miss specific (combat) stats for Tar-Pharagn or modifiers for attempts to pick every door. Along the same lines any data that informs of 1233 gold pieces—and three copper pieces—that can be found in the orc-captain’s chest has been omitted.

Everywhere that data on specific capabilities was necessary, this has been described in general terms that make it easy for the GM to translate into game stats for the system of his choice.

I wish all readers enjoyment with this treatise of my vision for this little part of Tolkien’s world and for immersion within the magical paths of your own fantasy.

Severin, IsildursHeir



¹ <http://www.tolkienforum.de/index.php?showtopic=8042&st=0>

Timeline

History of the place: Second Age

- 1912 Sauron orders his best architect Tar-Pharagn to fortify the borders of Mordor.
- 1913-1921 Exploration and surveying of the site of Agazlam.
- 1922 Start of construction. Around this time the Númenóreans begin to exact tribute from the men of Middle-earth.
- 1930 The three main towers are completed.
- 1935 Completion of the bridge arches. The fortress is garrisoned.
- 1936 The dam-wall in the vale is destroyed by a torrent, one pillar is heavily damaged.
- 1938 Reconstruction of the wall. The grating over the opening for the Morgai river is enlarged.
- 1942 Final completion of the fortress. Sauron personally inspects it.
- 2092 The architect Tar Pharagn is walled in within his chambers in Agazlam.
- 2100 The oppression of the men along the western coasts by the Númenóreans reaches a new height under Tar-Atanamir. Upon his orders heavy tributes and taxes are exacted from these people to further his greed for wealth. The careless destruction of the forests for the Númenórean shipbuilding furthers animosity towards the Dúnedain. Many look to Sauron for help and swear fealty to him. During the following centuries Sauron supports resistance against the Númenóreans and organizes an increasing guerilla warfare against the Númenórean conquerors.
- 2131 From this time Agazlam serves as a waypoint for important travelers. Some of these are later known as the Nazgûl.
- 2280 Umbar is made into a great fortress of Númenor.
- 2355 After the founding of Pelargir and the strengthening of Umbar, Sauron sees an increasing threat in the Númenóreans. He orders the building of barracks near Lugshapat and sends a great force of orcs for the support of the formerly exclusively mannish garrison.
- 2362 Bloody strife between the mannish and orcish garrison. By treachery the orcs are able to take the second tower. A fierce fight ensues between the remaining mannish troops and the orcs. Unbeknownst to all, they are all under the malevolent influence of the imprisoned Pharagn. Agazlam is inoperable and barred for many weeks until the Witch-king is dispatched by Sauron to put an end to the strife. Pharagn and the mannish captain are found guilty of treason against Sauron. The captain is given to the orcs and the Witch-king binds Pharagn to his chambers by powerful spells. The fortress is then manned exclusively by orcs.
- 2371 Due to their inability to adequately deal with the necessary economics of the region, the orcish garrison is once more replaced by a mannish one. The orcs still man the first tower. To avoid future rebellions and implement Sauron's most recent instrument of power—a religion tailored to revere him as a god—a temple is built and the half-orc Boltag dispatched as High Priest. Subsequently, this office is equal in rank to that of the captain.
- 2689 An earthquake brings down all the arches. The towers resist the trembling of the earth.
- 2698 The arches are re-built and enhanced by walkways behind the battlements, partly even shielded by protective roofs. Due to the increasing economic traffic in Mordor, great non-residential outbuildings within the inner courtyard of Lugburug and along all walls replace the old barracks.
- ca. 2650-2700 The future Tar-Calmacil (then a great captain in his youth) conquers many lands along the western coasts and earns Sauron's eternal hatred. He erects small but well-placed fortifications against possible attacks from Mordor. They also serve to keep watch on the mountainfolk of the Ered Nimrais. These fortresses are the forerunners of the later cities of Minas Ithil and Minas Anor. Calmacil also orders the building of a wooden bridge at the site of later Osgiliath a provisional haven for the landing of troops—and as a well-calculated threat against Sauron. All the fortifications of Mordor are enlarged, but only secretly in a way that does not look like a threat against Númenor. Around this time the outer fortifications and towers of Lugskut are built. Sauron orders the preparation of great army camps within the vales of the Morgai near the fortress. Sauron has to cancel his century-long support of Númenor's enemies to avoid an open war with the Dúnedain. Until about S.A. 2900 almost all of Sauron's activities against the Númenóreans cease and all the lands west of Mordor are avoided by the servants of the Lord of the Rings. In this time he concentrates on the inner and eastern lands of Middle-earth, far away from Númenórean influence. He enlarges his sway in these territories and bides his time. The lands of the future Gondor are in Númenórean hands from now on.
- 3262 Ar-Pharazôn lands at Umbar and Sauron feigns surrender and is brought to Númenor as a prisoner of the king. Stories and rumours about the power of Númenor lead to the desertion of large contingents of the mannish garrison at Agazlam. After Sauron's surrender and deportation to Númenor all order in the garrison ceases and it dissolves through large-

- scale defection. Many orcs massacre each other in power struggles.
- 3319 Akallabêth, Sauron loses his fair shape. The few remaining orcs in the fortress flee eastward. An earthquake in the wake of the changing of the world damages many fortresses, including Agazlam.
- 3335 A Nazgûl returns to the fortress and begins a solitary vigil.
- 3336 The Nazgûl and Tar-Pharagn (who calls himself Gul-Pharagn by now) engage in a contest of power. Pharagn is victorious and takes the Nazgûl's ring, though he does not use it. Pharagn forces the remaining scattered orcs and descendants of the mannish garrison who have founded a few villages nearby into his service. Sauron is still too weak to contest this.
- 3338 Gul-Pharagn begins the scouting of Ithilien, especially the booming Minas Ithil. He also sends envoys to all the former guildhouses.
- 3345 Gul-Pharagn now has much information about the new state of Gondor and commands a force of about 2,000 warriors—the greatest organized body of troops within Mordor beyond Barad-dûr. He recognizes the growing power of Sauron and goes with his new ring to Barad-dûr. His knowledge of all the secret passages enables him to bypass all guards in order to reach the innermost chambers. Sauron, aware of his approach, lets him proceed and together with the remaining eight Nazgûl awaits him. Pharagn appears before Sauron, throws himself on the floor and lays the ring before the feet of his master. He tells him of his exploits and the knowledge he has gained about Gondor. The Lord of the Rings, impressed by the unbroken loyalty of Pharagn offers him the ring. Pharagn accepts and enters the ranks of the Nine. The former holder of the ring is—in his shapeless form—bound like Pharagn before him into the chambers in Agazlam and walled in.
- 3346 Sauron orders all his troops to Barad-dûr. Only Gul-Pharagn and a small group of spies remain at Agazlam.
- 3400 Sauron orders the covert re-occupation and repair of the fortress. At first, only a small elite garrison of orcs is dispatched. The primary purpose is to prevent Gondorian spies entering Mordor.
- 3429 At the beginning of the year, a great host from the east arrives at Agazlam. Even before the arrival of all troops the repair of the fortress continues and no longer in secret. Great stores are prepared, and in summer the surprise attack on Ithilien takes place. After initial success, the troops of Mordor have to retreat. Agazlam becomes the central obstacle against the feared assault of the west.
- 3431 The fortress is being prepared for an assault and is at its apogee of power. A host of 10,000 in the neighbouring camps is ready for action.
- 3434 Countless soldiers and orcs from the south and east pour into Mordor. Originally Sauron planned to use them for the second wave against the west, but now they are needed to defend Mordor itself. The garrison at Agazlam is bloated to 30,000. On the day of the summer solstice the battle upon Dagorlad is fought and Sauron's armies are utterly defeated. Shortly thereafter, Isildur's sons commence their attack upon the pass from the west, using Minas Ithil as a base. Against Sauron's expectations, the main host under Gil-galad and Elendil seems to refrain from an attack upon Carach Angren, instead moving fast southwards through Ithilien towards Agazlam. There-
- fore, reinforcements from the Carach Angren area are re-deployed to Agazlam. The fortress is hopelessly overcrowded and water is running out. The apparent move towards Agazlam is a feint though. A raid led by Isildur (later known as the "Ride of Thunder through Udûn") takes Carach Angren. About half the troops at Agazlam are frantically sent north to re-take this vital fortification while the main host of the west is already on its way back towards the Morannon. The reinforcements of the Alliance arrive in time and Sauron's attempts to re-take Carach Angren lead to total disaster for his forces, which are utterly routed. The Orodruin erupts however, barring the easy way to the Dark Tower with flows of lava and noxious vapours. Now the west marches for Agazlam to secure supply lines into Mordor...

The battle of Agazlam

A few weeks after the victorious Battle on the Dagorlad, Elendil and Gil-galad approach Agazlam from the east. In the west Isildur's sons keep up the pressure on the fortress. Thousands of stragglers from Sauron's armies have fled here and every day sees new arrivals from the east, since Agazlam has been assigned as their assembly point and the way to Barad-dûr is barred by volcanic eruptions.

Agazlam still holds a pivotal strategic position, barring the shortest supply route for the western armies. Tens of thousands of sauronic warriors have made their place in the fortress, the outlying camps and the eastern slopes of the Morgai. Unfortunately morale among the majority of these troops is quite low, having been soundly defeated before. In addition, many have lost much of their equipment and arms in their flight. The supply situation is catastrophic, since the fortress cannot sustain such masses nor equip them properly.

Then the host of the west attacks with great vigour, since here is the last great body of sauronic armies in Mordor outside the Dark Tower. The supply lines of the Last Alliance currently run through Cair Andros, Dagorlad and Udûn. They are much too long and arduous to function effectively for long and thus Agazlam has to be captured. Fresh food, water and wine from Gondor are the rewards and for the bravest a leave in Ithilien. The main host of the west takes position in the plain before the Morgai, with the center near the crossroads of the main roads that lead to Agazlam. Elves from Imladris and Dwarves from Moria climb the Morgai further to the north and south and then move along the ridge towards the enemy encampments.

Beginning at dusk of the thirtieth day after the summer solstice the Elves begin to shower the camps with arrows from above and the Dwarves thwart any hope of climbing the hills and getting at the archers. For a few days there is a kind of guerilla warfare, where the Elves and Dwarves suddenly appear, shower Sauron's cramped troops with a deadly hail of arrows and then vanish again. Seven days later the main body of troops begins its assault, sending large columns uphill. The road to Agazlam is taken by a vanguard of the leaders' elite bodyguards brushing improvised barricades aside. Counterattacks by the enemy are easily repulsed and panic begins to spread among Sauron's surrounded troops. Many surrender or attempt to flee. About half of Sauron's army escapes in the valley between the Ephel Dúath and the Morgai southward. Right before the gates of Agazlam the last resistance is broken and the siege of Agazlam is set.

The siege of Agazlam and the end of the fortress

The west commands much heavy siege equipment like artillery, battering rams and towers that have already proved useful for the storming of the Morannon (and will be necessary at Barad-dûr again). These weapons are brought into position and within a few days, the thin eastern walls of Lugburug

are breached and the tower captured by the west. Due to its intentionally weak eastern fortifications it is highly vulnerable against attacks from Mordor. On the Dúath pass, Isildur's sons take care that no one escapes in that direction. Only a few days after the fall of Lugburug the middle tower Lugshapat is taken as well. Its great artillery (Lugskut) is used to batter the first tower to rubble. The fortress that guarded the pass for over 1,500 years has fallen in less than 15 days to the forces of the Last Alliance.

The site in the hands of the Last Alliance

Both outer towers are no more than heaps of rubble. The useful and well-hewn stones are salvaged by the west and used to build the siege lines around Barad-dûr. The western arches have collapsed as well and only the middle tower and the pillars of the bridges are relatively undamaged. In order to make this supply route available again, wooden bridges are built to replace the destroyed ones. Only a few weeks later the supply convoys start coming through the pass. The Morgai vale is searched for stragglers. A few are caught, but many orcs escape detection in deep vales and cunningly hidden caves; providing a constant threat. The site of Agazlam plays a crucial role in the further war effort, but the garrison of soldiers from Minas Ithil speak of a nameless horror residing here. The original plan to re-use the tower as a watchtower for Gondor is abandoned for this reason.

3341 Victory over Sauron

The Third Age

3 Lugshapat is abandoned.
 12 The construction of the fortresses for the Gondorian border watch over Mordor is begun. Carchost and Narchost and Durthang are among the most important of these. The plan to secure the Dúath pass includes the construction of the tower of Cirith Ungol near the site of the first outer tower of Agazlam.

26 When Cirith Ungol's construction is begun, workers repeatedly report eerie lights and voices coming from Lugshapat, but troops sent out to investigate are unable to gain any evidence.

33 Cirith Ungol is completed, but the bridge is left standing for the time being. It serves as the primary route into Mordor for clean-up operations against remnants of Sauron's forces and for the engineers that destroy the last fortifications and useful installations of the land.

65 Meneldil orders the levelling of Lugshapat, since the bridge is now no longer needed.

67 Lugshapat is finally levelled, the arches and pillars destroyed. Debris and rubble is all that remains of the once proud fortress.

1640 Cirith Ungol is abandoned in the wake of the Great Plague. The watch on Mordor is abandoned.

1980 The Witch-king returns to Mordor and gathers the Nazgûl. Cirith Ungol is occupied by orcs.

1998 A wooden bridge is constructed at the site of Agazlam.

2000 The Nazgûl issue from Mordor and lay siege to Minas Ithil.

2050 Eärnur, the last king of Gondor accepts a challenge to single combat with the Witch-king. He leaves for Minas Ithil and is never seen again. Minas Ithil is renamed Minas Morgul.

2901 The majority of the remaining inhabitants of Ithilien flee the land. The refuge of Henneth Annûn is built.

2951 Sauron returns to Mordor and begins the reconstruction of Barad-dûr. Agazlam is not rebuilt, since the pass is adequately defended by Minas Morgul and Cirith Ungol.

3019 The One is destroyed and Sauron's realm ended.

The site at the end of the Third Age

*The eastern faces of the Ephel Dúath were sheer, falling in cliff and precipice to the black trough that lay between them and the inner ridge. A short way beyond the way-meeting, after another steep incline, a flying bridge of stone leapt over the chasm and bore the road across into the tumbled slopes and glens of the Morgai ... Frodo now led the way, northward as near as he could guess, among the stones and boulders lying thick at the bottom of the great ravine ... The light, though no more than a grey dusk, was now enough for them to see that they were deep in the valley between the mountains. It sloped up gently northward, and at its bottom went the bed of a now dry and withered stream. Beyond its stony course they saw a beaten path that wound its way under the feet of the westward cliffs. Had they known, they could have reached it quicker, for it was a track that left the main Morgul-road at the western bridge-end and went down by a long stair cut in the rock to the valley's bottom. It was used by patrols or by messengers going swiftly to lesser posts and strongholds north-away, between Cirith Ungol and the narrows of Isenmouthe, the iron jaws of Carach Angren. **LotR. The Land of Shadow***

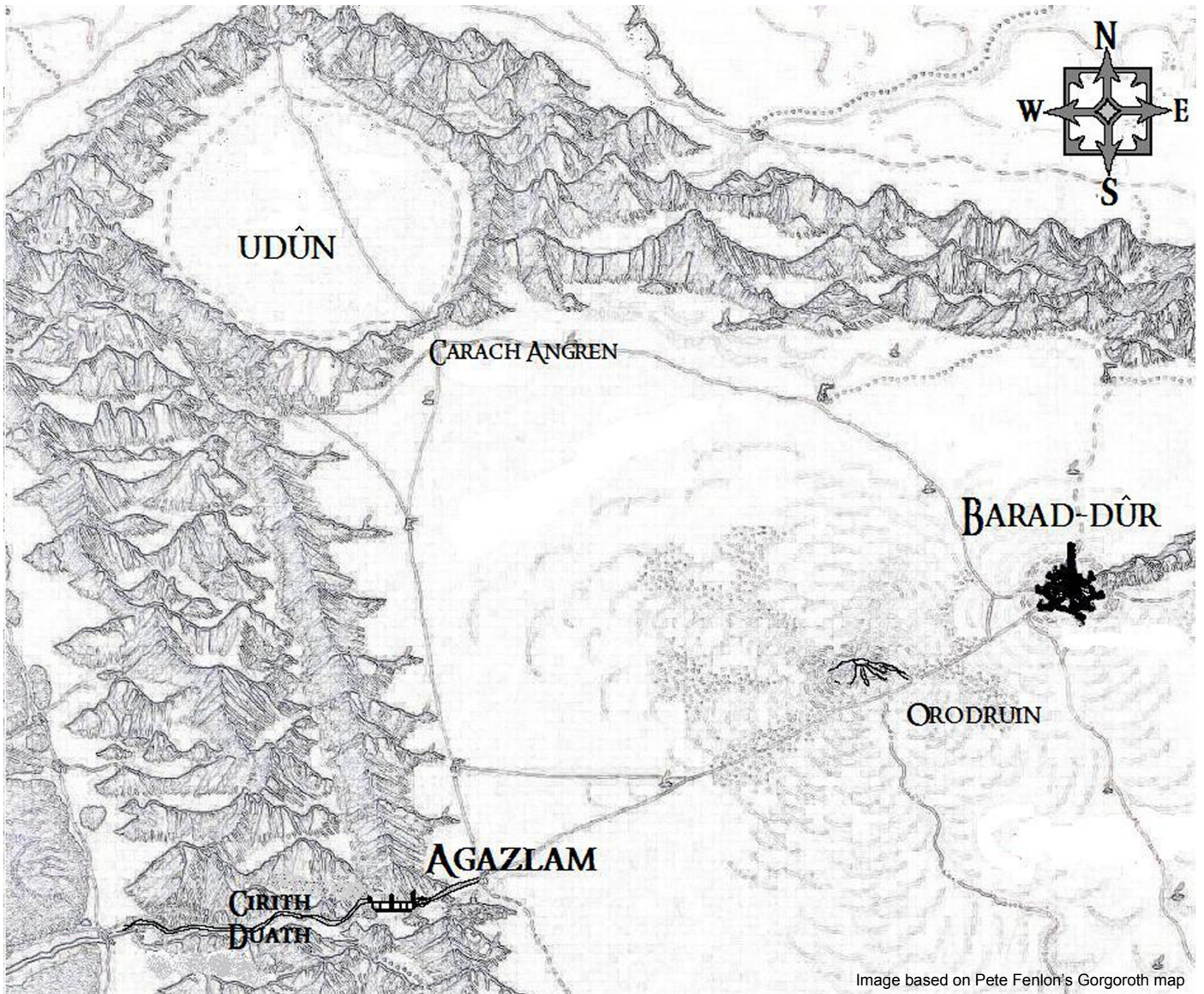


Image based on Pete Fenlon's Gorgoroth map

The fortress Agazlam

(Black Speech: “Tongue of Blood” /
Orcish: “Bloody Tongue”)

Strategic impact and Sauron’s reasoning concerning the design of the fortress site

The fortress of Agazlam is situated at an important strategic point. It protects the Dúath pass (later called Morgul-pass) and denies entry to Mordor at this site. In addition to these military aspects, it serves as a natural traffic junction and assembly point for any attack upon Ithilien. It protects the road through the Morgai/Ephel Dúath valley and is the only access into the southern third of the Morgai valley (which ends in a dead end where the Morgai ridge merges with the Ephel Dúath to the south). The north-south road east of the Morgai is controlled by the fortress too. In addition there is a road leading directly from Barad-dûr to Agazlam. The fortress itself is part of the crossroads and allows even the greatest hosts a quick march through the Morgai valley or from its bottom to the fortress level. Whoever controls the fortress controls all traffic in this region of Mordor.

Construction time

From S.A. 1900 Sauron begins slowly but steadily to fortify his realm against a possible Númenórean threat. He deems himself stronger and superior, but is not willing to take chances. He does not want to challenge the Númenóreans (for now) and designs his fortifications such that they are not an open threat, but are primarily all built within Mordor. This is the reason Agazlam is not constructed on the summit of the pass but at its eastern entrance. Around the year 2000 the majority of the fortifications are completed, but are constantly updated to keep pace with developing needs.

Strategy and enemies

Sauron pursues an aggressive strategy: Primarily, Agazlam shall support his own troop movements. Its function as a bastion is only a secondary one. In his opinion the worst case would be if the fortress were taken by an enemy and then used to contain him in his own land. Therefore the fortress is designed with its strongest points westward. In case an enemy takes the first parts, these can be destroyed from the following towers. Eastwards, the defenses are weak to ease counterattacks by Sauron’s forces. Overall, the fortress should be strong west-and weak east-wards. This basic principle applies to all Mordorian border fortifications, since Sauron assumes a stout defense of Mordor with great numbers of troops at his disposal. As the “Lord of the World” in the Second Age and with the One upon his finger, he judges the likelihood of a last stand in Mordor, with only few forces available, to be low. Since only the Númenóreans are considered serious enemies, the architecture of the forts resembles this potential enemy: To withstand the Númenórean skill in designing and building war machines, powerful bulwarks are necessary, sometimes even similar to modern bunkers.

Economy of the Black Land

Sauron had centuries in which to identify the best economic system for his empire. Perhaps there were experiments with a managed economy, where all the goods, lands and workforce were centrally assigned and tightly regulated by the Dark Tower. These experiments cannot have been sustained for long—if you are looking at the timescale of Sauron’s rule. Beginning roughly with his return from the war with the Elves, he implemented a flexible system which was able to organize big flows of commodity over long distances—and where they were needed. This answer to his economic demands was a market economy. Alongside the military, political and religious power of Sauron, his economic power shapes the lands east of Mordor.

The treasuries of Barad-dûr are filled with gold and gems from Mordor’s mines as well as tribute from vassals and the spoils of military campaigns. The gold is not hoarded for the pleasure of Sauron (though he keeps the best pieces for himself of course), but as a carefully used tool to keep the economy of Mordor and the surrounding tributary lands running. Great amounts of gold, goods, slaves and other valuables reach Mordor as tributes from lands far away, but this is only a small part compared to the amounts that come into Mordor by trade. One might think of Mordor as a gigantic fortress, full of soldiers and orcs with no other purpose than plotting war against Sauron’s enemies all day long. Upon closer inspection one sees that this is hardly so. Merchants from the south and east are free to enter Mordor. They are tightly supervised though (and sometimes outright spied on), but as long as they pay the required tariffs and duties, and do not spy for the enemies of Mordor, they are free to trade. In Mordor there is much profit to be gained, and nowhere in Middle-earth are there such good prices for foodstuffs. In addition, the merchants bring primarily wine, timber and goods that are both easily transportable and valuable like fine fabrics for Sauron’s officers or dried meat for the regular troops in Mordor. Here the goods are traded for gold, high-quality iron, salt or weapons. Barad-dûr controls the flow of goods, but intercedes only in times of war. Sauron lets the communities rule their own affairs as long as his command and overlordship is accepted. In other words, all the communities, be they his cities and fortresses, the fishery industry at the Núrn sea or the mines, are given authority to ensure their economical survival.



Economy of Agazlam and Relations with the surrounding territories

Roads and Tolls

Roads are an instrument and symbol of power of all great empires. Mordor and its vassal kingdoms often have the most sophisticated networks of roads in all of Middle-earth, though this is challenged (and often surpassed) by the later colonial empire of the Númenóreans in Middle-earth. Agazlam connects three important roads—and controls all of them. The Fortress of Agazlam lives primarily on the tolls that are due from all caravans, and provides lodging and provisions for travellers as well as food and water for the animals—for a price of course. Together, these revenues give Agazlam a comfortable economic position.

The Great Northern Road (Bl. Sp.: *Forul Razc*)

Agazlam lies at an important junction of one of the two main roads running from south to north in western Mordor. Both are part of the great northern route. For the greater part of the Second Age, this is the only well-paved route which leads from the Far South to the Greenwood and the gardens of the Entwives (*S. Saint in-Enyd*). The part running near Agazlam is the shorter one leading from Udûn to the twin cities of Ostinwath¹ and Ostigurth (located at the spurs of the Mountains surrounding Gorgoroth) and further to the Nargil pass (located near the spring of the Harnen river), which connects Mordor with Near Harad. All who have business in Barad-dûr prefer this route and almost certainly have to stop at Agazlam, because before and after a trek through Gorgoroth most caravans make a stop here to rest men and animals alike. This is in part due to the nature of the Dark Tower, and because of Gorgoroth having the most extreme climate in all of Mordor. Near the Morgai the temperatures are often not as high and the frequent

dust storms often less violent. The great eastern road is not only used by merchants who have business in Mordor, but also transit travellers who only want to pass through Mordor.

The road to Barad-dûr (Bl. Sp.: *Razc Lugburz*)

Which place in Middle-earth can claim to have a road leading directly to Barad-dûr? Agazlam of course! It is the central choke point through which all relations—diplomatic and economic—with the people of later Gondor are handled (primarily the mountain people of the Ered Nimrais that later became the Oathbreakers). Until about the year 2700 of the Second Age there is a thriving trade with the Mountain-folk of the Ered Nimrais and the people of the neighbouring coastlands. Mordor's goods are in high demand among them and some rare and valuable exotic luxury goods reach their chieftains through Agazlam. The technological level and wealth of Mordor is a stark contrast to the achievements of these peoples. Still Sauron encourages this trade since he wants to influence these people against Númenor. Agazlam is the center of the relations with these peoples, and it is from here that gifts, weapons, advisors and priests find their way west to support their resistance against the Dúnedain. From the coastal regions merchants reach Agazlam also, but from here the sons of lords and war-chiefs are especially welcomed and trained in the arts of politics and war.

The road in the Morgai valley (Black Speech: *Razc Gul*; "Undead Road")

The road in the Morgai valley might seem superfluous at first glance, since it connects Carach Angren with Agazlam—something that the northern road in Gorgoroth does as well. There are times though, when this road is the only connection available and takes over the whole duties and traffic of the main road. In times of war, the latter is often barred to civilian traffic and kept for

exclusive military use, e.g. for the rapid deployment of troops. In such a case, merchants and supply caravans have to take detours and alternative routes. One of these is the Morgai road. Such traffic blocks for the northern route can last for extended periods of time (months or in extreme cases even years), and then the Morgai road is choked and full of ox-wagons. On the other hand, if quick re-deployments of troops between the Morannon and the Dúath pass are necessary, the Morgai road is a quick way. In extreme cases, both roads are used for troop deployments to facilitate the rapid movement of large armies. Then all civilian traffic in this area is severely curtailed. Another possibility is the sometimes problematic geologic situation in Gorgoroth. When Orodruin produces great quantities of ash, the passage along the North Road can be unpleasant or even hampered. The same holds true for long-lasting and violent dust storms. In such cases many travellers prefer the slightly longer but safer journey through the Morgai. Thus this road has earned its name "Razc Gul", since at some times it is devoid of traffic, and at others it is the busiest commercial artery in this part of Mordor.

The Morgai Valley

Agazlam is the only suitable entrance to the Morgai valley. The part of the vale north of the fortress contains a number of orc-holds which are tributary to Agazlam. This is mostly given in the form of warriors to replace losses from raids into Ithilien or granite slabs to provide repair material for the fortress. These are the only raw materials available in this part of Mordor. In the shorter southern part of the Morgai valley the climate is a bit kinder, with a bit of rain. This enables some hardy bush and hedges to grow and some men have settled here in small villages, mostly after completing tours of duty at Agazlam and then not returning to their homelands for whatever reason. Despite that, the population of the Morgai valley is quite low. Whilst a few inhabitants of

¹ The site is named "Barad-wath" in ICE's *Gorgoroth*

the fortress originate from these local mannish communities, the vast majority of workers, slaves and soldiers are recruited outside of Mordor.

Ithilien

Mordor's influence and activities in Ithilien vary over time. Until the appearance of Númenórean colonies along the coasts and their challenge to Sauron's hegemony, his influence on Ithilien is considerable. It is seen as the frontyard of Mordor and the Dark Lord exacts tribute from its people—though the tribute is modest and the population (mostly hunters and gatherers) sparse. With the same restraint wood is lumbered transported over the Dúath pass into Mordor. These tributes and lumbering activity are not restrained as an end in itself (e.g. Sauron being a benevolent ruler), but for political reasons: Sauron aims to present himself as a better and more considerate power than the Númenóreans who used to fell woods (in Eriador) without any consideration of the natives or conse-

quences. Sauron does not want to be seen as a second Númenor in this way and accepts a lesser income from this region for the sympathy of its people. The only exception is the valley where later Minas Ithil stands; this is more or less completely cleared of forests. Its history is worth noting:

At the time, the area was subject to a powerful orcish chieftain, almost a king in the mid-Ephel Dúath. It was he who extended his raids deep into Ithilien and even ordering the clearing of the Ithil vale. The local men knew—and hated—him well, but due to his power could do nothing against it. Sauron became aware of the situation, and desiring good relations with these men, sent emissaries to the chieftain. He was quickly seized, deposed and bound. Then Sauron's emissaries approached the men, asking for a meeting with their lords. There they presented to them a chest filled with gold as compensation for their sufferings—together with the bound chieftain to do with as they please. Henceforth, no

orc would dare to set foot here without the permission of the local men.

In any case the clearing later served the Númenóreans well when they built their City of the Moon here.

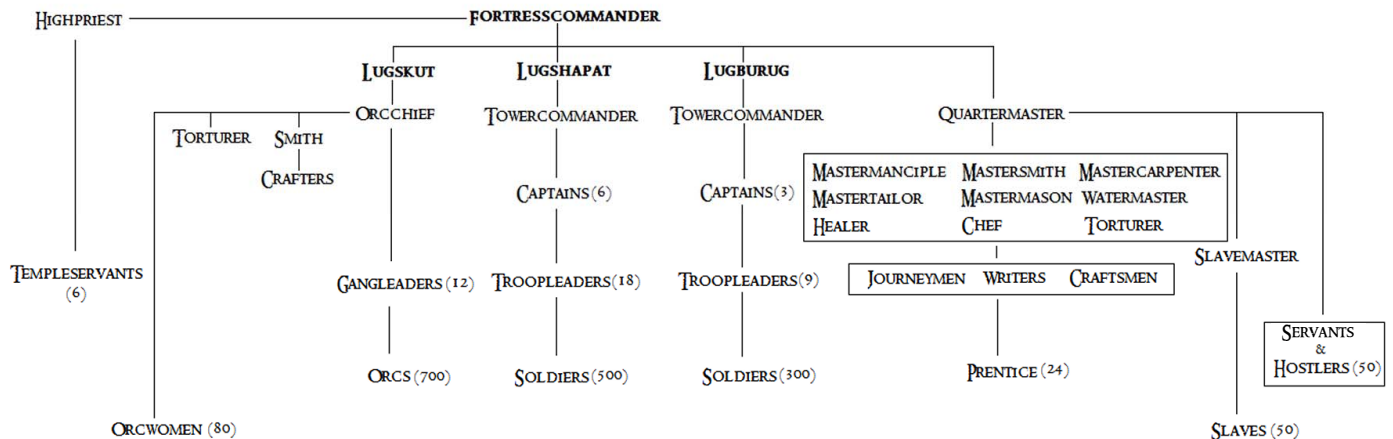
Support and Control from the Dark Tower

Fortresses like Agazlam and Carach Angren, that are located in the more inhospitable regions of Mordor, without immediate access to raw materials (e.g. mining) or noteworthy agriculture and without a great population that can be taxed, are supported with both goods and gold from Barad-dûr. All the people in the fortress—both military and civilian (apart from slaves)—are paid by the captain. The captain has to send his annual reports to Barad-dûr, where they are checked and the grants for the next year calculated. So a Captain of a fortress in Mordor basically only fears three things: a visit of Sauron, the Witch-king or an accountant of Barad-dûr...



CIRITH DÚATH

The inhabitants of the fortress



Agazlam is inhabited primarily but not exclusively by soldiers. The tower of Lugskut is wholly in orcish hands, even though the fortress was originally designed for a purely mannish garrison. The fortress is a microcosm of the different races and social strata of Sauron's forces. This is the cause for constant tension of varying degrees, ranging from simple defamation to schemes for murder or even armed uprisings. It is one of the primary tasks of the captain and his officers to prevent these conflicts from escalating to threaten the functioning of the fortress. The captain is the highest authority in the fortress and initially Phrag himself held this office, followed by other powerful servants of Sauron. Since S.A. 2371 the captain has to share his authority with a High Priest of Sauron's church. The High Priest can relieve the captain of his post any time and supervises all his orders and actions. The High Priest has no direct command authority however (except over his temple staff), but keeps an ear open for trouble and everyone must report to him any rumours or evidence of transgressions or blasphemous talk concerning Sauron's position as lord and god. He sends regular reports to Barad-dûr, and having one's name on such a list can become quite uncomfortable.

Directly below the fortress captain are the three tower captains. One of them is the orc chieftain of Lugskut.

These sub-captains are each responsible for the functioning of their respective area of command and the execution of the captain's orders. The captain of Lugburug is most often from Harad—and in most cases of noble descent. This position carries the highest prestige among the tower captains and is also the second-in-command after the fortress captain. The next in rank and prestige is the commander of Lugshapat whose responsibility is also the whole bridge and Morgai wall. He is the second deputy of the fortress captain and generally an Easterling. The orc captain is the commander of Lugskut and the outer towers. He attends the council of captains only rarely. In general the mannish garrison and commanders treat the orcs with contempt and keep to themselves. In theory the orc captain is the fourth in the chain of command, but should he really have to take overall command, it's likely that the mannish soldiers would refuse to obey him.

Each tower commander has a varying number of subordinate captains under him. Such sub-captains generally lead about 80 to 200 troops through two officers who command about 40 to 100 soldiers each. Each such officer commands several troop leaders who are responsible for about 10 to 20 soldiers. Below the rank of the common soldiers are only orcish females and slaves.

Civilians within the fortress

The fortress is home to a significant number of civilian inhabitants and even more who are travelling through it. The latter are taken care of by the scribes and custodians and are obliged to obey their commands. Should a visitor rank significantly above these clerks, a higher ranking officer or even the fortress commander will take care of him. All the civilians are outside of the military chain of command and only the fortress commander can give them orders. Generally he delegates this to the quartermaster—the highest ranking civilian within Agazlam. Depending on their status, most civilians comply with the word of a soldier though—if the latter holds a higher rank.

Most of the menial tasks (e.g. cleaning latrines, carrying firewood or coal) are carried out by slaves—under supervision of course. The second lowest rank is held by the commoners (menials and maidservants), who are given better treatment and even some—small—wages, since they carry out tasks that require some skill (e.g. cooking, grooming the horses etc.). Their rank is comparable to that of the ordinary soldiers. Consequently, they do not take orders from them, unless they are friends or do it voluntarily for some reason. Above the menials are the crafters like smiths, carpenters, tailors and custodians. The smiths and masons also man the siege

weapons in the case of an attack and can command the ordinary soldiers that staff the machines as labor force. The crafters have the following ranks (lowest to highest): apprentice, journeyman and master. Apprentices equal the troop leaders, journeymen the officers above them and masters rank as the towers' sub-captains. This hierarchy reflects the relations between civilians and soldiers: they only follow suggestions from those of equal rank and if they are on good terms. As noted above, the civilian chain of command is strictly separated from the military one, even if some customs of cooperation and mixing have established themselves. The quartermaster is among the most important men of the fortress and there is a saying among the common soldiers: "We fight on even when the tower commanders fall, the captains are slain, the sub-captains flee and the troopleaders despair! But when the quartermaster perishes, everything is lost!"

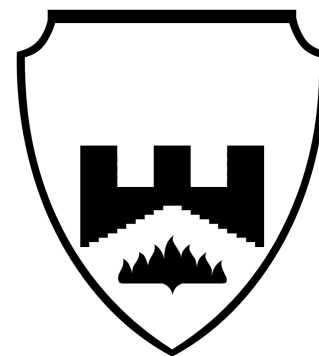
Love and life in the fortress

The orcs of Lugskut are the only ones to live their whole life in the fortress. They stay there from the day of their birth unto their—most often violent—death. Slaves are born in Agazlam as well and spend their brief lives here unless they are sold on the markets on the shores of Núrnen or to travelling merchants. The origins of the slaves are quite diverse. Some were born in Agazlam or other fortresses of Mordor, some were sent as tribute to Sauron by his subject lands in the east or South and still others were captured in the neighbouring westlands like Ithilien or the shores of the future Gondor. Even people who looked suspicious to the authorities could find themselves in the dungeons and later as a slave of Mordor. Of course only those who proved under interrogation not to be dangerous had the luck to be left alive to work as a slave. The slaves live in very basic conditions. Pregnancies are not viewed favourably, since they reduce the efficacy of labour, but on the other hand they are not strictly prevented (e.g. by strict separation of male and female slaves), since they also result in new slaves for free. From an early age, the

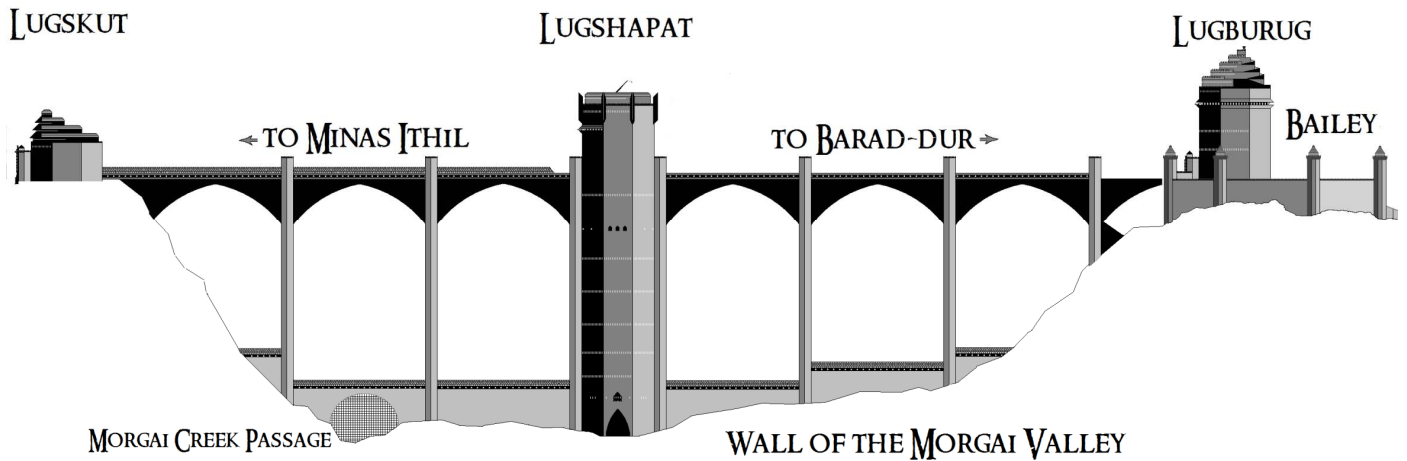
children are tasked with simple duties and the slavemaster is generous with using the whip as a tool to teach them the most important things in life. Being born as a slave in Mordor is indeed among the most dire fates in Middle-earth. Beside the whip and the ever-present punishments there are other means to ensure compliance among the slaves: the sacrificial altars of Sauron's priests and the orc-mines in eastern Mordor where the life-expectancy of a slave is often counted in months rather than years. The civilian inhabitants of the fortress live here for long years as well. In most cases they are too far from their homelands to return for a visit. Thus they save most of their wages to return to their homes after the fulfillment of their duties and buy a piece of land. However, only the journeymen and masters generally earn high enough wages to be able to do this. The simple servants and apprentices stay on into old age and usually die here if they have no relatives at home who might take them. The civilians may, according to the laws, marry each other and have children. Over the centuries a small community of indigenous "Agazlami" (as they call themselves) has emerged in this way. In principle, marriage and the birth of children is encouraged (see level four, Room 8-11 in Lugshapat for description), but the permits are subject to the quartermaster's decision, which leads to some arbitrariness in the practice of such permits. Concubinage is not tolerated and the pregnant women (but not the men!) are cast out of the fortress without money or other compensation. The consequences in a land like Mordor are not hard to imagine. Many a couple has sought a secret escape from the fortress, perhaps bribing a guard and fleeing to the coast. Otherwise the civilians are free to leave once their agreed term of service is over and the quartermaster gives his consent. Usually he does this, unless there is a shortage in the occupation in question or at times of war.

Soldiers usually only stay for a temporary duty at the fortress. Their units are stationed here for a few years. For

the fortresses of Gorgoroth and Barad-dûr itself this term is usually for seven years. Afterwards, they are either sent home or transferred to more hospitable regions under Sauron's rule. Ordinary soldiers up to troopleaders normally enlist for twenty years of service in the armies of the Dark Lord, before they are discharged with compensation of gold. Depending on their cultural background they either become seasoned warriors in their home region or become farmers or traders. They are not allowed to marry during their service, and those already married when they enter must leave their family behind. In most such cases the marriage is annulled. Only the fortress' garrison commander is allowed to be married. There are separate chambers for his wife in Lugshapat. Occasionally, ordinary soldiers get a leave of a few weeks for extraordinary service. Since their home is usually too far away, they squander their money in the amusement quarters of the trading centers around the Sea of Núrnen. Officers officially remain in Sauron's service for life. Once they are no longer fit for active service they are either sent home with a pension or assigned to another office in Sauron's service (e.g. governor, High Priest in their home region or advisor to rulers). Soldiers—regardless of rank—are paid a respectable salary for their duty in Mordor. These clearly above-average wages are meant and seen as an incentive. In addition, successful service in Mordor is an asset for further employment in other realms of Sauron's empire. Thus many soldiers volunteer for here, rightly seeing it as a career stepping stone in their homelands.



Agazlam – the architecture

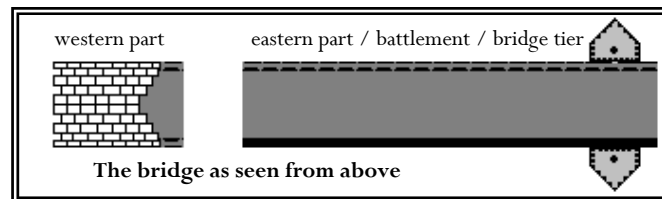


The bridge

The bridge that spans the gorge between Ephel Dúath and the Morgai is the most prominent feature of the fortress. It is a strategic bottleneck on an important road. Without this bridge, the fortress would be almost meaningless. It is paved with blood-red granite from the Morgai which is so hard and smooth that the whole surface seems to be glistening in the sunlight. This granite gave the whole fortress its name since the bridge sticks out like a bloody tongue from the towers. In the western part it has a massive saddleback roof as an effective protection against enemy missiles. Its purpose is to get reinforcements quickly and securely to Lugskut—even under fire. This stone roof ends shortly before Lugshapat. This was consciously done so that an enemy that has advanced this far could effectively be engaged from the tower. The sides of the bridge have a small battlement to engage enemies upon the bridge and in the valley below through crenellations. This battlement can only be accessed on its eastern end from the towers of Lugshapat and Lugburug and is secured by a massive wooden door. In this way an enemy is forced to cross the whole bridge before he gets access to the battlement. The walls of the battlement are much stronger towards the bridge area than outwards, since no danger is expected from either the north or south. Should the battlements be bombarded from these directions, the walls would

quickly crumble. Simple arrows or smaller bolts shot from the valley or nearby cliffs are no danger for the walls, but even small stones shot by *ballistas* or catapults would be a problem. The eastern part of the bridge area is not roofed, only the battlements on both sides are covered by stone plates. (The drawing below shows the northern battlement

with an open roof for clarity). From the battlements thick wooden doors lead to spiral stairs, through which the upper platform of the bridge piers can be accessed. The piers are made from black granite slabs, have no hollow areas or chambers and possess a fighting platform with crenellations on their top.

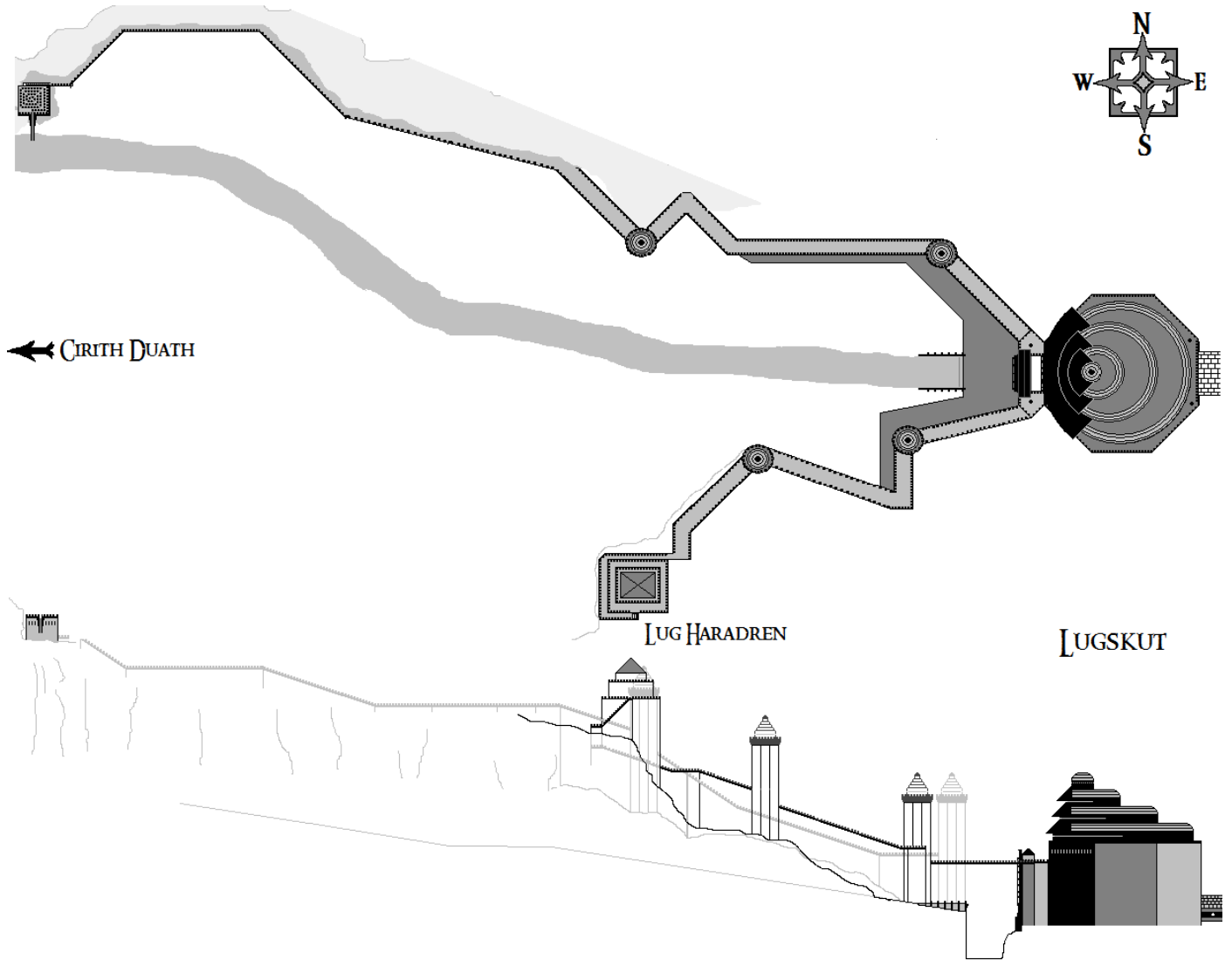


The three main towers

Sauron's order to direct the whole strength of the fortress westward to ease a reconquest or destruction from the east, should this ever become necessary, is reflected in every detail of the fortress' design. The thickness of the walls and roofs of the towers are extremely strong towards the west and thin eastwards. Protective roofs and crenels are present almost exclusively westwards; gates and drawbridges protect from attacks from the west and even the war machines face only westward.

Details

Unless noted otherwise, all rooms have thick wooden doors which can be barred from the inside. Where appropriate, special items or artifacts are mentioned. These are marked by 'X' Letters from (A)-(Z) and described in detail in the chapter "Special Items". All rooms are lighted by sufficient oil lamps. The soot of centuries has left a thick black layer above the lamps on all ceilings.



Lugskut—the outer towers

The first of the outer towers is located near the site where Gondor later built the tower of Cirith Ungol. Lying behind a face of rock, it is well protected against enemy missiles. It is not very high, since it is built about 50 metres above the mountain pass and accessible only by a path through Shelob's caves or the defensive walls of the fortress.

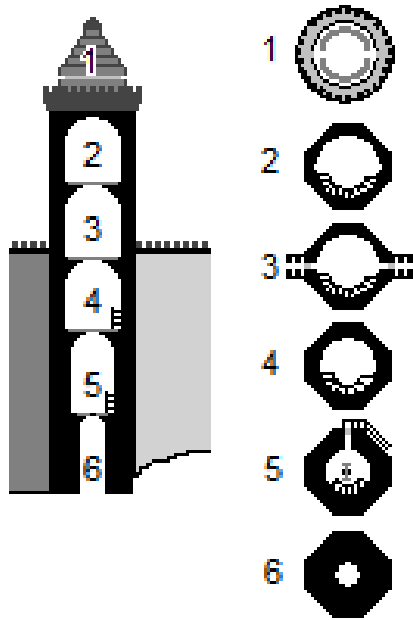
Ultimately, it is no more than a house of two stories with massive walls and a flat roof. The road below can easily be taken under fire from the crenels and embrasures. To prevent battering rams,

siege towers or catapults from attacking it has a special defensive system: A broad, sloping groove of stone leads down from the roof like an aqueduct and over the road. Should an enemy advance along the road, the defenders can roll great balls of stone down from the roof, which impact with devastating force 50 metres below. A defensive wall runs along the stone face and is long enough to allow hundreds of archers to rain down their arrows upon an enemy. The wall slowly decreases from 50 metres height to 15 metres. Where the rock face backs away and the entrance to the Morgai valley opens up, the fortress wall

merges with the aforementioned outer wall. To secure this area, octagonal watchtowers with round crowns can be found on both sides of the valley. The road above the Dúath pass ends in a ramp built of masonry—the abutment of the great drawbridge that spans the wide moat. This moat protects the curtain wall from being undermined or the approach of siege equipment. All these outer fortifications were built from S.A. 2735 onwards when the threat from Númenor was perceived to have increased.



Sample description of a watchtower



The watchtowers have 6 levels each. To compensate for irregularities of the terrain, the towers may appear of different heights, but the number of levels is always constant. For structural reasons the walls become thinner on the upper levels. At the base they are about 5 metres thick, tapering down to 1 foot on the upper levels. There is a stair at the inner side of the wall.

1. Tower chamber

The soldiers on duty will use this room in inclement weather. A brazier gives warmth and torches lie nearby. The roof is not made of shingles but heavy slabs of stone on massive oak beams to better withstand siege missiles.

2. Common room and living quarters

A table and a blanket on some straw are the furniture. The latter is for off-duty soldiers as a place to rest. A small fireplace in the tower's wall provides some heating and cooking capacity. In times of siege or attack, ten soldiers are stationed here.

3. Passage to the fortress wall

Robust doors, reinforced with iron and only about 1.5 metres high are the only access from the wall into the tower

and beyond. Nothing special is to be found here. In times of war, additional guards and provisions are located here.

4. Storeroom and arms cache

Here are some barrels containing some emergency supplies, water and arrows in case of siege.

5. Entrance level—(stairs only in the towers of Luginburg in the eastern part of the fortress)

At this level lies the entrance to the tower and the fortress wall. A wooden stair leads up the outside of the tower to this level. This stair can easily be destroyed, to make it difficult for an attacker even to reach the entrance. The door is made of iron and barred from the inside. On the floor of the room is a winch like the ones found on wells, located over the so-called "fear-hole" that leads down into the cellar of the tower. The winch is the only way into the cellar or out of it.

6. Cellar

In some of the towers supplies are stored here. In other towers prisoners are kept here, that are either on their way to the main prison or kept here until there is sufficient room and time to deal with them "adequately". They are also used to punish soldiers for minor offenses. Usually they are kept here without food or light for some days, though this may be lengthened indefinitely and without notice.

It was the uncertainty about the length of imprisonment that gave rise to the name "fear-hole".

Adventurers who are imprisoned here may find the remains of its former inhabitants. Inside the ribcages of some they may even find small stones and earth (which these unfortunate souls ate in desperation just to fill their bellies).

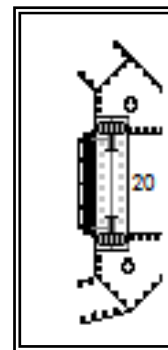
The southern tower—Lug Haradren

Another tower is on the southern side of the pass. It is rectangular in shape and built on another high outcropping of stone. The main wall that ascends sharply to it runs in a spiral around its rocky base

to an entry at the back. Usually this tower is occupied by the eldest son of the orc chief. He has his own realm here and waits for the day he can safely succeed his father and become chieftain of the tribe. Mostly, the father knows of the usual plots on his life, but since this is expected among orcs, it fills him with pride.

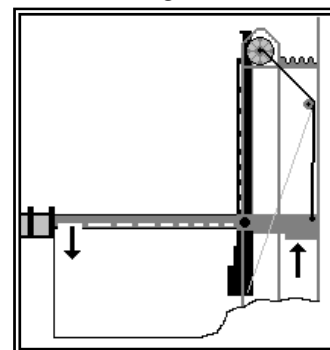
Moat, drawbridge and access to Lugskut

There are no stairs leading down on the rear side of the wall. The only way down is through Lugskut. The bastion at the gate has two narrow openings which lead to the third level of the tower.



These ways can be barred from the inside, primarily by stout wooden beams, which makes them impregnable to normal means. The gatehouse above the bastion (containing the opening mechanism for the drawbridge; see image left) and the bastion itself can only be accessed via a spiral stair between the two steel doors.

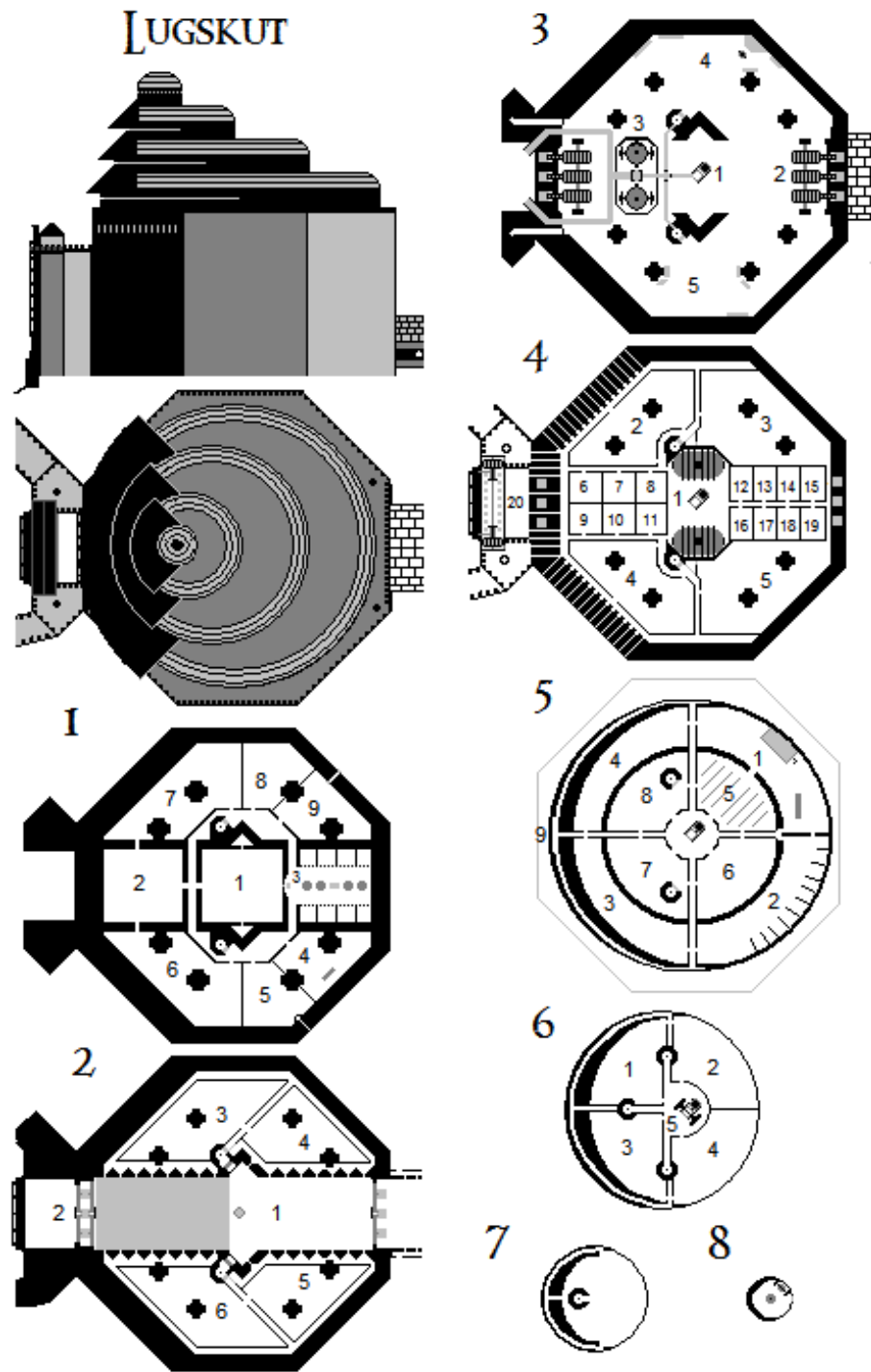
The great drawbridge can be raised and lowered via two chains and treadmills (see image below). Counterweights



below the fulcrum of the bridge ensure that the bridge is closed by gravity alone. Thus it

needs no active force (e.g. pulling up) to be closed. For opening, chains run downwards diagonally in the direction of the main tower that pull up the counterweights and thus lower the forward part of the bridge down. Within the gatehouse there are loopholes in the floor that allow the showering of the enemy with arrows and stones.

Lugskut—
The Tower of the Shield

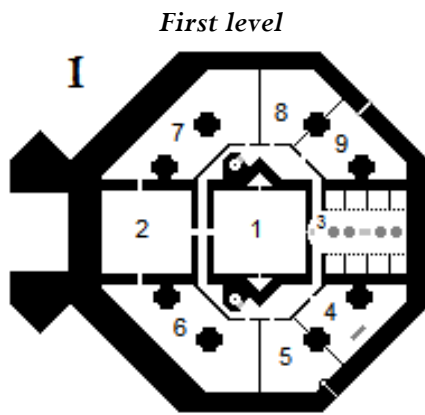


Lugskut guards the western access to the bridge fortress. It is deliberately built—relatively—low and has the thickest walls (on the western side). Since any attacker would descend down from the pass and bring siege artillery to bear upon the tower, Lugskut is built very sturdily and robustly. Its purpose is to deflect the enemy's blows and withstand all assaults. Massively built roofs of stone and narrow loopholes protect the tower from the impact of the feared Númenórean siege engines. To improve the tower's resistance against siege engines, Pharagn intentionally designed the loopholes small, and their arcs of fire are further limited by protective roofs and juttys. Open battlements and generous firing arcs for missiles were intentionally left out, since Lugskut is supposed to hold off the enemy with its robust construction while Lugshapat performs the active defense.

The tower was originally designed for a mannish garrison, but from S.A. 2355 – so for most of its history – Lugskut is continually occupied by orcs which have altered the arrangements according to their tastes and customs.

The orcs are crowded into their quarters in a number three times that of the mannish troops. All commanders of the fortress as well as Sauron and his captains see them as fodder. Orcish inhabitation makes Lugskut a hole and a dump. The concept of hygiene and the common sense behind the use of latrines is not commonplace among all orcs. The whole tower stinks like hell, exacerbated by the fact that there are only a few openings in the walls. Only when a room becomes unusable by waste blocking the doors are the orcish women sent to remove it all. The fortress commander knows of these problems in Lugskut and regularly sends one of his officers as an overseer to Lugskut—a job that is generally regarded as a penalty.





1. The Orc-chieftain's quarters (formerly a storeroom for valuable goods)

The giant cellar room is perfect for the orcish leader. In the eastern wall there is a hidden spyhole, from where he can check whether the guards are on duty. The northern of the two triangular chambers is a secret cistern, the other the treasure chamber of the tower. The doors are hidden and the orc-chieftain carries the only keys on his belt. In times of siege the content of the cistern is as valuable as the contents of the treasure chamber. The orc-chieftain keeps his spoils here, containing a sack of coins of differing origin, several Númenórean weapons and even a *mithril* shirt taken from a Númenórean scout. In the daytime the chieftain sleeps here or enjoys himself with his favourite concubines from the quarters of the female orcs in the next room.

2. Quarters of the female orcs

The female orcs which carry out those menial tasks, that are the duty of the slaves in the other towers. Only the orcish chieftain and proven warriors that are due for a reward have access to this room.

3. Dungeon

On the walls there are barred cells for ten prisoners each. Often these are scouts from the west or simple men abducted from their farms in Ithilien. Orcs that have fallen out of favour with their superiors are kept here as well and are denied food for their stay. In the floor there are four holes, each about 6 metres

deep. They can be covered with stone slabs and are filled with garbage and manure about a foot deep. This is the place for dangerous prisoners that need some "special" treatment. One hole takes up to four prisoners. In the middle between the holes is a simple rack which is used whenever it is deemed helpful for other prisoners to see an "interrogation". At the western end is a table for the guards where they while away the time with dicing.

4. Torture chamber

A great rack has space for several victims. The great pillars have chains for even more victims and on the walls all the tools for this grisly trade are arrayed. It goes without saying that orcs are quite ingenious in this department.

5. Waste dump and garbage shaft

This room is used by the orcish females for everything that is no longer of use. Since the room is long since over-filled, the waste is simply thrown out of the windows and crenels. In the wall there is a chute for waste water, which is used for disposing of faeces from the latrines and kitchen waste from the other towers. It descends at 45° for about 5 metres until a grating at the outside bars the way. With a width of two metres the shaft is quite generously designed. Since it has not been used for its original purpose for a long time it is now dry and one can relatively easily crawl through it, if the grating at the end can be defeated. Since the orcs visit this room only seldom, a fugitive or an intruder stands a good chance of dealing with the grating undisturbed. Below broken furniture, remnants of clothing and fabric, and bones are hidden some items of worth. Among them are an elven brooch in the shape of a leaf (A), a broken bone saw from the torture chamber (can be used to saw through the grating), a pair of elven boots that were of no use to the orcs and any other things the GM deems appropriate. Whether an intruder has the guts to search in the dark, accompanied by rats and insects, is an entirely different matter of course.

6. Working, residential and dining room of the female orcs

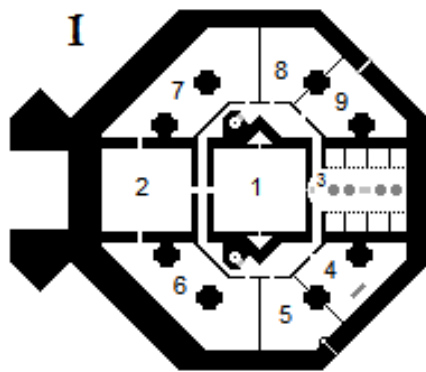
Here the orcish women consume what the men have left over or discarded (and what they were able to sneak away with during kitchen duty). On occasion the torture master sends a prisoner for their amusement here. Otherwise, the females use their time to repair clothing, make capes for the soldiers, boots, torches, ropes and other things of daily use.

7. Imp room

This bare room is the home of the orcish imps. Only those that are strong enough to seize a place near the door get the food that the females leave for them. When this is not sufficient, they simply devour the weakest amongst themselves. Occasionally the torture master takes some of the cleverest imps to enjoy watching his "art" or even to assist him in it. The chieftain and the torture master decide which imps leave these chambers forever to be trained as warriors.

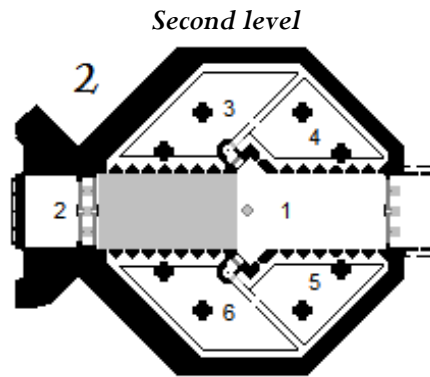
8. Chambers of the torture master

Here Ut Ulogoth resides, an ancient orc who has already survived several chieftains. He was (and is) the advisor of all chieftains and for many long years has been the éminence grise behind all of Lugskut's chieftains. Behind his back, the other orcs whisper that he eats the hearts of his victims and that this is the reason for his great age. The truth is far from that though. In his younger years, he provided a great service to a Nazgûl... The exact whereabouts remain for the GM to decide. The room's decoration would scare anyone other than orcs, since the torture master really does eat body parts of his victims. The remains he uses to "decorate" the walls of his chamber—in which he might almost be called talented! Owing to his great knowledge of human (and orcish and even dwarvish) anatomy, he also serves as the tribe's healer. He is quite good at surgery, though most orcs are reluctant to give themselves into his care, for obvious reasons. To simplify matters, he treats his patients in the torture chamber as well...



9. Messenger's room and secret exit

In the wall there are an inner and an outer door—both made of heavy steel. The orcish chieftain has the only keys. Both doors are extremely well hidden, and they can only be located by a careful search (e.g. a candle light flickering near the doors to locate them when there is a strong wind outside). Within the room there are torches, provisions and equipment for messengers. Behind the door there is a narrow and precarious stair hewn into the rock down to the Morgai valley. It is seldom used and therefore heavily overgrown with lichens, moss (at moist spots) and scrub. This way secret messengers can enter and exit the fortress. In addition it is a kind of emergency exit for the tower captain—and of course unknown to his subordinates (to avoid any lessening of the will to resist in case of attack).



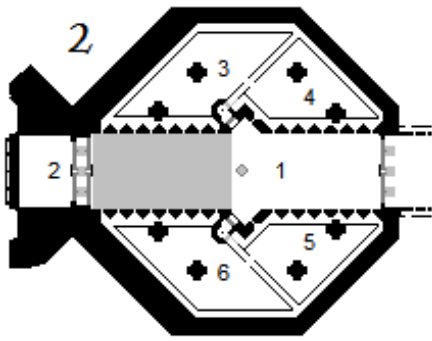
1. Central doorway and spiral stairs

This way is about 10 metres wide and runs from the bridge to the middle of the tower level. Afterwards, it ascends in a sharp ramp about three metres towards the western gate. This construction was necessary to build the drawbridge a bit higher because the pass ascends immediately beyond it. Loopholes control the doorway from the south and north. In the eastern part there are similar loopholes in the wall (4 metres high) which come to about 1 metre height in the area of the ramp. In the middle of the ramp there is a murder hole of about two metres diameter in the ceiling, from which stones and boiling oil can be poured down on the enemy. This hole is present in the ceilings of all levels up to the sixth. The ceiling is at about eight metres in this area and the hole can be covered with a bronze dome. If not needed for defense, it is used as a way to lift heavy cargoes to the upper levels via a winch on the sixth level. The only entryway into the tower leads through massive iron doors towards the two spiral stairs in the north and south. The doors have no locks and can only be opened via mechanisms that are operated by the guard on duty behind the opposite loophole. For access to the loophole level (rooms 3 to 6) one has to climb the spiral stairs four metres higher. The stairs connect the levels one to six. On each level there is a further steel door barring access and which can only be barred or unbarred from the inside.

2. Doors and walkway behind battlements

The gate is identical with all the other main gates in the fortress. They are all double gates, the inner opening in- and the outer out-ward. The wings were crafted by the foundries and smithies of Barad-dûr. Each wing is seven metres high, hollow with a hull of 2.5 cm steel. The inner and outer hulls are connected by internal struts at regular intervals to reinforce the overall integrity. These hollow gate wings were transported to Agazlam by Trolls and the cavity filled with soft iron on site.

The hard and tempered steel serves to deflect attacks by axes, fire or sharp battering rams. The mass of the soft iron core resists the force of blunt impacts like stones from siege engines or great blunt battering rams. This serves to take the stress from the great hinges of the gates. Where the two wings meet there are great spikes in the form of massive teeth that interlock like fingers and effectively prevent the gates from simply being forced by pushing with great power. Even though the gates alone are able to withstand almost all imaginable assaults, there are three massive perpendicular bars ready to further block the doors. These bars are made from the wood of the blood-oak, that can only be found around the Sea of Nurn. They are almost as resilient as iron, hard to ignite and of a reddish-black colour. On the inside of the gates there are perpendicular grates running the height of the doors. When the bars are lowered from above, long gaps in the bars engage with the grates, thus firmly connecting the bars with both doors (inner and outer). This way, even hauling up the gates is effectively prevented. In the floor are holes about one metre deep that accommodate the bars, thus firmly anchoring them in the rock. When the doors are open, these holes are filled with fitted wooden boxes that can quickly be removed. The bars are only lowered in times of crisis. During almost the whole history of the fortress they remain in the raised position, since the gates are more than adequate to deal with any normal threat. The western



gate is always closed at night, while the eastern one is open almost all of the time. The eastern gate of Lugskut is the only one in the whole fortress possessing only a single pair of wings. This was done to ease its recapture, should that ever become necessary.

3. and 6. Storeroom

Foodstuffs, torches, lamp oil and many other consumables are stored here in sacks, boxes and barrels. They are transported here through the central gateway by ox-drawn wagons and later

transported to the upper storeys by the stairs. A great part of the storeroom is occupied by caches of arrows and bolts for the defense of the gateway. Tools, bars and spare stone can be found here as well for use in repairing or barricading the pathway during an attack. In the event of an enemy taking the main gate, the spiral stairs would be blocked using the stones and bars stored here, in effect blocking their doors as well.

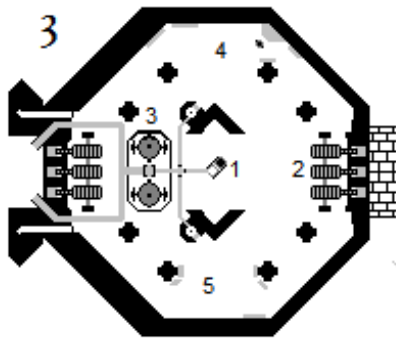
4. and 5. Quarters of the door wardens

These are home to twenty orcs each, living on crude wooden-frame beds. The mattresses have long since gone and the frames are covered with rags and straw. The guards of this level are taken in monthly turns from all the orc companies of the tower, making these quarters the most filthy and despicable of the whole tower. No orc cares for the place, since working for the comfort of others

is a concept wholly alien to orcs. Occasionally, the departing garrison take great delight in handing over the quarters in an especially filthy condition to their successors. Despite all this, gate duty is still one of the most sought-after posts, since the rooms are among the darkest in the whole tower and unloading the supply wagons often offers the opportunity for snatching a good piece for oneself. The orc chieftain has made a habit of checking the gate guards every time he leaves his quarters. The slightest transgressions are punished severely, since this is a crucial point for the defense of the whole fortress.



VIEW INTO GORGOROTH

Third level

The third storey comprises one great room which contains the workshops and machines of the tower. This is also the place where tools, raw materials and coal are stored. Two corridors lead through the western wall toward the outer towers and the gatehouse of the drawbridge. Both corridors are secured with steel doors that can be barred from the tower side.

1. Murder hole and freight elevator

Tracks allow the relocation of a bronze dome over the murder hole and secured by (removable) bolts.

2. Treadmill of the gate bars

These three interconnected treadmills move the gate bars up or down via a system of gearwheels. The treadmills can only be operated together. The efficient power transmission allow a mere twelve orcs to move the bars weighing several tons within a few (ca. 5) minutes. The downward motion can be much quicker though if the securing chain is removed from the treadmills. Then gravity moves the bars downward if the operators of the mills are too few or too lightweight, in which event they end up like hamsters in a wheel rotating at high speed. This mechanism is the same on all gates of the three towers and a further ingenious invention of Pharagn.

3. Oil cauldrons

These are two great cauldrons with a capacity of 700 litres each. Below them are equally massive braziers. The cauldrons are filled with oil via pipes leading from the barrels on the fourth level. It takes about one hour for the oil to boil.

After that, the cauldrons can pour their contents into a reservoir. From this reservoir grooves lead to the murder hole, the spiral stairs and the western treadmill, and to pipes in the western wall. Through steel valves the crew can direct the flow of the oil and decide which groove is flooded with oil. Enemies before the gates, within the gate complex and on the spiral stairs can thus be subject to a more or less continuous stream of hot oil, since the cauldrons can feed the reservoir every thirty minutes alternately. Previous tests of the fortress commander have shown that there are only interruptions of about two to four minutes in the oil flow if all grooves are flooded. If necessary, the pauses can be avoided if the oil is not fully heated to boiling, but victims of this shower may not really notice a difference between boiling and half-boiling oil. The oil stocks in the upper storey suffice for a more or less continuous stream of about eight hours. Almost all gates of the fortress are protected by such a system. After the last test the orcs had to clean the floor of the oil for weeks since there were so many accidents due to the slippery surface—and the orcish chieftain himself slipping on it. Such oily surfaces are a severe obstacle for the iron-shodden orcish boots. Such test runs are usually ordered when the human Fortress Commander is of the opinion that the gate of Lugskut needs a cleansing and his orcs are underemployed. The orcish crew consists of smiths and orcs well-versed in

crafting that have made their home in these rooms. They are good at operating the system, but do not take its maintenance overly seriously.

4. Smithy

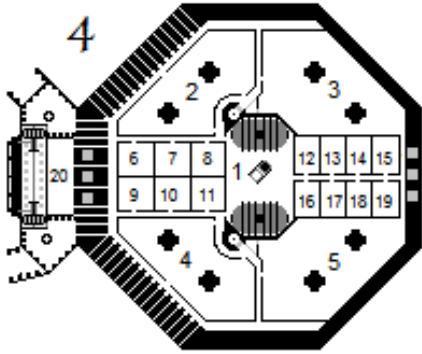
The chief smith of the orcs lives and works here. He is also the chief of this storey and commands about fifty craftsmen, workers and apprentices. All these have made their quarters among the crates of nails, metal ore and half-finished metal equipment. The young and the dumb orc warriors hold them in small esteem, though all the others know that it is a bad idea to fall out with those who repair the weapons and armour; especially since the smith and his men are quite a strong bunch.

Should one be in combat with these orcs, one should be on his guard since they are much more intelligent, stronger and better fed than the average orc. Upon the death of the master smith (not necessarily a natural one) a hammer is passed down to his successor. It is an ancient artifact from Angband, the “Hammer of Pain” (H). Normally the apprentices have to work with this hammer that brings horrible pain, but also has some remarkable properties...

5. Workshops

More workbenches, chopping blocks etc.



Fourth level

The majority of the orcs of the tower live here, and this is the only level of Lugskut with loopholes—of course in the western wall.

1. Murder hole, freight elevator and oil barrels

On this level the hole in the floor can be closed with a bronze dome as well. Two big oil tanks of copper stand right

above the triangular walls of the levels below on the northern and southern wall. The cauldrons on the level below can be filled with pipes leading from these tanks. After each test run these tanks must be refilled by bucket at great effort. These buckets have to be carried by hand from the central doorway two levels below. If the oil is supplied in small barrels, it might be hoisted up on the freight elevator. Depending on the enthusiasm of the orcs, this process takes up to a week. Consequently, after each test run, cleaning up and carrying buckets are the primary duties of the orcs – tasks which they despise.

2. to 5. Orc quarters

About 80 orcs live in each room. They may be cramped, but at least they are not cold. #2 and 4 are those rooms with the defensive loopholes.

6. to 10. Quarters of the gang leaders

These are the homes of the four senior gang leaders, each of whom leads two troops of 40 orcs each.

11. Quarters of the shaman

See NPC descriptions for more on the inhabitant of these quarters.

12.-19. Quarters of the gang leaders

These are the homes of the eight regular gang leaders, each of whom leads a troop of 40 orcs each.

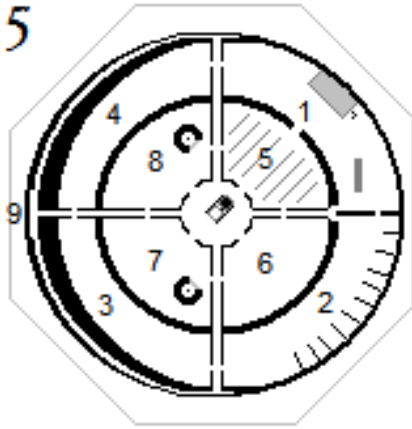
20. Drawbridge

See page 21 for a detailed description of its mechanism and mode of operation.

OUTSKIRTS OF MORGAI RIDGE AS SEEN FROM LUGSKUT



Fifth level



For this level and above, the design of the tower changes. The octagonal layout makes room for round storeys with dome-like transitions between the tapering storeys. The round levels are shaped like a ship's prow towards the west and equipped with protective covers of massive stone slabs to give maximum resistance against the feared Númenórean siege engines and deflect any missiles hurled against the bridge. The round form was chosen to minimize structural stress from the impact of such missiles and provide a more favourable angle for shot deflection as opposed to straight walls.

1. Kitchen

This room serves as kitchen, slaughterhouse and larder all in one—an arrangement that the orcs have absolutely no problem with. The oversized fireplace can accommodate the roasting of a whole ox in one piece. In times of shortage, it was not unheard-of to see some orc or another here. The cook is a strong

orc who quickly decapitates anyone who tries to steal food or mess with his area of responsibility. He commands respect even from the orcish chieftain and sleeps in the kitchen, since he trusts no one where—his—food is concerned.

2. Cattle shed

Here the orcs keep all the livestock that they have been able to get away with (mostly from Ithilien). The animals that are due for slaughter are mostly lean and often tough as old boots. In case of low spirits among the garrison the fortress commander assigns better animals for slaughter or even buys them at his own expense from the caravans. Here can be found every kind of animal that is kept in the neighbouring lands: old and frail cattle, buffalos, goats, sheep, donkeys, pigs and even a number of dogs. Occasionally there may be some unlucky soul of the Free Peoples that has survived the torture chamber and longs for death as a merciful release. In general, the cook's desires are similar since he is of the opinion that you should not play with your food!

3. and 4. Orc quarters

About 60 orcs live in each of the these rooms, under indescribable conditions.

5. Dining room

The orcs take their meals here. The captains sit next to the kitchen and get the first choice from the dishes that are brought out. Only when they are sufficiently fed does food reach the tables of the lower ranks. It goes without saying

that plates and cutlery are unknown. For soups or other fluid food (e.g. blood soup) each orc has his own bowl made of wood or tin. Sometimes helmets are sufficient as well. Bones and leftovers are simply thrown onto the floor. The orc-females have to clean out these things from time to time when it becomes too hard to walk here from all the filth on the floor.

6. Larder

The cook stores all his non-living foodstuffs plus the leftovers (if any) here.

7. Storeroom

Arrows, weapons and armour of orcish design are stored here. All of them are of inferior quality, since the better items have long since been snatched up and found their way into the personal property of individual orcs.

8. Storeroom

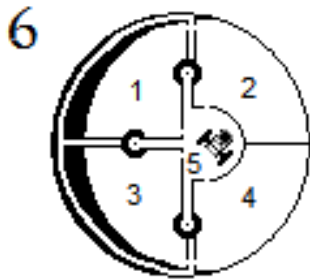
Ropes, spare parts for the winch, logs for the fire, coal for the kitchen, plus extra supporting beams and tools for general repairs in case of an attack are stored here.

9. Fighting platform

Three accessways lead to this area, a gallery behind the three foot thick curtain wall. The gallery is protected by a chest-high wall without crenellations. Above it is a far projecting roof which provides excellent protection against missile of all kinds. In case of an attack, about 150 orcs assemble here and shower the enemy with arrows.



Sixth level



7



8



1. to 3. Orc quarters

About 60 orcs are crowded into each of these rooms.

4. Guest quarters

Once these quarters were decorated with fine furniture. This has long since

vanished; being sullied by the orcs or burned in one of the fireplaces. For many years, any high-ranking guests have been hosted in Lugshapat. High-ranking orcish guests (e.g. inspectors from Barad-dûr) are quartered in the rooms of the chieftain, who in turn takes his quarters here—albeit grudgingly.

5. Winch of the freight elevator

The transport of heavy or bulky goods can be facilitated up to here by the elevator. The winch is located on the ceiling and its crew has to step on small steps to operate the cranks. There is the usual bronze dome to close up the hole.

Seventh level

About two dozen orcs live on this level. It is the least sought-after station in the whole tower and the troop here, consisting of outcasts from the other units, is subjected to being in a constant

cold draught as well as painful sunlight. Occasionally, a troop that has caught the displeasure of the chieftain is transferred here for disciplinary reasons.

Eighth level

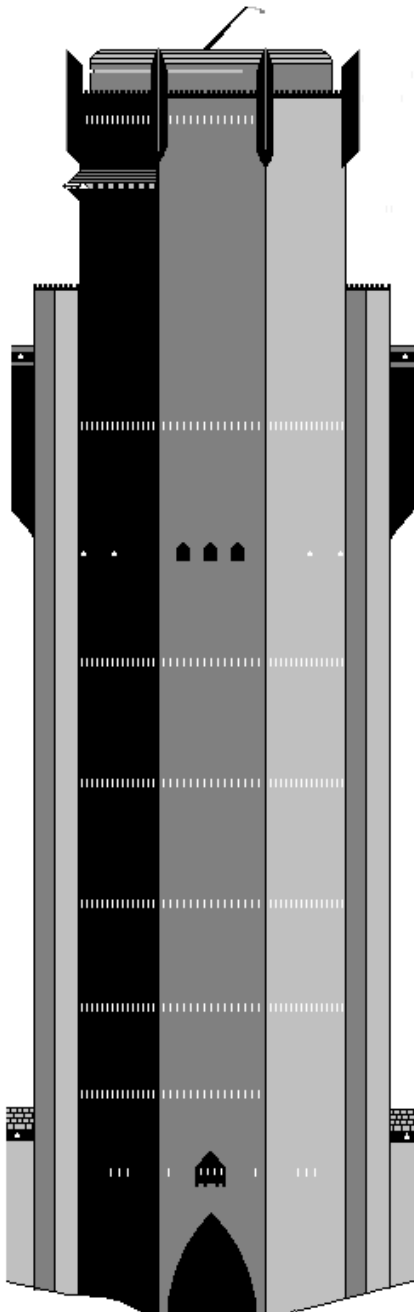
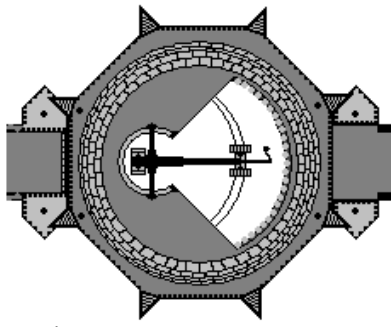
Four orcs are always on watch here and look out for approaching enemies. During daytime, two human soldiers from the other towers are also on guard here. These are usually some unlucky guys who got this assignment as a punishment for some transgression. It has become customary for the human guards to enter the orc tower only with cloths dipped in vinegar over their mouths...

On one wall is a great gong which is sounded in an alarm and can be heard as far as Lugshapat.



LAVA AROUND ORODRUIN

Lugshapat— the Tower of the Sword

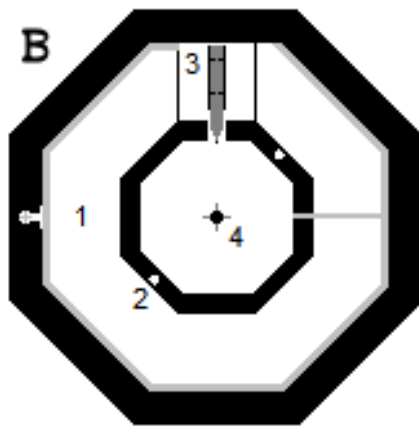


The name of the Tower of the Sword is fully justified by the titanic stone-throwing machine in the uppermost level and the huge number of troops stationed here (in fact the greatest number for a tower in the whole fortress). While Lugskut, the Tower of the Shield shall stop the enemy and take its blows (and missiles), Lugshapat's purpose is to fight back by the bombardment of the enemy with deadly missiles. The great trebuchet at the top of the tower outranges any mobile siege engines by far, giving the tower a distinctive advantage at a distance—as well as accuracy due to its calibration on its fixed location. In an emergency the machine can also be used to destroy Lugskut from its weak eastern side as well as the bridge connecting the towers. Lugshapat is the central bulwark of the fortress and its main tower. Despite the title of "Tower of Power" for Lugburug, the fortress commander resides in Lugshapat and it is from here that the troops and the running of the fortress are overseen. Beside the big siege machine, a central winding ramp within the tower is the defining feature of this tower. It is wide enough that a wagon

pulled by two oxen or three riders abreast can comfortably use it and cover the vertical elevation. Bridge and ramp are interwoven at this, the transport nexus of this corner of Mordor. The fortress administration and other facilities to control the flow of goods and the traffic are also located here. Another unique feature is the fact that an attacker will probably attack from above (the bridge) on a lower level. Therefore many features of this tower are designed "bottom-up". For example, the guard quarters are high up in the tower and those of the commander not on the highest level, but below the bridge level. In general, the less important features are located in the higher levels (e.g. guest quarters), and the important ones lower down. In addition, there are some interesting precautions, to prevent an enemy that has gained entry into the tower at the bridge level from being able to benefit from his height advantage.

The basic layout of the structure consists of an inner within an outer shell, a design feature pivotal to many of the tower's peculiarities.



(Secret) Basement level

This whole level is secret and only known (and accessible) to the fortress commander. A well-hidden spiral stair leads to the level lying about ten metres below the Morgai valley floor. The spiral stair is also an escape route for the commander and leads directly here from his chambers in the seventh level. The existence of the stair is for reasons explained later one of the best-kept secrets of Agazlam.

1. Well and cistern

A cistern fed by groundwater occupies almost the whole floor area of the tower. A narrow and slippery path runs along the curtain wall towards the inner tower. The gigantic cistern holds enough water to supply three thousand soldiers for at least four years. Due to the scarcity of water in Mordor, control of this cistern is a powerful instrument of rule in this land. After its completion, all those with knowledge of the cistern were shifted to garrisons far away in the east or south, except the mere slaves who were summarily executed. A young kraken (similar to Moria's "Watcher in the Water"), captured by Sauron in the Núrnen was presented to Tar Pharagn as a gift to be placed here. Before that, the creature was put under a spell, giving him a name in the process. At first Pharagn was skeptical about the idea of placing such a creature in the only—and extremely valuable—water source of the fortress. But Sauron ordered him to proceed anyway. He had experience with a similar and initially unwelcome inhabitant of one of the cisterns of Barad-dûr.

In the end this guest proved quite valuable: The water was effectively protected from rats and other potentially dangerous vermin since all these feared the presence of the creature. Indeed rats had been a major problem in the cisterns of the Dark Tower—much bigger than the minimal waste from the creature.

The Kraken sleeps most of the time and after the manner of dragons awakes when someone intrudes into his "realm". This is the reason why it is content with rare feeding, always personally by the fortress commander who throws victims in one of the wells ('2') or brings the unfortunate soul down here in person. Everyone entering the cistern will encounter the monster. Only those speaking the name of the creature ('Ullfahgosh') are spared from his subsequent attacks. The spell is powerful enough that the Kraken hears his name even when it is spoken above the water of the Morgai creek—but only when it has water in it. No one is aware that the creature obeys any order that is spoken with his name!

2. Well shafts

The load-bearing walls of the inner tower are wide enough to let down several long but slender containers by means of a winch. The shafts run through all the levels like a tube. Each such shaft has eight such ropes, each one from every adjoining level. All levels have iron grates over the shafts (within the tube), that allow only enough space for a very slender elf or a child (about 40cm) to squeeze through. Access to the shafts can be restricted by adding single iron hatches (e.g. in times of water shortage) on the "tube" walls of the shaft of the respective level. Only the water-master and the fortress commander have keys. The shafts lead down to the very bottom of the cistern. Should someone slip through the iron grates and reach the bottom of the well shafts, he will find a further massive grating about 8m below the surface (depending on the water level in the cistern) that bars the way to the cistern proper. Should he try to remove the grate, the Kraken will notice him and attack by enveloping him with its arms

and injecting its digestive fluids. Until now no one has tried such a feat and only minor items can be found here that have been either lost in the shafts when getting water or deliberately discarded. Among them are a simple golden wedding ring (B) that was cast into the shaft with a curse from its owner and a dagger that was involved in the attempted murder of a former fortress commander (C). Beyond that, there is little to be found here, since it is a capital offense to spoil the water by any means (water supply being always a critical point for a fortress). And one might only think of a deliberate poisoning...

3. The ram of destruction

A massive granite obelisk weighing several hundred tons is suspended by heavy chains of steel. Like a titanic pendulum it is drawn in one direction fixed in the position on the outer wall. Should the supporting steel beams be removed (e.g. with hammers), it is only held back by a steel ring at its base. The ring is held by the snout of a stone dragon's head attached to the wall. Speaking the word "awake" in the Black Speech ("Shagrim!") causes the mouth to open and release the obelisk. The obelisk will then swing towards the middle of the tower. The dragon's mouth can alternately be destroyed by brute force of course.

4. Foundations of the central ramp and treasure chamber

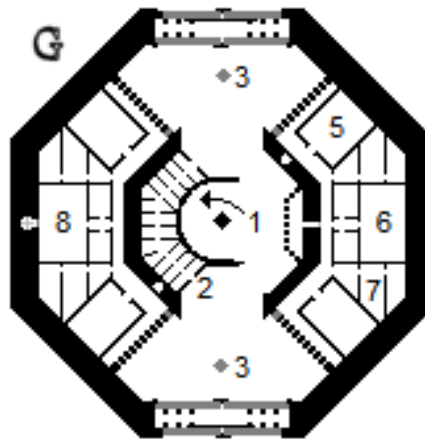
This room lies above the water level and has been entered only twice since the building of the fortress—both times by Tar Pharagn who hid the heirlooms of his house here: The *Stone of Will* (D), a clam with a hair of Uinen (E) and the seal of his house (F). Beside these, the room contains his collection of his most daring designs as well as tomes of architectural knowledge both of Númenórean and Sauronic origin (G).

The floor is the smoothed stone of the mountain itself; only in the middle of the room there is a shallow disc hewn from the surrounding material. This holds an orb of about two metres diameter that is made from the same black granite as the obelisk mentioned above.

Steel beams secure the orb against accidental shift (e.g. in the frequent earthquakes in Mordor). Like the ones securing the obelisk, these beams can be removed quickly. The central pillar of the great ramp that reaches almost the whole tower rests on the orb. The ramp is so cunningly built that the slabs forming it are only loosely set in the wall, not firmly connected to it. The stability of the whole ramp structure rests on the central column and this in turn on the orb. Once the supporting beams are removed the orb remains relative stable on the flat disc. But once the obelisk is unfastened, it would swing with its full force against the orb and destroy it or kick it out of position. This in turn would cause the central ramp column to drop by about two metres. The obelisk would then swing back and forth a few times, hitting the less stable parts of the ramp column, which would cause the ramp to drop a further ten metres and all floor plates to fall out of position. In the end, the whole ramp structure would collapse in a big event, rendering all tiers of the tower below bridge level inaccessible from above. An attacker would be unable to descend into the Morgai valley or attack the lower levels of Lugshapat. (The garrison of the higher levels would be cut off too, but perhaps this is intentional—to punish them for their inability to stop the enemy? At least this would fit to a sauronic thinking)



Ground level



The ground storey contains both gates for access to the road in the Morgai valley (though traffic to and from its southern part is very limited, that being a dead-end). Here this road and the one between Mordor and the Ephel Dúath intersect at different elevations. The massive, load-bearing construction of the inner tower is interrupted by two gate-like gaps, through which passes the road towards the great ramp up to the bridge level. This storey mainly contains facilities for the administration and storing the goods of the traffic passing through this spot. The gate guards have their quarters here too.

1. The Great Ramp

The great ramp is the only connection between the ground level and the sixth tower level. It is also the only access for wagons and riders from the (northern) Morgai valley and the “undead road” Razc Gol. At times it is filled day and night with the cries of oxen and their drivers and the rumbling of wagon wheels, while at other times it seems totally abandoned and used only by the local garrison. Its gradient and width are designed so that a laden wagon drawn by two oxen can comfortably ascend it. This is assisted by the design of the floor which gives a better grip for the animals pulling the wagons. The ceiling is about 4m above the floor, giving even riders good clearance. Alternatively,

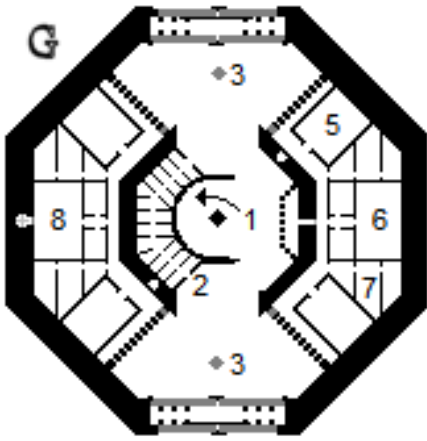
three riders abreast may use the ramp as well. The ramp is built around a central column measuring about three metres in thickness. It ends at level eight, directly below bridge level. From here on, one has to ascend the last storey to bridge level via a separate straight ramp in two sections with a 180° turn between them. The ramp winds up counterclockwise, which is unusual since siege architecture normally has stairs etc. wind the opposite way to give right-handed defenders the advantage against an enemies coming from below. But here the attacker would be coming from above...

2. Stables

Here are boxes to accommodate 22 horses and space for the storage of saddles and harness. The stables are cleaned by slaves and the animals tended by grooms. The manure is simply brought out of the building and thrown onto a big dung heap. Altogether 18 horses are kept here, eight of which are constantly used by couriers and scouts while eight are resting. The two remaining ones are treated with special care: One for the fortress commander and one for urgent couriers on a mission for Sauron. The additional boxes are reserved for the animals of travellers or guests and often occupied.

3. Gates / anteroom / murder holes / archer’s gallery

Each of the two gates is guarded by three soldiers. The gates open inward (in contrast to the ones of the other towers), because it is assumed that the enemy would not approach from the Morgai valley, but through the tower from above. For this reason, the construction deviates in another, crucial detail: The inward barring beams are exchanged for thick iron bars. Pulling levers will cause these to fall down. There is no mechanism for raising the bars, since an enemy approaching from above shall have no possibility of making the bars operable again quickly. Since this has not been



tested and is quite old by now, there is a 30% chance that it will malfunction partially or even completely. The levers are located behind a thin facing of stone and only the captains and the commander know of them. Should a spy get knowledge of the levers and use them, the gates would have to be dismantled and built anew! Murder holes in the eight foot ceiling offer the possibility of pouring oil onto attackers. The rooms adjacent to the antechamber are lined with loopholes. The walls have a steel door each, bordering on the inner tower, through which the gallery and the rooms behind it can be reached.

4. Guardroom and control station

Two guards and two administrators are always on duty in this office, which is divided from the ramp room by a one foot high wall and iron grating. Here all permits are checked, names and destinations noted—regardless of whether they use the ramp or simply exit the tower on the other side. Travellers coming down the ramp are the only ones not controlled, since they are supposed to have been checked at another gate already. In case of attack the gateway and ramp area can be placed under fire from here. For this purpose four crossbows and 100 bolts are stored here. The room can only be accessed by a back door. According to standing orders, this door must always be locked from the inside.

5. Quarters of the gate guards

Eight soldiers each live in these four quarters. They take turns to stand guard at both gates day and night in squads

three men strong. They also supply the two soldiers for the guardroom (4). This way, eight soldiers of each quarter are always on duty, leaving their room empty for their six-hour shift. The routines are shifted, so that one room is on guard duty for six hours, the next is on stand-by, the third is ready for courier and scout service and fourth is resting. The stand-by duty includes searching passing wagons, escorting guests or prisoners to their assigned destinations, helping with unloading of cargo or supervising slaves doing so. Patrol and scout duty means patrolling the Morgai valley and maintaining contact with patrols from Carach Angren, Barad-dûr and other places in Mordor. Since these rooms have no windows, the soldiers often spend their free time in the common rooms of the upper storeys or in the Morgai valley, enjoying the fresh air of Mordor...

6. Archive of the administrators

Countless scrolls, papers and tomes fill the shelves of this administrative archive. Should someone have sufficient time, he would be able to analyze and recreate the economic and military traffic of the past thousand years. This would take decades of course... This is one of the few unlocked rooms in the fortress. The two small adjacent rooms are each the quarters of a scribe. Other scribes live across near room 8.

7. Storerooms

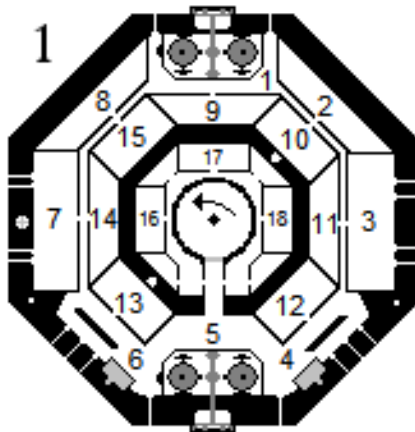
These rooms contain additional equipment for the gate guards (weapons, spare parts etc.). In addition they may contain ropes, torches, oil barrels, building materials or foodstuffs that have been unloaded and stored temporarily here until being taken to their final destination in another part of the fortress.

8. Rest room for travellers

Simple plank-beds and tables await travellers who are important enough to enjoy this comfort, but not important enough to be eligible for the guest quarters in the upper part of the tower. Typical clients are leaders and captains of caravans (the simple caravan staff have to

make do with the space before the gates), messengers that have carried out their missions, spies on their way to or from Ithilien etc. A great, almost sculpture-like mural adorns the outer part of the curtain wall. It shows a depiction of Sauron in his fair form, standing atop Barad-dûr and surveying the lands of Mordor. In the distance the pictured landmarks of Mordor blend into a map-like representation of the whole of Middle-earth. The artist has used another—remarkable—technique as well: Of all the elements of the image, Sauron is the only part not raised, but recessed. This gives the impression that Sauron gazes directly at every beholder—regardless of their point of view. Apart from that, he can be recognized by his long, flowing hair and that all the orcs and men before him are on their knees, pressing their faces to the ground. It has become a custom that all guests quartered here bow before the relief when entering and exiting the room. The relief is indeed a masterpiece and beside its artistic craftsmanship it has a subtle magical power: observers are prevented from touching it! If a PC tries to touch the relief the GM should deter them in some way, according to their background (I).

Should someone step into Sauron's shoes (literally) and lay his own body in Sauron's depression, this part of the relief sinks further and can then be opened like a door. To use this whole mechanism, one must be at least 1.8 metres tall and weigh a minimum of 90kg (a character of up to 2,10m would also fit into the depression). Behind it there is a further steel door leading down a narrow spiral stair to the secret cellar level. The fortress commander has the only key to this door.

First level

The first storey provides space for kitchens, workshops, the main storerooms and the quarters of the slaves and craftsmen. It is the economic heart of Lugshapat.

1. Oil cauldrons

These cauldrons are operated in exactly the same way as the ones on level three of Lugskut. Since here only the area before the gates and one murder hole have to be fed with oil, a continuous “oil shower” is possible if both cauldrons are alternately used. The cauldrons of Lugshapat can be used in a secondary function for the preparation of stew or washing (see kitchen’s description).

2. Storage of iron rations

This room contains the foodstuffs that might be needed in case of an extended war. Even though an outright “siege” of the fortress (e.g. being invested from all sides) is not considered in the fortress’ design, Pharaagn and all subsequent fortress commanders were well aware that in case of a major war with the West, the availability of food supplies would be a critical issue in all of Mordor. Thus a good store within the fortress would considerably ease the burden of provisioning the installation from the east.

Only very long-lasting foods are kept here. Barrels with cooking oil, raisins, nuts of various sorts (among them rare, big nuts with a furry shell from southern Harad), dried meat in salt barrels, dried fruit, eyes (of unknown origin) in vinegar. Even titbits like gelee cubes with

fish in oil can be found here. The room is secured by a steel door, and only the quartermaster and the fortress commander have keys. Assuming extremely economical use the contents of this room are sufficient to feed the garrison for one year.

3. Flour storage

Flour sacks fill the whole room. The storage is sufficient to bake bread for the whole garrison for one year. There is not only wheat flour, but also from barley, oats and maize. Since there are regular deliveries from the fertile regions around the Núrnen sea, there is a regular turnover with the oldest sacks being used for baking bread. Since the transport of flour is much less costly and problematic than raw grain (and the fact that the vicinity of Agazlam does not support the farming of grain), the fortress has no mill of its own. The quartermaster has a keen eye on cleanliness in the room and the storage master has to ventilate the room daily to prevent explosions of dusting of flour. An intruder with the necessary knowledge of this danger (e.g. with previous experience as a miller) could slit lots of sacks to fill the room with a lot of dust....

4. Kitchen

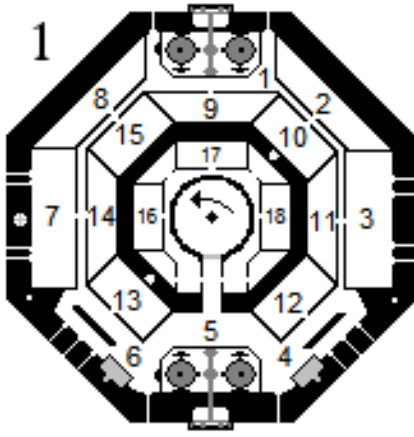
A great table at which a dozen cooks can work simultaneously occupies the middle of the room. It is busy the whole day: hacking meat, preparing fish from the Núrnen sea, kneading the dough etc. A big cauldron hangs above a large fireplace whose outlet ends a few metres above the room in a grated hole in the outer wall. It is possible to simultaneously heat several smaller cauldrons or roast a whole oxen on a skewer. The other end of the table is firmly integrated into the wall and holds a place for baking bread and other dishes. The oven is big enough to simultaneously bake a small loaf of bread for every soldier in the fortress, which is in fact regularly done. It also serves to keep dishes warm. During daytime, the kitchen is a hive of activity; the servants are occupied with all manner of food preparation—from the slicing of vegetables to the carving of whole

cows. The slaves try to carry away the waste without interfering in the work process, keep the kitchen clean and carry water in buckets for all kinds of kitchen use. The servants are naturally well fed, while stealing food is forbidden to the slaves under threat of the death penalty. They have a place reserved at the end of the table, where the usable leftovers from the preparation process are put (or even—if a maidservant has a big heart—a good piece of meat). During night-time the kitchen is usually empty and encountering someone is the exception, for example if a big feast of the tower commander is being prepared for the next day or the slaves have been given extra work for some minor transgression. The bakers are the first to begin their shift, at three hours before dawn, to bake the bread for the breakfast of the garrison. Under special circumstances the oil cauldrons intended for defense (see #1) may also be used for cooking soup. This has happened seldom to date, primarily only when great hosts encamped in or near the fortress have to be supported by the fortress kitchen in addition to the garrison.

5. Oil cauldron (see #1)

6. Washhouse and emergency kitchen

Half of this room is equipped exactly like the kitchen in #4 and is normally used as a washhouse. The great cauldron above the fireplace normally serves as the washing tub and on the big table the laundry is prepared by scrubbing and treating with soap suds. This is the place where almost all of the laundry of the soldiers ends up sooner or later. Even the tower commander’s clothes are washed here—of course with special care. Hundreds of plates, cups and other dishes are cleaned here after each main meal. Twice a week there is washing day, and then all the work (washing and the supply of water by bucket) is carried out by slaves under the supervision of journeymen. The oven is used whenever the regular one on the other side of the room is being cleaned.



In case of extraordinary feasts or when extra troops have to be supplied, this room is used as an additional kitchen. Cleanliness of clothing and personal hygiene is then closely monitored. Should such extra troops be present for longer and if the fortress is not under immediate threat, the laundry can be done in the oil cauldrons.

7. Drying room

Long lines crossing squarely through the room contains various pieces of clothing from the soldiers and servants. Copper pipes from the oven in #6 lead along the ceiling. In case cool mists from the Ephel Dúath prevent proper drying, the outgoing air from the oven can heat up the room considerably. In times of crisis the room can be used as additional troop quarters.

8. Wood and coal storage

Fire wood and coal is stored here in great crates and stacks. Wagons bring them to this level and then they are repacked by slaves here. They are used for cooking, room heating and firing the oil

cauldrons in # 1 and 5 in case of attack. The coal for the cauldrons is kept in a big, locked crate, since it is not to be used for everyday firing. The wood is from the region around Núrn, from the southern slopes of the Ephel Dúath near the borders of Harad. Much of the coal is charcoal from the big charcoal piles there or hard coal found by the orcs in their mining, but the majority of the latter stems from Sauron's slave-mines.

9. Spice storage

The main contents of this room are salt and sugar in great barrels, but there are also exotic spices from the home regions of the fortress' soldiers. One shelf contains small sachets of rare spices from the deepest South and East. Many of these small bags would fetch several times their weight in gold in the markets of Osgiliath.

10. Second water storage

Reserve storage with the same function as #13.

11. Storage for cooking oil and fat

Barrels and stoneware contain butter, plant and olive oil. In case the flour from #3 should explode, the added ingredients from this room would make for a nice mix of flammables.

12. Larder

This contains food ready for use in the next day or two. Sausages, marmalade etc. are stored here.

13. Water storage

Since the kitchen and wash house have a great need of water, special meas-

ures have been included. Should there be enough water in the cistern, the slaves are busy winching water containers up and filling barrels with it. These barrels are then transported by carts into the kitchen and wash house. In the event that the cistern is low on water, water from other sources is brought in. If washing is suspended and the cooks use water economically, the full water storage here lasts for about three weeks (normal-sized garrison assumed).

14. Storage of iron rations

The content is identical to #2, but intended for daily use.

15. Lamp oil storage

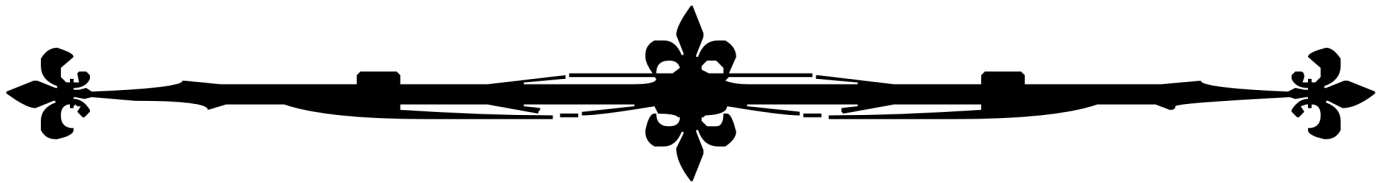
Man-high jugs held by iron railings contain the whole supply of lamp oil of the whole tower.

16 and 17. Meat storage

Since temperatures within the inner tower are quite low and a chimney effect provides a constant stream of air up the Great Ramp, this is the right place for storage of perishable goods. In those rooms which are only separated by a grating from the ramp, numerous halves of cattle and pigs are suspended from the ceiling by chains. Even parts of horses and donkeys can be found here—beside other strange beasts unknown in the west.

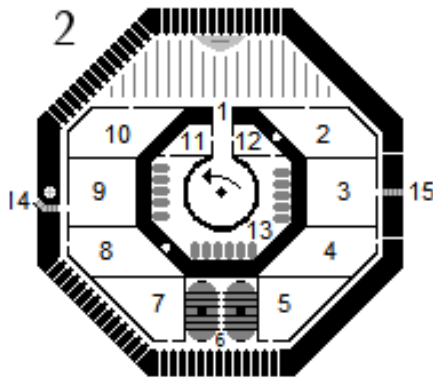
18. Vegetable storage

Similar to #16 and 17. The only difference is that vegetables instead of meat are stored here.



Second level

The great dining room and the quarters of the servants can be found here, in addition to further utility and storage rooms and access to the wall that bars the Morgai valley.



1. Great dining room

Twenty long tables provide enough room to serve the whole tower garrison (apart from those on duty) at the same time. Normally this happens twice a day: In the morning, shortly after sunrise and in the evening shortly after sunset. About 250 soldiers can be present at these times, while slaves hurry between the benches, serving food and clear up dishes into the scullery (#2). On the wall is a table at right angles to the rest. Here the captains take their meals. The fortress commander is seen here only for special events and normally dines within his quarters.

2. Scullery

Directly on the well shaft is this room where dishes are cleaned. Cupboards hold hundreds of tin cups, pottery etc. After each major meal, the slaves are occupied for two to three hours cleaning up.

3. Living quarters of the quartermaster

The master of the civilians within the fortress lives in quarters of luxurious dimensions: ten times the space assigned to simple servants. It is bigger than the captains' quarters in levels six and seven

as well, indicating his high status within the fortress. The current quartermaster originates in the Far East of Middle-earth and rules his subordinates with almost military precision, being possessed of an almost religious devotion to cleanliness and accuracy. He is an ascetic and has quickly removed the lavish furniture of his predecessors. The big room's only contents are now a pitcher, a dish for personal hygiene, a decorated mat of raffia for sleeping (J) and a small chest with his few personal belongings. On the floor one can find a low pad for writing on and on the far wall is a closet with hundreds of scrolls. Since he is busy around the fortress almost the whole day, he spends only little time in his room (and that mostly meditating). The slaves fear him, since the slightest transgression means hours of extra work. His almost magical ability to show up exactly when something goes wrong is the characteristic that frightens the slaves' the most. In the meantime even many of the soldiers deem him a sorcerer for his seeming lack of need for sleep. It is told that even when he sleeps, his eyes are always open. Beside a few items of good but simple clothing there is nothing of worth in the chest. Should someone search the scrolls for hints of dark magical knowledge, they will be disappointed, since there are only administrative papers about storages lists of the past years, copies of supply orders etc. to be found here. With greater scrutiny, the records about the assignment of rations in case of attack can be found.

4. Storage for tools, building materials and raw materials

Here beams, nails, blocks of stone, plaster, planks, tools etc. are stored.

5. Quarters of the master craftsmen

Partitions divide this room into four quarters. In contrast to the quartermas-

ter the master cook, the master baker, the chief carpenter and the female master tailor have made the room into their private oasis of prosperity.

6. Oiltanks for defense

Here are the two great tanks of oil which feed the oil cauldrons on the level below. Oddly enough, the fortress commander almost never orders any test runs for the boiling oil defense, which would necessitate extensive cleaning and refill of the tanks. Therefore the room behind the tanks is an excellent place for hiding things. Perhaps one of the servants might have hidden a cache of forbidden herbs or some other small treasure here.

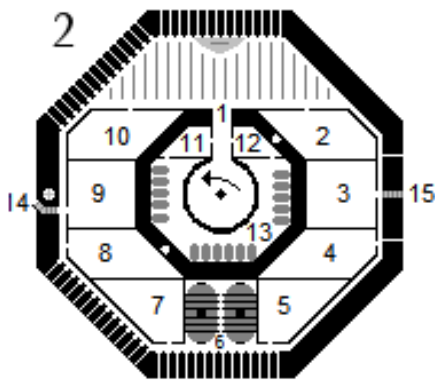
7. Workshop

Long workbenches hold a multitude of tools. Here all kinds of metal- and woodwork are possible that are necessary for the running of the fortress. There is only a small forge for the repair of items of daily use or tools. Major smithcraft has to be carried out in neighbouring Lugburug.

8. to 10. Servants' quarters

About 25 male and 20 female servants live in these quarters. The women live in room 8, separate from the men. Concerning "relationships between servants", see the chapter *The inhabitants of the fortress*. Should a couple be lucky and get a permit for marriage, they are allowed to live in room 11 together for one month, after which they have to return to the common rooms again. Despite the simple basic design of rows of beds and a chest before that, the inhabitants managed to create some degree of privacy. The beds are separated by movable "walls" of linen on wooden frames and the walls have been decorated by simple pictures. In the middle of the room is common table. The maidservants even have a great wall hanging with embroideries. Each single maidservant has made her sign on it. The hanging has thousands of symbols in a myriad of scripts, small pictorial embroidery, scenes from home etc.





11. Wedding room

This room is almost totally occupied by a great bed. The bed is decorated with carvings and the walls are decorated with images that the people of Gondor would likely call absolutely obscene. Elves would probably frown and shake their heads. The room also has an unlocked access to the wine cellar (13). This is what could be interpreted as the official wedding gift of the fortress commander.

12. Quarters of the watermaster and cellarer

In case of attack the watermaster is responsible for managing the water reserves of the fortress. In times of peace he is “only” the cellarer. Since the fortress has never been attacked in over thousand years, the office is mostly held by men who can appreciate the responsibility and show a wide girth and red nose. Of course the “water” master despises it having to share “his” wine cellar with the occupants of room 11. Therefore he instructs them very carefully which of the wines are for the “bosses” (his terminology) exclusively.

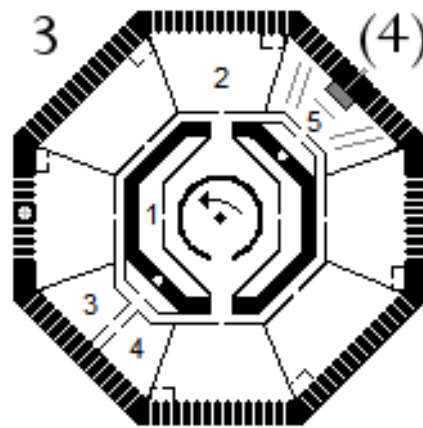
13. Wine and beer cellar

Along the cool surface of the inner tower are stacked great barrels of beer and wine. Beer is supplied to the soldiers once a week. Wine is for the captains only—or at public holidays for all.

14. to 15. Stairs to the wall

These stairs lead to the wall that bars the Morgai valley. Why there is a sharp bend towards the western part of the wall (14), no one has asked in more than a thousand years.

Third and fourth level



These levels house the soldiers’ quarters. The layout of both levels is identical, but for structural reasons oriented like mirror images. Because of this, there is only one description and layout for both levels (In level 4, rooms #3/4 have changed places with #5, everything else is identical).

1. Armoury

These chambers hold the weapons and armour for times of war. Helmets, cuirasses, bows, shields, spears, swords and axes in double the number of the peace-time garrison are stored here. In case of extended or over-strength patrols outside the fortress or a battle, their extra gear can be found here as well. Great stores of arrows, boots, overcoats, and other similar equipment can also be found here (even rations). The level would be self-sufficient for several weeks. Only the captains have keys for the armoury, but the door is “only” of sturdy oak.

2. Room of the common soldiers

This room is home to 30 common soldiers. Beds are lined in rank and file along the wall, each with a great trunk before it. There is a great common table in the middle of the room with seating for everyone. Racks for cloaks and weapons form the only other furniture of these rooms. Each quarters has a small room for the troop leader, since he is supposed to have his men under constant supervision. These troop leader quarters are individualized but quite cramped.

3. and 4. Quarters of the captains

Each of these two rooms is occupied by a captain that leads three troops, with a total of 93 subordinates. These rooms are quite spacious, with a big bed, a desk and cupboards for their personal belonging. They all have keys for the armoury. One of the captains was careless enough to make a sketch of the lever-operated mechanism for the first level and keep this in his locked desk (easy to open by force though). On the margin he has written: “One pull on the lever and we are all pinned like rats in hole!”

Directly adjacent to the quarters is this level’s washroom. The water from the reservoir is emptied directly into the stone bowls where the soldiers may wash. These bowls have a drain leading directly into a groove in the bottom and a hole in the wall. The latter is clogged up quite often and the slimmest of the slaves has the “honour” to crawl into it and remove the obstruction.

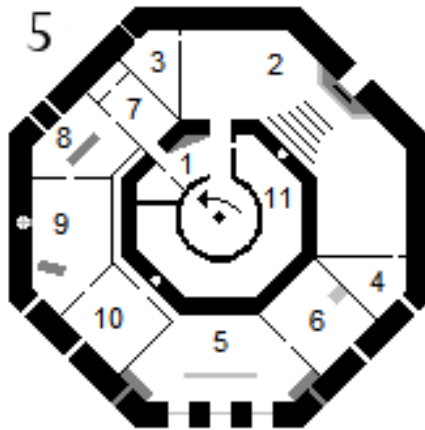
5. Common room

The common room has enough space to accommodate all the soldiers of one troop at the same time—but then about half of the men have to stand. A great fireplace is surrounded by benches and tables. The room is decorated with trophies and banners from the units. There is also a bronze plate from the floor to the ceiling. In minute letters are engraved upon it the names of all the soldiers that have served here since the building of the fortress. Should someone count, he will end up at more than 10,000...

According to the situation and time of the day, there may be some soldiers here gambling with dice or cards, a lone early riser warming up at the fireplace, slaves cleaning and supplying the room with fire wood or even a drinking session if there is an occasion and the captain has allowed the sale of beer. Near the common room is the latrine. It does not have a drain, but big vats which the slaves have to load into handcarts and empty each morning and evening into the slurry pit before the fortress. In case of an attack, the vats are emptied directly down the wall through the windows.

Fifth level

Temple and quarters of the fortress commander.



1. Guardpost and reception counter

During the day, the adjutant of the commander is seated behind this counter. Here he performs administrative work and receives guests, emissaries, caravan chiefs (if they have a request important enough), messengers from the Dark Tower or captains from other fortresses. Petitioners should have a certain rank or a really important request, or the adjutant will only give them an appointment some time in the next few weeks. The small quarters of the adjutant are directly behind the counter where he has to be ready for the fortress commander around the clock. To the right and left of the counter are a guard each, one before the temple's entrance and one before the quarters of the commander.

2. Sauron's temple

This room is dominated by a big black altar situated on a dais. As with all altars of Sauron, this one has his symbol, the Lidless Eye, on its front. A groove in the altar's surface allows the draining of the sacrifice's blood and simultaneously colours the contours of the eye in red. Iron chains and shackles have been omitted, since the victims are usually drugged by the High Priest and undergo the procedure in apathy and silence. Behind the altar is the greatest window of the fortress. It is made from red glass and shows an eye as well. The pupil of the eye has

been left out. If one looks through it, the dim site of Barad-dûr can be glimpsed in the far distance. Even if the tower itself is not visible, the clouds and smoke surrounding it are. The temple and the window are intentionally orientated towards Barad-dûr, making this place something special. Before the altar there are benches for the captains and other personalities of the fortress. Simple soldiers or servants must stand or kneel when attending religious service.

3. Chambers of the High Priest

These are the quarters of the High Priest of the fortress. Currently this post is held by a woman with the name Zigasit. The room is lavishly decorated and lit by golden candelabra. High shelves hold numerous scrolls and books with Sauron's religious teachings. A *craban* sits most of the time on a rod in the wall. It is quite intelligent, being able to speak a few words. She will report any intruders to her mistress, unless she's away with a message to the main temple in Barad-dûr.

The current occupant is very conscious about her appearance and has an enchanted dressing table with extensive carvings set here. A chest before the four-poster bed contains the donations to the temple, currently amounting to about 700 gold pieces in various currencies.

4. Chambers of the temple's maidservants

Here live the six servants of the temple. They are the personal servants of the High Priestess and women too. The room is much more simply equipped than those of the High Priestess, but with sheets and tapestries they have made the chambers much more lively.

5. Quarters of the fortress commander

This big room was originally designed for the wife of the fortress commander, and is therefore quite comfortably furnished and has three big windows. In this it is the only room beside the temple to have real windows, even if the view over the Morgai vale is not really majestic.

Thick carpets, wall hangings, countless vases and a great crystal chandelier produce an atmosphere of luxury and cosiness. Beside comfortable armchairs and a few bookshelves, a tambour and a harp provide ample opportunity for the wife of the commander to pass the time.

The room is also used as guest quarters for especially high-ranking visitors. For example, Sauron himself dwelt here when he inspected the fortress after its completion in S.A. 1863.

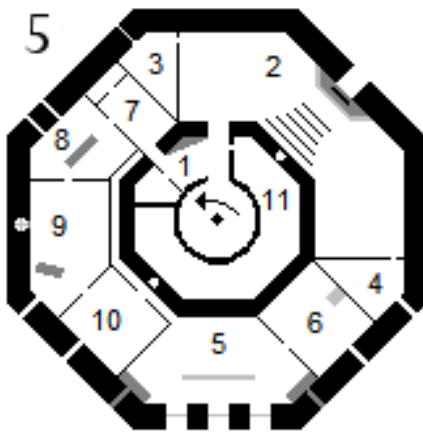
In the middle of the room is a great carved table where the commander, his wife, the High Priest, the captains and the occasional very high-ranking visitor participate in the officers' regular evening meal. Two great hearths provide cozy warmth during the cold nights of Mordor.

6. Bedchamber of the fortress commander and his wife

Beside a massive four-poster bed, a massive oak cupboards hold the clothes of the fortress commander and his wife. A great chest with valuable possessions is also in this room. The key is hidden in the cupboard with the wife's clothes—amongst her underwear!

7. Waiting room / Chambers of the servant

The room is equipped with several chairs and is used as a waiting room for guests and conference attendees. At the far end of the room is a door to a small room. This is the quarters for the personal servant of the fortress commander. He gets his orders exclusively from the commander and no quartermaster would dare to give him any orders. He is on stand-by for his master round the clock and is called by the ringing of a bell, which can be activated by pulling a rope from rooms #5, 6, 9 or 10. It is told that the bell is heard occasionally, when no one has pulled it. The story of Tar Pharaon and his walling in has been lost over the centuries and there is a rumour that a ghost haunts the bricked up room (#10) who rings for his personal servant on moonless nights...



The personal servant cares for the everyday needs of his master, from the emptying and cleaning of the chamber pot, the preparation of his clothes, serving the food and cleaning up to locking away of important and secret documents. He has the full confidence of his master. Some fortress commander have female personal servants. This room is then mostly empty.

8. Conference room

Round a great chart- and conference-table the captains hold their regular morning conferences. All other important debates are held here as well, such as for forays or raids into Ithilien.

9. Study and library (former living quarters of the fortress commander)

The study of the commander is sparsely furnished. A great desk is so positioned that he gets light from an enlarged

loophole behind it. Bookshelves and heaps of charts and maps line the walls and a cupboard with hard liquor stands right behind the desk.

On the wall of the secret stair is a relief from the same artist who sculpted the one from room #8 in the 2nd level. It depicts Sauron, standing on the highest crenellation of Lugshapat. He gazes west and directs his armies with raised sword. The relief has the same magic and opening mechanism as in room #8 on level 2.

10. Tar Pharagn's studio

This is the room where Tar Pharagn planned his fortress in Carach Angren, Tir Nargil, and many other buildings in Mordor. Before the great windows is a big drawing board and the whole room is full with half-finished designs, sketches, drawing materials, books with tables about the structural characteristics of building materials. These tomes would fetch very high prices for the right clientele.

In the year S.A. 2092 Tar Pharagn was walled into this room alive, and until S.A. 2362 no one has entered the room. On occasion wailing or groaning can be heard through the thick walls. This is dismissed as superstition though among those who hear it. The wife of the seventh fortress commander was especially sensitive to it, but no one believed her, and finally in desperation she took her own life by jumping out of the window of her chambers.

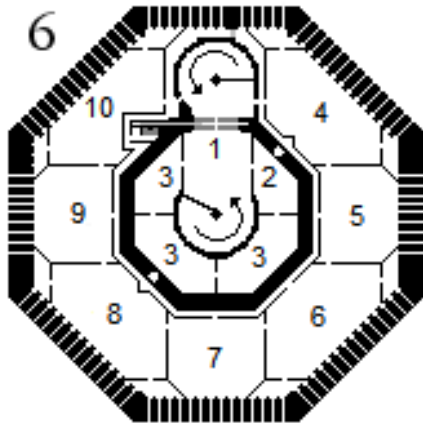
11. Treasury

The fortress commander has the keys for this room always on his person. All the customs revenues of all towers, the personal reserves of the commander and the pay of the soldiers are stored here. Also located here are the possessions confiscated from prisoners, captured spies from the west or travellers without valid papers. About 8,000 gold pieces are stored in sacks and chests. One chest with several pieces of jewelry of about 500 gold pieces worth includes an amulet in the shape of an eagle. Should this item be returned to a high-ranking family in Númenor they will be very grateful, since it is the only clue to the fate of the heir of the family. In the hindmost corner of the room there is a black sword leaning in its scabbard against the wall, covered by an old blanket (S). A merchant from the Far East left it here as payment for his dues. Now it is thought that he wanted to get rid of it, since all those who have had anything to do with it have been pursued by bad luck. The then quartermaster found this out as he was bringing it to a storeroom, when he slipped and fell onto the sword. When his body was recovered, one of the soldiers cut himself on the blade and soon thereafter the arm had to be amputated. After several similar 'accidents', the sword was carefully stored away in this chamber. By now it has been standing here for centuries, almost forgotten by all.



Sixth level

Quarters of the slaves, guests and the tower commander.

**1. Connection to bridge level and small ramp**

This gate blocks the way between the great ramp and the smaller one which connects this with the next level. Directly by room #10 there is a loophole, from where the exit of the smaller ramp can be put under fire. Like with the other great gates, this is constructed as a double one with one part opening out and the other in-ward (see Lugskut, level 2, room #2 for details). A treadmill west of the gate operates iron rails that can be extended to slide into grooves within the doors, firmly fastening both sets of doors. This mechanism is secured by a lock which effectively prevents any tampering by unauthorized personnel.

2. Chamber of the slave overseer

The slave master is counted among the civilian personnel of the fortress—to the masters specifically. He does not command high respect among his peers though, and thus has to content himself with these dark and cold quarters in the inner tower of Lugshapat. Beside his bed is a small desk, and a chest with personal items stands near the wall. The tools of his trade (the slave whip for occasional ‘encouragement’ of the slaves and a cat-o’-nine-tails for real punishment) are not nearly as feared as his small black notebook...

The slave master loves his occasional journeys to the Sea of Nurn to buy new slaves. The funds for this are provided by

the quartermaster and always too meagre (in his opinion).

3. Slave quarters

These three rooms harbour (separate from one another) the male and female slaves plus the children and adolescents. The rooms are filled with four-storey beds, a few buckets for the sanitary uses of the occupants and a small oil lamp offering meagre lighting. Altogether, 50 slaves will be here in the middle of the night once their cheerless day’s work has been done. The doors are always closed and only the slave overseer has the keys. The quarters of the female slaves lie directly adjacent to those of the overseer, so he may make sure that everything is all right...

Currently there is only one elderly slave here. He is now beyond his 40th year and knows that he will end up on the temple’s altar should his health not improve rapidly.

The slave overseer is already planning his next purchase in Nurn, which will fill the room again.

4. Chambers of the tower commander of Lugshapat

These are the private chambers of the commander of Lugshapat. The current occupant, Vaton Innota, has furnished this room splendidly and luxuriously. Pictures of fertile lands far away hang in heavy golden frames from the wall. A chandelier is lighted every evening from a slave and a great table in the middle of the room holds exquisite silver dishes. A massive four-poster bed completes the baroque image of the room. The adjoining southern chamber is where the commander keeps his personal fortune, but he keeps the only keys permanently around his neck. The northern chamber holds the lavatory and a washing basin. Over the past years the High Priestess has been a frequent dinner guest.

5. Office and conference room of the tower commander

In contrast to his private chambers, this room is spartan and simple in furnishing. A conference table, a few cupboards with administrative papers and a

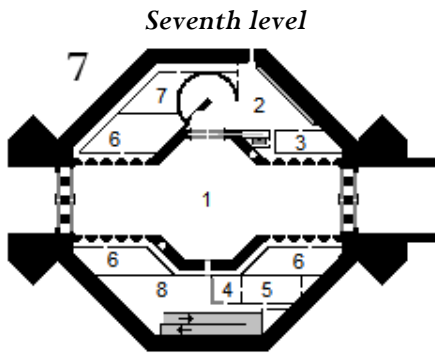
desk with a simple wooden chair are the only furniture. The tower commander spends most of his day here—and sometimes the nights too—and broods over problems known only to him. He is of the opinion that the bare room helps him to think.

6., 8. and 10. Reserve quarters for extra soldiers

Currently these quarters are empty. Beds and chairs that are kept for additional soldiers or guests are piled up on heaps at the wall. Each of the rooms can accommodate 20 persons. The neighbouring rooms are reserved for the captains of the troops or for the storage of their equipment, depending on the circumstances. Room #8 is currently used as a quarters for a small group that could be called “adventurers”. The regular inhabitants of the fortress view them with a good deal of suspicion, though they have valid papers directly from Barad-dûr. The group consists of a big and a small orc, an Easterling, a Númenórean woman and a strange man clad in wolfskins. At times they disappear for weeks or even months and it is rumoured that they are on a secret mission in the west.

7. and 9. Guest quarters for high-ranking visitors

These quarters are lavishly furnished and quite comfortable. The furniture is usually covered by great blankets, since only special guests are accommodated here. On occasion important emissaries of Sauron, generals or guests from the west reside here. Even Nazgûl are counted among the rare but regular visitors. Should the Witch-king or even Sauron reside here, they take quarters in the chambers of the fortress commander who then willingly relocates to these quarters. A few Nazgûl stayed here even before they transformed into wraiths.



1. Bridge archway

The bridge leads through this archway. It is closed on both sides by the gates already described for Lugskut (Lugskut, lvl 2, room #2), though these are open most of the time. The way is subject to enfilading fire from loopholes on both walls. The great gate which leads towards the ramp and the level behind it can be closed by the same mechanism that operates the gate on level eight. Six soldiers are on duty here at all times, and two more can be found at the reception desk (#4).

2. Trough

Wagons and teams coming up from the Great Ramp regularly stop here to water their animals, since these are thirsty and tired after the long haul up. Any manure is simply discarded by the

grooms through a chute in the northern part of the wall. The trough is constantly refilled by slaves carrying buckets from the well within the inner tower.

3. Quarters of the grooms and labourers

This room is occupied by two grooms and four labourers. The latter are mainly responsible for the unloading of wagons and carts.

4. Reception and administrative desk

A small steel door leads to a central corridor and then first into a defensive corridor and then into the reception area. Here permits are checked, and cargo lists compared with those numbers supplied by Barad-dûr. Here the custom dues are collected from the passing caravans which use the Great Ramp or the bridge. Wagon trains arriving from the Morgai valley are checked at the second level. At the end of the day, the records of the checkpoint are brought to the archive (#6 on the second level). Two guards are stationed here day and night.

5. Office and living room of the administrator

The Chief Administrator of the fortress has his private quarters and his office located here. The monthly customs

dues (about 500 gold pieces in various currencies and promissory notes from Barad-dûr) are safely stored in the chamber on the outer wall before they are brought to the treasury (level seven, #11). Only the administrator has the keys.

6. Quarters of the guard soldiers

These four rooms are occupied by eight soldiers each, just as on the second level (#5). They also provide the guards in the reception room (#4). The shifts are the same as aforementioned, but the second shift varies in that they patrol the bridge on both fighting parapets in both directions.

7. Storage for fodder

Straw, oats and other fodder for draft animals is stored here.

8. Temporary store

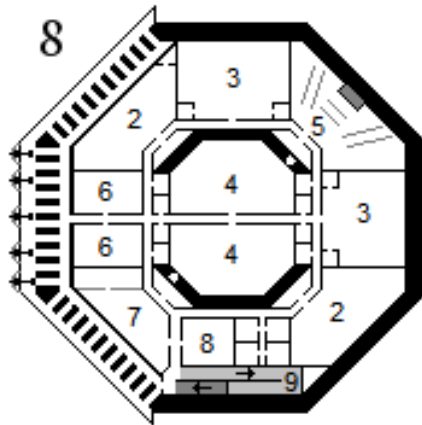
The room is used for several purposes: Goods that are due for inspection are spread out here and supplies for the fortress are stored temporarily before being brought to their final destinations. Chests, barrels with all kinds of goods can be found here all the time. The Great Ramp at the southern end of the room provides access to the next level.



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Eighth level

The eighth level harbours the main fighting platform, additional troop quarters and a small hospital.



1. Fighting platform

This is an additional defense of Agazlam, exclusively directed westwards. Here several *ballistae* for throwing stones at the bridge can be found. In case of an attack on Lugshapat, numerous archers take position here, well protected from enemy missiles.

2. Troop quarters

About 30 soldiers live in this room. It is furnished similarly to the troop quarters on level six (#2). Additional weapons and equipment of the troops, in addition to iron rations and brandy are stored in the triangular chamber. Across the corridor is a wash room.

3. Troop quarters

Another common quarters. The troop leader has made his quarters in one of the two small chambers. The other holds the additional equipment of the troops.

4. Troop quarters

As #3. The two small rooms opening onto the middle corridor here are the quarters of the troop leader and the equipment storage. The adjoining small chambers in the northwest and southeast are quarters of troop leaders from the units in room #2. The rooms in the southwest and northeast are filled with long arrows for the *ballistae* of the fighting platform, as well as regular arrows.

5. Common room

The common room and the latrine at the other end of the corridor are identical to those found on level six (#5).

6. Captain's quarters

As #3 and 4 on level six.

7. Sickbay

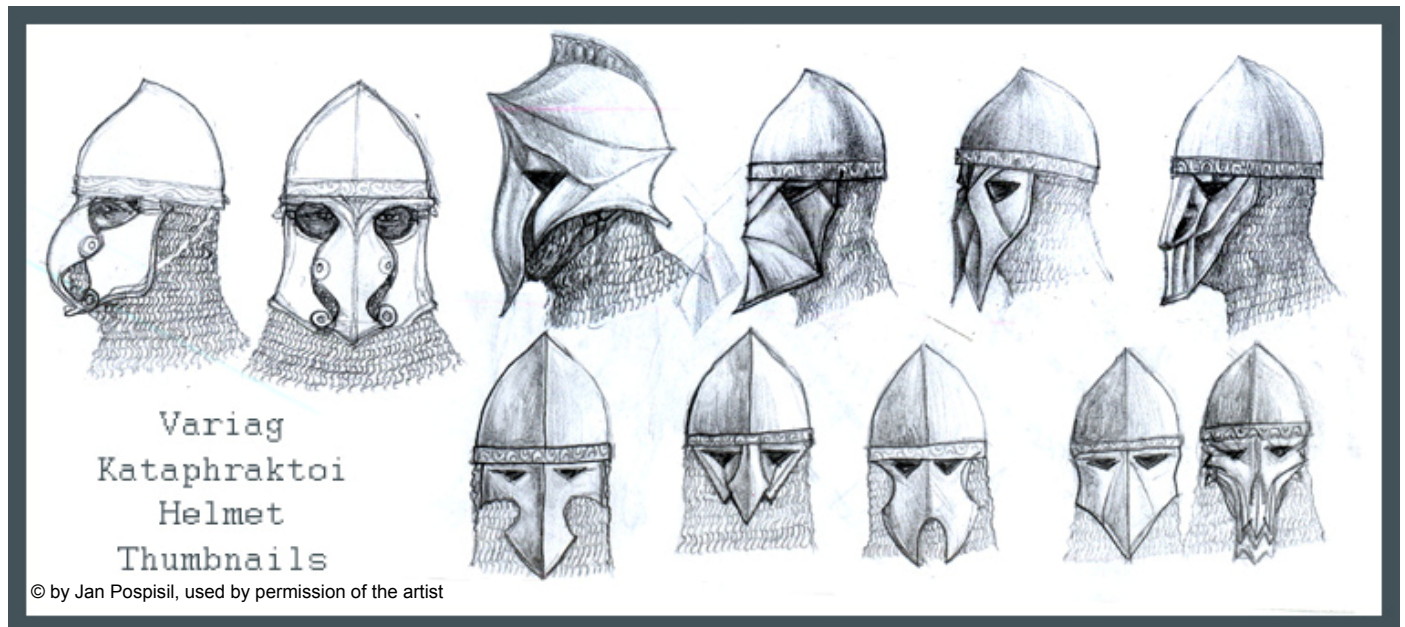
Up to 20 injured or sick soldiers or servants can be tended here. The table for severe cases where saws and other instruments are necessary, is—for understandable reasons—located in the partitioned off area in the northern part. Here is also a great oak cupboard with all the necessary aids of the surgeon (but no herbs). The room is almost empty all of the time, since the hospital in Lugburug is primarily used during peacetime.

8. Quarter of the surgeon and his aides

These quarters are occupied only during times of war. The larger room is reserved for the surgeon, the four smaller ones for his aides.

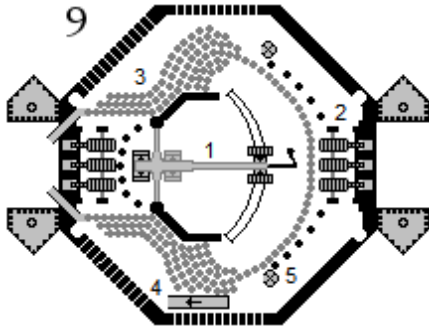
9. Ramp

See level nine (#1).



Ninth level

On level nine are located the most important defensive devices of the whole fortress. During peacetime, the level is deserted most of the time and only visited when the guards for the higher levels pass through. Occasionally a few craftsmen may be seen here, performing repairs or maintenance on the devices. Once a week the trebuchet crew trains, but only rarely with real missiles. For this reason the ceiling to the next level is missing over the machine itself as well as over the area through which it can track. Numerous columns are located behind and to the side of the machine and before its counterweight to support the ceiling in place of the missing area.



1. Trebuchet “Shapat”

The great siege engine “Shapat” (Bl. Speech for “sword”) gave the whole tower its name. It extends over this and the next level and works on the *trebuchet* principle. The great metal basket near the axle is loaded with a quantity of lead weights according to the desired range. Then, the arm of the machine is pulled down via two treadmills and a system of block and tackle. Drawing the machine requires at least as many crew on the treadmills, with a total of at least 300 kg body weight, as it does to operate it. Normally the machine is aimed directly west, towards the narrow pass, but in the drawn position it can be trained 45° to either side. For this purpose, the drawing mechanism is mounted on iron rails and pulling a system of levers switches the treadmills’ power into a sideward motion, tracking the machine sideways too. The gigantic axle of the throwing arm rests on rails as well,

which are anchored in the floor of the twelfth level. Before the machine is fired, the iron wheels of the throwing axle have to be arrested to prevent the machine from swinging back and forth after throwing. The machine is built almost exclusively from high-quality steel, and only the ammunition sling is made of ropework and leather, which need replacing every few decades (less if the machine is operated more frequently). The whole machine is protected as well as possible from enemy missiles. Its depressed placement is ideal for this, as only the arm of the machine towers above the battlements—and this only when throwing. The round, open roof of the uppermost level is made of massive blocks of stone and protects the machine even from the largest enemy missiles, unless they were to come in from a very steep angle—which is considered impossible under all circumstances.

The gigantic *trebuchet* is the central element for the defensive strategy of the whole fortress. Its crew is extremely well-trained and—assuming a ready supply of ammunition—can loose one shot per minute. Extensive training shots after completion of the machine (and while the westward part of the fortress was still under construction) led to the drawing up of detailed targeting tables. A bronze plate was fastened to the drawing mechanism, showing a map of the target area. Concentric circles on this map show the exact settings (counterweight necessary for given missile weight and target area). Direction markers on the map equate to matching ones on the floor, so that even in an emergency an unskilled captain can relative easily make well-aimed shots. If the counterweight basket is fully loaded, the greatest missiles reach 300m beyond the gate of Lugskut. Therefore siege engines like catapults or siege towers can be effectively attacked under cover—and without the danger of effective counter-fire (at least as long as Lugskut holds). If stones are used which can still be lifted by a single man, the missile flies over the highest part of the pass itself and impacts beyond sight about 1.5km from the machine. Such a use for the machine is con-

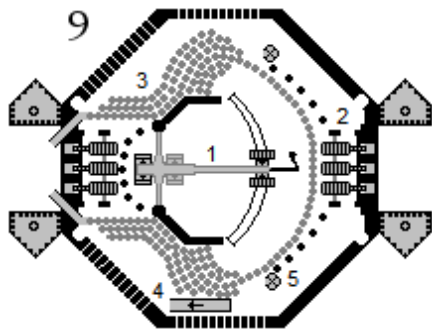
sidered pointless though. Some say that Shapat can throw small stones (e.g. fist-sized) as far as the Anduin (where later Osgiliath will stand) to annoy the Númenóreans who wonder about small stones raining down on them. Or at least that’s what the machine’s crew say to the fortress’ errand boys when they have had a drop too many...

Should an enemy undaunted by death indeed reach the walls of Lugskut and hold there, withstanding the showers of arrows and boiling oil, Lugshapat would cease its fire. Then the hook at the end of the throwing arm would be removed and replaced by another one. This is only a matter of a few minutes. The new hook is made to enable an early release of the missiles, resulting in a steep angle for the shot and similarly descending in a steep angle right before Lugskut, and minimizing the blind spot in which the tower protects an attacker from Shapat’s regular missiles. For this purpose, the smaller ammunition is loaded rather than the big stones (see “missiles”).

Should an enemy be able to take Lugskut, the western tower or even the western bridge arches can be destroyed. To enable this destruction, all the eastern walls of that tower are built as thin as possible. In this way, an attacker gains no advantage of taking a strong first fortification.

If the Tower of the Sword itself should fall into the hands of such an attacker, he would have no benefit from Shapat, since it cannot be aimed eastward—and the westward direction would be held by the attacker already.

Shooting for practice is seldom done with real missiles. Such practice shooting is mostly done when the fortress commander feels that the orcs of Lugskut are in a bit too high spirits. The orcs are clearly aware of the consequences of misses and wailingly retreat into the cellars of Lugskut where the impact of the missiles is still clearly perceivable (and in some places even the sound of the flying missiles). Occasionally the orc chieftain takes an opportunity to use such a shooting for his own amusement: Unimportant prisoners or disagreeable members



of the tribe are sent out before the fortress. Then he bets with his entourage which shot will hit the victim and how the resulting patch will look. This is also used as a test of courage for new officers; these have to stand on a pre-defined spot and survive three shots before being allowed to flee for their life. Perhaps such an event might be a chance for prisoners to escape?

2. Spiral stair to the roof and treadmills for the gate bars

Spiral stairs are set into the outer wall leading to the roof of the tower. The treadmills for the barring beams of the gates work as described for Lugskut (level 2, room #2)

3. Missiles

Within stone grooves in the floor there are more than 200 stone balls made from granite fashioned in Lugburug. They measure about half a meter in diameter and weigh ca. one ton. With little effort they can be rolled through the groove. Normally only two men are required for this, but one exceptionally strong one may do it as well. The ball is rolled to the throwing arm and right there in the groove the sling is slung around it, avoiding any necessity of lifting it. In case the enemy comes directly in front of Lugshapat and cannot be reached by Shapat, the balls can be rolled on the grooves right over the edge. To do this, a safety stick at the end of the grooves is removed and as many balls as

desired rolled down. Then they fall about 20 metres and impact with deadly force right in front of the gates. Constructing a roofed battering ram capable of resisting that would be a challenge even for the Númenóreans.

But the magazines hold other missiles beside the great stones as well. Against mobile enemies (e.g. moving soldiers), the great machine's big rocks are too cumbersome. For such cases, numerous small stones of about 1-5 kg weight are then put into a sturdy bag of Múmak-leather. Such "shotgun" missiles have an immense area effect upon individual soldiers moving against Lugskut. Even worse, the crew also has incendiary ammunition at their disposal. Ready missiles with a mix of flammable substances in canisters that burst upon impact and spray everything within meters with almost inextinguishable flames, and containers filled with iron spikes or caltrops can turn the area before the gates into a hell for any attacker. If an enemy were to lay siege to Lugskut for hours with great force and machines, and all the great stones were fired, there is no dearth of other smaller ammunition. If Mordor has one thing in plenty, it is stones. Those of the fortress who have seen the great *trebuchet* in action cannot imagine anyone or anything being funnelled through the narrow Dúath pass that would not end up being crushed before reaching the gates of the fortress.

4. Ramp from level ten

This ramp leads without steps directly up from the level below. No spiral stair has been built, since more balls may be rolled up to be stored here here (with great effort though).

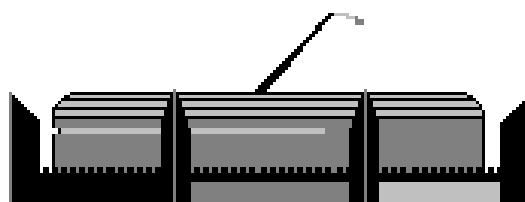
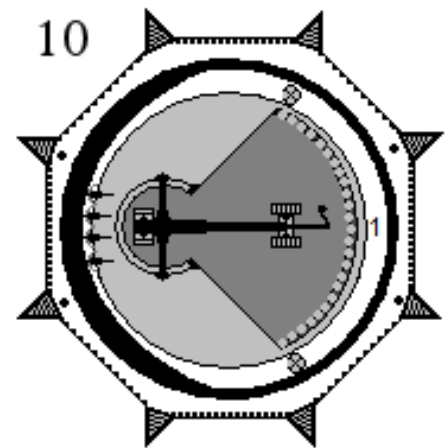
5. Spiral stair to gallery

These two spiral stairs lead up to the topmost level.

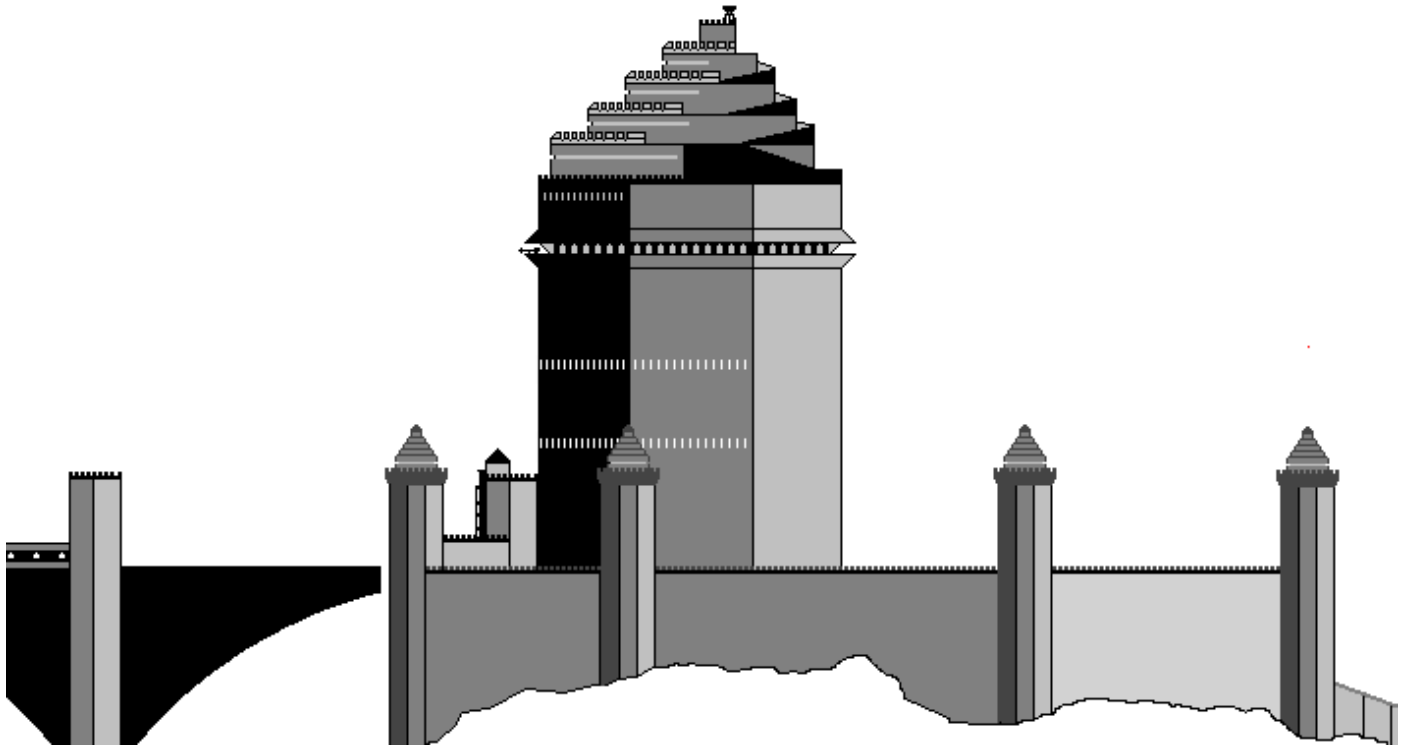
Tenth level

The tenth level lies well above the roof. The perfectly round protective roof is open to the sky and what looks like a stone dome from below is in truth a massive roof, built to withstand even the greatest of siege engine missiles and protect the great *trebuchet* in turn. The level is made up of a narrow gallery behind the machine, which runs around the area left open for the great sling. The western part of the gallery carries a number of fixed *ballistas*. Right behind it, the great sling rests upon great steel wheels which run on steel tracks. Four soldiers are permanently on guard here, looking primarily westward.

The roof of the eleventh level, crenellated and fitted with pointed oriels, is reached via spiral stairs in the walls. The oriels can be reached by fixed metal ladders.



Lugburug—the ruling tower

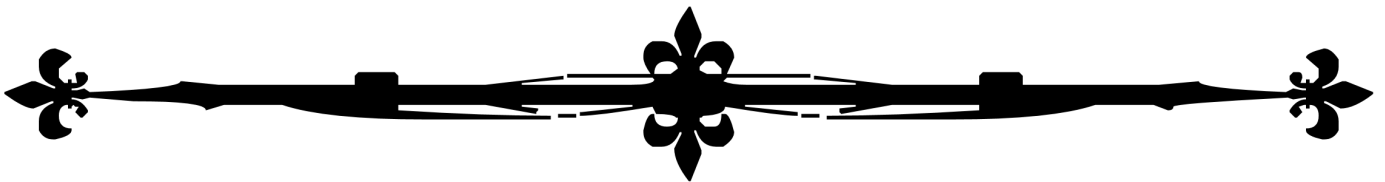


Lugburug has its name because it towers above the other two—and forms the last line of Aglazam’s defense. It is also the center of a great place for the movement of goods and caravansary. Beyond it, the great troop camps in the side valleys of the Morgai are supplied and maintained from here. The design of the tower is similar to Lugskut, but has two levels more than to its smaller brother. The garrison of the tower is almost entirely composed of Haradan warriors. These attach great importance

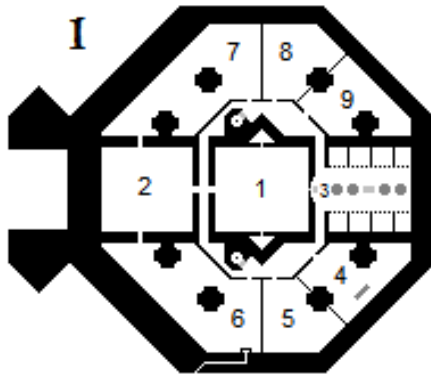
to culture and cleanliness. Despite the almost identical layout of both Lugskut and Lugburug, the difference in outlook could not be greater. On the one side the dirty and uncultured orcs, on the other the clean and cultured Men of the South. The craftsmen and slaves of Lugburug are subordinate to the quartermaster of Lugshapat. There is a busy exchange between both of the towers occupied by men, where the civilian occupants are concerned. The soldiers meet in their off time too and listen to stories of far away

lands (if they understand each other’s language). Despite the fact that each tower is self-sufficient at need, Lugburug is the economic hub of the whole fortification. Here are located the main administration center, the primary workshops, the great hospital and the most extensive armoury of the fortress.

Note: The detailed description of gate mechanisms, oil cauldrons and central elevator are omitted, since they are all identical to those of Lugskut.



First level



1. Treasury and storage for valuable goods

Here can be found silk, rare spices, rich furniture, bars of precious metals etc. These have either been collected as custom dues or await further transportation to their final destination. There are two small secret rooms here as well, and a cistern and a treasury. The latter presently contains the personal fortune of the tower commander (about 1,200 gold pieces worth in total).

2. Water storage / Cistern

This cistern is supplied by a drainpipe leading from the bridge level. For this purpose, water carts are regularly filled in Lugshapat and on arriving at the bridge level of Lugburug, drained into this cistern. With economic use of the water, a full cistern provides water for the full garrison of Lugburug for four months. Slaves distribute the water by carrying buckets throughout the tower. In times of war, the cistern is locked by the tower commander and access tightly regulated.

3. Dungeon

(see Lugskut)

4. Torture chamber

(see Lugskut) Both the dungeon and the torture chamber are much more

clean and tidy than their counterparts in Lugskut.

5. Storeroom

This is where the possessions of the dungeon's inmates are kept. A table in the middle serves as a place to spread out and check them. After that, they are put together again and put on a shelf on the wall. PC's that have escaped imprisonment may find their belongings here. Items that were obviously very special or valuable might have found their way directly to the treasure chamber or even Barad-dûr.

6. Waste storage and waste chute

The slaves bring garbage like leftovers from the table and fluids here, for disposal via a chute to the outside. The remaining contents consist of broken furniture, holey sacks and useless things from the workshops in level six. According to needs, parts of it are burned in the fireplaces or—if absolutely useless—carried outside and dumped there. For details on the chute, see Lugskut level 5, room #1. Desperate people (or PC's) may even find something useful here. It is up to the GM and situation to decide whether PC's find something they need.

7. Storeroom

This room is filled with chests right up to the ceiling, in which are stored cloaks, blankets, ropes, torches, harness, spare wheels, axles, horseshoes etc.. These items are exclusively kept here for times of war to be given to units passing through or other military that has need of them.

8. Chambers of the torturer

The current torturer hails—like the whole tower's garrison—from Harad. He was born near Umbar where he carried out the verdicts of the Númenórean masters. Considering the crimes of some

of his delinquents, he deemed some of the verdicts too mild and secretly began to inflict his own sense of justice upon them. When this became known he had to flee for his life, lest he find himself on the executioner's block. In the end, he entered the service of Mordor. Over the years, he has seen some kind of personal "purification" and developed some quite abstruse opinions. His goal in torturing is no longer to inflict as much pain as possible, but only to apply the minimum necessary for getting the truth. He has developed some strange rules and methods, that should ensure the application of only a minimum of pain. The subsequent verdict of the tower of fortress commander he carries out with simple efficiency to get it over and done with—unless the verdict calls for further punishment. Even then he strives to make it as precise and painless as possible. He deems himself a civilized man, but that does not prevent him from sharing "professional" opinions with his orcish colleague from Lugskut. That figure also seems his only friend. He is the only man of the garrison to voluntarily visit the orcish tower with any regularity. During their intensive discussions, he has not been able to convince the orcish torture master of his opinions. Like he once stated: "You're an artist and I'm a scientist—we won't end up at a common approach, but we can learn from each other...".

It's hard to decide in which chambers one would prefer to be a "customer".

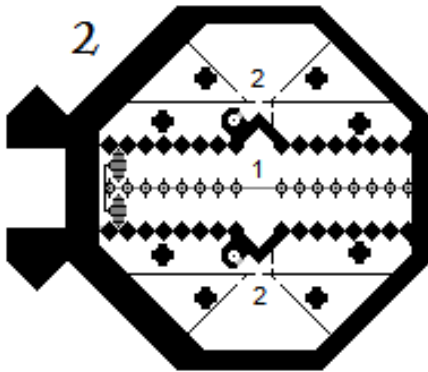
9. Storeroom

Here the tower's stock of brandy is stored in amphoras. Despite being of quite low quality as such, it has gained a pleasant note from the long storage. The rotgut does not only burn in your throat though!



Second level

The second level contains the main stores of the tower and features a very special defensive mechanism.



1. The fire trap

Directly above this room is the gateway on the bridge level. Should an enemy take the whole bridge, and Lugburug be in such dire straits that it is in danger of falling, the tower or fortress commander will come here. A secret door between a column and the outer wall at the western end of the room provides access to the fire trap. The door is cunningly hidden and can probably only be located if one knows where to search. Since it has not been opened for centuries, it is covered by a thick layer of dust, soot and lime. To open it, two floor plates must be pressed simultaneously and at the same time the torch holder near it turned thrice counterclockwise. This is quite stuck, however, and a lot of strength must be applied to move it. Accordingly, a simple check won't reveal the mechanism. Behind the door is the room of the fire trap.

Two tanks are fastened to the (high) ceiling. These can be filled via a pipe from the great oil tanks in the fifth level. If the—now quite rusty—valve of the tanks is opened, a tin pipe drains the oil into 16 fire pots, which are located near the ceiling. If the oil is ignited, flames lick onto the 16 arches, which carry the weight of the entrance to the bridge. The keystones are not real stones, but boxes of hollow steel that have holes in the bottom and are filled with lead. After the oil has burned for about half an hour, the lead becomes soft and finally melts,

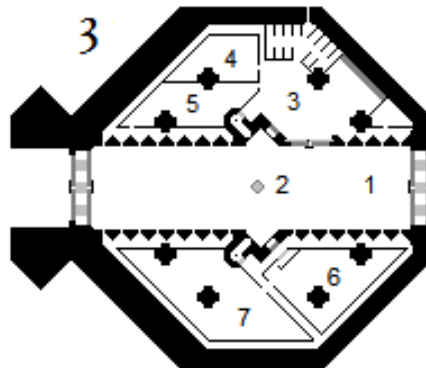
dropping out of the boxes. Thus, the boxes eventually lose their structural integrity, causing the arches to collapse simultaneously, creating a gaping hole in the road. Access to the tower from either end will then be prevented by a gaping hole seven metres deep.

2. Storeroom

Storeroom for iron rations, filled with barrels full of salt meat, salt and flour sacks.

Third level

In contrast to Lugskut there is a trough built into the wall here. The gate can be barred by beams. The doors leading to the inner tower do not lead toward spiral stairs, since the accommodation on this level is at the same level as the bridge. Both spiral stairs have a short corridor and a loophole to place enemies at the access door under fire from behind.



1. Main Gate (see Lugskut and Lugshapat)

2. Murder hole and freight elevator (see Lugskut)

3. Horse stables and trough

Here the horses of high-ranking visitors and messengers can be tended. The fastest horses of the fortress (5 in all) are housed here as well to provide spare mounts for messengers with urgent errands. A small opening and shaft in the wall allow the disposal of manure directly outwards. This hole is definitely too narrow for humans; at most a child could slip through, but would fall down after about ten metres. The landing

would be relatively safe though—in a heap of manure. A small room next to the stable houses the two grooms.

The western boxes are empty most of the time, since there is a horse there that makes other animals uneasy. It is a spare mount for a Nazgûl, in case he should lose his regular one (or ride it into the ground). A potential thief would have to be both extremely fearless and a superb rider to get away—in addition to possess the necessary willpower to master this difficult animal.

4. Storage for fodder and straw

A great heap of straw and oat sacks fill this room.

5. and 7. Quarters of the gate guards

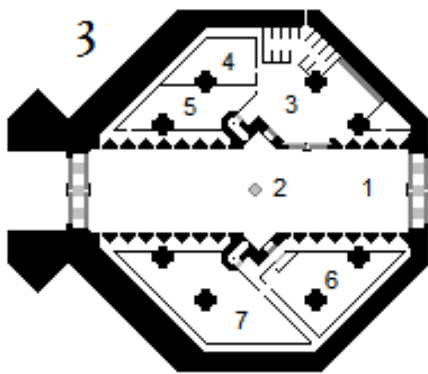
These two rooms house 36 Haradan warriors altogether. A simple bed, a single chest for equipment and a washing bowl are the standard furniture for each. They are relieved weekly by units from the upper levels, rotating back into the quarters of that unit.

The guards at the gate take their duty seriously. The standard of the unit on duty is set at the eastern gate to show which unit has its turn at the gate. Of the 36 men, 24 are on active duty in 8-hour shifts round the clock (8 hours active duty, 8 hours stand-by, giving the soldiers something of semi-free time), while 12 rest or enjoy their free time. Four guards are at each gate, two are at the reception area (room #6) and the remaining two patrol the walkways along the bridge. Six guards are on stand-by to lend a hand if it proves necessary.

The final six soldiers patrol the immediate vicinity of the fortress either on foot or on horseback, according to the circumstances. Both rooms have additional stores of bows and arrows in case the gateway has to be placed under fire.

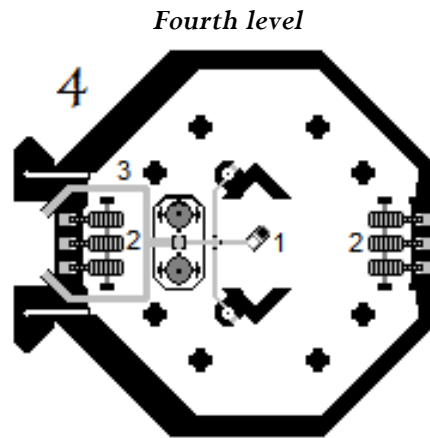
6. Reception and administrative desk

Here is the main administration of the tower. Four scribes are present at all times, and during daytime the master scribe as well. Four messenger boys are constantly on their way to and fro be-



tween the eastern entry of Agazlam, Lugburug, the two reception areas of Lugshapat (and occasionally Lugskut). They carry information and orders as to which wagon, cart or caravan should be inspected, whether custom dues have already been paid or which caravan should be included in the main documentation located here. The inspection of single wagons is done nearby in room #3. Should entire caravans be searched, this is done before the gates of the tower. Normally, random checks of the cargo are made, but the permits of the caravan captains are inspected much more closely. By paying higher dues than those set by the lords of the Dark Tower, the clearance can be significantly reduced and unnecessary inspections be avoided...

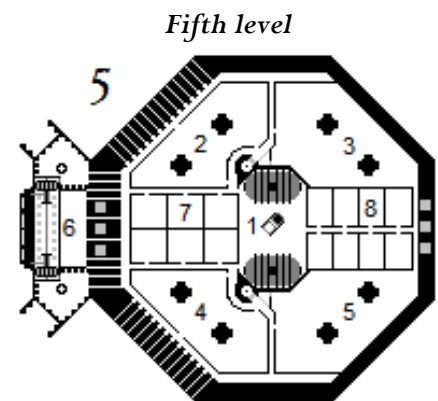
Normally only caravans arriving from the east are inspected. The others are checked at Lugskut. The messenger boys sleep in the servants' quarters of Lugshapat. The scribes and their master have quarters in the upper levels of Lugburug.



This level has the same installations as Lugskut, level 3. In contrast to Lugskut, there are no workshops here though. Every single spot is filled with building materials (wood, bricks, nails, chains, ropes etc.). It seems no one has had any thought that in the event of an earthquake the weight of all this material could cause the floor of this level and the one below to collapse—but the architect designed all the floors sturdily. Against the walls are piled spare bedsteads and other furniture sufficient to provide accommodation for about 100 soldiers in case of attack, though of course it would have to be cleaned up first. The level is quite cramped with all the stuff and the labyrinthine paths between all the chests, sacks and other things are narrow. A well-hidden place that can only be reached by crawling through an empty barrel is the hideout of a frightened messenger boy who fell out of favour with the pedantic quartermaster and was threatened with being sacrificed on the altar. The fact that this was not only said to intimidate him says a great deal. The boy has now been hiding here for several weeks and feeds on leftovers that he can snatch away. Till now he has not mustered the courage to make an escape attempt from the fortress, and where might he go? He yearns for the west, but that would mean making it through the orc tower...

The boy is well acquainted with the whole fortress (he has even been in the fortress commander's quarters several times as a messenger), but he doesn't know any real secrets. Should someone

promise to assist him in his escape, he would be an excellent source of intelligence on the fortress layout and the daily schedules.



1. Murderhole, freight elevator and oil tanks

See Lugskut, level 4

2. to 5. Quarters of the soldiers

These four rooms house 60 Haradan soldiers each. The quarters are quite cramped, since two troops have to squeeze into one room. In order to have at least a table and a few cupboards, the soldiers sleep in bunkbeds.

6. Gatehouse of the drawbridge

See Lugskut, level 4.

7. Quarters of the captains

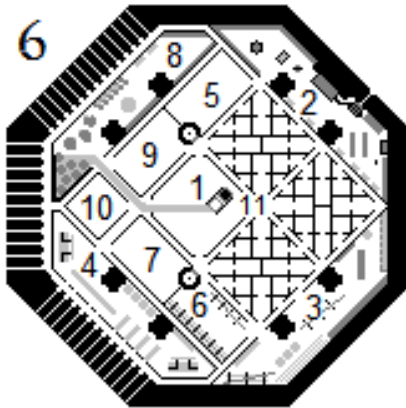
Two captains, the leaders of four troops each, live in the two westernmost chambers. The four eastern rooms are filled with additional equipment and rations for the four units.

8. Rooms of the troop leaders

Since eight troops are stationed on this level, eight troop leaders live in these quarters too.

Sixth level

The sixth level holds the main workshops of the fortress and the quarters of the servants working here.



1. Murder hole and central freight elevator

A shallow, wide groove runs from the workshop of the stonemasons to the freight elevator, down which newly hewn missiles for the great sling of Lugshapat can be rolled. In an emergency, they might be rolled right at someone coming in through the doorway.

2. Main smithy

A great forging furnace with bellows provide the temperatures necessary for smelting iron. The two supporting columns hold numerous smith's tools and moulds. Almost every wall is lined with workbenches where the journeymen sharpen swords and polish armour. A small coal fire in the northern part of the room is situated near a water basin for quenching. Another small fireplace in the eastern wall is used for the making of nails, horseshoes, arrowheads and other small equipment. Great chests along the southwestern wall contain iron rods and bars. The main product of the smiths is not weapons or other major war-gear, but horseshoes made in advance. Hundreds of these are hung upon long rods along the walls. The smiths often cooperate closely with the carpenters for the repair of wagon axles, to make hoops for wheels etc.

3. Main carpenter's workshop

In the southern part of the carpenter's shop are piled beams and planks awaiting further work. The middle of the room has a great saw block and on the columns hang several saws, planes and drills of various sizes. In the northern part are workbenches and several chairs. Here carvings and adornments are fixed on the finished products. The carpenters were originally intended mostly to produce furniture and roof timbers, and maintain other wooden parts of the fortress, but now they work mostly on wheels and barrels.

4. Tailor, furrier and tannery

The northern and southern areas of this workshop contain great looms, where almost all kinds of cloths have been made in great quantities. Tailors sit on long benches between them and either repair uniforms or make new ones. Leatherwork is produced here too. Currently, the repair of bridles and other animal harness is prioritized.

5. Smiths' stores

All the necessary raw materials for the smiths are stored in this room within big crates, barrels and shelves. Among them are bars of raw iron, iron rods, a bit tin and copper and a great amount of hard coal etc.

6. Carpenters' stores

The storage of the carpenters is so designed that most of the long planks and beams can be transported from the freight elevator in this room to the workshop and thereby avoid the impassable corners. Iron rods stand out from the wall and planks are stored upon them. A few fine woods are to be found here as well, since the fortress commander has ordered a new chair for his table.

7. Tailors' stores

Numerous bales of cloth—both fine and coarse—can be found here. Vast amounts of thread, animal hides, leather pieces etc. are to be found here as well.

8. Stonemason's workshop

Here stone is shaped for the maintenance of the fortress, and paving stones for the roads of Mordor are finished here as well. The ammunition for the great sling of Lugshapat can be made here from granite slugs, though this is rarely needed, as only few practice shots are fired. The southern part of the room has a slight depression in the floor. Here the balls can be stored temporarily, rolled along a groove to the elevator when needed and subsequently taken to Lugshapat by cart.

10. Common and dining room

Here the craftsmen, servants and even the masters gather for their meals.

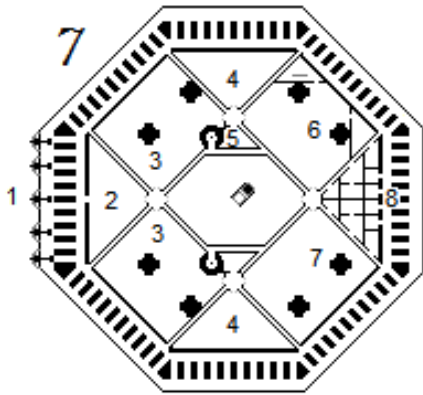
11. Servants' quarters

The masters, journeymen and apprentices live here. The four biggest rooms and their antechambers (#1) are the quarters of the masters. The smaller ones with antechamber (#2) are occupied by four journeymen. The smallest chambers (#3) are shared by two apprentices each. The northern rooms are occupied by two master smiths as well as master stonemasons and their journeymen and apprentices. The eastern quarter is exclusively occupied by carpenters, and the southern by the tailors.



Seventh level

A broad walkway upon the battlements runs around the whole tower here. To the west five great *ballistae* are stationed in fixed positions, ready to shower any approaching enemy with (fiery) missiles. Apart from the main hospital, the level is mostly empty.



1. Fighting platform

Low round arches within the thick wall of the tower allow easy access to the platform from within. The roof above the platform acts as a good protection for the defenders. The platform provides space for a maximum of 300 archers. They are not hindered by crenellations. Only long shots at steep angle and ones directly below are not possible, since the archers are hindered by the viewing slot of about one foot height here.

2. Storeroom

Here the spear-like missiles for the *ballistae* are stored, together with spare strings, tar and cloth. Hundreds of arrows in great crates await use here as well.

3. Quarters for additional troops

Both rooms contain bedframes and empty chests piled up against the walls. They are kept ready for times of attack, when additional troops bolster the regular garrison's strength.

4. Storerooms

These storerooms hold blankets, pottery, hammocks, uniforms, spears, bows, lamps and much more general equipment. They are designed to accommodate up to 500 additional soldiers for extended periods in times of war (should this become necessary). For this, all free spaces in storage rooms, common rooms, on corridors and workshops are converted into emergency quarters using the materials stored here.

5. Latrine

Similar to most such installations in the fortress, these function via buckets that are emptied by slaves twice a day.

6. Main hospital

This is the main hospital of the fortress, being equipped with 25 beds. Normally it is quiet here, and only a handful of the fortress' occupants are here to have injuries (mostly from accidents) treated. Combat injuries are currently a rarity. The northern separated part is a treatment area with a table which uncomfortably resembles the one from the torture chamber in level one (room #4), even the instruments of the two trades being quite similar. For obvious reasons, treatment of severe injuries is not made in the patient's room. The other separated (southern) room is the office of the

healer/surgeon. A locked and well-protected cupboard holds the valuable herbs, potions, salves and revenues(!) of the healer/surgeon. All those seeking the services of the healer/surgeon have to pay him a fee—unless the fortress commander rules otherwise or in times of war. The healer/surgeon is no combatant. Similar to the craftsmen and the servants he holds a special position. Since he is a sought-after man and commands rare skills, he will only yield to the fortress commander's wishes. The healer/surgeon is an Easterling from the region of the Sea of Rhûn with libertine thinking. Mainly for this reason, he has been under discreet and suspicious surveillance by the High-Priestess, who only waits for a chance to put him on trial for blasphemy, but he has been far too clever to fall into any of her traps so far. He possesses a set of instruments of the highest quality which he inherited from his father (M).

7. Auxiliary hospital

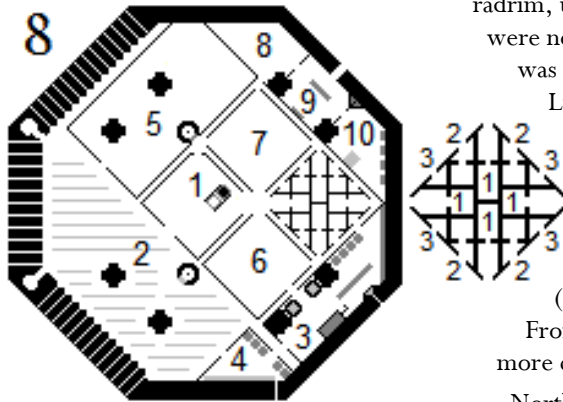
This room is empty except for 35 empty beds. If necessary, it is used as an additional ward for the hospital.

8. Chambers of the healers

The two rooms with anterooms accessible from the north and south are the living quarters of the master healers. At present only one of these is occupied. The smaller chambers on the eastern wall are occupied by the male nurses and are all occupied. The two triangular rooms contain dressing materials, splints, fabrics, crutches etc.



Eighth level



1. Murder hole and freight elevator

2. Dining room

In the dining room all soldiers and craftsmen are entertained, similar to Lugshapat. Since both the military and civilian garrison of Lugburug is much larger than those of Lugshapat, the room is larger too. Despite this, crowding is a regular occurrence.

3. Kitchen

The kitchen is equipped similarly to the one in Lugshapat, but has no bakery. Bread and other products requiring an oven are brought in from Lugshapat, and reheated if necessary. The water supply is a problem in this kitchen, since the tower has no well of its own. Water is brought in from Lugshapat in big barrels and transported via the freight elevator into the kitchen and the washhouse, where four great barrels of water and two great tanks are kept full all the time. The waste water is directed into a sink and drained through a pipe directly out of the wall. Leftovers therefore accumulate on the roofs of the lower stables and storehouses—and the rats and crows take care of them. For a long time, the

chef came from the east, but the Haradrim, unaccustomed to these menus, were not pleased. One day, the chef was found dead before the gates of Lugburug. It is commonly thought that he, full of homesickness, threw himself over the battlements... Thereafter, a troop leader from the Haradan warriors was suggested (and accepted) as the new chef.

From this time on, there were no more complaints about the menus.

North of the kitchen are the quarters of the kitchen personnel. Currently one chef, four kitchen servants and maidservants and four apprentices live here. Concerning the layout of the rooms, see room #11 from level six.

4. Washhouse

A few water barrels are stored here, so that slaves from Lugshapat may clean the dishes in a great tub.

5. Storeroom

Preserved foodstuffs for the kitchen are stored here. Perishable food (e.g. fresh meat) is provided by Lugshapat when necessary. The stores in this room are sufficient to feed all the occupants of Lugburug for two months.

6. Larder

Prepared fare that keeps for a few days are stored here together with prepared raw foodstuffs for use in the kitchen.

7. Water- and beer storage

This room is filled with barrels. For the most part they contain water, but there is beer from Harad also. Two small barrels with wines from Rhûn that were brought by the previous chef are still unopened, not yet having been found a use.

8. Anteroom to the chambers of the tower commander

Here the captains of the tower meet for their debates. Occasionally an ordinary soldier that has been called to the commander waits here as well—hopefully for a commendation...

9. Conference room, living quarters and office of the tower commander

The room is illuminated by a great window, from which the smoke and clouds of shadow of Barad-dûr can be descried—just like from the windows of the temple in Lugshapat. A great map table is placed before the window. Conferences and debates are held here—or dinners are held for guests of the tower commander. Before the opposite wall is the desk of the tower commander, in whose panels he stores his keys and secret documents.

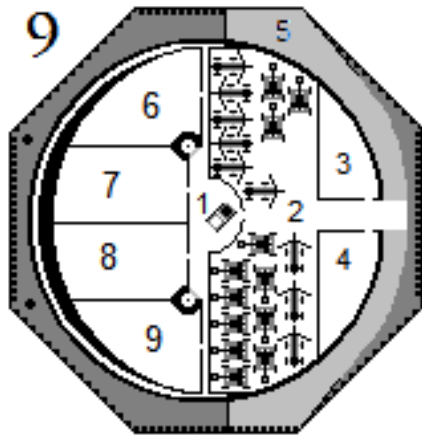
At the wall bordering the bedroom a small fireplace is ready to provide heating for the room.

10. Bedroom of the tower commander

Though the tower commanders are not allowed to have their wives with them in the fortress, this room has a great double bed. The current commander is not married and according to the customs of his people, he sleeps on a heap of cushions beside the bed. The chests along the eastern wall contain his personal possessions and the funds for the pay and administration of Lugburug—in addition to his private fortune. A fireplace provides warmth if the nights should be too cold.



Ninth level



1. Murder hole and freight elevator

2. Storage of ballistae and onagers

About a dozen *ballistae* and *onagers* are kept in storage here. In the event that Lugburug (and the fortress) comes under attack, these are brought to the upper levels via spiralling ramps. From there, the bridge and the middle tower can be placed under fire. The ramps leading to the upper roofs are all located on the eastern side of the tower, deliberately hindering the placement of any eastward facing artillery. The smiths and carpenters of Lugburug provide the crews for these machines. They also are responsible for the maintenance of this artillery. The fortress commander orders regular training on the machines, which the craftsmen see as a welcome variety in their duty.

3. Storage for ballista missiles

4. Storage for onager missiles

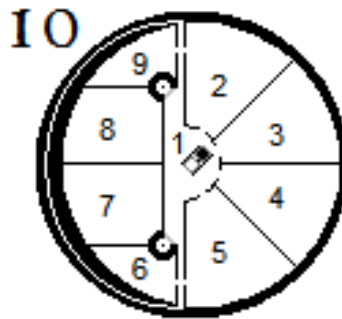
5. Ramp to the roofs

The ramp leads to the roof of the ninth level. From here on further ramps lead up to the roof of the eleventh level.

6. to 9. Storerooms

All four rooms contain primarily foodstuffs. Room #9 has the iron rations of the tower. It is closed with an iron door for which only the tower commander has a key.

Tenth level



1. Murder hole and freight elevator

See Lugskut, level 5.

2. to 5. Living rooms of the soldiers and troop leaders

These four rooms house 12 soldiers each. The furniture is the same as in the other regular troops' quarters. Since among these Haradrim the troop leader is elected monthly by the soldiers, he sleeps here with them (being one of them). Since he is blamed for any mistakes made by his troop, but on the other hand does not have that much power or privileges, the office is not very sought-after.

6. Lavatory and latrine

7. Common room

A big fireplace dominates this room which also has a few big tables. Beside the entrance door there is a barrel of wine. The spigot is secured by a lock. The captain decides whether the barrel is opened and if so, for how long...

8. Armoury and equipment

9. Steam bath

With great skill, the men of Harad have built a steam bath here. The side walls hold plank beds, which have been polished shiny by generations of regular use. In the middle of the room a copper cauldron rests (probably salvaged from the kitchen) amid the coals of a brazier. Over the centuries, skilled soldiers have converted this former storage into a bath-house. Walls and floor have been decorated with abstract mosaics. In addition, a great marble table has been dug up from somewhere and placed here.

The soldiers like to assemble here and relax after a long watch on the cold nights of Mordor. Even the captains can be found here, and sometimes even the tower commander. A small anteroom has been converted into a changing room, where the soldiers may leave their clothing, weapons and other equipment on wooden shelves.

Eleventh level



1. Winch of the freight elevator (see Lugskut)

2. and 3. Living quarters of the tower guards

In both rooms there are six beds and a small chest. Here the tower guards who are drawn for weekly shifts from among the units quartered lower down in the tower, sleep. While on duty as tower guards, they may not leave levels six to ten of the tower. There are always six men on duty, patrolling the roofs and battlements of the upper levels. The other six are on stand-by in the living quarters or common room to support the watch in case of an alarm.

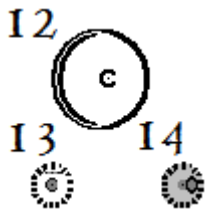
4. Storage for missiles

Many thousands of arrows are stored here in great trunks and on the shelves.

5. Common room of the tower guard

The room is furnished with a wooden table, a couple of chairs and a water barrel. This is the room where the tower guards warm up in bad weather or during the night. At most two of the guards on duty are allowed here at the same time. The guards on stand-by or off-duty are mostly here.

Twelfth level



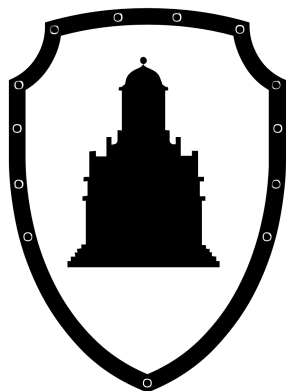
This level is mostly empty. It serves as quarters for additional troops only in times of war. In addition, numerous logs of firewood and amounts of brushwood are stored here as fuel to keep the beacon on the uppermost level going.

Thirteenth level

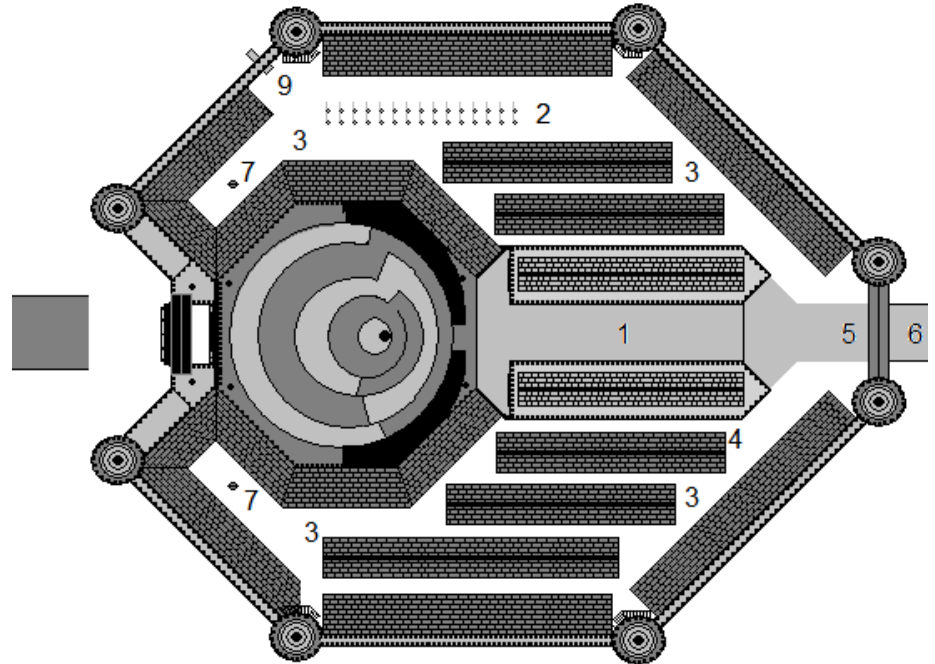
This is an observation deck. The spiral stair ends right in the middle of the floor. Two guards are stationed permanently here and survey the surrounding area in all directions. Should an enemy be spotted (or the alarm be raised for other reasons), the guards light the great brazier which sits on four great iron rods about four metres high.

Fourteenth level

The very highest point of the tower is the brazier described in the thirteenth level.



The outbuildings and stables within the courtyard of Lugburug

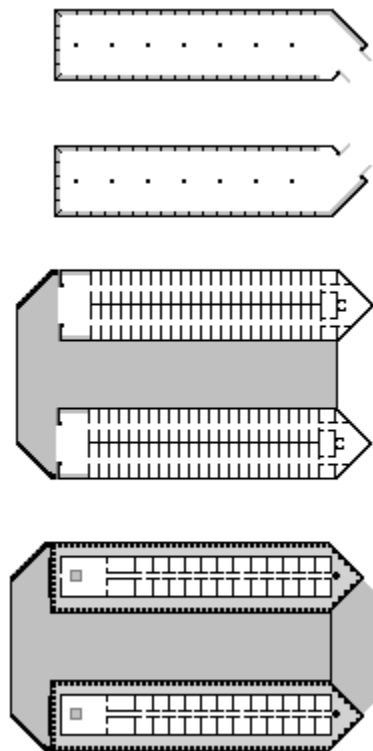


These buildings in the tower's courtyard are added in S.A. 2668 in the place of the former barracks. They are simple functional buildings to handle the increasing traffic and movement of goods within this part of Mordor (for which the former buildings were not large enough). They are made of brick and are

far less durable than the rest of the fortress, but they prove good enough for centuries, even if they frequently have to be repaired after earthquakes. This part of the fortress is always busy with merchants, caravan drivers, military units on transit and slave caravans on their way to different directions.

1. The stables near the ramp (see images left)

The great ramp leads to the eastern gate of Lugburug and toward the bridge. To the north and south of the ramp are a pair of three-storey buildings. They serve as stables and, being built more robustly than the other outbuildings, serve as an emergency defense for the ramp and eastern gate of Lugburug for the unlikely event of a slave revolt or similar small-scale attacks (e.g. brigands). The ground floor is a stable for oxen and the parking lot for carts and wagons. A light wooden gate controls access to the stable. Troughs for fodder and water line the walls. The second storey can be accessed via the gate ramp. There it widens north and southward and through a small courtyard are the horse stables. Each building has boxes for 90 horses (including mules or donkeys). The eastern end holds a chamber for saddles and



other equipment and two grooms. The latter's job is to keep all the animals and installations in good condition. A spiral stair leads to the loft. Here (and in the adjacent rooms) are kept fodder and straw for the animals. A smaller, fourth, level on top of the loft is used for the storage of additional fodder and straw in a great western and two smaller chambers. A great hatch in the floor allows easy access for distributing the stored materials. The other chambers are occupied by the wagons' drivers and caravan crew. The rooms have only spartan furniture, only two simple beds and straw sacks as pillows. The drivers and crew are of course allowed to help in the tending of the animals and general stable work while they stay here.

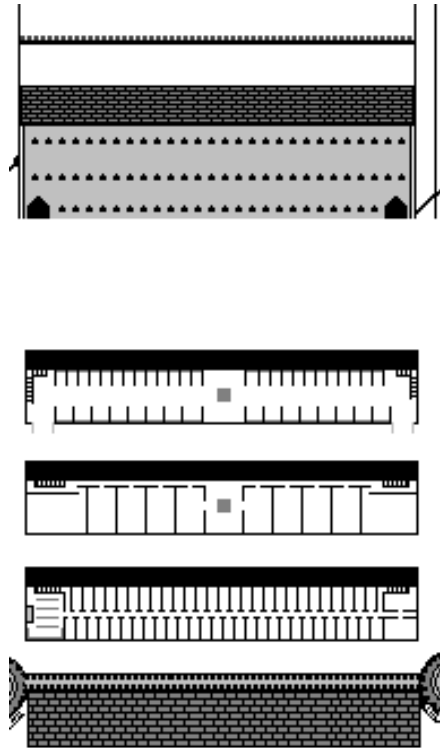
2. Assembly ground

When caravans or cavalry units depart from Agazlam for their next destinations, this is the place where the whole group is assembled and everything put in order for departure. Animals get a last watering from the great stone troughs located here and the drivers take their seats. After that the caravan sets out to wherever its destination is (e.g. Barad-dûr).



© 'Minas Morgul road' by Jan Pospisil, used by permission of the artist

3. Standard outbuilding



All the buildings in the courtyard, apart from the stables at the ramp, are built to the same plan. Depending on the timeframe, some of them may be empty, while others of them are overcrowded. At some times, caravan crews live here, wares are stored or they are used as slave pens. The versatile basic layout makes this flexible use possible and therefore they house a wide variety of residents. The soldiers of the fortress only rarely patrol the buildings, since passage to the towers is forbidden to transients. Access to Lugburug and the bridge is closely monitored too. All buildings have wooden gates, which are only closed during storms or other bad weather. The ground floor holds boxes for 26 horses and 16 oxen. Two stairs lead to the upper floors. In the middle of every floor is a big hatch for easy transport of fodder or straw between the storeys. The first floor is exclusively a storage with several rooms. On the second floor there are meagre quarters for 100 people. One end of the building has a common room with benches, a fireplace and a sideboard. Here the caravan crews may prepare their own meals or eat meals pur-

chased from the fortress kitchen. The other end of the building has a room which is a little more comfortable and intended for caravan leaders or guests of higher (relatively speaking) rank. Directly opposite is the latrine. The occupants themselves are responsible for keeping the quarters clean. When new residents arrive, an administrator accompanied by two guards shows the arrivals the location—and their duties. When they are due to depart, the administrator checks whether everything has been left in proper condition. If anything is not in order, the residents have the options to fix it themselves, pay for it in hard currency—or be reported to the fortress commander (or even higher ranks). Once, when a tribe of orcs left the quarters in a state that left much to be desired and refused to do anything about it, this was reported to Barad-dûr. Subsequently, the chieftain's head was sent from the Dark Tower to Agazlam and nailed to the gate arch of the building in question. It can still be seen there.

4. Administrative buildings

These buildings follow the same basic layout as the one in #3, but instead of the stables there are offices, a reception desk, a small smithy for the blacksmith and a slave pen. The quarters are bigger and more comfortable. A few scribes, administrative clerks and a unit of 60 soldiers plus their captain live here. The soldiers guard the outer gate, patrol the courtyard and take turns with the garrison of Lugburug in manning the wall and the outer towers.

5. Outer gate

This is not actually a gate, but a passageway. It is only secured by a boom and is guarded by ten soldiers. From the gatehouse above the passageway an enemy can be bombarded with stones or arrows—quite a weak defence! For well-known reasons, this is fully intentional.

6. Ramp

The road leads in many switchbacks from Gorgoroth up the Morgai ridge. This allows relatively easy access to the fortress, even for heavy wagons or Mûmakil.

7. Well

Like in most of Gorgoroth, access to potable water is a great problem both for man and beast in Agazlam. To this end, deep wells have been drilled, but even these are at times insufficient to provide enough water for the whole population living there. After the frequent earthquakes in Mordor the wells may not supply even a drop of water. In this case, water must be carried with great effort from Lugshapat by cart or scooped from the Morgai creek—if it has water at all.

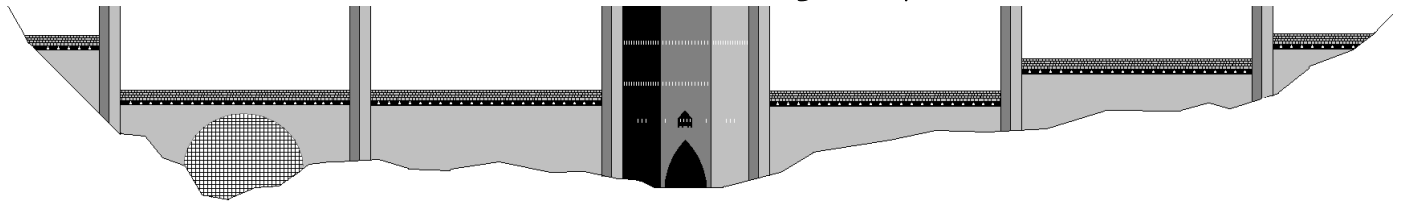
8. Slave pens

The slave pen is built like all the other buildings. Here the stable area is barred by gratings and the storage spaces have iron rings on the walls. Most importantly, the whole building can be securely locked from the outside...

9. Slurry and manure chute

This chute serves as the main waste disposal system for the waste of Lugburug as well as slurry and manure from the great stables. Over the centuries this fertilizer has produced the only spot of fertile soil in this region. Green grass and broom grow on the flank of the hill. Unfortunately, in the middle of this little oasis, there is a great heap of steaming manure.

The wall across the Morgai valley



Right below the bridge a barricade runs across the Morgai valley. Since no enemies are expected to traverse this valley along the north-south axis, because the only access is through Agazlam itself, the defenses are quite weak. The main function of the wall is to bar unhindered traffic through the vale and provide additional housing for extra troops. The wall is well protected from enemy missiles, lying directly below the bridge, and being the same width as the bridge itself. Enemies wishing to damage the wall first have to destroy the bridge for access (of course falling debris may cause massive damage in itself too). The wall is not very solid, due to the hollow structure which enables it to provide accom-

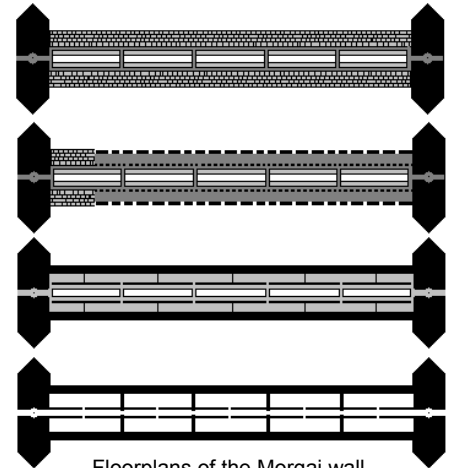


modation (see cross-sections left). In times of peace, these vaults are empty. Only the guards from Lugshapat regularly patrol the battlements and survey the valley. The northern and southern top of the battlements is protected by a stone roof on solid arches (see left). The middle of the walkway is not roofed to allow sunlight into the upper vaults. For this purpose the walkway



is interrupted for long stretches. One is well advised not to be careless, since the parapet is not over high and it's quite a long drop... Both sides of the wall are connected by a robust arch every twenty meters.

One storey below are the rooms where the additional troops are quartered in times of war. The whole wall can accommodate about 1,000 additional soldiers on this level. The larger rooms of the lowest level within the wall are used as storage areas for these troops as well as food storage for the fortress in general. The base of the wall is built solidly and varies in height to level out any irregularities of the terrain. Where the massive pillars of the bridge interrupt the wall, there is a narrow passageway in the middle of it. Often this serves as access for a small spiral stair which levels out any height variance of different portions of the wall. The only accessways to the wall are in the fourth level of Lugshapat—there are no gates that could provide access from the Morgai valley itself. A second distinguishing mark of the wall is the giant grating over the Morgai creek. It cannot be raised or moved and its purpose is to allow the creek to flow through the wall area without obstruc-



Floorplans of the Morgai wall

tion. Normally the creek is small and there are no problems at all. At times (e.g. after torrents or a long and fell winter with a lot of snow), the creek can swell up immensely. The first grating was designed too small, so that the torrent in S.A. 1936 was dammed by the wall and finally tore it down, taking large sections of it with it. Afterwards, the grating was enlarged and since then there have been no problems with the creek. The spacing of the grating is quite generous, so a slim elf or a child could squeeze through.

The camps around Agazlam

Agazlam can house several thousand soldiers without problem (though provisioning over extended periods can become a problem), but that is far too few should Sauron plan a major campaign against the west. For this reason, several roads and paths lead down into several side valleys of the Morgai. Here there are sites prepared for great camps, each according to the geography of the specific vale, but always the same in the basic design and content. These sites are maintained and cared for by the garrison of Agazlam. All camps together can hold an army 20,000 strong. During the one and a half millennia of Agazlam's history, there has been only one occasion when an army was stationed here: during the War of the Last Alliance. The camps are the only structures of the fortress that survived that war. They were the only parts of the fortress that were re-built at the end of the Third Age and used by Sauron's hosts. The following description of Bukkrash (Clawed Hand) serves as an example for the basic layout.

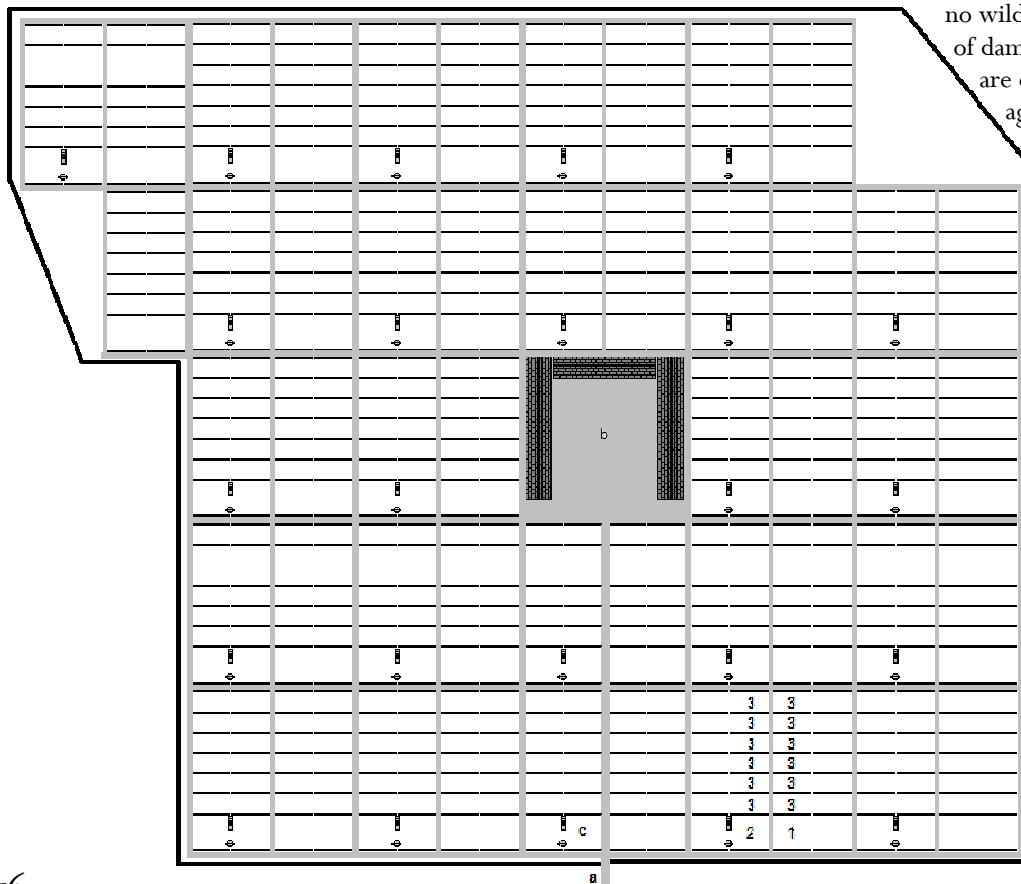
Bukkrash

For every camp a square layout has been the overarching goal, but the constraints of geography have not always made this possible. A smaller road breaks off from the main one leading down from the fortress. This road then proceeds into the small vale. The bottom of the valley has been levelled and between steep rock faces and slopes covered with boulders the camp Bukkrash (Or. "Clawed Hand") has been established. The whole camp is enclosed by a stone wall of two metres height. This is more designed to hold off predatory animals or water (if the creek has floodwater) than real enemies. The road leads through the wall at (a) straight toward the only building complex of the camp (b). These are of similar layout to the outbuildings at Lugburug. In times of peace they are filled to the roof with all kinds of goods for war. Blankets, cloaks, torches, weapons, saddles, tents etc. are kept in here in great quantities. If the camp is occupied by troops, the three buildings serve the staff and the leaders as living space,

headquarters, administrative center, hospital and kitchen.

For the regular troops there are places prepared where tents can be erected (c). Each company has 12 such camping grounds (3). One such place is sufficient for the common tent of ten troopers. The forward end of the tent row is bordered by an assembly place, every alternate one of which includes a well and cooking site to be shared by two neighbouring companies. At the front of each tent row there is a bigger tent for the captain and the troop leaders (1). The size and command structure of Mordor's armies are subject to great variety, depending on the origin of the troops, so the layout has some flexibility too. Orcish troops, for example, have fewer captains. If Bukkrash is optimally used, it is able to accommodate about 6,000 soldiers plus a baggage train able to support them for several months.

Normally the camps are desolate and scarcely watched. Every couple of days a patrol from the fortress shows up to check that everything is intact and the weather has not damaged anything and no wild animals have broken in. In case of damage, the craftsmen of Agazlam are obliged to repair any such damage. During Agazlam's long history, Bukkrash has been occupied only once, shortly before the end of the whole complex.



Important personalities

The following individuals lived in the fortress at various times. The GM may use them in his campaign as he sees fit. Since many commanders and High priests, to say nothing of the soldiers, were stationed here over the course of one and a half millennia, he may even use them as appropriate to any period, since most are generic and not tied to a specific time. The great span of Agazlam's history prevents every period being described individually. The section about the history of the fortress at the beginning of the article gives hints on this theme. When using the provided NPC's, the GM should have in mind the history of the fortress. For example, the office of High-Priestess was been established around S.A. 2400 so Zigasit (or her predecessors/successors) can only be encountered thereafter. The fortress commanders fled into the east after Sauron's capture by Ar-Pharazôn and thus are nor present at that time. The characters were designed with maximum flexibility in mind, being usable for almost all periods of the fortress' existence.

Tar-Pharagn (Gul-Pharagn)

Pharagn is a descendant of Elros and can trace his line in direct male descent from Manwendil, a younger son of Tar-Anárion the eighth king of Númenor, who founded an early cadet branch of the Elrosian line. The House of Manwendil was very careful to note its distinguished status as closely related to the Lords of Andúnië—the House second in prestige only to the King's. There were many intermarriages between these two Houses (Manwendil and Andúnië), so that Pharagn's descent is among the most noble in Númenor.

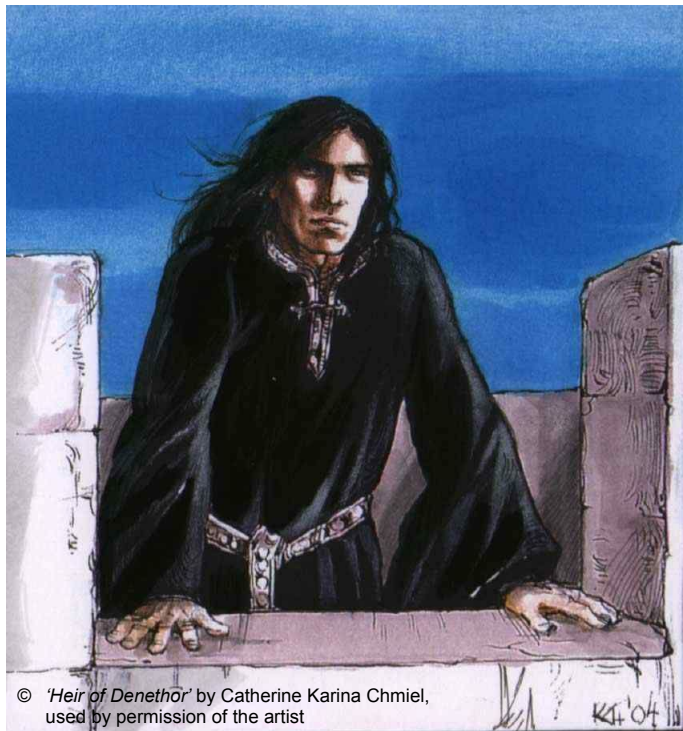
Due to his high birth, he is mighty in body and mind even according to Númenórean standards. Born in the year 1701 in Eldalondë, as eldest son of the mighty House of Manwendil he enjoyed the friendship of his House with the Eldar who brought rich gifts and lore from Eressëa or even Aman. Even as a

small child Pharagn was fascinated by the stories of the Undying Lands, and all the tales of the great towers (particularly the one in Avallonë), Aulë's Halls or other majestic buildings in Aman caught his neverending attention. He showed exceptional interest in their architecture, and it was hard to explain to him in his childish fascination that he could never visit them. One night, when he was twelve years old, he stole onto an elven ship ready to depart for Eressëa again. Within sight of the elven island he was discovered. Dismayed to see him, they turned their ship around, fully aware that the boy had broken the Ban of the Valar (forbidding mortal men to sail further west than Númenor could be seen). Due to his youth, he was not held fully responsible for his deed, but his father reproached himself for failing in his supervision. Therefore he resolved to send him to Middle-earth for a while, to remove him from further temptations concerning the West.

The Elves blamed themselves too and became more careful in their visits and relations with the Númenóreans. (The incident was not the only reason of course but part of a subtle development that was not fully understood or perceived until the days of Tar-Atanamir three centuries later.) Now their ships were much more closely guarded during their stay in Númenor and regularly searched before departure. To the young Pharagn the voyage to Middle-earth seemed like a voyage into exile. He perceived it as a punishment and deemed it an injustice done to him. He also could not forget the splendour of Avallonë—even if he only saw it from afar at the horizon that fateful morning. This way, Pharagn grew up in the—comparatively simple—Númenórean coastal settlements in Endor, finally staying at Vinyalondë. According to his interests, he learned from the local architects, who at this time were enlarging Tar-Aldarion's original design of the city. Quickly he surpassed his teachers by far in both artistic skill and lore and his heart yearned for ever grander designs like high towers and palaces. But the time for these had

not yet come and the Númenóreans were content to build only the utilitarian buildings they needed for now. In addition, they were still modest, being content with their status (though that would soon change). In this situation Pharagn began to be bored, seeing no real challenges among his fellow people. Only when news of his father's death reached him, did he travel one last time to Númenor. For a time he lived in Eldalondë, ordering the House of Manwendil, taking its heirlooms (including the powerful "Stone of Volition"—Mîren-innas) into his keeping. But after a few years he became restless and the urge for great achievements got ever stronger. He asked for an audience with his relative the king, Tar-Minastir, which was readily granted. Before the king Pharagn talked about great edifices, representing the power and glory of Númenor's king in Middle-earth. In his words proud towers rose, palaces and sparkling fountains shone and unconquerable walls shielded all this from all enemies. In fair and clever words he laid out his arguments, that after the defeat of Sauron, the king should take the opportunity and with great symbols of power show his will to represent a new, better rule over the lands of Middle-earth.

But in his eagerness and inebriated by his grand visions, his speech became too demanding, his demands too pressing and his pressure too rough. The well-meaning mood of the king hardened and after Pharagn ended breathless Tar-Minastir replied to him: "You are of the blood of my blood and of our fathers and kin to the House of Elros. But your name is not *Tar*-Pharagn, since I am the lord of these halls, the land of Númenor and all its possessions in Middle-earth. It is my decision to govern all of this. Of high towers you speak, but your words are as high-flying as your plans. The time for all these things has not yet come. We have to gather all our forces for the containment of the new Great Enemy, now barely driven forth but not defeated forever, heir to Morgoth's evil. Havens must be built for the support of our elven friends as well to comfort and sup-



© 'Heir of Denethor' by Catherine Karina Chmiel, used by permission of the artist

port the Men of Middle-earth who have to live in Darkness. If you are comfortable with this plain, but necessary and honorable work, I will gladly name you the greatest royal architect, for I see your gifts very clearly. In this capacity you shall build secure harbours for our ships with all the great skill of which I have heard so much." The short-tempered Pharagn, his heart still hot from his speech and dreams perceived this soft speech of the king as derision and spoke the following words: "You say my name is not *Tar-Pharagn*, since I am not king, but you. This may be, but in my veins runs blood more royal in mind than in yours. You know only the little wisdom of a Chandler and soldier, neither willing nor able to look beyond the days of your short lives. One day, when men gaze upon my legacy, they will say: 'Who was this Minastir, who left nothing but a name in the scrolls? Pharagn it must have been who made this construction, a true king indeed'. And they will call me 'Tar-Pharagn' and forget you. I will now leave for Middle-earth—remember my words!"

At this speech many of the advisors of the king sprang up, demanding punishment for such harsh words against the

king. But Minastir let Pharagn go, hoping that he might find wisdom later. Even when Pharagn left the hall, the king spoke his verdict: "*Tar-Pharagn*, hear my judgement. You have insulted the king and the great of Númenor and arrogated to yourself royal dignity! This alone would be enough to demand great punishment. But I know you are young and your heart is hot; therefore you shall be exiled from Númenor and leave for Middle-earth. There you shall dwell, but may return when you have learned wisdom. Then you shall ask for pardon before this throne and I will consider it. This is my verdict!" At these words Pharagn turned and spoke softly, and by some chance only the king heard his words: "I will return as *Tar-Pharagn*—or never!"

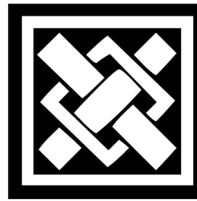
Tar-Pharagn (as he called himself henceforth in bitterness and pride) took up his heirlooms and sailed for Middle-earth. At *Vinyalondë* he mounted a horse and rode eastward out of the city. With this he vanished from the records of Númenor. For many years he travelled the lands of the east and the south, always seeking for kings who were willing to have their names set in stone. He served many lords as architect, building many towers, fortresses and palaces. Even elaborate and magnificent tombs, many of them now long buried under the sand of deserts or overgrown by the jungles of the south, rose under Pharagn's supervision. Thus he earned much wealth and great honours, even though he only had one demand from all his employers: "*Tar-Pharagn*" should be chiselled into the very foundation of each of these buildings. To such employers as he

knew would reject his demand, he did not speak of it, but let silently chisel his name into the stones even in the quarries where they were hewn, so that they got to the right construction area. In this way, when all the scrolls of lore and histories of the kings have turned to dust and no longer keep record of events, men will surely think of this *Tar-Pharagn* as a mighty king who had proud buildings with his name on it strewn all across Middle-earth.

Over the decades following his exile, Pharagn's mood became ever darker and he also served kings and people that accepted Sauron as their supreme lord. He took no fixed abode and travelled from place to place. But even in this way, he won great renown and power, since the knowledge of his skill and impressive feats reached even the farthest kingdoms. He was awarded great riches by his customers, but he also found many followers among the foremen and aides of the construction sites. Thus he thought that not only by his buildings could he gain immortality, and he founded a guild of master-builders. Wherever he went, he founded a guildhouse and taught the masters the secrets of construction that seemed like magic to many. Long after he vanished from the living world, the guild endured and founded houses all over Endor, even in the Númenórean colonies. The guild attracted many of the most talented and many a prince, later chancellor or advisor was trained there. Most of these remained beholden to the guild. But even the duties of the guild soon bored Pharagn. Around that time, he first heard of the greatest building project of all time, a tower that would dwarf even the great towers he had seen on *Eressëa* or the tower of *Elros* in *Armenelos*. A building of titanic dimensions, second to none in *Arda*. Throughout his extensive travels, Pharagn had become a fearless and resourceful man. None was able to hinder him in his goals. So he rode alone and unaided to the gates of *Barad-dûr* in *Mordor* and asked to be led to the master-builder of this tower. His words were full of dignity and power, so that the guards' laughter died

in their throats. Indeed Sauron gave him an audience. At this time, the Dark Lord was still fair-seeming and by clever and honey-tongued words could win over even the most wary. Only seldom did he need to resort to force or sorcery to achieve his ends. Accordingly even the clever, wary and proud Pharagn soon entered Sauron's service, swore an oath of fealty and henceforth worshipped the Dark Lord as his king and Lord of the Earth. That way Pharagn completely submitted himself to the will of Sauron and became the chief architect and master-builder of the Dark Tower. Barad-dûr itself (the tower) had already been completed by around S.A. 1600, but he added many halls, temples, outer towers, mechanism, traps etc., thereby improving the original design and immensely strengthening the fortress-complex that surrounded the tower itself. Many an outer tower or outlying fortification would have been a strong fortress in almost every other respect itself. For this reason, it was told by some that Pharagn was the one who really finished Barad-dûr.

Pharagn had now spent more than half of his lifespan, which was already greater than those of his Númenórean compatriots, due to his descent from the Line of Elros. The fear of old age and death began to gnaw on his mind, and for a time he began to doubt himself and the ideas and vision of great works did not come as easily and numerous as in his younger years. Sauron was clearly aware of the value of his servant and gave him a last assignment—and a ring, one of the Nine. His task was to fortify Mordor against the West and the Númenóreans, which appeared in ever greater numbers along the western coasts of Middle-earth, potentially threatening his position in Mordor. The ring came from the spoils of Ost-in-Edhil when Sauron had thoroughly plundered the halls of the Elven-smiths and was one of the Nine, that Sauron gave to Mortal Men. Like all of the Great Rings, it had the ability to conserve, and for Pharagn this meant conserving his vigour, avoiding further deterioration of both his mind and body.



For decades, the ring alleviated any detrimental effects of aging for Pharagn. It seemed to him as if time stood still for his body. He lived on in excellent health for the remainder of his normal span, and years beyond it. Pharagn first designed the bridge-fortress of Agazlam, then took his abode there and from there planned the twin fortresses that tightly controlled access to the Nargil pass, Pundh and Skanth and many more. But at the fortress of Carach Angren (also known as Isenmouthe) his skill failed him. Whatever the cause, this task was more than a match for his skill. All the towers and walls he designed for the fortress were destroyed by earthquakes. Such tremors of the earth were (and are) nothing unusual in Mordor, and by this time he never had problems in designing his building to resist the earthquakes of Mordor. But at this point in Mordor the mountains were still rising and the valley of Udûn lowering, and this was probably the most active spot in all of Mordor or even Middle-earth, the land convulsing frequently and violently. Pharagn became desperate over this task. Cursing, he locked himself in his chambers, planned and designed but he could find no solution. One day there was a knock at the door. The Witch-king personally came in and spoke: "Kinsman, your time has come. All your work but this one has been done, and the Master no longer has any use for you. He demands his gift back. Give it to me and pass where I cannot go any longer, until the end of time. You still have the choice, use it wisely!" But Pharagn would not relinquish his ring and the Witch-king had to seize it from him by force. Pharagn seemed translucent and ghostly once the ring was removed from him. The years threw him down immediately, and he cursed the Witch-king, but he swore eternal fealty to Sauron and vowed to fulfill his task. Neither did he eat nor

leave his chambers. For a while the Witch-king stayed in Agazlam, overseeing it. At last, he had Pharagn's chambers walled up, and he left when his master called him to other tasks. What happened exactly in those chambers is not known for sure, but what was held to be certain was the fact that Pharagn did not simply die. Probably he was already too far under the spell of his former ring, being almost powerless without the focus of his existence, but also unable to depart from Eä. In fact he had become a Ringwraith without a ring, that gift now given to another, which fact led especially to his diminished and powerless state. Perhaps the Stone of Will was another help, that kept him above the level of total impotence, but still extremely weak and unable to leave this place. In the following centuries he did the only thing still possible for him: Designing further buildings for his last task. Though he was unable to use physical tools, his state allowed him to make all this in his mind—the only thing left to him. Even though he was unable to leave the confines of his chambers, his malevolent influence was felt throughout the fortress. It crept like an invisible shadow throughout, impossible to grasp, but present subliminally. This grew extremely slowly, but after about 300 years had passed, it had accumulated so much that it took only little for the factions among the garrison of the fortress to engage in open war against each other. The winning one (the orcs) were not to enjoy their victory for long, however. Soon the Witch-king appeared at the fortress, leading a strong army. Sauron had no tolerance for bickering among his subjects, he needed a secure fortress at Agazlam. Thus the Witch-king made short work of the winning faction. He was quite surprised that Pharagn still dwelt here. In the absence of special orders from Sauron, he wove a mighty spell to confine Pharagn and his influence securely within his chambers. In this state he spent almost a thousand years, nursing his hatred. When Sauron was caught up in the destruction of Númenor and returned to his home extremely weakened, a Nazgûl arrived in Agazlam,

beginning a secret vigil there. Once the latter entered the level of Lugshapat where Pharagn was imprisoned, Pharagn was able to break free of the tight bonds laid on him (having learned much about them over the long years) and he entered into a fierce battle against his foe. The vale of the Morgai was filled with the terror of their cries and shrieks and for several days each strived for supremacy. Finally, Pharagn defeated his foe by a trick: Luring him into his chambers, the binding spell fell back on the Nazgûl, trapping him and allowing Pharagn to wrest the ring from him. He did not, however, use the ring, to avoid too much attention from Sauron. In addition he wanted to convince Sauron of his ongoing usefulness. In the long years of his imprisonment he had found a way (he thought) to overcome the obstacles of the fortress at Carach Angren. Within the following four years he gathered a strong army from the scattered remnants of Sauron's forces and secured this strategic pass for Sauron. He also sent spies into the newly-founded Gondor; mostly into the adjacent province of Ithilien. He also sent out envoys to the guildhouses (though not all of them still existed). In the meantime, legend had made some kind of mythical founder of him, but when his messengers gave the correct secret passwords and the correct answers to the mysterious questions concerning the guild teachings, the guildsmen sank to their knees and vowed obedience to their returned master. That way Pharagn learned much of what had happened, in the west as well as south and east. Since the guild was always weakest in the west, some key information was missed by his informants, though Pharagn thought his intelligence complete. When he deemed the time was right, he set out for Barad-dûr to show his successes to Sauron and regain his favour. Sauron couldn't make up his mind concerning Pharagn. On the one hand, he had openly resisted his wishes and attacked his valuable servant, but on the other hand had obtained much extremely valuable information for the war that must come. It seems that at that time this was more valuable than the seemingly ignominiously defeated

Nazgûl. So Sauron reluctantly gave the ring to Pharagn, reminding him that he was "under probation" for now. When Pharagn put on the Nazgûl's ring—with Sauron's permission—a bloodcurdling scream could be heard from Agazlam, the Nazgûl now knowing that he had finally been defeated. From this day on, he was named Gûl-Pharagn.

The subsequent fate of Gûl-Pharagn is not known for sure, but reports have come to the west, that his fate was even more gruesome than anticipated:

Well-prepared by Gûl-Pharagn's intelligence about Gondor, Sauron's armies attacked the new realm, but the war did not go as expected. Resistance was much stiffer and the enemy was able to counter all major movements, thus robbing the Dark Lord's armies the chance to defeat the Númenóreans in a swift stroke as had been hoped (and expected from Pharagn's intelligence). Even worse, the Dark Lord's armies had to retreat into the Ephel Dúath to avoid total defeat against the realm of Gondor alone. Now it was clear that the war would be much harder and longer than expected, and defeat was no longer an impossibility. Enraged, Pharagn was summoned before Sauron's throne and given a last chance to prove himself worthy: The gap of Carach Angren was still not adequately fortified and Pharagn was ordered to change that before the Alliance had chance to exploit this weakness. Immediately he set in motion his carefully laid plans and the site became the scene of a gigantic construction. Hundreds of construction guild members responded to his call and flocked to Pharagn for the organisation of the construction. Slaves were ruthlessly driven to extremes to fulfill their tasks and still thousands of them died, with Pharagn not even noticing their fate, only being interested in the fulfillment of his plan. He succeeded and in S.A. 3433 the fortress was completed. With the completion of this—his greatest—work, he finally had his life's dream fulfilled and the Stone of Willing lost its power on him, giving his spirit finally the ability to fully encompass the folly of his limitless ambition. Unfortunately, he no longer

was the master of his soul, and so was no longer able to leave Arda due to his spirit being inextricably bound to the Great Ring he wore.

All his efforts were in vain though when Isildur took Carach Angren by force in a commando raid and Pharagn fled before the wrath of the west towards Barad-dûr. Sauron's ire then knew no bounds, Pharagn having failed him twice since his reappearance. The infuriated Sauron was at least able to act upon his desires, since Pharagn's form had been slain in the defense of his greatest work and, shapeless, his spirit had fled back to Sauron. Now he cursed his decision to give him a Ring, and for his incompetence Pharagn was now sentenced by Sauron to a special fate, the Dark Lord having it in mind that Pharagn might prove useful later. His existence was bound to the very foundations of the Barad-dûr, the most powerful building in Middle-earth. After all, this was thought to be a fitting punishment for the great architect. To Pharagn's misfortune, his master lost the war against the Last Alliance, and he had to wait another almost 3,000 years until Barad-dûr was rebuilt and he could provide worthy services to his Master.

Sauron, however, was now occupied with the invading army of the west. How the Ring that Pharagn wore was recovered from the defeat at Carach Angren and how the imprisoned Nazgûl at Agazlam was again freed, becoming Sauron's last hope in this war, is another story. The only thing known for sure in the west in this context is the name of that Nazgûl—Khamûl!

Pharagn in the game

For most of the existence of the fortress he is a wraith, unable (and partly unwilling) to participate in its affairs. At best he might manifest himself weakly near his chambers, but that's it. This only changes significantly once he regains a ring at the end of the Second Age. While he dwells at Agazlam, he is immune to magical attempts at domination or distraction (short of the Nazgûl or Sauron himself of course). This effect is mostly due to the Stone of Will.

Tion Ekostari— commander of the fortress

Tion Ekostari comes from a noble family of the Far East of Middle-earth. The family has an ancient tradition of service to Sauron and has provided many high-ranking administrators, priests and generals in Sauron's empire. Normally they serve the Dark Lord in their home region and only serve further afield for short periods, mostly to learn something of the local traditions and customs that are probably needed later. Tion is an exception. As heir to the House of Ekostari he fell in love with the daughter of a merchant. Against much opposition from his father he finally married her, but was excluded from succession to the family title thenceforth. As a consequence he concentrated on his career in Sauron's armies. He fought in several smaller campaigns in the east and served as commander of many outlying fortresses, until he was assigned to Agazlam. Here he quickly rose through the ranks, first as commander of Lugshapat, then Lugburug and finally of the whole fortress. Superficially he seems a level-headed man, cultivated and eloquent. But he also has a dark side to him: Some slaves seem to recall seeing him murdering the former fortress commander, secretly disposing the body by the waste chute in the courtyard of Lugburug. These slaves are well aware that talking about that might lead to a quick death for them. In addition, what if the commander could present evidence in his favour? Thus they keep their mouths shut. Indeed Tion killed the former commander, who has been listed as missing from that day on, and for a very specific reason. He wanted to have his wife by his side, a prerogative of the fortress commander alone. The High-Priestess has only heard rumours so far, but is eager to learn more facts, and thus watches Tion suspiciously (albeit clandestinely of course).

Tion in the game

Tion is hardly a sly scoundrel or a primitive bad guy. He is a proud man, intelligent and by long experience well-

versed in leading troops. Even though he is now beyond his 60th year, his skills as a swordsman and administrator are legendary. Only when his wife Larinwe Ekostari is involved, he becomes a maniac. He is not haughty, and should the PC's put forward an understandable and important request, he will grant them an audience within the capabilities of his busy schedule. Once he has made a decision on a topic, however, he will stick to it.

Alloto Mokes— commander of Lugburug

Mokes began his service in Sauron's armies as a simple soldier. He grew up a slave driver's son on the sad shores of the Núrn sea. When he was fourteen years old, a slave revolt broke out and one of the first victims of the rebellion was his father. Mokes took up his father's whip and sword, clove his way through the enemy despite his young years and hid himself.

When troops from the nearby garrison suppressed the revolt, Mokes took a cruel revenge—with approval from the garrison commander—by whipping the ringleaders to death. The commander took the orphaned Mokes to his unit, at first as a sort of mascot. At age fifteen he enlisted officially into the garrison and quickly rose through the ranks. By twenty he was already captain of his own company, and both his sword and whip were widely known—and feared—in the region around the Sea of Nurn. Mokes specialized in suppressing rebellions and the punishment of dissidents. This became quickly known in the Dark Tower and accordingly Mokes received numerous assignments, which led his now infamous company far beyond the borders of Mordor. When a small Haradan principedom planned to leave the influence of Mordor and ally itself with the Númenóreans, he was assigned there and ruled it with an iron fist for a few years. Once the area had been "pacified", he was sent to Agazlam to take the command of Lugburug. Sauron's armies are

known for their openness concerning social background. You do not need to be of noble or royal blood to rise to the highest ranks.

Alloto Mokes in the game

Alloto is a psychopath. Apparently silent and calculating, it needs only the slightest of transgressions to rouse his wrath. Since the death of his father, he is incapable of emotion, and so his punishments are normally cool and calculatedly cruel. His dark and ireful outbursts can be seen in his regular use of the slave whip. For this reason, he is feared by the slaves and admired by his men for his compelling nature—while at the same time they too fear his wrath. He handles business and day-to-day dealings with merchants, diplomats and other travelers in Lugburug functionally, though he is extremely bored by it. Should you get to know Mokes, you would think him intelligent and easy to get along with, albeit a bit cool. Mokes has tremendous self-control though, and his rational side is quite capable of handling the daily routine without problem. Should someone give him an opportunity for disciplinary action or punishment, you'd better take to your heels. Mokes strives to become commander of Agazlam as soon as possible, since he deems himself assigned to a job far below his capabilities.

Vaton Innota— commander of Lugshapat

Innota is a child of Agazlam and one of the few high-ranking personalities to have his roots here. He is the child of a maidservant and a simple soldier. His father's unit were deployed to the southern border of Mordor shortly after his birth and was never to return, so he never knew him. The quartermaster allowed his mother to give birth to her child, since at this time there was need for workers. At first he helped the smiths and carried out small errands in the fortress. A captain who recognized his speed and intelligence became fond of him and took him into his service. When he reached the age of fifteen, he was allowed to enlist in the armies of Sauron.

So Innota changed from serving amongst the civilian servants to serving in the military, and did his basic training in Agazlam and later in the great training camps in eastern Mordor. After a few years of duty at the Dark Tower he returned as a troop leader to Agazlam and there through the years rose in the ranks to captain and finally tower commander. Vatou Innota seems to like the luxury his office offers and enjoys it to the full.

Innota in the game

Innota's knowledge of the fortress is second to none. He is a calm and hardly cruel man. He takes a special interest in the needs of the civilian servants of the fortress. He sees himself less as a soldier than as an administrator. Under his rule the lot of the servants and craftsmen has become much easier and better, resulting in a strong loyalty to him within this group. Innota is a quiet person, a calm administrator without great ambition, but of high intelligence. Due to this, he rarely is noticed in the play of intrigue within the leadership of the fortress, and rarely perceived as an enemy. In the meantime he has even gained some weight and enjoys the luxuries of his position. But might this perhaps be only a facade and a means to an end?

Innota has maintained a liaison with the High-Priestess for some years now, a further bonus in the power plays of the mighty here. She thinks to control him that way, even though it might very well be that he sticks to it for purely rational reasons. The main question thus is now: Is Innota really a calm administrator enjoying the luxuries of a tower commander's life or a sly, power-conscious and very patient man? To really judge that, one should know a fact that currently is only known to Innota: For a minor offence Alloto Mokes whipped his mother to death while he was stationed in the Dark Tower....

Cragh P'ougek Rag— the orcish chieftain of Lugskut

Rag—as his “friends” are allowed to call him—became chief in the usual orcish manner. He challenged the former chieftain and subsequently slew him. Usually the sub-chiefs and closest underlings offer to fight in the chief's stead. The old chief was so senile and aged that they themselves deemed the time right for a new one. At this time Rag already had a record of successful forays into Ithilien and ruled the outer tower Lug Harad with a tight but effective regime. According to the rules, as he not only challenged the old chieftain to a duel without weapons and not only bit his throat, but the whole neck, he received his official title which means something like “Big reaping jaw with huge fangs”. Rag also seems to be more intelligent than previous chieftains. Without consulting the fortress commander he almost totally ceased the forays into Ithilien to prevent the ever more present Númenóreans from responding in earnest. Instead he has specialized in big, well organized secret scouting missions as far even as the coast and the environs of Pelargir. Occasionally he leads such missions himself. Of course there is some looting, but outlying homesteads or villages are no longer attacked, nor are people enslaved or killed. His scouts, called “sniffers” or “snaga” (slave) by other orcs, have reached a much higher status than in the other orcish tribes of Mordor. This causes some unrest among the fighting orcs though, since they view themselves as the undisputed masters of orcish society. They long for the “old days” where an orc could loot and pillage to his heart's content... They do not understand that by this strategy Rag has gained significant sympathy in the Dark Tower and as a reward regularly receives gold and foodstuffs sent to Lugskut—and in much greater quantity than would ever have been possible by looting and pillaging. Since the smaller orcs now take the brunt of missions in enemy territory, the greater orcs have become somewhat complacent, distracting themselves with opulent feasts from the dull

guard duty in the outer towers. Rag has great liberty in running his tower and orcs, since this part of the fortress is inspected by the fortress commander only to the minimum necessary degree. In the whole, the orcs are more or less ignored by the rest of the garrison. The chieftain's son currently lives in the outer tower of Lug Harad with all his supporters and it goes without saying that his has completely different views than his father. He also plans to take the tower's leadership in the near future and lead the tribe again to greatness and glory! Of course his father knows about all this—and he is very proud about his ambitious offspring!

Rag in the game

He is a quite intelligent orc and capable of achieving his goals with negotiations, bribery and intrigue—even if a clear and easy solution like a bite in the throat or a well-placed blow of his scimitar is more to his liking. Should the players give him a good offer or solve one of his problems in a way that sees that he himself and his tribe get a fair share of any profit, he is likely to agree to it. This is under the proviso it does not conflict with Sauron's goals (as he sees them) and can be kept secret. For example, buying a prisoner out of Lugskut would be possible if the Dark Tower has shown no interest in him. One should take care where any ransom is being paid, unless one finds himself in the next cellar, since Rag (like any orc) keeps any contract only as long as he sees advantage in it for him—and sometimes not even then.



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Zigasit—the High-Priestess



Zigasit is extremely beautiful and unfathomably evil. She grew up as a temple servant in Barad-dûr and of her origin nothing is known except that the Witch-king himself brought her as a foundling from one of his campaigns in the east to the Dark Tower. She is aware of this story, since the High-Priest of Barad-dûr himself told her so during her initiation. By now, no one could tell her any more about her origin. The Witch-king still dwells in the east under orders from his master, and the Dark Lord has not granted her an audience, despite her pleas. She is convinced that she hails from a high-ranking Númenórean family, since her slow aging would favor that explanation. She firmly believes that one day the secret of her origin will be revealed, on the day she becomes the head of Sauron's church. She will do absolutely everything for this. Zigasit can use her charms and good looks to further her ends, and where her power as High-Priestess of Agazlam or the fear of her ire

is insufficient to get her way, she will use her attractiveness to men—and sometimes women—to get it. Currently the commander of Lugshapat is thus bound by her charms (at least she thinks so).

Normally Zigasit looks like a young woman in her mid-twenties, and one cannot hesitate to think how such a young person could already have achieved such a high position. If one sees her without her balms and magic in place, however, her looks change drastically. Then she still has the appearance of a very attractive woman, but one already in her early to mid-forties.¹

Zigasit in the game

Zigasit is a diplomat, inquisitor of moral, scout and healer for Sauron's church. Her preachings strengthen morale (and morals!), affirm faith in the Dark Lord and uncover deviationists. She also checks whether all the daily choirs and business are in accordance with Sauron's general rules. Therefore she is

not only a priestess, but also member (and local chief) of Sauron's (inquisitorial) secret police. She holds no disciplinary authority over the occupants of the fortress, but she can relieve the fortress commander any time from his duties, as long as she can present credible evidence to support her decision. Exactly this is her goal and she will not shy away from fabricating such "evidence" (if no genuine evidence exists), since she hopes that such a major coup would gain her glory from the Dark Tower and finally elevate her to the coveted status of supreme leader of Sauron's church. Her advancing age will lead her to realize her plans in the not so far future. In all other respects she is a true and genuine adherent of Sauron. Should the PC's become opposed to her, she is the most dangerous person in the whole fortress. In open combat she is relatively easy to defeat. Her real strength lies in her ability not to get into such a situation... Her (effective!) means are poison, intrigue, seduction and—if necessary—sorcery. Should one of the PC's get involved with her, he might even catch a glimpse of her without her "aids" activated and be startled by the change in her appearance...



¹ Her exact age is not provided as— due to the extended (and decreasing) nature of Númenórean longevity (see the article in *Other Minds, Issue 6*)—her apparent age of 45 corresponds to different real ages in different time periods. To calculate her real age, use tables on pages 17 and 72 of *Other Minds, Issue 6*. Example: If she has a total life expectancy of 145 years (Arûwanâi born around SA 2850), her "healthy" age is 130 (subtract 15 years from total). Cross-indexing 45 "normal man" age with 130 "healthy" Númenórean years (interpolating midway between 120 and 140 columns) shows that she really would be 75 years old then.

Falon—the quartermaster

Falon is another follower of Sauron from the Far East. He is descended from a merchant's dynasty, but as a third son had no chance of inheriting the business. In Techschawar, a trade metropolis, his father sent him to Sauron's governor as an apprentice. Quickly his talent for organisation was recognized and he turned out to be a real administrative genius. He rose through the ranks and was soon sent to the scribe's school at the Dark Tower. There he became the assistant to the quartermaster of that fortress, and after a few years he was assigned to his first independent assignment at Agazlam. This was probably in part due to his advice about re-organizing the administration of Barad-dûr which embarrassed the incumbent quartermaster there. There is little else to say about him. Apparently he has no private life, being totally absorbed by his work. He is feared for his precision and has a pedantic sense of order and cleanliness. As a test, the fortress commander sent him in his first days at Agazlam as an instructor to Lugskut. Even now, fifteen years later, the orcs speak of that demon sent to him from Barad-dûr to clean the tower. It took them almost a year to restore the old "comfortable" state to the tower.

Falon in the game

There is only one way to get into business with or influence him: Make suggestions to improve the administration and work flow within the fortress. Other things like power, wealth or relationships do not mean anything to him. His tattooed bald head and his wiry physique might be mistaken as belonging to a skilled martial artist. Falon is quick and enduring indeed, but quite weak and unimpressive in melees.

Shagotz Bhul ul Thark— Orcish Shaman

It's hard to believe but there are times when even Orcs need spiritual advice. Shagotz functions as a priest, as healer for mental sicknesses and as advisor for everyday problems. As you can imagine, his role as priest has become quiet difficult since the High Priest of Sauron's Church has been installed in the fortress. Since the darkest times, when the orcish race was created by Morgoth out of perversion and pain, there have been shamans. In every orcish tribe there is exactly one shaman and its apprentice. Never more and never less. If a Tribe is without a shaman it will not last long and will collapse. The reason for that is mainly the superstitiousness of the Orcs, because only a shaman knows the secret ways of initiation of a new chief, the secret prayers to Morgoth (and only to Morgoth, to nobody else, not even Sauron!) and the ways, known only by shamans, of healing infertility, dwindling pugnacity or lack of interest in slaughter and war.

Like all orcish Shamans Shagotz can use magic. That is very rare within the orcish race and it is a basic principle that an orc with the gift of magic will become a shaman. Very few know that elven blood is very strong within all shamans, which might explain their magic abilities. Shagotz is not only an Orc. He is a seeker and learner. He will lend his ear to anyone who can teach him unknown secrets of the laws of Arda. Through lessons learned in his life, he believes in fate and will never stand against things which he presumes to be fate. So if a persuasive fact or a story is told to him, even by a prisoner, he might come to the decision, that it is the fate of that prisoner to escape. But do not believe that Shagotz is easy to convince of that, because he is a cunning Orc. But he will at least listen where other Orcs won't. Shagotz often meditates for hours and whole days and sometimes disappears for long walks in the Morgai and the Ephel Duath. Some say he can even calm the

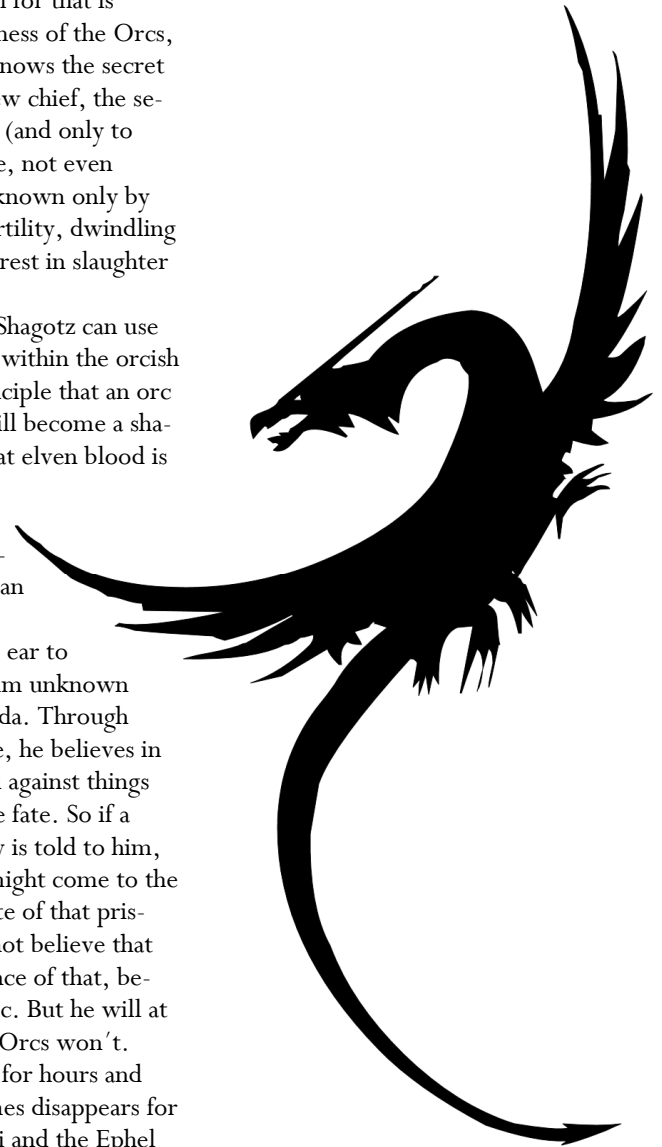
anger of Shelob, because he has spoken to her. The other Orcs fear him. He is quite a strange Orc, but aren't all shamans?

Ut Ulogoth— torture master of the orcs

(see the description of the torture chamber and his rooms in Lugskut)

Pregil Uzari—the torture master of the Haradrim

(see the description of the torture chamber and his chambers in Lugburug)



Ideas for less important personalities and archetypes

The Bad Company

This focuses on a group of spies in Sauron's service (who might be described as 'adventurers'). They are servants of the Dark Tower, but are still interested in their own profit if it does not come into conflict with their primary duties. The Bad Company is composed of a Númenórean sorceress, an orcish warrior, an orcish scout (called "snaga" or "sniffer") and a ranger from the indigenous people of Ithilien.

The Diplomat of the Dark Tower

He is an ambassador and spokesman of Sauron. Well-versed in diplomacy and negotiation, he often travels to the mountain people of the Ered Nimrais. Only the best and most loyal are allowed to negotiate on behalf of Sauron. Therefore, he is extremely intelligent and fiercely loyal to the Dark Lord, and also commands some magic skills.

The accountants from the Dark Tower...

...have absolutely no sense of humor and their incorruptibility is legendary. Some say that Sauron holds their spirits prisoner and therefore they act and calculate like automatons. They are always encountered in groups of seven, wear black robes and have shaven-headed skulls. They also have the unpleasant gift of showing up where least expected.

Messengers of Mordor

They are called the most hardiest and swiftest riders in Middle-earth. They are almost always Easterlings, who carry messages between the fortresses of Mordor on their small but sturdy horses. They endure cold, rain (not in Gorgoroth...) and heat with equal, ungrumbling stoicism. These are hardy men and stories are told that they deliver their messages in record time even on foot if necessary, should they have lost their mount. The messenger's code is as follows: "First the message, then the horse, then the rider!"

Special Items

The description of the fortress included references to some special items that are further detailed here.

A—the magic brooch "Leaf of Rain"

This leaf-shaped brooch from an elven cloak possesses amazing properties.



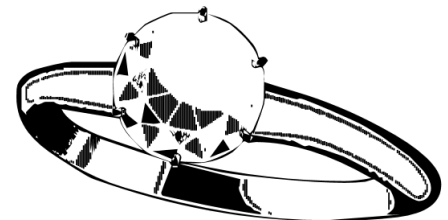
If placed on a natural surface (e.g. earth or natural stone), each night a mouthful of water collects there—even within the desert of Gorgoroth. One gulp of this water is sufficient to quench the thirst of a tired man. The brooch can also be used to scoop water from another source. If this water is exceptionally clear and pure, it gets mild healing properties (exact effects at the GM's decision according to his game system).

B—a wedding ring

The phrase "Ash Nazg Krimpat" can be seen engraved in this ring, hidden under a thick layer of dirt and grime. In the unlikely case that the finders of this ring are familiar with the phrase, they will instantly recognize why the original owner's marriage was ill-fated. The ring was cursed by the enraged husband with the following words:

"Would you turn every wielder as invisible to anyone as I was to my wife and as impervious to advice as she was!"

Indeed the curse had a slight magical effect on the ring, but it may also be due to the inscription which could prove powerful in a land like Mordor. Each wearer of the ring thinks he has become invisible. He is deaf to any arguments trying to convince him of the opposite. This self-delusion is so intense, that a wearer ignores his reflection (e.g. in water) or interprets it that only he can see it while anyone else cannot. In combat he dismisses it as pure and extremely bad luck that his enemies strike at him—since without seeing him they have no idea where he really is of course! Once per use the character gets a roll to resist (medium magic resistance roll according to the game system used). Each time the ring is used, this gets harder though until he cannot be convinced to the contrary at all. If a PC takes on the ring, the GM should send the player to another room, explain the situation to the rest of the group, who should act as if he is indeed invisible. After that, the player is called in again and should be given a similar description as Frodo experienced when he took on the One and grant him an appropriate check for resistance (see above).



C—a dagger (“*Shiiz Shiizar*”)

This dagger was intended to kill the fortress commander in S.A. 2834. It is an heirloom of the tower commander of Far Harad and has a wavy blade engraved with a snake. The engraving forms letters on the blade and merges into a sculp-snake at which is a with two eyes. The dagger is *Shiiz* the name is spoken aloud (in the correct language with the right pronunciation), the dagger slowly transforms within a few minutes into a small cobra, which follows simple orders (e.g. “crawl through this window”, “follow me”, “bite the man in this room” etc.). The secret of the dagger can only be unveiled by someone fluent in the southern Haradic dialect. If the snake is killed, it transforms back into the dagger, broken in a corresponding fashion.

The murderer was a simple slavegirl who secretly stole this dagger from the commander of Lugburug to slay the fortress commander in his bath. For this bath, many slaves brought hot water, and hidden in such a bucket she smuggled the weapon into the bathroom and stabbed the commander in the back. Leaving the distinctive dagger behind as she fled, she not only intended for her victim to die, but also to incriminate the commander of Lugburug for the murder. Unfortunately for her, exactly this man was the first on the scene, since he was summoned to a meeting with the fortress commander. He took the dagger, spirited it silently away and disposed of it in a well so that he might not be blamed. The fortress commander also survived only by the healing arts of the High Priestess of Sauron. Thanks to the meticulous documentation of the quartermaster it was discovered that a certain slavegirl had access both to the chambers of the tower commander as well as being planned for the water service of the for-

trass commander. But this girl and the dagger she was supposed to have were nowhere to be found, since she had used the confusion after the assassination attempt to flee for her life. Nothing of her further fate is known in Agazlam.

D—The Stone of Will (“*Mîr en-innas*”)

This is an heirloom of the family of Manwendil of immeasurable worth. For the retrieval of this (and the following two) items the House of Manwendil would inundate the bearer with riches. Due to the influence of that House, great rewards like a grant of land in the colonies on the western coasts of Middle-earth could also be possible.

In appearance the stone is similar to a *palantír* (if anyone has ever seen or even heard of those...)



(e.g. ca. 15cm). The stone was created specifically for men by the Jewelsmiths of the Noldor early in the Second Age ; , and came to Númenor as a gift. It possesses the power to fill the user with confidence in his skills and abilities and fulfill a project without doubts or troubles. The elves deemed this helpful for men to focus their will in works for the greater glory of Arda. But they were not able to foresee the side-effects this would have upon men (similarly to the later case of the Rings of Power, though here the use by men was inadvertent of course). The heirs of the House of Manwendil used this heirloom frequently—some more, others less so—and made great works with its help. For some, this use enhanced the more negative aspects of a focussed will (like obduracy and imperviousness to advice). Hence this gift supported the reputation of the House of Manwendil for producing indomitable

and brave characters, but who were also unscrupulous. The reputation of the House of Manwendil suffered this until the day when Pharagn as the heir of the House took the stone. His genius led him to ever more ambitious projects, and once he began using the stone, he would suffer no opposition. No goal was beyond his ambition. Finally a clash with king Tar-Minastir resulted in Pharagn being banned from Númenor. Later in Middle-earth he always carried the stone with him since it calmed him. When everything looked dark and hopeless, he even talked with the stone, caressing it. This constant use led to an addiction; he became dependent on the stone, similar to a Ringwraith with his ring (albeit on a completely different scale since it could not provide serial longevity).

The stone can be used by its owner (who must formally take possession of the stone), and up to 200 metres away. Within this range, the owner will be very calm and confident. Even great challenges will be handled with professionalism and skill. If the owner is mortal and frequently uses the stone he will develop an irrepressible will to achieve his life’s goals. Attempts to dissuade him, and eventually even powerful influencing spells will fail.

E—a sea shell with a hair from Uinen

A fine *mithril* chain holds the shell of a silver-coated clam. The contents of the shell is a piece of amber, polished like glass on its front and cut on its rear to fill exactly the clam. If one looks very closely at the amber in direct sunlight, he can perceive a thin greenish hair included in the amber. This priceless amulet was created even before sun and moon existed. A smith of Fëanor’s folk created it in Valinor for his love, a maiden of the Teleri. But she was killed in the kinslaying at Alqualondë and full of grief the smith threw it into the water. Later it was washed ashore again in Aman and found by another of the Teleri. Once he picked it up, he could hear the ocean clearly in his mind and within it, very near, the voice of a woman:

*“From hands, loving and soaked with blood
thrown with curses into the roaring flood
shall ever give direction to water, to the sea
in lands, so dry, and barren of life to be.”*

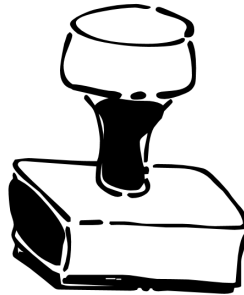


The amulet subsequently came as a gift from the Teleri to Númenor and became an heirloom of the House of Manwendil. Beside its value as a piece of art, and its incalculable worth as a ‘relic’ of a mighty Ainu, it protects the wearer in any activities within or upon the water and confers upon him—unless he is utterly evil—the favor of Uinen. The effect is not calculable though and will always look like natural “luck” or another natural cause. It may range from the sudden calming of a storm, to the encounter with a piece of driftwood to cling to etc. But it will not protect the wearer from any foolish behaviour on his part, should he challenge his luck.

Whenever the amulet is held aloft on its chain, its front will always face towards the nearest body of water or natural watercourse, be it the ocean, a river or a small spring. In a wasteland like Mordor this is arguably the most valuable talent.

F—the seal of the House of Manwendil

This seal shows a ship with foam before its prow, over which a great eagle spreads its wings. It is the most important heirloom of the House which traces its lineage back to Elros. Treaties sealed by it are not lightly broken by the signatories nor are sealed letters opened. Even the wickedest servants of Sauron are plagued by great uneasiness and a feeling of injustice when trying to do one of the things above. For many of Sauron’s servants this might be the first time they experience such a feeling... It needs a great strength of will to do any such things as described in defiance of the seal’s power. Each GM should determine the exact mechanics and penalties according to his game system used.



G—Sauron’s magical treatise of architecture

Pharagn has written down Sauron’s teachings about architecture, in the old Black Speech. The topics covered are quite diverse. Some are easy to implement, like the golden ratio, while others talk about the qualities of various materials or advanced mathematics for calculations of statics in structural engineering. Many of these skills already count as “magic” among most men (simply because they cannot comprehend them). The true magical teachings will amaze practitioners of simple magic. They begin with the following sentence: *To craft truly great magic, the magician has to pour part of himself into the magic and therefore binds himself into the object of his craft.* That is a wisdom that holds especially true for Sauron himself.



H—The Hammer of Pain

This is an orcish blacksmith's hammer that was forged with great pain by an ancestor of the orcs long ago in Angband. No one knows anything certain about the origins of this item (and the origin of that orc), but it must have been a tortured soul indeed, full of ire and blind rage, and with elven blood in its veins. The creator of the hammer probably wanted to imbue the hammer with all the pain and suffering of his miserable existence—in which he obviously succeeded. Use of the hammer causes great pain with every strike and within a short time bloody blisters appear on the wielder's hands, the arms become as heavy as lead and every subsequent strike becomes harder and harder. The GM should devise appropriate checks for the system of his choice to ensure that use of the hammer is hard even in game terms. Enduring the pain over days and weeks pays off in the end. All the pain and suffering the user experienced in its forging is transferred into the object made this way. Each weapon forged with the help of this hammer causes similar pain in any living being struck by it. The skill of the creator is important as well. The finer crafted and the longer the making, the greater the effect of the item. A simple arrowhead, quickly produced by an apprentice, will cause some mild weariness and small blisters on the part of the body hit by the arrow. On the other hand, a scimitar forged by a master smith over the course of weeks will cause extreme weariness, leaden feeling, severe blistering and bloodcurdling pain with every hit. The latter is only of short duration, but may still decide a combat. For these effects, the GM should also develop mechanics appropriate to the system of his choice.

The hammer is made from black steel and despite its age has neither a scratch nor any other sign of wear on it. For millennia, the hammer has passed from the old master smith to his successor. The master smith himself uses it only rarely though, unless he has an important order, like the forging of a weapon for a chieftain. Most often the apprentices are

“allowed” to use the hammer. At the end of the apprenticeship they usually have scarred hands and can use the hammer for extended periods without greater problems. That way, the hammer also fulfills the role of a training tool. It is unknown how often the hammer has been cursed by the orcish apprentices though....

Should the rightful owner of the hammer use it as a weapon, it functions like an extremely well-made warhammer and causes the effect on its target that the smith would normally have to endure in making an item. The exact details dependent on game system used, but the effects are dealt with every hit. The severity of the effects depends on quality of the best item forged with the hammer by this owner. The rightful owner is that orc who wrests the hammer from the cold dead hands of its former owner.

I—The relief on the wall

The relief is enchanted such that nobody dares to touch it. This is a preventative measure to avoid anyone discovering the secret opening mechanism for the spiral stair leading down to the cistern (sometimes the best protection for a secret is a pompous diversion). The wall relief will most likely draw the attention of the players too and encourage further investigations. Any attempt to touch it should be countered by the GM, e.g. with words like “you don't want to touch it because ...

... you feel it to be full of dark magic and you are not sure what that may cause to you.”

... you deem it *lèse-majesté* to touch the image of Sauron the Great with your unworthy hands”

The exact feeling should be according to what the individual character would see as the greatest hindrance. If the PC's don't heed such descriptions and still try to touch it, the GM should call for a magic resistance with a high difficulty level.

J—A decorated raffia mat

This mat is in the possession of the quartermaster. He got it as a gift from the quartermaster of the Dark Tower, whom he served as an assistant for many years. If one concentrates on the mat, the thoughts become very clear and with some practice, falls into a deep meditation. This meditation replaces sleep almost completely and allows the user to get by with two to four hours of meditation instead of a full night's sleep. The quartermaster is unaware that the mat also allows the quartermaster of the Dark Tower, meditating on the mat's twin, to read the primary thoughts one meditates about. Fortunately for him, he is absolutely loyal to the Dark Lord...

S—The Black Sword (“Anguirel”)

This unadorned but great sword is Anguirel, the mate of Anglachel which was later named “Gurthang” by Túrin Turambar and became the stuff of the greatest of legends! It was forged by Eöl the Dark-elf and later stolen by his son Maeglin when the latter fled with his mother to Gondolin. Later Maeglin betrayed Gondolin to Morgoth's forces. He finally died by the hand of Tuor, falling to his death from the walls of Gondolin. The further history of Anguirel is not known, but it finally re-appeared from the mists of time in the east of Middle-earth. The sword has a dark streak of fate in it, similar to Anglachel. The sword waits for a worthy wielder who will fulfill this fate with great deeds. Whether one of the PC's is this man, is open to GM discretion—or for the PC to seek to prove through valiant deeds, in defiance of the disadvantage of the sword's own disapproval. The sword is likely to be the death of him, but could just possibly be the making of a mighty legacy.

If the wielder of Anguirel were also to claim the Stone of Will, this could be all the more potent a combination.

As long as the time has not come and the sword wielded by an unworthy user, it will bring him bad luck until it gets into the hands of a man worthy of it.

Anguirel is among the most powerful weapons still existing in Middle-earth. Its sharpness and effect on the enemy is even greater than Aeglos, the spear of Gil-galad or Narsil, the sword of Elendil the Tall. Someone looking for a weapon to slay a dragon or mow down orcs like green grass has found it here. The only question that remains is whether Anguirel is in the hands of the right wielder. If not, small mishaps will happen to the character that can accumulate to the loss of an eye, finger or even arm—or epic drama.

K—Dressing table of the High-Priestess

This dresser is finely crafted and decorated with carvings of dragons and other evil creatures. Its various drawers contain numerous beauty balms, creams and vials with various perfumes. All these cosmetics are extremely effective—almost like a kind of magic...

The dresser also has several secret compartments and false bottoms. Several, sometimes quite exotic, poisons lie here ready for use. Among the contents are also potions containing truth serum, and also healing salves and ingredients. The vials with the perfumes contain some very exquisite fragrances. Some of these not only have a good smell, but also more stimulating effects. With these, the Priestess can precisely adjust the effect she wishes to have. She can either appear as the terrible priestess of Sauron or as a highly attractive and seductive woman. Quite a few informants have found themselves in the embrace of the loving priestess; she has even purportedly had a liaison with the commander of Lugburug.

M—Tools of the Healer

This is a medium-sized chest, covered on the outside with leather and lined on the inside with velvet. Numerous fittings hold surgical instruments like scalpels, knives, saws, pincers etc., even cupping glasses and fine needles for arteriotomy. All the tools are coated with silver which makes frequent cleaning necessary. The healer thinks the set is magical, since there are much fewer cases of gangrene or other infections when using these instruments. In reality, the frequent cleaning leads to better hygiene and nobody knows that the silver coating has an antimicrobial effect too. Beside this, the tools are finely crafted and of superb quality, greatly enhancing the healer's chances of successfully treating wounds and reducing the suffering they cause.



EASTERN HILLSIDE OF THE MORGAI



General framework for adventures in and around Agazlam

Over time Agazlam is a quite different place: At one time the fortress is primarily a crossroads for trading, at another an army camp full of thousands of heavily armed troops, and toward the end of its existence an empty ruin. There are countless campaigns possible at this site and therefore only a rough framework is given here, in addition to a few ideas and suggestions.

Epochs of the fortress' history and effect upon adventures: "The best time to travel here"

Here follows a short summary of the challenges, aids and general conditions of the possible adventure epochs.

Second Age

⇒1942 to 3262◀

The fortress is in a normal state. The regular garrison is present. According to the wishes of the GM Sauron could be currently waging war, filling Agazlam with additional troops and their baggage.

⇒3262 to 3320◀

Sauron has submitted to Ar-Pharazôn and been deported to Númenor. Panic has spread among his subjects. The majority of the garrison has fled as well, and only the orcs of Lugskut remain, though some of them have fled east as well.

⇒3320 to 3336◀

After Sauron's fall in the destruction of Númenor and the wrath of the gods the last remaining residents flee from the fortress. Earthquakes from the sinking of Númenor have caused massive damage to the empty fortress. Only occasionally do very bold (or foolhardy) souls make this place of shadows their—temporary—home. This period is well-suited for adventures in a horror or 'haunted castle' style. In 3335 there is even a Nazgûl present. He is as weak as Sauron though and will attack the players only from the shadows or in ambush. In game terms, he should only be as powerful as the Nazgûl appeared in the Shire in *The Lord of the Rings*. He will prefer magic or horror effects to drive them out of the fortress.

➤3336 to 3346◀

Tar-Pharagn has defeated the Nazgûl and guards the empty fortress. With each day he grows more powerful. In addition, he builds up troops. This is still an excellent, but more challenging era for adventurers...

➤3346 to 3400◀

Sauron tries to avoid any attention from the west. Only Pharagn and a handful of spies occupy the fortress, but these are formidable opponents. The fortress seems to be empty, but the gates are closed and evil eyes watch the characters if they try to enter the complex.

➤3400 to 3429◀

Craftsmen and an elite guard strengthen the garrison. Now it will be much harder to enter the fortress and survive. The installation is no longer watched secretly, but aggressively defended in the event of an attack. By now the enemies are not very numerous, but entering in secret is very hard since the trade caravans of earlier times have now almost totally ceased to travel this way. The economic infrastructure is slowly rebuilt though.

➤3429 to 3433◀

Several thousand soldiers now make their home at Agazlam and prepare for a major attack into Ithilien. The mountains swarm with scouts to prevent any western spies discovering the preparations for the surprise attack. Sauron's attention is mostly focussed here, since it his most important staging ground for the upcoming campaign. In this period it is almost suicidal even for the powerful to try to penetrate the fortress' defenses.

➤3433 to 3 TA◀

Agazlam has been captured and occupied by the forces of the west. For characters allied with the Free Peoples it is now easy to explore the fortress and its secrets. For characters aligned with Sauron it has of course become much

harder to operate here. It is not impossible though, since Agazlam is not very tightly watched and numerous supply caravans pass the repaired Morgai bridge and it might not be too hard to blend in here unless you're an orc or troll.

Third Age

➤3 to 67◀

Agazlam is empty once more with demolition slowly making progress until 67. All guards have left the installation since it is said to be haunted. This is the easiest period in which to explore the fortress, since the improvised bridge is still regularly (even though with great intervals) used by troops that patrol into Mordor, seeking out remnants of its orcs and destroying their hideouts or guarding supply caravans for other Gondorian construction sites.

Player Aids

'It isn't funny, O no! Not amusing. It's not sense to try and get into Mordor at all.' **Gollum, LotR, The Black Gate is Closed.**

Mordor in the Second Age and travelling in the Black Land—No Elves, please?

In *The Lord of the Rings* we have become acquainted with Mordor as a dark fortress and big army camp. A place where only two hobbits can go undetected, with lots of luck and fateful coincidence. At the end of the Third Age, amidst the War of the Ring, this was true of course—all the more as we see Mordor only through the eyes of two brave but not very experienced hobbits. Mordor was—especially in the Second Age—much more than a simple fortress and army camp. It was the center of a continent-spanning empire, with numerous vassal states and subservient kingdoms throughout all of Middle-earth—primarily in the south and east. Throughout much of the Second Age, Mordor is the bustling hub of this world empire. In

all of Mordor, and primarily towards Barad-dûr, there is a constant traffic of diplomats, messengers, priests, merchants, caravans with tribute, slave columns and army units from different countries on the move craftsmen, scouts etc. Of course all this traffic is closely monitored and the administration in Barad-dûr is well aware of all movement, stopover and merchant activity for a very simple reason: taxes! To enter and exit Mordor again is not nearly as hard as we read it in *The Lord of the Rings*. You only have to name a reasonable business and get a passport upon entry, or already to possess a passport due to being summoned to Mordor by Barad-dûr.

Such an entry passport can be obtained from the officials at the border. They ask a lot of questions about the purpose of the applicant, origin and destination of the business etc. For people from the east and south it is of course much easier to pass the Mordor border check. People who do not look like they belong to the Sauronic empire (e.g. Númenóreans) have much more trouble in getting a passport and for Elves it is practically impossible (discounting secret entry of course) without being thrown into the dungeon for later interrogation. There is the possibility of disguise (perhaps even magically), but the risk of detection cannot be ruled out and then one is in real trouble for sure! The border guards know their trade quite well, so that any story for why someone wants to enter must be absolutely watertight. In most cases it is best to first visit one of Sauron's vassal kingdoms and there get a letter of recommendation or passport for business before travelling into Mordor. This eases the relations with the border guards a lot. Within Mordor one is well advised to stick to the pre-determined route since any deviations in destination, estimated time on the road etc. are likely to draw a close inspection at the next checkpoint. Should someone be caught in an area for which he has no permit (or which is principally banned for travelers) one is in real trouble for sure. The dungeons of Mordor are effective, and one might even be transported to Barad-

dûr. The interrogators there are extremely skilled and one is likely to literally scream out one's knowledge very soon.

How to come into Mordor, and especially Agazlam?

There are many possibilities to get to Agazlam without leading an army of Elves and Men to storm the fortress. Here are some of these possibilities. Naturally, players will devise many other possibilities that the GM has not even dreamed of.

Acting as mercenaries guarding a caravan or diplomat. Origin of the travel is the Far East or South. There they are hired for the job (or have gone there to on purpose be hired, in order to get into Mordor without raising attention). A waypoint in the travel is the fortress of Agazlam.

They accompany ambassadors from the people of the White Mountains (the later Oathbreakers). These are in friendly contact with Sauron. Here even Dwarves or Númenóreans might be hired as guards.

The PC's are rebellious forest- or coast-dwellers from whom the Númenóreans are exacting heavy tributes, and who are looking to Sauron for help and support. The Númenóreans might even have destroyed their way of life or means of subsistence, leaving them eager for revenge on the haughty Men from the Sea. This scenario is only available for the later Second Age.

The PC's have been born as slaves or have been captured and made slaves. Now their lot is an unhappy one at Agazlam. But perhaps they have allowed their captors to catch them in Ithilien, just for the chance to get access to Agazlam?

The PC's travel as craftsmen to Agazlam, since there is much need for them after an earthquake has damaged large portions of the fortress.

The PC's have been captured by the scouts of the fortress, or allowed themselves to be captured. Now they have to escape the dungeon before the chief torturer begins with his work.

The PC's secretly enter Mordor as spies of the west and scout the outer features of the fortress—or even gather information from within.

The PC's might be a group of experienced scouts of Sauron. Their home base is Agazlam, from where they start their missions into Ithilien or beyond and return with booty and information.

They might be soldiers or other occupants of the fortress who are framed for murder (or have witnessed one) and now have to save their necks.

The group consists of scouts from the west whose goal is to gather intelligence about Agazlam and its surroundings in a time when the fortress is empty. Perhaps they even make it their base.

The PC's are assigned to search the empty fortress for secrets and treasures after the War of the Last Alliance.

The party makes their base here after the War of the Last Alliance as bounty hunters to search for remnants of Sauron's forces and turn a profit by capturing them and handing over the Gondorian authorities.

What aids are available?

To prevent only parties composed entirely of Boromirs or Glorfindels being able to venture into Mordor and Agazlam, the GM should have some aids available. The choice of the era in which the campaign takes place is the most important of these. According to the mission, the players might have maps of Agazlam handed to them (perhaps acquired earlier by other spies of the west). Even occupants of the fortress may be helpful, such as a slave or craftsman with knowledge of the fortress who wants to escape. Other options are strife and dissension among the inhabitants that make it easier for the party to get assistance from one faction or another. Perhaps a scullion wants to pull a trick on the kitchen master or a tower commander wants to eliminate the fortress commander to be promoted himself. Manners are rough in Mordor and evil often leads to its own demise. But perhaps the players can get between the lines and into trouble.

Adventure ideas

Adventures on Sauron's side

In Sauron's service I (SA 2363 or any other time until SA 3262)

A group of agents from the Dark Tower is being sent to Agazlam, to check the goings on there, since reports of strife between the mannish and orcish contingents in the fortress have grown at an alarming pace. They disguise themselves as normal travellers and get involved in the struggle between the factions. If they achieve a satisfactory solution for Sauron (e.g. beheading the leaders of both factions or, even better, bringing them as prisoners to Barad-dûr) they will receive a great reward.

In Sauron's service II (SA 1942 to 3433)

An important personality in Agazlam (e.g. High-Priestess, a tower commander etc.) has been murdered. The players are sent to the fortress to solve the murder secretly and arrest the murderer and any others involved.

In Sauron's service III (SA 1942 to 3433)

Agazlam is the base for a group of feared Sauronic agents, who plan their missions beyond the Ephel Dúath from here. One day an important personality (e.g. fortress commander) is found dead in the agents' quarters—with a dagger in his back. The player's problem is that they are the agents.

In Sauron's service IV (SA 1942 to 3433)

Agazlam is the base for a competent and feared group of Sauronic agents (as in the previous adventure). By her charms and powers, the High-Priestess gains the trust of one of the agents. She wants him to bring evidence that the fortress commander is embezzling funds and putting revenues in his own pocket. She wants to tip the accountants of

Barad-dûr off about this. To her detriment, the fortress commander is extremely honest and correct in this respect. They have to find out whether this is a facade only or must some evidence be fabricated?

***In Sauron's service V
(SA 1942 to 3433)***

Spies of the enemy have crept into Mordor, probably in or near Agazlam. They must be found and brought to justice!

***Diplomats of the Dark Tower
(SA 1942 to 2735)***

Numerous chieftains, tribal leaders and kings of the mountain folk of the Ered Nimrais have convened at Agazlam to take counsel on how the Númenórean aggressors might best be countered. The PC's are sent to care for, guard and counsel them. But then an incident occurs: A tribal lord of Minhiriath (that has been ravaged by the Númenóreans) insults the king of the mountain folk. The latter calls for revenge in a personal duel. This would inevitably lead to war—regardless of the outcome. The duel is set for the next dawn and the players have to find a way to prevent it. Whether they find a diplomatic solution or arrange for either lord to have a deadly “accident” for which the other could not have been responsible is theirs to decide. The important thing is to avoid any open conflict between the participants' peoples.

***Guardians of the Night
(shortly before SA 3336)***

Sauron is a prisoner of the Númenóreans! His realm has fallen, his armies dispersed. Agazlam is abandoned. Crouched around a small campfire you listen to the voices of the night somewhere in Gorgoroth. You have not yet decided where to go. Suddenly a shadow appears, a hunched figure, sniffing and groping—seemingly harmless but emanating a deadly fear! “Go to Agazlam and

see what happened there. Kill or subjugate everyone whom you encounter there. Report to me here upon the first sickle moon.”

***Defenders of Agazlam
(shortly before SA 3336)***

Sauron is a prisoner of the Númenóreans! His realm has fallen, his armies dispersed. Agazlam is empty. A Nazgûl gave you the order to scout there. This you have done, and now you have been chosen to defend it against scavengers and anyone trying to go there. Then a great unit comes near—soldiers from the great city of Minas Ithil. What shall be done? Bombarding them with the great engines of war or letting them in and bring them down by guerilla attacks from within?

***Saboteurs of the Night
(SA 3434 to 3441 during the siege
of the Dark Tower)***

Agazlam has been occupied by the west. At first the number of the guards was great, similar to the number of soldiers passing through and the great supply caravans. Here might be a possibility to blend in among the enemy. Can the group enter Agazlam by this route and commit sabotage in the fortress to draw forces away from the siege of the Dark Tower?

***Adventures for
unaligned characters***

Mercenaries and Merchants

The players are part of a trade caravan, either the merchants themselves or mercenaries hired to protect them. Other options might be carneys, or simple travellers looking for a quick way through Mordor. While resting at Agazlam they may

- witness a murder
- be imprisoned for irregularities in their permits

- be imprisoned due to a mix-up in identities
- get a mission from a high-ranking officer to arrest and convict a clerk for corruption

Can they come out of this dangerous situation?

***Anarchy—God has fallen!
(SA 3262 to 3336)***

Sauron has been captured by Ar-Pharazôn. The whole of Mordor and large parts of Middle-earth have lost their god-king and fear the revenge of the West. Armies disperse, generals commit suicide out of desperation and even the Nazgûl have gone into hiding. This is the chance for the PC's—Agazlam stands empty and great treasures await the bold. But a few followers of Sauron stay in Agazlam and a shadow creeps through the night! Are the PC's out for loot or sabotage for the west, taking the opportunity at this time to scout the great fortresses of their enemies, doing as damage as possible?

***Deserters
(SA 1942 to 3262 & 3336 to 3433)***

The PC's are soldiers, orcs, slaves, craftsmen or temple servants in Agazlam. Each of them has a reason to flee: a maidservant is pregnant against the wishes of the quartermaster, a soldier slept while on duty and awaits his whipping in a few days, maidservant of the temple has lost her faith in Sauron etc. Now the time has come to leave the fortress and flee for the home country, the west or any other safe place. Should the escape be successful, they will be pursued by orcish trackers or run into patrols of the west. The escape must be quick but also prepared carefully. Some of the PC's already know each other, while they watch the others while making preparations for the escape. Will they try to betray each other or help the others to enable the escape of all of them? Might the other be a spy or traitor?

Elendil before the gates! (SA 3433)

The days are dark at Agazlam! The West besieges the fortress. The players know each other for some time and they decide to try an escape. But how should they escape the sentries of the fortress and the besiegers? And where to go afterwards?

Master thieves (SA 3433 to TA 67)

Agazlam is occupied by the west. At first the garrison is quite large, but also the numbers of passing soldiers and supply caravans to support the siege of Barad-dûr. This would be an opportunity to merge into the masses. After the defeat of Sauron in SA 3441 the vigilance lessens and the garrison significantly reduced. Can the PC's enter the fortress in secret and escape laden with booty?

The search for the Black Sword (any time)

By many turns information has reached the PC's that a mighty sword, forged in the depths of time by a powerful elf and made from metal that cleaves all iron like butter, can be found somewhere in Agazlam—a fortress of Mordor. Now this sword must come into the player's possession. It is only known that it was last seen in Agazlam. There it must be found, stolen, forced from the current owner, bought or procured in any other way possible. For details on the sword see Lugshapat level 7, room 11 and the list of special items, entry "S".



Adventures for the Free Peoples

Scouts for the West (SA 1942 to 3433)

A mixed group of elves, Númenóreans and perhaps even a dwarf is instructed by an important personality to scout the borders of Mordor and especially its fortifications. They are quite successful in that, keeping hidden in the Ephel Dúath for days and weeks, charting the fortress and its surroundings, recording the watch cycles and troop movements. Suddenly one or more of them are caught by a patrol. These are thrown into the dungeon and have to be rescued (or escape themselves) by whatever means possible.

Travellers in the Land of Shadow (SA 1942 to 3262)

The players are part of a merchant caravan, being mercenaries hired to protect the goods and merchants. Alternatively they could be merchants themselves, carneys or simple travellers looking for a quick way through Mordor. During a stopover at Agazlam a young soldier, slave or pregnant young maid-servant beseeches their assistance in escaping westward! Will the players give this assistance? How can they cope with the tight checks on this border?

Juggler in dire straits (SA 1942 to 3262)

Even Sauron's soldiers need some entertainment. Therefore an orcish company has surrounded the wagons from a juggler's family and politely asked for a performance at Agazlam. An alternative would be that a messenger from the fortress simply has promised a good wage for their performance. By chance the jugglers are in company with the players (or have been hired as guards by them or were deliberately sent from the west to use this chance for a little intelligence gathering). On site they discover that the mood of the audience is much worse than anticipated. But that is the exact

reason why a troupe of jugglers was desperately needed to improve morale. The job is simple: Put the soldiers in a good mood or else they might try to call for your heads instead!

Hold out - we bail you out of there! / Leave no man behind! (SA 1942 to 3262 & 3336 to 3433)

A close friend of the PC's is trapped in the dungeons of Agazlam, or an important soldier from the west or a father from Ithilien has been abducted and taken there. The group is assigned to liberate him or make plans for a rescue attempt of their own devices. But how to get to the fortress?

If the adventure takes place in SA 3262 they are lucky, since the garrison has either already left the fortress or is in the process of disbandment. Some prisoners have been forgotten in the dungeons and only some cruel shadows still prowl the otherwise empty fortress.

Diplomats of the Dark Tower (SA 1942 to 2735)

Numerous chieftains, tribal leaders and kings of the mountain folk of the Ered Nimrais have convened at Agazlam to take counsel how the Númenórean aggressors might best be countered. The players have infiltrated Agazlam or are agents of the west who have mingled with the retinue of the ambassadors. It is their job to prevent an agreement between all the tribes. Unfortunately there is an embassy from the Dark Tower present as well, trying to thwart exactly such plans.

Spies of Isildur (SA ca. 3330 to 3433)

The group is tasked with secretly entering the fortress and gather as much intelligence as possible that might help in later attacking it.

SA ca. 3330 to 3335: Relatively easy. Only meagre opposition is left at Agazlam, most of them orcs.

SA 3335 to 3429: Increasingly difficult, since a Nazgûl stays here—first alone and later with a growing garrison.

SA 3429 to 3433: The fortress and its surroundings are the site of a massive army encampment. Thousands of soldiers await their orders for their deployment against the west. A job for true heroes indeed!

Isildur's special force (SA 3433)

Isildur has a canny penchant for secret commando missions. He has already penetrated heavily guarded areas twice in the past. First he snatched a fruit of Nimloth in Armenelos right before Sauron's guard and later he spirited away a *palantir* from the hard-pressed Minas Ithil. He has the following mission for a troop of handpicked elite specialists: "On the eve of the frontal attack enter Agazlam secretly and wreak as much havoc as possible. The more distraction, fear and confusion you can plant in the enemies' hearts, the better. Then either flee or barricade yourself until we can relieve you. We will then do the rest."

Ghostbusters (SA 3433 to TA 67)

Gondor's soldiers tell of strange phenomena in the tower. It is rumoured that an evil spirit walks abroad. It is the restless spirit of a Nazgûl who was robbed of his ring and imprisoned there. It has not yet been discovered that in the depths of Lugshapat there waits a mature and very hungry watcher in the water! Time for a classic exorcism and monster hunt...

The heirlooms of the House of Manwendil (any time)

The players are tasked with the mission to go to Middle-earth and search for evidence of the fate of Pharagn and the heirlooms of his House. The brother of Pharagn will pay almost any price especially for the seal of the House of Manwendil. In case of a success he can even arrange for a land grant in one of the new colonies and elevation to noble status in Númenor. But the trail is old and leads right across all of Middle-earth, making for a long quest indeed that will eventually bring them to the Gates of Mordor...

Severin, IsildursHeir.

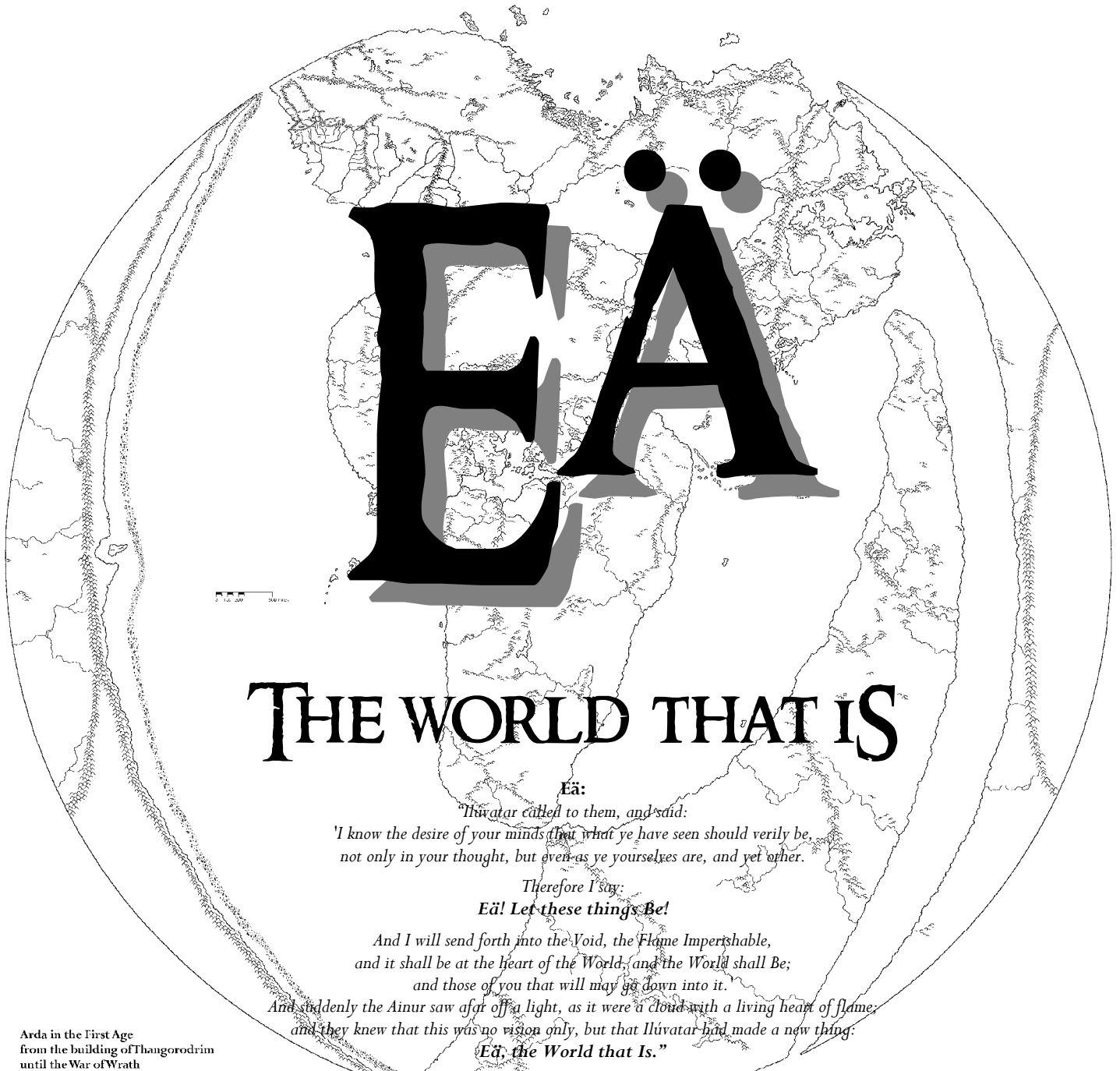
Acknowledgments

I want to thank everyone who has supported this project with constructive criticism. Especially Thomas Morwinsky, who has provided countless advice to fix errors and point out problems as well as always being ready with his profound knowledge as a scholar of Middle-earth. As the translator of the raw version he has edited the text intensively, always staying in close contact with me. By his support and enormous effort in translating "Agazlam", it has become much better than I ever dreamt.

Thank you Thomas!



GORGOROTH LOOKING NORTH FROM AGAZLAM



THE WORLD THAT IS

Eä:

Ilúvatar called to them, and said:

'I know the desire of your minds that what ye have seen should verily be, not only in your thought, but even as ye yourselves are, and yet other.

Therefore I say:

Eä! Let these things Be!

And I will send forth into the Void, the Flame Imperishable, and it shall be at the heart of the World; and the World shall Be; and those of you that will may go down into it.

And suddenly the Ainur saw afar off a light, as it were a cloud with a living heart of flame; and they knew that this was no vision only, but that Ilúvatar had made a new thing:

Eä, the World that Is."

Arda in the First Age
from the building of Thangorodrim
until the War of Wrath

--J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Silmarillion*, Ainulindalë (The Music of the Ainur).

The Eä RPG system is dedicated to role playing gaming in J.R.R. Tolkien's universe.


Eä d20 is currently well along in it's development with the "Races & Cultures" tome nearing completion. Eä d20 is the adaptation of the Open D20 (D&D 3.5) role-playing gaming system modified to more accurately fit the "feel" of Tolkien's Middle-earth.

Tomes of lore include:

- Races & Cultures (near completion)
- Magic in Middle-earth (core mechanics complete, conversion charts in progress)
- Destinies & Lore (Classes, Skills, Feats, etc. - in early stages)
- Creatures & Monsters (Ancalagon through Zigurim) (planned)
- Valar & Maiar (Includes Vala, Maia, Istari, Lords and Characters of Renown) (planned)

Find details and downloads at: www.earp.com

Roleplaying Battles in Middle-earth

by José Enrique Vacas de la Rosa
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Roleplaying games have their armed conflicts normally resolved on the personal scale, e.g. when the PC's are dealing with a band of orcs, thugs etc. Gaming in a battlefield situation is much more complex and normally not manageable with the individual combat rules.

*This article deals with a solution to the question how such situations can be handled and giving the PC's a fair chance of **influencing** events rather than being passive recipients of the large-scale rolls.*



Introduction

The Pelennor Fields, Helm's Deep, the Battle of the Five Armies... the history of Middle-earth is full of epic battles which have decided the destiny of whole realms and shaped its history. But when it comes to extended battles, role-playing gamers are usually put aside. How to keep the tension and excitement of a siege or frontal charge in one evening? MERP gamers could use the Rolemaster *War Law* supplement which, in my opinion, failed to cover small-unit and skirmish level combats where the characters can make a difference. Decipher's CODA system took a similar approach, offering wargaming-like rules for battle.

But in my opinion, that is a wrong approach. In the middle of battle characters would only know how things are going in the small part of the battlefield they are fighting in (and not in a completely accurate way because they would probably be quite busy giving or following orders and keeping themselves alive!). So, I offer a simple yet effective generic conceptual system (that is, you will need to flesh it according to the system you are using) based upon the one offered in the first edition of the Legend of the Five Rings, by A.E.G. Games.

The System

This system uses a single dice throw to summarise what happens in one hour of battle (one battle turn). Usually, the character will take wounds and that is it, but there is also a chance to perform an Heroic Action such as challenging an enemy champion, saving a comrade or even attacking the enemy general! I explain the basic mechanic, but is up to you to adapt it to a specific game system.

1 – Determine in which position you are going to fight: vanguard, main body or rear. You may change this during the battle if you are free to move or if

your unit is moving, but you can only move to the next position in one turn (from vanguard to main body and the opposite, from rear to main body and the opposite).

2 – The Game Master decides which side is winning this turn, and how forcefully. If the battle is big enough, he only needs to decide the result of the battlefield section where the characters are fighting (e.g. the character is in the right flank of a Gondorian army facing an Orc host. This turn the Gondorians' right flank is pressing the Orcs hard, but in the centre the Orcs are pushing the Men of the West back). Also, if the characters have units under their command, or have engaged in an Heroic Action (see point 5) they could give an advantage to their side. This will give a modifier according to the following table (you will need to assign values to each modifier category depending on your game system):

Your side is:

Utterly crushing the enemy:

Maximum positive modifier

Pressing the enemy hard:

Medium positive modifier

Slowly pressing the enemy:

Minimum positive modifier

In a stalemate:

No modifier

Standing still:

Minimum negative modifier

Severely pressed:

Medium negative modifier

Being annihilated:

Maximum negative modifier

3 – Each character makes a battle-skill check. This skill is an abstract measure of how good the character is at staying alive in the middle of a battle. Depending on the specific game sys-

tem, it can be a calculated skill derived from the character's weapon skill and some physical capabilities (e.g. nimbleness and perception).

4 – The result on the following table will give you the amount of damage taken in the course of that battle turn and tell you whether you have a chance to take an Heroic Action.

Battle-skill test result	Vanguard	Main body	Rear
Critical Success	90% Heroic Action Medium damage	50% Heroic Action Low damage	15% Heroic Action No damage
Medium success	70% Heroic Action Medium damage	40% Heroic Action Medium damage	10% Heroic Action Low damage
Normal success	50% Heroic Action Medium damage	30% Heroic Action Medium damage	5% Heroic Action Low damage
Small Failure	30% Heroic Action Maximum damage	20% Heroic Action Medium damage	No Heroic Action Low damage
Medium Failure	20% Heroic Action Maximum damage	10% Heroic Action Maximum damage	No Heroic Action Medium damage
Fumble	10% Heroic Action Maximum damage	No Heroic Action Maximum damage	No Heroic Action Maximum damage

Damage: Given damage is for a 'typical' armored character. Unarmored characters should suffer damage one category worse, and heavily armored ones should suffer one category less. In the same way, if the character has bodyguards or is protected from harm somehow, damage should be reduced.

You can think of **Low Damage** as one dice (or whatever suits your game system), **Medium Damage** as two dice and **Maximum Damage** as three.

Heroic actions: You have to roll a percentile score equal to or less than the given percentage to get it and in most cases you are free to decide to take it or let it pass (this is noted in the Heroic Action description). See point 5.

Renown: if your game system uses this concept, battles are definitively a fast way to increase personal renown. Characters should gain renown depending on the size of the armies involved, their role in the command chain and the Heroic Actions taken.

5 – Heroic Actions: As the name suggests, these are actions which can turn the tide of a whole battle and dramatically increase personal renown at the cost of great danger. When you get the chance to take a Heroic Action, your Game Master will decide which one is available and then you can decide to take it or not.

Usually, if you reject your Heroic Action, it will have no consequence but sometimes your renown may suffer as in rejecting a challenge of an enemy champion.

List of Heroic Actions

Some of these require that the PC is in an army position (usually vanguard) and/or commanding an 'unit' (noted as 'captain' below). The 'unit' size will depend on the scale of the battle and the battlefield itself (i.e. a small number of men may hold a bridge against a superior foe), but in any case means "a number of men big enough to be able to have a significant role in the battle".

- Save an important NPC/PC (vanguard, main army): The PC can let it pass.
- Protect the archers/war machines (captain)¹

- Kill the enemy archers/destroy the war machines (captain)¹
- Maintain the shieldwall (captain, vanguard): Hold the line against an enemy charge. The PC cannot let this pass, his own survival is at stake!
- Break the shieldwall (captain, vanguard): Lead a charge to break the enemy lines.
- Protect the general
- Kill the enemy general
- Personal challenge (in close combat): the Game Master should prepare the enemy champions stats before the game, one for each kind of enemy unit.
- Protect the retreat (captain)
- Field promotion (not captain, some previous Heroic Action in this battle or a high Renown, in close combat): The unit captain is killed in battle and the character takes (or is granted) the lead. He is considered a 'captain' regarding Heroic Actions for the rest of the battle.

Of course, the Game Master can add specific Heroic Actions for his battle using these as a guide (e.g. if the characters are protecting a castle and the enemy has just broken the main door, one of them can lead a group of valiants to slow down the entering foes so his side can regroup).

¹ In this case, if the character is order to do so, he can decide to 'let it pass' but quite probably he will face the consequence of his disobedience. On the other hand, if he is free to lead his men in his own, he is free to take the Heroic Action or let it pass at his own choice.

Simplified System— Chronicles of Middle-earth

by

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A fitting game system has always been a topic among Tolkien-orientated roleplayers. Here Daniel tackles the question in a broad way, addressing almost all major topics of such gaming. This complements his treatment of magic in Other Minds, Issue 10, thus giving us a comprehensive view on his understanding of fitting Middle-earth roleplaying rules.



Preface

Version 1.0

This material is based on the works of J.R.R. Tolkien, which are copyright of Tolkien Enterprises Inc. (“The Lord of the Rings” and “The Hobbit”), and of *The Tolkien Estate* (“The Silmarillion”, the series “History of Middle-earth” and all other Tolkien writings). Its use does not challenge those copyrights.

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© *Chronicles of Middle-earth* (Crónicas de la Tierra Media) 2007, 2009, 2010: Luis Daniel Vacaflores R.

Chronicles of Middle-earth is a fan-made role playing game based on the work of J.R.R. Tolkien.¹ The *Simplified System* of *Chronicles of Middle-earth* is intended for beginners and/or those players who don’t enjoy a complex game system.

The *Simplified System* is the same *SAMA System* as in *Chronicles of Middle-earth*, reduced to its minimum expression. All other game elements from the larger system are considered optional, and can be adopted at any time, as the game group wishes.

In the Appendix B you can find a character sheet and skill listings for use with the mechanics presented here.

Mechanics

Dice

Chronicles of Middle-earth uses two ten sided dice to make percentile rolls (d%). It is always good to have other dice, but they are not necessary.

The Basic Rule

In *Chronicles of Middle-earth* there is a basic rule, on which all other kind of rolls are based.

The dice rolls of *Chronicles of Middle-earth* are in essence percentile: there is a given percent (for example 56%) that must be not exceeded to get a success. Any higher result is a failure. That is the *success probability*.

This basic logic is used for simple success or failure rolls, without any further complications.

But it does not end there, because there are different *degrees of success* (especially important in opposed rolls and in certain special situations). And to have a simple and easily recognizable system (for the *degrees of success*), the following rule is used: the greater the roll, the better the success. That is, a roll of 47 is better than one of 18.

Combining these two principles we have the following: the higher the better, so long as it does not exceed the basic success number.

Chronicles of Middle-earth uses the *Damage Factor* (DF) to quantify the *degree of success*: a numeric scale to transform these percentile rolls into concrete facts. The DF has its basic use in the combat system, where the roll is multiplied (or divided) by a DF, depending on the kind

¹ On all his writings, not just on “The Lord of the Rings” or “The Hobbit”. *Chronicles of Middle-earth* is a work in progress at present.

DF	Caused by
×1/20	A bee sting
×1/10	The fist of a child (or of a hobbit)
×1/5	A dagger
×1/3	A sword
×1/2	A two handed axe
×1	A troll's club
×2	Crushed by a great rock
×3	The bite of a dragon
×4	Fire from a dragon
×5	The more powerful nature forces

of weapon used; the end result is always rounded up. But the DF is also essential for other kinds of rolls, determining for example the duration of a spell or the quantity of food gathered during a morning. The DF is modified by the DM (Damage Modifier) or the DR (Damage Reduction), increasing or reducing it by one or more grades.

Failure also has two different grades: "normal failures" and "fumbles". *Fumbles* are especially disastrous failures with destructive, inconvenient or even comic secondary effects... but never predictable ones. Fumbles happen when the roll falls in the *fumble range* (normally 96-100, but varying for tasks of different difficulty, or for using different types of weapon in combat). All other failure rolls just result in "normal failures", non-successes. The *fumble range* is also the upper limit for the *success probability* (that is, the latter can never go over the *fumble range*).

In *Chronicles of Middle-earth* there is an open possibility for an astounding success, a stretch of luck that goes much further than the basic ability of the character: an *open roll*. Each time that a character gets a roll equal to his *maximum success probability* (56 for a 56%), or each round number inside the success probability (50, 40, 30, 20 and 10), or a roll of 01, then it becomes an *open roll*.

In an *open roll* the player makes another roll and adds the result to the original roll. *Open rolls* have no *failure*, *fumble range*, only success, being able to get a roll between 01 and 100. In this way the normal limit of 100 can be exceeded. If a *degree of success* is needed inside the hundred range (such as for a *critical hit*), use the final roll.

It is important to add that an *open roll* can be again *open*: the round numbers (10, 20, 30... 100) and a roll of 01 mean a new *open roll*, and so on potentially indefinitely.

Open rolls are only to be used when the *degree of success* matters. They can be ignored in "simple success" rolls.

This takes us to the following practical consideration: each little complication and further roll slows the flow of the game. As such they are to be avoided if not necessary.

This *basic rule* is the grounding for all rolls in the *Chronicles of Middle-earth* system (*skill rolls*, *attack rolls*, *magic rolls*, etc.).

The difficulties and their fumble ranges are as follows:

Difficulty	Modifier	Fumble range	% min.
<i>Routine</i>	+20%	100	20%
<i>Easy</i>	+10%	99-100	10%
<i>Medium</i>	+0%	98-100	7%
<i>Hard</i>	-10%	97-100	5%
<i>Very hard</i>	-20%	96-100	4%
<i>Extreme</i>	-30%	95-100	3%
<i>Absurd</i>	-50%	91-100	2%
<i>Ridiculous</i>	-70%	86-100	1%
<i>Impossible</i>	-100%	81-100	—

To this is added the fact that in a *skill roll* there is always going to be a success and failure possibility. It does not matter how low the value of a *skill* is (because it has no *advances*, or because of the penalties), there is always going to be a *minimum percent* (% min) of success. And no matter how high it is, there is always going to be a chance of failure, the *fumble range* (normally between 1-10%, but at the high end of the scale: 100 and down).

Character creation

The *character creation* process in the *simplified system* is as follows:

First step: Concept.

Second step: *Characteristics* rolls.

Third step: Select a *people*.

Fourth step: Distribute 150 *Skill points*.

Fifth step: Determine initial money and equipment.

Sixth step: Complete the *final attributes* (HP, Initiative, etc.).

Seventh step: Develop the character's personality, physical appearance and personal history.

Concept: The first thing to do when you create a character is to know which kind of character you want to play. Is he a brave Dúnadan warrior? A humble hobbit farmer? An arrogant elven mage? A grumpy and selfish dwarf? A noble orc exile?

The concept is only a base on which to build and a guide to the process of character creation. It should not be an inflexible mould. You can always change your original idea, or discover new and unexpected details beyond your basic concept. Does the Dúnadan warrior have a fear of spiders? Or does the arrogant elven mage have a soft spot for children?

The concept can be modified throughout the character creation process, especially between the *characteristics* rolls (second step) and *final attributes* (sixth step).

And above all: do not restrict yourself to stereotypes. We use them to facilitate our comprehension of the world and its structures. but everyone is different, as near or far from a stereotype as you can imagine. And that is especially true for PCs.

Characteristics: In *Chronicles of Middle-earth* there are six characteristics: Strength, Dexterity (the physical characteristics), Logic, Intuition (the mental characteristics), Charisma and Will (the social and spiritual characteristics). Each has a base value between 1 and 10.

There are two successive methods (not alternative) to determine the char-

acteristics of a character:

Method one (random): Six ten-sided dice are rolled (6d10). The player chooses where to locate them (Strength, Dexterity, Logic...). If the player is not satisfied with the characteristics generated in this system, then he should use method 2, using these rolls as base. [Note: there is only one 6d10 roll to generate the characteristics of the character. It is not repeated indefinitely, but the build method is used instead]

Method 2 (build): 35 points are allocated between the different characteristics, with a minimum of 1 and a maximum of 10 in each.

Method 2 has the advantage that the characteristics can be maximized/minimized. Its disadvantage is that they are intermediate values. In method 1 with a little luck better general values can be achieved.

People: After developing a concept and determining the characteristics, a people must be chosen for the character.

At the beginning of a Chronicle the Storyteller tells the players the zone and epoch where the adventure is going to begin, which can and should influence the selection of what peoples the characters come from.

Once chosen, the character must note all modifiers from his people on his character sheet.

In the *simplified system* there are only the following *peoples*: humans, elves, dwarves and hobbits.

Humans: Humans have the gifts of death, freedom, the fire of life and adaptability.

- +5 in any characteristic (player's choice).
- +20 in any skill (player's choice).
- Fast progression.

Elves: Elves have the gifts of immortality and perfection.

- Dex +10, Int +10, Cha +10 and Will +10.
- Night vision, Eagle eyes.
- Immunity to sickness.
- Hatred of orcs: DM +1.

- Soft step: elves can walk over snow or branches without sinking.
- Magic affinity: they are the only people that can begin the adventure with skill points in the "white magic" skill.
- Slow progression.

Dwarves: Dwarves have the gifts of resistance and obstinacy.

- Str +10, Dex -5, Cha -10 and Will +15.
- Dark vision.
- Immunity to domination.
- +20 on all skills (except combat) that are used underground, for item creation and in trading.
- -30 swim, -20 *stealth*.
- Size: small, except for calculating HP.
- Hatred of orcs: DM +1.
- Thick skin: DR 1, not cumulative with armor.
- +2 gp initial money.

Hobbits: Hobbits have the gifts of nimbleness and resistance.

- Dex +15, Will +5 and Str -5.
- Resistance: Will is used instead of Strength to calculate HP (Will ×2).
- Size: small.
- +50 *stealth*.
- +20 on attack rolls in distance combat.

Orcs Orcs are savage and brutal. They are of heights between 0,9 and 1,5 meters. They live in the mountains.

- Str +5, Dex +10, Cha -10.
- *Small size* category (modifications to DB and HP).
- Dark vision.
- +30 to track using *outdoor skills*.
- Sunlight weakness (-50 to actions under direct sunlight, -20 if in daylight, but not directly under sunlight – in shadow, an overcast

day, etc.).

- Hate for elves: DM +1.

Uruk-hai Uruk-hai are a new race of warrior orcs. Strong and resilient, they are of heights between 1,7 and 2 meters.

- Str +10, Will +10, Cha -5, Log -5, Int -5.
- Dark vision.

Trolls Trolls are humanoid beasts of 3 meters height, from the very essence of earth.

- Str +20, Dex -5, Log -10, Cha -5
- Dark vision.
- They turn into stone if touched by sunlight.
- *Very big* size category (modifications to DB and HP).
- Thick hide, like stone (DR 2).
- +15 *perception*.
- Stupid.

Skill points: All characters in the *simplified system* get 150 *skill points* to distribute in all their different skills. The costs in *skill points* follow the same basic logic as the progression table (see below), before applying the bonuses from characteristics: the points in the range 01-15 are free, but to get them you must pay for at least one point from the next range. Each point in the range 16-30 costs one *skill point*. Each point in the range 31-50 costs two points. Each in the range 51-70 three points. And in the range 71+ each point costs five *skill points*.

Fast progression: Humans learn fast, extending their advances one range up: 01-30 free, 31-50 one *skill point*, 51-70 two *skill points*, 71-90 three *skill points*, and 91+ five *skill points*.

Slow progression: Elves have all the eternity, and advance slower than other mortals, reducing their advances by one range: 01-15 one *skill point*, 16-30 two

	0-15	16-30	31-50	51-70	71-90	91+
Slow Progression (elves)	1/each	2/each	3/each	5/each		
Normal progression	free	1/each	2/each	3/each	5/each	
Fast Progression (humans)	free		1/each	2/each	3/each	5/each

skill points, 31 50 three skill points, and 51+ five skill points.

Archetypes: a quick way of beginning to game for novice players is to use an archetype to guide the use of skill points.

In the *simplified system* there are three archetypes: the specialist, the Jack-of-all-trades and the balanced.

- **Specialist:** 1 skill at 75% (140 points), 1 skill at 25% (10 points).
 - * *Specialist (slow progression):* 1 skill at 54% (125 points), 1 skill at 20% (25 points).
 - * *Specialist (fast progression):* 1 skill at 90% (120 points), 1 skill at 55% (30 points).
- **Jack-of-all-trades:** 3 skills at 40% (75 points), 5 skills at 30% (75 points).
 - * *Jack-of-all-trades (slow progression):* 3 skills at 25% (75 points), 5 skills at 15% (75 points).
 - * *Jack-of-all-trades (fast progression):* 2 skills at 60% (80 points), 3 skills at 50% (60 points), 1 skill at 40% (10 points).
- **Balanced:** 2 skills at 50% (110 points), 1 skill at 40% (35 points), 1 skill at 20% (5 points).
 - * *Balanced (slow progression):* 3 skills at 30% (135 points), 1 skill at 15% (15 points).
 - * *Balanced (fast progression):* 2 skills at 70% (120 points), 1 skill at 55% (30 points).

Initial money: Each character gets 8 sp (2 gp) as initial money, with which he can equip himself. Dwarves get double that money. See the simplified list of weapons and armor available to the characters below.

Final attributes: There are many items on the character sheet (*HP, Initiative, DB, DR, Movement, etc.*) that are neither characteristics nor skills. Before finishing the process of character creation it is necessary to fill in all these attributes, taking into account all modifiers that could come from different factors.

Hit Points (HP): *Hit Points* represent the capacity of the character to withstand physical damage. The greater his HP the greater the resilience of the character.

The number of HP of a character of medium size is determined by adding Str + Will, multiplied by $\times 2$. Hobbits are small but resistant, using only their Will to calculate their HP (Will $\times 2$).

Damage points are subtracted from the total of HP, but its total is permanent (does not change with the *damage points* received). The greater the *damage points* received, the more wounded the character.

When a character gets to 0 HP or less (when the *damage points* are the same or higher than his HP), then the character collapses into unconsciousness or even enters a coma. The death of the character comes when these negative points exceed the total of Str + Will (or Will $\times 2$ for hobbits).

For the simplified system HP represent both the physical and spiritual energy of the character, and any use of "spirit points" that could come into play are subtracted from HP.

Natural recovery of HP is 1d6 per day. The use of *outdoor skills* to bind and cure wounds gets HP back with a DF of $\times 1/10$; it is the overall application of medical knowledge, including major surgery in the worst cases. With this skill HP are not recovered immediately as if by magic, but each HP healed represents five minutes of intensive care.

Initiative: *Initiative* represents the reflexes of the character, and is especially relevant in combat, determining who acts first and who last.

Initiative is determined by Dex, the encumbrance of the character, the armor worn, the kind of weapon used and other factors (like magic effects or special abilities).

Defensive Bonus (DB): *Defensive Bonus* represents the ability of the character to dodge attacks and therefore to avoid damage. The DB of the defender is subtracted from the *Offensive Bonus (OB)* of the attacker.

DB is defined by Dex, shield use, magic effects and other factors.

Damage Reduction (DR): *Damage Reduction* represents the damage protection offered by armor. DR can also be natural. DR counters DM (see below), reducing the *Damage Factor (DF)* by one grade each time.

Movement: A medium sized character's *movement* is his Dex in meters (approximately equivalent to one yard) per round (5 seconds). This is the distance that a character can move walking in one round. It can be modified by the encumbrance of the character, armor, magic effects and/or special abilities.

The maximum speed of a character (running) is three times his *movement*. The difference in the *movement* values of two (or more) runners is applied as a bonus (or penalty) to opposed rolls for the competitors in races or chases.

Size (category): The player himself defines the exact height of his character based on the ranges of his people. Each people has one *size category* (called just *size* on the character sheet). This *size (category)* defines the HP and DB modifiers of the character.

Size	Examples
Tiny	Insect
Very small	Rabbit, cat
Small	Child, hobbit, dwarf
Medium	Human, elf
Big	Horse, warg
Very big	Troll
Gigantic	Giant, dragon

Chronicles of Middle-earth has seven sizes (*categories*): tiny, very small, small, medium, big, very big and gigantic (see table below).

Size	HP (Str+Will)	DB	MV	DM	Crit.
Tiny	1 HP	+20	-3	-2	-10
Very small	$\times 1/2$	+10	-2	-1	-10
Small	$\times 1$	+5	-1	-1	—
Medium	$\times 2$	+0	—	—	—
Big	$\times 4$	-5	+2	+1	—
Very big	$\times 10$	-10	+5	+2	Cr. -10
Gigantic	$\times 20$	-20	+10	+3	Cr.

The bonuses and penalties presented in the table are not cumulative. They should be directly applied for each *size category*.

In a way “medium” is the basic *size category*. The smaller, the less HP, and the larger, the more HP. But the smaller the harder to hit (more DB), and the bigger the easier to hit (less DB). And finally, the smaller the character, the less damage he inflicts (basic and critical), and the larger he is the more damage.

The **DM** column refers to the increase or reduction in grades and not as a simple sum or subtraction of the initial DF. The **Crit.** column refers to the modifications to critical hits: -10 means that this quantity is to be subtracted from all critical hits made by the character (reducing his capability to inflict mortal damage), with the single exception of *open rolls*. “Cr.” means that a creature this big causes an additional *crushing* critical; for *very big* creatures this additional critical has a -10 penalty.

The skill system

The skill system follows the basic rule. The basic success probability of a skill is determined by the advance points in it, to which are added the corresponding characteristic and other additional factors; after that you subtract the difficulty for the action. In *Chronicles of Middle-earth* simplified system the *skills* are reduced to the following:

Missile combat (Dex): this skill is used for shooting bows, stones, slings, etc.

Melee combat (Str): this skill is used for armed melee combat (swords, daggers, axes, maces, etc.).

Brawl (Str): this skill is used for unarmed combat (kicks, punches, head butts, etc.).

Outdoor skills (Int): this skill includes almost all the situations involved in outdoor life (survival, hunt, climb, swim, ride, herbalism, healing, etc.), and it is of general use.

Stealth (Dex): this skill applies to hiding and to moving silently, and is op-

posed to the opponent’s *perception*. (*Stealth* and *perception* are the only specific skills in the simplified system.) Armor brings a penalty to the *stealth* skill.

Subterfuge (Log): this skill includes all deceit and sleight of hand abilities, often known as “thief’s skills”. They include lie, disguise, pick pockets, open locks, etc.

Social skills (Cha): applies to the social charm of the character. It includes persuasion, leadership, diplomacy, seduction, bargain, etc.

Craft skills (Log): used for the creation of objects.

White magic (Will): used in a general way for all magic of a beneficent nature, like protection, healing, luck, guidance, etc. The only offensive spells of this kind of magic are those directed against corrupt spirits.

Black magic (Will): used for all destructive magic, requiring Morgoth’s essence to materialize. It is control, fear and destruction magic. This magic is known for its great use as combat magic. Normally only the servants of the enemy use this kind of magic.

Perception (Int): this skill allows the character to notice what is happening in his surroundings, be it a hidden item, the subtle change in the wind, the uneasiness of someone at lying, the negative spiritual charge of a place, etc. It is opposed by *stealth* or *subterfuge*.

The magic system

The magic in Middle-earth is a much debated theme amongst Tolkien fans, and it can not be really discussed in an introductory document like this.¹ This is a simplified system that seeks to give basic parameters for its use.

In the simplified system there are two magic skills: *white magic* and *black magic*. White magic is harmless, and is useful for things like healing, protecting, guidance, etc. Only elves, as creatures with a

strong magic affinity, can begin with skill points in *white magic*. Anybody else could develop it normally in a Chronicle, if they get a master and the storyteller allows it.

Black magic is more violent, and it is useful for destruction, domination, striking horror into enemies, etc. For simplicity’s sake I suggest that in the simplified system only the servants of the enemy can use black magic.

The nature of magic in *Chronicles of Middle-earth* is flexible, allowing the players to create general effects with freedom, but I suggest that the use of magic be sporadic and allowed only at moments where it is appropriate to the story. I also suggest that players seek inspiration in the magic effects described in the books of Professor Tolkien, and/or that they specialize in one or more of the domains of the Valar, as described in the *Valaquenta* in “The Silmarillion”.

In general I suggest that the generic DF for the use of (white or black) magic be $\times 1/5$ or $\times 1/10$, and that it be considered the “skill to work miracles”, with effects limited only by the mage’s imagination and the approval of the storyteller. It is strongly suggested that these magic effects increase the general possibilities open to the characters, but not that they replace the use of the other basic skills.

Besides limiting the indiscriminate use of magic I also suggest that the standard casting time be three rounds, with the only exception being the combat magics of black magic.

Progression system

In most role playing games the progression of the character is measured in experience points and in a system of progressive levels, like predesigned packages based on a “class” stereotype. But in *Chronicles of Middle-earth* skills improve individually by direct use. A character that never uses a weapon is never going

¹ I have published some articles in “Other Minds” magazine on this theme: *Between Canon and Dogma, A Journey in the Dark* and *The Ways of Magic* in OM8, and *The Art of Magic* in OM10. These will expand into the complete magic system of *Chronicles of Middle-earth*.

to improve in *Melee combat*. But if he frequently uses his *outdoor skills* to raise food for his family, then he is going to become quite expert in that skill.

Each time a character uses a skill he has the chance to improve it as shown in the Progression Table below.

Progression Table

Advances	Advances for Humans	Advances for Elves	Improves 1 point for:
01-15	01-30	---	Each (serious) attempt
16-30	31-50	01-15	Each success or fumble
31-50	51-70	16-30	Each open roll or fumble
51-70	71-90	31-50	Each open roll
71+	91+	51+	Each maximum roll

Each (serious) attempt means that the skill improves by one¹ each time the character uses it, regardless of whether he gains a success or not. By “serious” I mean that its use must one be where the success or failure is significant. You do not improve by a point in *Melee combat* for hitting a tree in the garden; those kinds of “exercises” are considered a kind of *study*, in which you automatically improve by one point for a full day’s practicing.

Each success or fumble means the skill improves one point each time that the *skill roll* is a success, or if it is a fumble. It applies the logic that the roll must be relevant where success or failure matters. For “practice”, each day of exercising a skill allows one roll to determine success or fumble and, consequently, if the skill is improved or not.

Each open roll or fumble means that at this level it is no longer enough just to use a skill or to use it successfully, but that now you only improve it if you get an open roll or a fumble. “Practice” progression becomes extremely slow from this level on.

Each open roll means that you improve the skill by one point only if you get an open roll.

And lastly *Each maximum roll* means that you improve one point in a skill only if your *skill roll* (not including *open rolls*) gets exactly the percent number of the skill (that is, if after applying all relevant modifications the character has a success probability of 89%, then only a *skill roll* of 89 is going to improve the skill).

After character creation the *progression system* is to be used, using *skill points* only if the character spends one or more years of game time resting or living a normal life. In this case he earns 10 *skill points* per year.

To all this you must add the following rule: you win extra advance points if the requisites of upper levels are fulfilled, one additional point per level. That is, you can get 1-5 advance points, depending on the success grade and the actual progression level.

Elves and humans in the progression system: Elvish nature is fundamentally different to the rest of the peoples in Middle-earth. Their life is eternal and because of that they have a very different perception of time. This is reflected essentially in the increased costs for the *advance points*.

The opposite case is that of humans, because the Gift of Eru Ilúvatar for them is the gift of a fleeting nature, similarly reflected in their reduced *advance points* cost.

These differences are also reflected in the *progression system*. Elves progress slower than others, using one level higher in the progression table. And humans advance fast, using one level lower in the same progression table. Humans use the *each maximum roll* beginning with the base value of 91+ and elves with 51+, as seen in the progression table.

Money

In *Chronicles of Middle-earth* the monetary system has one gold piece (gp) equivalent to 4 silver pieces (sp), and one silver piece equivalent to 4 bronze pieces (bp).

Equipment

In the simplified system all types of weapons are reduced to the following categories:

Weapon category (melee)	DF*	Initiative	Fumble	Cost
Two-handed weapons (big)	×1/2	-5	96+	2 gp
One-handed weapons (medium)	×1/3	-3	98+	1 gp
Small weapons	×1/5	-1	99+	2 sp
Unarmed	×1/10	+0	100	—

* Missile weapons cause damage one grade less than melee weapons. Their cost, initiative modification and fumble range are the same.

The selection of the exact kind of weapon is then only a matter of personal taste, and has no effect in the simplified game system.

Armor is divided into two categories:

Armor	DR	Initiative	Cost
Light	1	-1	7 sp
Heavy	2	-4	3 gp

Shields give a +6 bonus to DB, increase the fumble range of the weapon by +1, and cost 3 sp.

Combat system

In combat the success probability is determined by the attacker’s OB (in the relevant combat skill) minus the defender’s DB. The damage of a successful attack is determined applying the DF (plus DM and DR) to the percentile roll of the attack.

1 This is a direct increase. The difficulty is already taken into account, and you must ignore the costs of the *skill point* system.

About this simplified system

The simplified system of *Chronicles of Middle-earth* aims to offer a basic game system, which allows both players and storytellers to have an agile and enjoyable game in Middle-earth.

In the complete rules Middle-earth is explored in depth, and you can choose to implement new details that help improve the richness of the world; a set of simple but enjoyable rules, onto which you can add details without lessening its simplicity.

Almost all elements of the complete rules can be added to the simplified system without problem: the critical system, the complete skill list, spirit points, the magic system, the complete list of weapons and armor, advantages and defects, etc. Together with the simplified

character sheet I give also a character sheet with the complete list of skills. If you use this you should double the *skill points* received in character creation. If you implement this after some time, with well established characters, reproduce the value of each simplified skill in two skills from the complete list, so that they coincide with its general category.¹ But in the end as it deals with a dynamic skill advance system, it does not always matter to keep a 1:1 relation with the points you win or lose.

The system to give *skill points* and the detailed description of each people could represent a major complication. In the complete rules the *skill points* (and the *development points*) are given by the character age. And even the four peoples presented in the simplified system, these represent a much greater variety of

choice for the players. In this case it is better to use one set of rules or the other from the beginning (from character creation). If you implement the advanced rules after some time, then it is better to keep the people and the form of giving *skill points* as they are for existing characters, and to apply the new rules for new characters.

It is necessary to say that some explanatory and complementary articles from *Chronicles of Middle-earth* have already been published in "Other Minds" magazine. In OM12 I plan to publish a long description of the elven peoples, also articulated in the rules system of *Chronicles of Middle-earth*. You can refer to this additional material to complement the simplified system.

Happy gaming!



¹ Another possibility (player's choice) is to use the complete value only for one skill, and use half its value for another three secondary skills in the same category.



"Then Ilúvatar said to them: 'Of the theme that I have declared to you, I will now that ye make in harmony together a Great Music. And since I have kindled you with the Flame Imperishable, ye shall show forth your powers in adorning this theme, each with his own thoughts and devices, if he will. But I will sit and hearken, and be glad that through you

great beauty has been wakened into song.'"

- Ainulindalë (The Music of the Ainur)

The Silmarillion

by J.R.R. Tolkien

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Game Aids: Moldewarp stats for LotRRPG

by José Enrique Vacas de la Rosa
(arthadan@gmail.com) © 2010
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In *Other Minds*, Issue 4, the *Great Armoured Moldewarp* was introduced as a possible underground adversary. Since only *MERP* stats were provided, users of *Decipher's Lord of the Rings Roleplaying Game (LotRRPG)* either had to make these stats themselves or skip the use of the creature. Here veteran *OM* author José Enrique Vargas de la Rosa come to the rescue, providing *LotRRPG* stats for it.



Great Moldewarp

ATTRIBUTES

Bearing 4 (± 0), Nimbleness 8 (+1), Perception 9 (+1)*, Strength 10 (+2), Vitality 9 (+1)*, Wits 8 (+1)

REACTIONS

Stamina +2*, Swiftiness +1, Willpower +1, Wisdom +1

SKILLS

Armed Combat: Natural Weapons (Bite, Claws, sensing-tentacles) +2, Observe (Hear, Smell) +6, Stealth (Hide) +3, Survival (Underground) +2

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Armour (3), Ferocious (defending territory), Multiple Attacks, Natural Weapon (bite, 1d6), Natural Weapon (claw, 2d6), Natural Weapon (sensing-tentacles, poison)¹, Poison (Great Moldewarp's poison), Vulnerability (Snout)²

DEFENCE: 11 **MOVEMENT RATE:** 12 (3 digging through rock) **SIZE:** Large (6 wound levels) **HEALTH:** 11 TN
EQUIVALENT: 5

¹ the Moldewarp must make a successful grab attack (see Corebook, page 229) to poison a victim. A Great Moldewarp can generate enough poison to affect 1 human-sized victim per day.

² a blow to its snout will cause the Moldewarp to recoil in pain, or thrash about in a dangerous but unfocussed fashion. But to attack its snout is to put oneself in the path of the two mighty forepaws and the poison of its tentacles.

Great Moldewarp's poison

TYPE: Contact **ONSET:** Immediate **POTENCY:** +2 TN **TREATMENT:** +1 TN
EFFECT: +2 TN to all Physical tests for 1d6 rounds **SECONDARY EFFECT:** no effect
STAGES: 1

Giant Moldewarp

ATTRIBUTES

Bearing 6 (±0), Nimbleness 8 (+1), Perception 9 (+1)*, Strength 16 (+5), Vitality 12 (+3)*, Wits 8 (+1)

REACTIONS

Stamina +5*, Swiftness +1, Willpower +1, Wisdom +1

SKILLS

Armed Combat: Natural Weapons (Bite, Claws, sensing-tentacles) +6, Observe (Hear, Smell) +8, Stealth (Hide) +1, Survival (Underground) +5

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Armour (6), Ferocious (defending territory), Multiple Attacks, Natural Weapon (bite, 3d6), Natural Weapon (claw, 4d6), Natural Weapon (sensing-tentacles, poison)¹, Poison (Giant Moldewarp's poison), Vulnerability (Snout)²

DEFENCE: 11 **MOVEMENT RATE:** 48 (12 digging through rock) **SIZE:** Huge (8 wound levels)

HEALTH: 17 **COURAGE:** 1 **RENOWN:** 5 **TN EQUIVALENT:** 15

¹ the Moldewarp must make a successful grab attack (see Corebook, page 229) to poison a victim. A Giant Moldewarp can generate enough poison to affect 2-4 human-sized victims per day.

² a blow to its snout will cause the Moldewarp to recoil in pain, or thrash about in a dangerous but unfocussed fashion. But to attack its snout is to put oneself in the path of the two mighty forepaws and the poison of its tentacles.

Giant Moldewarp's poison

TYPE: Contact **ONSET:** Immediate

POTENCY: +5 TN

TREATMENT: +5 TN

EFFECT: cannot move for 1d6 minutes

SECONDARY EFFECT: cannot move for 1d3 minutes

STAGES: 1

Huge Moldewarp

ATTRIBUTES

Bearing 6 (±0), Nimbleness 8 (+1), Perception 9 (+1)*, Strength 13 (+3), Vitality 11 (+2)*, Wits 8 (+1)

REACTIONS

Stamina +3*, Swiftness +1, Willpower +1, Wisdom +1

SKILLS

Armed Combat: Natural Weapons (Bite, Claws, sensing-tentacles) +4, Observe (Hear, Smell) +8, Stealth (Hide) +2, Survival (Underground) +4

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Armour (5), Ferocious (defending territory), Multiple Attacks, Natural Weapon (bite, 2d6), Natural Weapon (claw, 3d6), Natural Weapon (sensing-tentacles, poison)¹, Poison (Huge Moldewarp's poison), Vulnerability (Snout)²

DEFENCE: 11 **MOVEMENT RATE:** 24 (6 digging through rock) **SIZE:** Mammoth (7 wound levels) **HEALTH:** 14

TN EQUIVALENT: 10

¹ the Moldewarp must make a successful grab attack (see Corebook, page 229) to poison a victim. A Moldewarp can generate enough poison to affect 1-3 human-sized victims per day.

² a blow to its snout will cause the Moldewarp to recoil in pain, or thrash about in a dangerous but unfocussed fashion. But to attack its snout is to put oneself in the path of the two mighty forepaws and the poison of its tentacles.

Huge Moldewarp's poison

TYPE: Contact **ONSET:** Immediate

POTENCY: +5 TN

TREATMENT: +5 TN

EFFECT: cannot move for 1d6 minutes

SECONDARY EFFECT: +2 TN to all Physical tests for 1d6 rounds


STAGES: 1

Things a PC should know

by
by Tom Davie

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Providing gamers with a solid and not yet too broad knowledge about the world Middle-earth (assuming they are novices in Tolkien's works) has always been a challenge. Tom recognized this as well and provides us with a convenient way to address it.

You can find the handout that is the topic of his work in the Appendix of this Issue.



Having spent many years roleplaying and gamemastering in the wonderful world of Middle-earth, I came to the realisation that there was often a discrepancy between player knowledge of Middle-earth and their character knowledge (the old 'metagame' problem). This was a particular problem with players who had not read any of Tolkien's works, whose only knowledge of the world originated from the films. I wanted to provide such players with a handout that would help to address this issue, rather than (as previously) have it come up during a game session.

So some of you may remember that in March 2009 I put this topic to the mailing list of fan-sourcebooks asking for comments and ideas. Initially I thought that appropriate topics to go into such a handout would be things such as days of the week, holidays, travel times etc., but I was open to other suggestions.

The suggestions I received included:

- cultural values
- knowledge of social classes and appropriate behaviour
- personalise handouts for each character—such as local gossip, local lore etc.
- natural environment
- religion
- places of interest
- local economy
- important people

These were all useful suggestions. However, the idea behind this handout dictated three main restrictions as to what could go in: firstly space, secondly that topics be non-time specific, and thirdly that this was 'general' knowledge.

Firstly and most important, I only wanted a nice, simple two page handout that was quick and easy to read, as I have learned from bitter experience that players will not read anything that is too long or looks too complicated.

Secondly, ideally such a handout should be general enough in regards to time that I can give it to a player playing an elf in the Second Age, or a man in the Fourth Age. So time-specific information such as important people and places of interest could not be included—this sort of information is in my view campaign dependent.

Thirdly, that this handout contains what 'everybody' knows (or at least the majority), or assumed general knowledge. Personalised handouts defeat the whole purpose, and in my view such information is better given to each PC in their Background etc.

In the case of 'everybody' we are actually talking about adventurers, since although PC's come from different races and cultures, largely this is their profession. So the sort of general assumed knowledge that most PC's would know such as trade and travel, an overview of cultural beliefs about religion and magic, and general comments about lands in the North-west region of Middle Earth are the subject of Page 2.

Page 1 directly looks at the problem of the 'metagame' by making some general comments about the differences between Middle-earth and our Earth, which can be summarised into four main ones: magic, the presence of non-human intelligent races, the constant threat of an Enemy (or Dark Lord), and that Middle-earth is generally a world where the nobility holds power and authority and everyone knows their place, similar to our own medieval (or broader—pre-Enlightenment) world.

It is surprising to me how often these differences are neglected, which is another reason for this handout. In particular as GM I have often had to warn players that there is no way that their character would behave in such a way 'to Lord [take your pick here]'.

The Tale of Years

by
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A critical reception of Tolkien's texts lies at the core of a Tolkienesque gaming. With this in mind, we should ask ourselves whether texts we accept as "canon" (in the sense of Tolkien's final intent) meet this requirement.

*Thomas Gießl has asked this question in context with the popular and basic "tale of Years" found in the Appendix B of *The Lord of the Rings*.*

The result is a highly informative treatise of how the ToY might have looked like, if Tolkien had the time to make everything according to his wishes.



Introduction

The following text is critical enlargement of Appendix B of *The Lord of the Rings* (subsequently abbreviated LotR) which consists of the Tale of the Years (ToY) of the Second and Third Age. It was achieved almost exclusively by drawing material from the earlier drafts of said Appendix from the 12th volume of *The History of Middle-earth* series (HoMe) *The Peoples of Middle-earth* (PoMe). I also draw on parts of Appendix A of LotR (and of earlier versions of said Appendix published in PoMe) when they described or outlined events exclusively. Texts published in the UT—mainly the essay on the palantíri, 'The Line of Elros', and 'Of Galadriel and Celeborn'—were also used as comparison to fix certain errors Tolkien overlooked when correcting the appendices.

My motivation for conducting such a work was triggered by the fact that Tolkien was under immense pressure to complete the appendices for the LotR, which caused numerous problems for the Appendices A & B (see especially Letter #160 for a first-hand report from Tolkien on that topic). The ToY did not suffer as much as Appendix A, but became still much too short, and in more than one occasion ambiguous or outright contradictory to other sources. In my opinion, these are artefacts caused by the hasty (sic!) way it was assembled for publication.

Second, there is the fact that I read a certain entry in the ToY in the PoMe (ToY_PoMe) which left me very annoyed that it was not included in the ToY of the LotR (ToY_LotR).

One can, of course, uphold the position that Tolkien had the chance to correct these flaws during the second and third edition of the LotR (when he as the author of a very successful book was in a much more comfortable position), and take the approach that things should remain as they are presented there, but I think that for several reasons Tolkien did not reach a—for him—satisfactory solution to the problem and amending the ToY (and other parts of the Appendices of the LotR as well) to a greater extent as shown in the PoMe still is in concert with Tolkien's views. Especially if one intends to look for a timeline which contains much, if not all, information on the main events happening in the Second and Third Age.

From my point of view, I did only include material I considered 'canonical' beyond a doubt. There are some dubious passages, but I do account for all of them in the commentaries. Beyond the LotR and PoMe, *Unfinished Tales* (abbreviated UT) was a primary source.

I always tried to uphold the grammar, spelling and syntax of the original entries from the LotR.

My amendments appear in *red italics*.

Appendix B The Tale of Years (Chronology of the West-lands)

The *First Age* ended with the Great Battle, in which the Host of Valinor broke Thangorodrim and overthrew Morgoth. Then most of the Noldor returned into the Far West and dwelt in Eressëa within sight of Valinor; and many of the Sindar went over Sea also.

The *Second Age* ended with the first overthrow of Sauron, servant of Morgoth and the taking of the One Ring.

The *Third Age* came to its end in the War of the Ring; but the *Fourth Age* was not held to have begun until Master Elrond departed, and the time was come for the dominion of Men and the decline of all other 'speaking-peoples' in Middle-earth.

In the Fourth Age the earlier ages were often called the *Elder Days*; but that name was properly given only to the days before the casting out of Morgoth. The histories of that time are not recorded here.

The Second Age

These were the dark years for Men of Middle-earth, but the years of the glory of Númenor. Of events in Middle-earth the records are few and brief, and their dates are often uncertain.

In the beginning of this age many of the High Elves still remained. Most of these dwelt in Lindon west of the Ered Luin; but before the building of the Barad-dûr many of the Sindar passed eastward, and some established realms in the forests far away, where their people were mostly Silvan Elves. *Oropher*, king in the north of Greenwood the Great, and his son *Thranduil* were these *Sindarin realm-founders*. In Lindon north of the Lune dwelt Gil-galad, last heir of the kings of the Noldor in exile. He was acknowledged as High King of the Elves of the West. In Lindon south of the Lune dwelt for a time Celeborn, kinsman of Thingol; his wife was Galadriel, greatest of Elven women. She was sister of Fin-

rod Felagund, Friend-of-Men, once king of Nargothrond, who gave his life to save Beren son of Barahir.

Later some of the Noldor went to Eregion, upon the west of the Misty Mountains, and near to the West-gate of Moria. This they did because they learned that *mithril* had been discovered in Moria. The Noldor were great craftsmen and less unfriendly to the Dwarves than the Sindar; but the friendship that grew up between the people of Durin and the Elven-smiths of Eregion was the closest that there has ever been between the two races. Celebrimbor was lord of Eregion and the greatest of their craftsmen; he was descended from Fëanor.

Year Event

- 1 Foundation of the Grey Havens, and the Kingdom of Lindon. *This was ruled by Gil-galad son of Orodreth, chief of all the Noldor who did not yet depart to Eressëa.*
- 32 The Edain reach Númenor.
- c. 40 Many Dwarves leaving their wrecked old cities in Ered Luin go to Moria and swell its numbers.
- 442 Death of Elros Tar-Minyatur, Eärendil's son, first king of Númenor.
- c. 500 Sauron, servant of Morgoth begins to stir again in Middle-earth.
- 548 Silmariën, ancestor of the Lords of Andúnië, born in Númenor
- 600 The first ships of the Númenóreans appear off the coasts of Lindon. *At first they come only seldom, and the Númenóreans do not stay long in any place.*
- 750 Eregion (or *Hollin*) founded by the Noldor, Galadriel being chief among them. *Remnants of the Telerin Elves (of Doriath in ancient Beleriand) establish realms in the woodlands far eastward, but most of these peoples are Nandor. The chief of these were Oropher, father of Thranduil, who ruled in Greenwood the Great beyond Anduin. Later the fairer realm of Lórien was founded; for Galadriel, Felagund's sister, visited the woodlands and sent the Sindarin people of Amdir into Lothlórien.*
- c. 1000 Sauron, alarmed by the growing power of the Númenóreans, chooses Mordor as a land to make into a stronghold. He begins the building of Barad-dûr *in secret. Also he makes there the forges of Orodruin, the Mountain of Fire.*

Year Event

- 1075 Tar-Ancalimë becomes the first Ruling Queen of Númenor.
- 1200 Sauron endeavours to seduce the Eldar, *hoping to lure them, the chief obstacle to his dominion, into his power.* Gil-galad refuses to treat with him. *But Sauron is still fair to look on and the smiths of Eregion, of whom Celebrimbor of the Silver Grasp—a descendant of Fëanor—is chief, are won over by their desire of skill and knowledge.* The Númenóreans begin to make permanent havens.
- c. 1375 *Revolt in Eregion. Celebrimbor becomes lord of Eregion. Galadriel leaves for Lórien. Celeborn stays in Eregion.*
- c. 1500 The Elven-smiths instructed by Sauron reach the height of their skill. They begin the forging of the Rings of Power. *This takes many long years. Sauron eventually leaves Eregion.*
- c. 1590 The Three Rings are completed in Eregion by Celebrimbor of the Silver Grasp.
- c. 1600 Sauron forges the One Ring in Orodruin. He completes the Barad-dûr *with the power of the Ruling Ring.* Celebrimbor perceives the designs of Sauron.
- 1693 War of the Elves and Sauron begins. The Three Rings are hidden. *The 'Days of Flight' begin, or the 'Dark Years' properly so called, being the time of the dominion of Sauron. Many of the remaining Eldar depart west over Sea.*
- 1695 Sauron's forces invade Eriador. Gil-galad sends Elrond *Eärendil's son* to Eregion and calls for the help of Númenor, though that is delayed.
- 1697 Eregion laid waste. Death of Celebrimbor. The gates of Moria are shut. Elrond retreats with remnant of the Noldor and founds the refuge of Imladris.
- 1699 *Imladris is besieged but holds out under the command of Elrond.* Sauron overruns Eriador. *Gil-galad defends Lindon and the Grey Havens with the help of the Númenóreans.*
- 1700 *Tar-Telperiën's great navy under the command of her nephew and heir Minastir sets out from Númenor to Lindon. With the aid from the Númenóreans Gil-galad and Elrond are victorious and Sauron's main army is defeated*
- 1701 Sauron is finally driven out of Eriador. The Westlands have peace for a long while.

Year	Event	Year	Event	Year	Event
c. 1800	From about this time onward the Númenóreans begin to establish dominions on the coasts. Sauron extends his dominion slowly over the great part of Middle-earth; but his power reaches out eastward, <i>since he is withheld from the coasts by the Númenóreans. He nurses his hatred for them, but cannot yet challenge them openly.</i>	3261	Ar-Pharazôn sets sail <i>for Middle-earth. The might and splendour of the Númenóreans fills the servants of Sauron with fear. Ar-Pharazôn lands at Umbar, and in pursuance of his own secret designs Sauron humbles himself and submits—pretending to recognize the Númenóreans' superiority.</i>	3339	<i>Aratan, second son of Isildur, born in Gondor.</i>
1869	<i>Tar-Ciryatan, twelfth king of Númenor, receives the sceptre. The first shadow falls on Númenor. The kings become greedy of wealth and power.</i>	3262	Sauron is taken as prisoner to Númenor.	3379	<i>Ciryon, third son of Isildur, born in Minas Ithil.</i>
2029-2221	<i>Reign of Tar-Atanamir the Great, thirteenth king of Númenor. The shadow deepens. The king exacts heavy tribute from Men on the coasts of Middle-earth. The Númenóreans become jealous of the immortality of the Eldar; and the king speaks openly against the command of the Valar that they should not sail west beyond sight their land.</i>	3262-	Sauron slowly gains the confidence of Ar-	3429	Sauron, <i>being at last ready again, makes war upon Gondor. Orodruin bursts into smoke and flame, and Men of Gondor seeing the sign re-name it Amon Amarth, Mount Doom. Sauron comes forth and assails Minas Ithil, and burns the White Tree that Isildur planted there. Isildur takes a seedling of the Tree and escapes by ship down Anduin with his wife and his sons. He sails to Elendil in the North. Anárion defends Minas Anor and Osgiliath.</i>
2221	<i>Death of Tar-Atanamir. Tar-Ancalimon takes the sceptre. Rebellion and division of the Númenóreans begins. There are the Elendili, the Elf-friends and smaller party, and the majority of the King's Men. The latter become slowly estranged from the Valar and the Eldar, and begin to abandon the use of the Elven tongues; the kings take names of Númenórean form. The Elf-friends, dwelling most in the west of Númenor, remain loyal to the kings except in the matter of rebellion against the decrees of the Valar.</i>	3310	Pharazôn, until he dominates his counsels. <i>He urges Ar-Pharazôn to make war on the Lords of the West to gain everlasting life. Most of the Númenóreans fall under the sway of Sauron, and they persecute the Elf-friends; and they become tyrants over men in Middle-earth.</i>	3430	The Last Alliance of Elves and Men is formed <i>between Gil-galad Elven-king and Elendil and his sons.</i>
2251	About this time the Nazgûl or Ringwraiths, slaves of the Nine Rings, first appear.	3299	<i>Elendur, son of Isildur, born in Númenor.</i>	3431	Gil-galad and Elendil march east to Imladris <i>summoning all folk to their aid. Valandil son of Isildur born in Imladris.</i>
2280	Umbar is made into a great fortress of Númenor.	3310	Ar-Pharazôn <i>feeling the approach of death at last takes the counsel of Sauron and prepares a vast fleet for an assault upon Eressëa and Valinor.</i>	3434	The host of the Alliance crosses the Misty Mountains <i>and marches south. They encounter the host of Sauron upon Dagorlad north of the gates of Mordor, and they are victorious. Sauron takes refuge in Barad-dûr. Siege of Barad-dûr begins. It will last seven years.</i>
2350	Pelargir is built <i>above the Mouths of Anduin</i> . It becomes the chief haven of the Faithful Númenóreans.	3318	<i>Meneldil, son of Anárion, born. He was the last man surviving the Drowning to be born in Númenor.</i>	3440	Anárion <i>is slain before Barad-dûr.</i>
2899	Ar-Adûnakhôr takes the sceptre. He is the first king to take a name in the Adûnaic tongue.	3319	<i>Amandil the Faithful breaks the ban of the Valar and sails west, hoping to repeat the embassy of Eärendil, and obtain the help of the Lords of the West. He is never heard of again. His son Elendil, as his father had bidden, makes ready ships on the east coast of Númenor, preparing for flight with all the Faithful that he can gather. The great fleet of Ar-Pharazôn sets sail into the West and encompassing Eressëa assails the shores of Valinor. Númenor is destroyed, and swallowed up by the sea. The world is broken and Valinor separated from mortal lands. Elendil and his sons Isildur and Anárion escape and fly east with nine great ships to Middle-earth. They bring with them the Seven Stones or palantiri, gifts of the Eldar of Eressëa, and Isildur brings also a seedling of the White Tree of Eressëa.</i>	3441	Sauron <i>comes forth and wrestles with Elendil and Gil-galad. They overthrow him but are themselves slain. The One Ring is taken from the hand of Sauron by Isildur and kept as the weregild for his father, and he will not permit it to be destroyed. Sauron passes away and the Ringwraiths go into the shadows. The Second Age ends.</i>
3118	<i>Birth of Ar-Pharazôn.</i>	3320	Foundation of the Realms in Exile: <i>Arnor in the north of the Westlands with the city Annúminas; and Gondor about the waters of Anduin in the south with the city Osgiliath. Isildur planted the seedling of the White Tree of Númenor in Minas Ithil. The Stones are divided: Elendil retains three in the North-kingdom, at Annúminas, and at Amon Sûl, and in the tower of Emyrn Beraid (the Tower Hills) looking towards the Sea. His sons take four, and set them at Minas Ithil, Minas Anor, at Osgiliath, and at Orthanc in Angrenost (Isengard). In the same year Sauron returns to Middle-earth, and being at first filled with fear by the power and wrath of the Lords of the West, he hides himself in Mordor and is quiet.</i>		
3119	<i>Elendil born in Númenor. His father was Amandil chief of the party of the Elf-friends.</i>				
3175	Repentance of Tar-Palantir. Civil war in Númenor.				
3209	<i>Isildur, elder son of Elendil, born in Númenor.</i>				
3219	<i>Anárion, second son of Elendil, born in Númenor.</i>				
3255	Ar-Pharazôn the Golden, <i>twenty-fifth king of the line of Elros, seizes the sceptre of Númenor. He resolves to challenge Sauron the Great, and builds an armament.</i>				

Introduction: I added Oropher, the father of Thranduil of the Elves of Greenwood the Great. He died on the Dagorlad during the Battle of the Last Alliance, so it seems important that people know that Thranduil did not always rule there.

Year 1: I included Gil-galad as High-King of the Noldor and King of the Kingdom of Lindon. In PoMe_ToY Gil-galad is called 'son of Felagund' (see Thomas' article on Gil-galad's heritage in OM10). As this is very likely wrong, I changed 'Felagund' to 'Orodreth'.

Year 40: Added 'wrecked' for the dwarven cities to make clear that it was the ruin of Nogrod and Belegost that caused this exodus.

Year 548: More details about Sil-mariën's birth.

Year 600: More details on the travels of the Númenóreans.

Year 750: Additions to the founding of Eregion, Lórien and the Greenwood Realm. Mentioning of Oropher instead of Thranduil as King. It is mentioned that he ruled over almost all of Greenwood, the smaller area in the North being a Third-Age-phenomenon when Sauron took over control of the southern part in his disguise as *The Necromancer*. I changed Galadriel and Celeborn from being the founders of Lórien to instigators of said founding. Celeborn and Galadriel did not rule in Lórien before the death of Amroth.

Year 1000: Small additions concerning Sauron and Mordor.

Year 1200: More details about the dealings and motivations of the Elven-smiths and Sauron.

Year 1375: New entry about Celebrimbor's rebellion in Eregion. This is drawn from 'Concerning Galadriel and Celeborn' in UT.

Year 1500: I added 'This takes takes many long years' from PoMe. It bolsters the temporal problem somewhat that arises with Sauron's apparent early departure from Eregion. We have to assume, I think, that Sauron did not stay to see the first 16 Rings of Power become completed. Instead, he left at the earliest moment he deemed it possible for him to do so—without fearing that the Gwaith-i-Mírdain would not succeed—to make his own Ring. After all, he had to be aware of the fact that the Elves might start to realize that 'something' changed if he started to use the One Ring too late, when they were already accustomed to their Rings. We see this happening when Celebrimbor, wearing the Three Rings, sees through Sauron's deception the moment the latter uses the Ruling Ring for the first time. **Alternatively** we may assume, that Sauron had taken precautions in the designs of these first 16 rings ("masking" their connection to a later

Ruling Ring) so that the wearers would not note the existence of a Ruling Ring until it would be too late. Celebrimbor's independent creation of three more rings—without Sauron taking part in it and implanting these "masking" techniques as for the Nine and Seven, where he could have fooled the smiths of the real purpose of these techniques—thus was the undoing of Sauron's plan. Perhaps the ability to make invisible was such a *maskirovka*, having an obvious purpose with a hidden—real—one and Celebrimbor decided not to implement it in his personal project of the Three. See Letter #131 for the information that only the Three did not make invisible. The creation of the Three can thus be seen twofold: First it was the culmination of the Elves' original wish (to make a separate "paradise" by their arts) and in the same instant—unintentionally—foiled Sauron's secret plan. Remember that it was Celebrimbor (probably wearing one of the Three) that noticed Sauron finalising the One, and not "the smiths" in general. Thus the Three, representing the pure elven ideals—even if made with techniques learned from Sauron—were be the instrument that enabled the Eldar to evade Sauron's trap. They had no "masking" technique and thus enabled the wearer to perceive the Ruling Ring. Had they only made the original 16 rings (as Sauron probably had planned) they might have been caught in his plot as intended.

Year 1590: More details about the Three Rings and Celebrimbor.

Year 1600: Important detail about Barad-dûr added. The published appendices of *The Lord of the Rings* are in implicit contradiction with the main text. In the official ToY is only stated that Sauron 'begins the building of Barad-dûr' about the year 1000 SA, whereas we know from the main text that the foundations of the Dark Tower are supposedly built with the power of the Ruling Ring (and could thus not be destroyed when Elves and

Men razed the tower after Sauron's defeat by the Last Alliance). This is the explanation why Barad-dûr collapses after the Ring is destroyed. This event is very crucial for the storyline of the whole book, as others—not me!—assume that the destruction of Sauron's body was not triggered by the destruction of the One Ring but by the collapse of Barad-dûr (compare Thomas' article in OM3 about the Rings of Power). But of course Sauron would not have been able to 'build' the foundations of his Tower with the 'power' of the One Ring 600 years before this very Ring was forged! Evidently, it was always possible to assume or deduce that Sauron somehow strengthened or hardened the foundations of the Tower with the power of the Ring, after he forged it. The old entry of Year 1600 stated that 'he [Sauron] completes Barad-dûr'. But it is, of course, much better if we have an official confirmation that this completion was done with the Ruling Ring!

Year 1693: Details added about the Dark Years and about the passing of many Eldar over the Sea. This is a very crucial event in the history of Middle-earth. The great Noldo scholar Pengolodh supposedly left Middle-earth about this time. Apparently many surviving Eldar from Beleriand (with experiences of many painful defeats and losses) were not able to face the prospect of yet another futility, probably age-long campaign against another Dark Lord.

Year 1695: Addition about Elrond's father. Eärendil is in my opinion one of the most crucial elements of Tolkien's mythology, and it is a shame that he was never able to write, or at least outline, how he imagined his adventures late in his life.

Year 1699: More details on the War between the Elves and Sauron.

Year 1700: Heavy change on my account. I switched 'Tar-Minastir' for 'Tar-Telperiën' as, according to 'The Line of Elros' she was still the Ruling Queen at this time; but of course I

- retained Minastir as her heir and Supreme Commander of the fleet sent to Middle-earth. I consider 'The Line of Elros' a crucial work on the history of Númenor, which should not necessarily be devaluated due to the hastily drafted ToY.
- Year 1800: A sentence more about Sauron's attitude towards the Númenóreans.
- Year 1869: New entry about Tar-Ciryatan and the first shadow upon Númenor, which I mention first in this entry instead in a condensed version in the entry of Year 1800.
- Years 2029-2221: New entry about the rule of Tar-Atanamir the Great, and the political situation in Númenor. I changed the reign of Tar-Atanamir according to dates provided by *The Line of Elros* (TLoE) in UT.
- Year 2221: This is problematic. I changed this entry from 2251, as it seems that Tolkien considered this to be the final date. However, I had to change the content of this entry entirely, and followed Christopher Tolkien's suggestion to consider this year as the death year of Tar-Atanamir instead of the year of his accession. This explains also the mentioning of Tar-Ancalimon, under whose reign the division among the Númenóreans began according to TLoE. I elaborated on said division.
- Year 2251: I left the first mentioning of the Nazgûl in the entry for year 2251 which formally also included the stuff about Atanamir/Ancalimon. Thus the Nazgûl have another thirty years before being first confirmed as creatures of dread and terror.
- Year 2350: Clarification about the position of Pelargir which lay near the Mouths of Anduin before the Fall of Númenor.
- Year 3118: New entry. Pharazôn is born.
- Year 3119: New entry. Elendil is born. This seems somewhat problematic for the concept of the close friendship between the supposed childhood friendship of young Pharazôn and Elendil's father Amandil (see PoMe for details on this). One should at least assume that Amandil has to be about 20 years Pharazôn's elder, so I'm not sure how their friendship is supposed to have developed. Due to the Númenórean habit of having children late in life, Amandil would probably be already about 70 to 90 years old when Elendil was born, making the note even more problematic—although it might be possible that Amandil was, for some strange reason, an exception from the rule, but we don't know that. In this version Pharazôn may have seen Amandil somewhat as a father figure during their years in Middle-earth, or at least as an elder brother. **Alternatively**, one may also see to amend 'Amandil' for 'Elendil' as the childhood friend of Pharazôn. On the one hand their birth dates match nicely, making 'childhood friends' logical and on the other hand it would make great tragedy when they later become bitter enemies. At least this solution would fit nicely, burdened with less problems compared to the 'Amandil version'.
- Year 3209: New entry. Isildur is born.
- Year 3219: New entry. Anárion is born.
- Year 3255: More details about Ar-Pharazôn's usurpation.
- Year 3261: Additions about Pharazôn's campaign against Sauron.
- Years 3262-3310: More about Sauron's regime in Númenor.
- Year 3299: New entry. Elendur, first son of Isildur is born. I changed the names of the sons of Isildur to the versions provided by 'The Disaster on the Gladden Fields' which seem to be the final versions.
- Year 3310: Details about Ar-Pharazôn's Great Armament against the West, and Amandil's and Elendil's preparations for the worst case.
- Year 3318: New entry. Meneldil, Anárion's son, is born. He is the last man surviving the Downfall to be born in Númenor.
- Year 3319: Much more details about the Fall of Númenor added.
- Year 3320: More details about the Founding of the Dúnedan Kingdoms-in-Exile, and the distribution of the *palantíri*.
- Year 3339: New entry. Aratan second son of Isildur is born.
- Year 3379: New entry. Ciryon third son of Isildur is born. The fact that he is said to be born in Minas Ithil, whereas the former son, Aratan, is said to be born in Gondor only (see last entry). This enables us to deduce that at least Minas Ithil was inhabited (and likely already completed) 59 years after the founding of Gondor. The fact that Isildur planted the seedling of the White Tree in Minas Ithil is not necessarily an indication that it was completed before Osgiliath or Minas Anor—Isildur saved said seedling before Ar-Pharazôn gave in to Sauron's demands and let him burn the tree. Thus the seedling actually very much belonged to Isildur, and as he choose Minas Ithil, the Tower of the Moon, as his very own keep, and thus it was very much the only proper place for the new White Tree.
- Year 3439: More details about the beginning of the War of the Last Alliance.
- Year 3430: Minor details about the Last Alliance.
- Year 3431: Addition about the fact that Gil-galad and Elendil summoned 'all folk to their aid', which is a sign that Dwarves (not only, but likely mainly from Durin's Folk) and Ents really fought on their side. Valandil fourth son Isildur is born.
- Year 3434: More details about the Battle on the Dagorlad and its outcome.
- Year 3440: Precision about the place of Anárions death.
- Year 3441: More details about the battle between Sauron and Gil-galad/Elendil.

The Third Age

These were the fading years of the Eldar. For long they were at peace wielding the Three Rings while Sauron slept and the One Ring was lost; but they attempted nothing new, living in memory of the past. The Dwarves hid themselves in deep places, guarding their hoards; but when evil began to stir again and dragons reappeared, one by one their ancient treasures were plundered, and they became a wandering people. Moria for long remained secure, but its numbers dwindled until many of its vast mansions became dark and empty. The wisdom and the life-span of the Númenóreans also waned as they became mingled with lesser Men.

When maybe a thousand years had passed, and the first shadow had fallen on Greenwood the Great, the *Istari* or Wizards appeared in Middle-earth. It was afterwards said that they came out of the Far West and were messengers sent to contest the power of Sauron, and to unite all those who had the will to resist him; but they were forbidden to match his power with power, or to seek to dominate Elves or Men by force and fear.

They came therefore in the shape of Men though they were never young and aged only slowly and they had many powers of mind and hand. They revealed their true names to few, but used such names as were given to them. The two highest of this order (of whom it is said there were five) were called by the Eldar Curunír, 'the Man of Skill', and Mithrandir, 'the Grey Pilgrim'. but by Men in the North Saruman and Gandalf. Curunír journeyed often into the East, but dwelt at last in Isengard. Mithrandir was closest in friendship with the Eldar, and wandered mostly in the West, and never made for himself any lasting abode.

Throughout the Third Age the guardianship of the Three Rings was known only to those who possessed them. But at the end it became known that they had been held at first by the three greatest of the Eldar: Gil-galad,

Galadriel and Círdan. Gil-galad before he died gave his ring to Elrond; Círdan later surrendered his to Mithrandir. For Círdan saw further and deeper than any other in Middle-earth, and he welcomed Mithrandir at the Grey Havens, knowing whence he came and whither he would return.

'Take this ring, Master,' he said, 'for your labours will be heavy; but it will support you in the weariness that you have taken upon yourself. For this is the Ring of Fire, and with it you may rekindle hearts in a world that grows chill. But as for me, my heart is with the Sea, and I will dwell by the grey shores until the last ship sails. I will await you.'

Year Event

- 2 Isildur plants *the* seedling of the White Tree in Minas Anor *in memory of his brother Anárion, but he will not himself long dwell there*. He delivers the South-kingdom to Meneldil *son of Anárion and marches north up the vale of Anduin, purposing to take up the realm of Elendil*. He and his three elder sons *are slain by Orcs near the Gladden Fields and the Ring is lost in the River*.
- 3 Ohtar *Isildur's esquire escapes with two other men only from the slaughter of the Gladden Fields*. He brings the shards of Elendil's sword, Narsil, *which Isildur had saved, and delivers it to Valandil Isildur's son in Imladris*. Valandil was a child, fourth son of Isildur.
- 10 Valandil *Isildur's son* becomes King of Arnor *and dwells at Annúminas*.
- 109 Elrond, *who had remained unwed through all his long years, now took to wife* Celebrian, daughter of Galadriel and Celeborn.
- 130 Birth of Elladan and Elrohir, sons of Elrond, *in Imladris*.
- 241 Birth of Arwen Undómiel, *the fairest of all the maidens of the Third Age, in whom the likeness of Lúthien her foremother returned to Middle-earth*.
- 241 Birth of Arwen Undómiel, *the fairest of all the maidens of the Third Age, in whom the likeness of Lúthien her foremother returned to Middle-earth*.
- 420 Ostoher *King of Gondor* rebuilds and enlarges Minas Anor.
- 490 First invasion of *Gondor* by Easterlings.
- 500 *Tarostar* defeats the Easterlings *and takes the name Rómendacil I, East-slayer*.
- 541 Rómendacil slain in battle *with a second invasion of Easterlings, who are driven out by his son Turambar*.

Year Event

- 830 *Tarannon* Falastur begins the line of Ship-kings of Gondor. *He marries Berúthiel of Umbar, but they eventually go separate ways*.
- 861 Death of Eärendur, *last and tenth king of Arnor*. *The North-kingdom becomes divided among Eärendur's sons*. *The direct line of the eldest son, Amlaith of Fornost, rules the realm of Arthedain*. *Annúminas is deserted*. *The other realms were Cardolan in the south and Rhudaur in the northeast of Eriador*. *From this time the official names of the kings of Fornost were no longer given in High-elven form, but in Sindarin*. *Amlaith and his descendants maintain friendship with the Eldar, especially with Círdan at the Havens*.
- 933 King Eärnil I takes Umbar, which becomes a fortress of Gondor.
- 936 Eärnil lost at sea.
- c. 1000 *Coming of the Istari*.
- 1015 King Ciryandil slain in the siege of Umbar.
- 1050 Hyarmendacil conquers the Harad. Gondor reaches the height of its power. About this time a shadow falls on Greenwood *the Great*, and *it becomes darkened, and men begin to call it Mirkwood, for an evil spirit stirs there*. *About this time also the Periammath, of whom there are no earlier accounts among Elves or Men, are first mentioned in ancient records*. *These were a strange small people, called by Men Halflings, but by themselves (later in the west of Eriador) Hobbits*. *They are thought to have long dwelt in Greenwood near its western eaves, and in the vale of the upper Anduin*. *But at this time they began to move westward over the Misty Mountains into Eriador*. *It is said that they moved from their earlier dwellings because Men increased much at that time; and because of the shadow on Greenwood*. *The Harfoots were the first clan of Hobbits to enter Eriador*.
- c. 1100 *It becomes known to the Wise (being the chieftains of the Eldar and the Istari) that an evil power had arisen in Mirkwood and had established a stronghold on the hill of Dol Guldur in the southern forest*. *But it was still some time before they knew for certain that this was the shadow of Sauron himself and that he was awake again; so it is thought to be one of the Nazgûl*.
- c. 1050- *Apogee of Gondor's power under Ciryaher 1150 (Hyarmendacil I)*.
- 1149 Reign of Atanatar Alcarin begins.
- c. 1150 The Fallowhides, *a clan of the Periammath, enter Eriador and come down from the North along the River Hoarwell*. *The Stoors, another clan, come over the Redhorn Pass and move to the Angle, or to Dunland*.

- | Year | Event | Year | Event | Year | Event |
|---------|---|---------|--|---------|---|
| c. 1200 | <i>Under Atanatar the Glorious Gondor's sway extends from the Greyflood in the West to the Sea of Rhûn in the East, and from the south-eaves of Mirkwood in the North to the land of the Haradrim in the South. The Haradrim acknowledge the overlordship of Gondor for many years.</i> | | | 1634 | The Corsairs of Umbar ravage Pelargir and slay King Minardil. <i>They are lead by Angamaitë and Sangahyando great-grandsons of Castamir.</i> |
| 1248 | <i>Gondor's Regent Minalcar (the future Rómendacil II) wins a great victory against the Easterlings and destroys all their camps east of the Sea of Rhûn.</i> | | | 1636 | The Great Plague <i>comes out of the East, and devastates Gondor. Death of King Telemnar and all his children. The White Tree of Isildur withers and dies in Minas Anor. The power of Gondor dwindles. The plague spreads north and west, and many parts of Eriador become desolate. Beyond the Baranduin the Periannath survive, but suffer great loss.</i> |
| 1250 | <i>Minalcar sends his son Valacar as an ambassador to his ally Vidugavia in Rhovanion. There Valacar later weds Vidumavi, the daughter of Vidugavia—a mighty prince of the Northmen (who called himself 'King of Rhovanion'). Later this proves to be the origin of the Kin-strife.</i> | | | c. 1700 | <i>Mordor being now left unguarded, evil things enter in it again and take up their abode there secretly. Communication between the North and South kingdom ceases for a long while.</i> |
| c. 1255 | <i>The pillars of the Argonath are built and the line of the Anduin fortified by Minalcar.</i> | | | 1810 | King Telumehtar Umbardacil retakes Umbar and drives out the Corsairs, <i>slaying the last descendants of Castamir.</i> |
| c. 1300 | Evil things begin to multiply again. Orcs increase <i>rapidly and delve</i> in the Misty Mountains, and attack the Dwarves. The Nazgûl <i>stir once more. The chief of the wielders of the Nine Rings, becomes the Witch-king of the realm of Angmar northeast of Arthedain, and makes war on the remnants of the Dúnedain. The western Periannath, now for the most part mingled together, move westward from the region of Amon Sûl (Weathertop), and begin to make small settlements among the remnants of the peoples of the old North-kingdom. Their chief settlement was on and about the Hill of Bree.</i> | 1432 | King Valacar of Gondor dies, and the civil war of the Kin-strife begins. <i>The succession of his son Eldacar, half of alien blood (being the son of Valacar and Vidumavi of Rhovanion, who named him Vinitharya in her tongue), is contested by other descendants of Atanatar the Glorious. Chief among them is Castamir, Captain of Ships, descended from Calmacil and a grandnephew to Romendacil II.</i> | 1851 | The attacks of the Wainriders <i>out of the East</i> upon Gondor begin. <i>War lasts for many years. King Araval of Arthedain wins a victory over Angmar with the help of Lindon and Imladris. He seeks to reoccupy Cardolan, but the evil wights terrify all who seek to dwell near.</i> |
| 1356 | Argeleb I king <i>at Fornost is slain in battle with the realm Rhudaur, which resists his claim to overlordship. In secret Rhudaur was in alliance with the evil realm of Angmar. About this time, owing to the dissensions and to the unfriendliness of the lands and clime of eastern Eriador, some of the Stoors return to Wilderland and dwell beside the River Gladden that flows into Anduin. They become a riverside people, fishers and users of small boats. Others of the Stoors move north and west and join with the Harfoots and Fallow-hides.</i> | 1437 | Burning of Osgiliath and loss of the <i>palantír</i> . Eldacar flees to Rhovanion; his son Ornendil is murdered <i>by the command of Castamir.</i> | 1856 | Gondor loses its eastern territories, and Narmacil II falls in battle. <i>At this time it is thought that the Ringwraiths re-entered Mordor.</i> |
| 1409 | The Witch-king of Angmar, <i>taking advantage of the war between the Dúnedain and Rhudaur, comes out of the North and overwhelms the petty realm of Cardolan, and destroys the remnants of the Númenóreans that dwells there. Cardolan is forsaken; only Tyrn Gorthad is defended by the last Dúnedain of Cardolan. But in Rhudaur, which was in alliance with the Witch-king, for long there dwelt an evil people out of the North, much given to sorcery.</i> | 1447 | Eldacar returns and drives out the usurper Castamir. Battle of the Crossings of Erui. <i>Castamir is slain by Eldacar. Siege of Pelargir.</i> | 1899 | King Calimehtar of Gondor defeats the Wainriders on Dagorlad. |
| | | 1448 | Rebels <i>under the leadership of Castamir's sons</i> escape and seize Umbar. | 1900 | Calimehtar builds the White Tower in Minas Anor. |
| | | 1540 | King Aldamir slain in war with the Harad and Corsairs of Umbar. | c. 1940 | <i>After long estrangement, the two Dúnedain realms again take counsel with each other. Messengers pass between the two kingdoms, since both are in peril: the South from the Wainriders of the East and the North from renewed attacks of Angmar. For at last they perceive that some single power and will is directing the assault from many quarters upon the survivors of Númenor. Arvedui heir of Araphant of Arthedain weds Fíriel, the daughter of King Ondoher of Gondor.</i> |
| | | 1551 | Hyarmendacil II defeats the Men of Harad. | 1944 | Ondoher <i>with both his sons, Faramir and Artamir, falls in battle against a great alliance of the Wainriders and the Men of Khand and Harad. Eärnil, great-grandnephew of Narmacil II (and direct descendant of Telumehtar), defeats the enemy in South Ithilien. He then wins the Battle of the Camp, and drives Wainriders into the Dead Marshes. Arvedui of the North claims the crown of Gondor, both on his wife's behalf and his own as representing 'the elder line of Isildur'.</i> |
| | | 1601 | Many Periannath migrate from Bree westward and cross the River Baranduin (Brandywine). <i>The land beyond, between Baranduin and Emyrn Beraid, had been a demesne of the kings of Arnor, where they had both chases and rich farms; but they were now untended and fallen into wilderness. The king Argeleb II therefore allowed the Periannath to settle there, for they were good husbandmen. They became his subjects in name but were virtually independent and ruled by their own chieftains. This land the Periannath or Halflings called 'The Shire'. Shire-reckoning begins with the crossing of the Baranduin in this year.</i> | | |
| | | c. 1630 | They are joined by Stoors coming up from Dunland. <i>They entered the land from the south and dwell mostly near to the Baranduin.</i> | | |

Year Event

- 1945 *The claim is refused by Gondor and lapses with the death of Arvedui; but all his descendants, though too weak to press their claim, continue to maintain that they are also by right kings of Gondor, being descended both from Isildur and Anárion (through Fíriel).*
Eärnil II receives the crown.
- 1974 End of the North-kingdom. The Witch-king *takes* Fornost and overruns Arthedain, *lays the land waste, and scatters the remnants of the Dúnedain, most of the survivors fleeing over the Lune to Lindon. Arvedui flees north, taking with him the palantíri (the stones of Annúminas and Amon Sûl).*
His sons take refuge with Círdan.
- 1975 Arvedui drowned in the Bay of Forochel. The *palantíri* of Annúminas and Amon Sûl are lost. Eärnur, son of Eärnil II brings a fleet to Lindon. *Angmar* defeated at the Battle of Fornost by Eärnur, *Círdan of Lune and Glorfindel. The Witch-king is overthrown, and his realm destroyed, and he himself pursued to the Ettenmoors. He vanishes from the North.*
- 1976 Arnanth *son of Arvedui* takes *refuge with Elrond at Imladris. He abandons the title of 'king' but takes the title of 'Chieftain of the Dúnedain', since he now has no people. His descendants continue to bear names with the royal prefix, Ar, Ara.* The heirlooms of Arnor are given into the keeping of Elrond. *The Periannath sent archers to the Battle of Fornost, but after the end of the kingdom they claim the Shire as their own.*
- 1977 Frumgar leads the Éothéod into the North.
- 1979 Bucca of the Marish, *from whom later the Oldbuck family claimed descent,* becomes first Thain of the Shire.
- 1980 The Witch-king comes to Mordor and there gathers the *other eight* Nazgûl.
A terror of the Elder Days, a Balrog of Thangorodrim, appears in Moria. Some say that the Dwarves delving too deep in their search for mithril or true-silver disturbed this evil creature from its sleep far under the world. The Balrog slays Durin VI.
- 1981 Nain I slain. The Dwarves flee from Moria. Many of the Silvan Elves of Lórien flee south. Amroth and Nimrodel are lost. *Galadriel and Celeborn return to Lórien to aid it in its peril.*
- 1999 Thráin I comes to Erebor and founds a dwarf-kingdom 'under the Mountain'.

Year Event

- 2000 The Nazgûl issue from Mordor *and many folk flee from Ithilien in terror. They besiege Minas Ithil. About this time Fram of the Éothéod slays Scatha the Worm, and claims his hoard for his own. The Ered Mithrin are not troubled by dragons for a while.*
- 2043 *Death of Eärnil. His son Eärnur becomes King of Gondor. He is challenged by the Witch-king to battle.*
- 2050 The challenge is renewed. *Against the counsel of Mardil his steward Eärnur rides to the gates of Minas Morgul and is lost. Eärnur leaves no children. No male descendant of Anárion with an undisputed claim can be found. Mardil becomes the first Ruling Steward. For a long time before the stewardship had usually been held by a member of this family (one of nearly pure Númenórean descent). It now becomes hereditary in that family like a kingship. But each Steward takes office with the formula 'to hold the rule and rod until the King's return'; and they do not take official names of Quenya or High-elven form. Their names are mostly of Sindarin kind, that tongue being still used by those descended from the Elf-friends of Númenor. He and his descendants govern nominally 'until the King's return'. After the disappearance of Eärnur and the end of the Kings the White Tree seldom again bore fruit, and each year its blossom grew less as it slowly aged.*
- 2060 *The fear of the Ringwraiths or Nazgûl spreads far and wide. The power of Dol Guldur grows. The Wise deem yet that the Power there is one of these; but in the hearts of Elrond and Gandalf the fear grows that the darkness in Mirkwood may be Sauron himself taking shape again.*
- 2063 Gandalf goes *alone* to Dol Guldur *in secret, to discover the truth about the Necromancer. But Sauron is aware of him; and being not yet grown to great power, he fears the eyes of Gandalf and the strength of the Wise, and he deserts Dol Guldur and hides in the East again for a while. Here begins a time that is called the Watchful Peace. For there was a long quiet, but no certainty. During that time the Nazgûl never again appeared in visible shape beyond the walls of Minas Morgul; but the Wise were in doubt what should yet come to pass, and Gandalf made great journeys to discover the plans and devices of their enemies.*
- 2210 Thorin I leaves Erebor, and goes north to the Grey Mountains, where most of the remnants of Durin's Folk are now gathering.

Year Event

- 2340 Isumbras I, *head of the Took family in the Shire,* becomes thirteenth Thain, *the first of the Took line. After his days the office become hereditary in the family of the Took of the Great Smials. About this time the Oldbucks occupied the Buck-land, east of the River Brandywine and on the edge of the Old Forest.*
- 2460 *After a space of nearly four hundred years the Watchful Peace ends, and the powers of evil move again. Sauron returns with increased strength to Dol Guldur, and gathers all evil things under his rule.*
- 2463 The White Council is formed *to unite and direct the forces of the West, in resistance to the shadow. Curunír 'Lân or Saruman the White is chosen to be the head of the Council, since he has studied all the arts and ways of Sauron and his servants most deeply. Galadriel of Lórien wishes Gandalf to be made chief, but he refuses. Saruman begins his study of the Rings of Power and their uses and history. About this time it is thought that Déagol the Stoor found the One Ring in Anduin near the Gladden Fields where Isildur was slain as he tried to escape the orcs. Déagol is murdered by his friend Sméagol, who took the Ring.*
- 2470 About this time Sméagol, *now called Gollum, is cast out by his own people, and hides in the Misty Mountains. He vanishes out of all knowledge, taking the Ring with him.*
- 2475 *The attack on Gondor is begun again with new vigour in the days of Denethor I, son of Dior, the tenth Steward, when Uruks, black Orcs of great strength, first come forth from Mordor. Denethor's son Boromir defeats the enemy before East Osgiliath, but Osgiliath is finally ruined in this war, and the ancient and marvelous stone-bridge is broken. The Men of Gondor still maintain their hold upon Ithilien, but little by little its people desert it and pass west over Anduin to the valleys of the White Mountains.*
- c. 2480 Orcs again multiply *in secret and occupy many deep places (especially those anciently made by the Dwarves) in the Misty Mountains. They do this so stealthily that none are aware of it, until they have great forces hidden and are ready to bar all the passes from Eriador into the vale of Anduin, according to the plan of their master in Dol Guldur. Orcs and Trolls occupy parts of the now empty Mines of Moria.*
- since c. Northern Gondor repeatedly raided by 2500 Easterlings from Rhovanion.
- 2509 Celebrian, *wife of Elrond, journeys to Lórien to visit Galadriel, her mother; but she is taken by Orcs in the Redhorn Pass. She is rescued by her sons, but receives a poisoned wound. She is healed in body by Elrond.*

Year Event

- 2510 Celebrian departs *to the Grey Havens and sails over Sea, because after fear and torment she becomes weary of Middle-earth despite the healing by Elrond. A great host of Orcs, with Easterlings as allies, assail the northern borders of Gondor, and occupy a great part of Calenardhon. Gondor sends for help. Eorl the Young leads his people, the Éothéod, out of the North from their realm near the sources of Anduin, and rides to the help of Cirion, Steward of Gondor. With his aid the great victory of the Field of Celebrant is won. Elladan and Elrohir rode also in that battle. From that time forth the brethren never cease from war with the Orcs because of the suffering of their mother. Eorl and his people are given the plains of Calenardhon to dwell in, and that land is from now on called Rochann (Rohan) in Gondor. There the Éothéod, now called the Rohirrim, live as free men under their own kings, but in perpetual alliance with Minas Tirith.*
- 2545 Eorl falls in battle in the Wold.
- 2569 Brego son of Eorl completes the Golden Hall *of Meduseld.*
- 2570 Baldor son of Brego *takes a rash vow to enter the Forbidden Door in Dunharrow, and is lost. About this time Dragons reappear in the Far North and begin to afflict the Dwarves.*
- 2589 Dáin I slain by a Dragon.
- 2590 Thrór returns to Erebor. Grór his brother goes to the Iron Hills.
- 2620 *Isengrim II, tenth Thain of the Took-line, born in the Shire.*
- c. 2670 Tobold first plants 'pipe-weed' in the Southfarthing.
- 2683 Isengrim II becomes tenth Thain and begins the excavation of Great Smials.
- 2698 Ecthelion I, *Steward of Gondor, repairs and rebuilds the White Tower in Minas Tirith, afterwards often called the 'Tower of Ecthelion'.*
- 2740 *Orcs renew their invasions of Eriador. The Rangers under their chieftain Arassuil are hard-pressed to contain these incursions.*
- 2745-48 *The chief battles of the Rangers with the orcs invading Eriador are fought.*
- 2747 *A large Orc-force is able to penetrate the Ranger's defence of eastern Eriador and invades the Shire. Bandobras Took, second son of Isumbras III defeats them at the Battle of the Greenfields in the Northfarthing, and slays the Orc-chief Golfimbul. This is the last battle in which Hobbits (Periannath) were engaged until the War of the Ring.*
- c. 2750 *Eriador is safe again at last, the orcish incursions being finally defeated.*

Year Event

- 2758 Rohan attacked from west and east and overrun. Gondor attacked by fleets of the Corsairs. Helm of Rohan takes refuge in Helm's Deep *in the White Mountains.* Wulf seizes Edoras.
- 2758-59 The Long Winter. Great suffering and loss of life in Eriador and Rohan. Gandalf comes to the aid of the Shire-folk.
- 2759 Death of Helm. Fréaláf drives out Wulf, and begins the second line of Kings of the Mark. *The second row of King's Mounds is begun.* Saruman takes up his abode in *the Tower of Orthanc in the Ring of Isengard. This had been an ancient stronghold of Gondor.*
- 2770 Smaug the Dragon descends on Erebor and destroys the realm of Thrór the Dwarf, and lays waste the town and lordship of Dale. Thrór escapes with Thráin II and Thorin II.
- 2790 Thrór, *descendant of Durin, being now homeless and robbed of his treasure, ventures into Moria, but is slain by the Orc Azog in the dark. In vengeance for Thrór the scattered Dwarves of Durin's Race together with detachments from all other dwarven houses gather for a war against the Orcs of the Misty Mountains. Birth of Gerontius Took: later the fourteenth Thain of the Took-line, and known as 'the Old Took' because of his great age (he lived to be 130 years old).*
- 2793 The War of the Dwarves and Orcs begins. *It was long and terrible and fought largely in the dark of deep places.*
- 2799 *The War of Dwarves and Orcs comes to an end in a great battle: the Battle of Nanduhirion (Azanulbizar) before the Eastgate of Moria. The Orcs were almost annihilated, and Moria is once more emptied, but the Dwarves also suffer dearly. Thráin wants to reoccupy Moria, but the other houses return home, leaving him too weak to reclaim Moria. Also, they fear to face the hidden terror inside. Dáin Iron-foot returns to the Iron Hills. Thráin II and his son Thorin wander westwards.*
- 2802 *Thráin II and Thorin Oakenshield settle in the northern part of the Ered Luin beyond the Shire.*
- 2800-64 Orcs fleeing from the War with the Dwarves from the North trouble Rohan. King Walda slain by them (2861).
- 2841 Thráin II sets out to revisit Erebor, but is pursued by the servants of Sauron.
- 2845 Thráin the Dwarf is imprisoned in Dol Guldur; the last of the Seven Rings is taken from him.

Year Event

- 2850 Gandalf again enters Dol Guldur *to discover the purposes of the Necromancer. Gandalf discovers beyond any doubt that it is indeed Sauron himself, and that he is gathering again all the Rings of Power, and seeking for news of the One, and the dwelling [whereabouts?] of Isildur's Heirs. He finds Thráin and receives from him the secret key of Erebor. Thráin dies in Dol Guldur.*
- 2851 The White Council meets *in Imladris.* Gandalf urges *the Council for an attack on Dol Guldur. Saruman overrules him. Saruman keeps a watchful eye upon Anduin and he begins to search near the Gladden Fields.*
- 2872 Belecthor II, *twenty-first Steward of Gondor, dies. The White Tree dies in the court of Minas Tirith, and no seedling can be found. The Dead Tree is left standing in the court near the White Tower.*
- 2885 *In the days of Turin II, twentythird Steward, the Haradrim were stirred up by emissaries of Sauron. They cross the Poros and attack Gondor, ravaging South Ithilien. The Rohirrim send help. Folcred and Fastred sons of King Folcwine of Rohan are slain in battle in the service of Gondor.*
- 2890 Bilbo born in the Shire *(his mother was a daughter of the Old Took).*
- 2901 Most of the remaining inhabitants of Ithilien desert it owing to the attacks of Uruks of Mordor. *They remove westward over Anduin to Lossarnach and Lebennin. But the Men of Minas Tirith still hold Ithilien as a border country and patrol it; they keep forces in the ruins of Osgiliath. The secret refuge of Henneth Annûn (and others) is built.*
- c. 2905 *Cair Andros fortified to protect Anórien.*
- 2907 Birth of Gilraen mother of Aragorn II.
- 2911 The Fell Winter. The Baranduin and other rivers are frozen. White Wolves invade Eriador from the North.
- 2912 Great floods devastate Enedwaith and Minhiriath. Tharbad is ruined and deserted.
- 2920 Death of the Old Took.
- 2929 Arathorn son of Arador, *chieftain of the Dúnedain, weds Gilraen daughter of Dirhael.*
- 2930 Arador slain by Trolls. Birth of Denethor II son of Ecthelion II in Minas Tirith.
- 2931 Aragorn son of Arathorn II born on March 1st.

Year Event

- 2933 Arathorn II slain *by Orcs when riding with Elladan and Elrohir*. Gilraen takes Aragorn to Imladris. Elrond receives him as foster-son and gives him the name Estel (Hope). *He keeps the heirlooms of his father, but his ancestry is kept secret, since the Wise know that Sauron is seeking for the Heir of Isildur.*
- 2939 Saruman discovers that Sauron's servants are *also* searching the Anduin near *the* Gladden Fields, and that Sauron therefore has learned of Isildur's end (*maybe from Orcs*). He is alarmed, but says nothing to the Council.
- 2941 Thorin Oakenshield and Gandalf visit Bilbo in the Shire. *Bilbo sets out for Dale with Gandalf and the Dwarves*. Bilbo meets Sméagol-Gollum and finds the Ring; *but it is not guessed what Ring this is*.
The White Council meets; Saruman agrees to an attack on Dol Guldur, since he now wishes to prevent Sauron from searching the River. Sauron having made his plans abandons Dol Guldur *and flees east*. *Mirkwood for a time become wholesome again*. Bard of Esgaroth slays Smaug *the Dragon*. The Battle of the Five Armies in Dale. *Thranduil of Mirkwood, the Men of Esgaroth, and the Dwarves with the help of the Eagles of the Misty Mountains, defeat a great host of Orcs*. Death of Thorin II. Dáin of the Iron Hills *re-enters Erebor and* becomes King under the Mountain (Dáin II).
- 2942 Bilbo returns to the Shire with *a share of the treasure of Smaug, and* the Ring. Sauron returns in secret to Mordor *which the Ringwraiths have prepared for him*.
- 2944 Bard rebuilds Dale and becomes King. Gollum leaves the Mountains and begins his search for the 'thief' of the Ring.
- 2948 Théoden son of Thengel, King of *the Rohirrim, is born in Gondor*.
- 2949 Gandalf and Balin visit Bilbo in the Shire.
- 2950 Finduilas, daughter of Adrahil of Dol Amroth, born.

Year Event

- 2951 Sauron declares himself *and his true name* openly and gathers power in Mordor. He begins the rebuilding of Barad-dûr. *This had never been completely destroyed, since its foundations were unremoved; for they were strengthened by the Power of the One Ring. But Mithrandir journeys far and wide to counter the plans of Sauron and prepare Elves and Men for war against the Lord of Barad-dûr*. Gollum turns towards Mordor. Sauron sends three of the Nazgûl to reoccupy Dol Guldur. 'Estel' *returns from errantry in the company of Elladan and Elrohir*. Elrond reveals to *him* his true name and ancestry, and delivers to him the shards of Narsil, *the sword of Elendil*. *Elrond foretells that in his time either the last remnants of Númenor shall pass away, or the kingdoms of Arnor and Gondor shall be united and renewed. He bids Aragorn prepare for a hard life of war and wandering*.
Arwen *Undómiel had now long dwelt with Galadriel in Lórien, but she desired to see her father again, and her brothers brought her to Imladris. On the day in which his ancestry was revealed to him Aragorn met her at unawares walking under the trees in Rivendell, and so began to love her. Elrond is grieved, for he foresees the choice that will lie before her; and says at least Aragorn must wait until he has fulfilled his task. He reveals that as one of the pure blood of Númenor, born to a high purpose, Aragorn will have a long life-span. Aragorn says farewell to Rivendell and* goes out into the Wild.
- 2953 Last meeting of the White Council. They debate the issue of the Rings, *fearing especially that Sauron may find the One*. Saruman feigns that he has discovered that the One Ring has passed down Anduin to the Sea. Saruman withdraws to Isengard, which he takes as his own, and fortifies it. *He consorts no more with members of the Council*. Being jealous and afraid of Gandalf he sets spies to watch all his movements; and notes his interest in the Shire. He soon begins to keep agents in Bree and the Southfarthing.
- 2954 *Orodruin (Mount Doom), long dormant, bursts into smoke and flame again*. The last inhabitants of Ithilien flee over Anduin.
- 2956 Aragorn meets Gandalf and their *great* friendship begins.

Year Event

- 2957-80 Aragorn undertakes his great journeys and errandries, *even far into the East and deep into the South, exploring the purposes of Sauron and all his movements*. As Thorongil he serves in disguise both Thengel of Rohan and Ecthelion II of Gondor. *Because of his high race, the noblest among mortal men, his fostering by Elrond, and his learning from Mithrandir, and his many deeds and journeys he becomes the most hardy of Men, both Elvenwise and skilled in craft and lore*.
- 2968 Birth of Frodo.
- 2976 Denethor weds Finduilas *daughter of Adrahil, prince of Dol Amroth*.
- 2977 Bain son of Bard becomes King of Dale.
- 2978 Birth of Boromir son of Denethor II.
- 2980 Aragorn, *returning on a time to Rivendell from perils on the borders of Mordor*, enters Lórien and there meets again Arwen Undómiel. *He is now a mighty man and she returns his love*. Aragorn gives her the ring of Barahir, and they plight their troth upon the hill of Cerin Amroth *in Lórien*. About this time Gollum reaches the confines of Mordor and becomes acquainted with Shelob. Théoden becomes King of Rohan.
- 2983 Faramir son of Denethor born. Birth of Samwise.
- 2984 Death of Ecthelion II. Denethor II becomes *the twenty-sixth* Steward of Gondor.
- 2988 Finduilas dies young.
- 2989 *In the spring of this year Balin with Óin and Ori and other folk* leaves Erebor and enters Moria.
- 2991 Éomer Éomund's son born in Rohan. *His mother was Théodwyn youngest sister of Théoden*.
- 2994 Balin perishes, and the dwarf-colony is destroyed.
- 2995 Éowyn sister of Éomer born.
- c. 3000 The shadow of Mordor lengthens *and creeps over the lands, and the hearts of all the folk in the Westlands are darkened*. *About this time it is thought that Saruman dared to use the palantir of Orthanc, but became ensnared by Sauron, who has the Ithil Stone (captured long ago by the Nazgûl)*. He becomes a traitor to the Council *and his friends; but still schemes to acquire power for himself and searches all the more eagerly for the One Ring*. His spies report that the Shire is being closely guarded by the Rangers.

Year Event

- 3001 Bilbo's farewell feast *in Hobbiton; he vanishes from the Shire. He undertakes some journeys and a visit to Erebor.* Gandalf *at last* suspects his ring, *which Bilbo has handed on to his kinsman and heir, Frodo*, to be the One Ring. The guard on the Shire is doubled. Gandalf *begins to explore the history of Bilbo's Ring; he* seeks for news of Gollum and calls for Aragorn's help.
- 3002 Bilbo becomes a guest of Elrond and settles in Rivendell.
- 3004 Gandalf visits Frodo in the Shire, and does so at intervals, *to observe Frodo*, during the next four years.
- 3007 Brand son of Bain becomes King in Dale. Death of Gilraen.
- 3008 In the autumn Gandalf pays his last visit to Frodo.
- 3009 Gandalf and Aragorn renew their hunt for Gollum at intervals during the next eight years, searching in the vales of Anduin, Mirkwood, and Rhovanion to the confines of Mordor. At some time during these years Gollum himself ventured into Mordor, and was captured by Sauron. Elrond sends for Arwen, and she returns to Imladris; the *Misty* Mountains and all lands eastward are becoming dangerous.
- 3017 Gollum is released from Mordor. He is taken by Aragorn in the Dead Marshes, and brought to Thranduil in Mirkwood. Gandalf visits Minas Tirith and reads the scroll of Isildur.

Commentary

The pages refer, if not explicitly stated otherwise, to the twelfth volume of The History of Middle-earth, *The People of Middle-earth (PoMe)*. The Tale of the Years of the Third Age from *PoMe* is abbreviated to *ToY_PoMe*, *The Tale of the Years of the Third Age* from *The Lord of the Rings* to *ToY_LotR*.

Year 2: see p. 177, Year 3441. The addition summarizes the events described in the chapter 'The Council of Elrond'. Isildur's last deeds and passing.

In 'The Council of Elrond' Boromir speaks about Isildur dying before this Age of the World started. Tolkien's conception originally intended to place the death of Isildur in the last year of the SA. So for a time Boromir was correct, and may very well refer to the outdated version in the text. Tolkien might have overlooked this. But it also can be interpreted as an illustration of the decay of Gondor under the Stewards where historical education is concerned.

Year 3: For this and all further amendments I draw on the second version of 'The Tale of the Years of the Third Age' from 'The Peoples of Middle-earth'. See *PoMe* p. 227-8 TA Year 1.

As Isildur was slain in this version in the SA I omitted the repetition about the fact that his three eldest sons were slain as well.

Year 10: see, p. 228, Year 10. The amendment is merely a precision of Valandil's home. As Annúminas becomes deserted pretty early in the history of the Northern Kingdom, I felt obliged to explicitly state that its first King actually did live there.

Years 109, 130, 241: See p. 234, Year 2300. Elrond's wedding is set into the Year 2300 TA in this version. The entry is much longer, and goes on length about the fate of Elrond's children, but as the children get their entries in the *ToY_LotR* it seems improper to talk about them in the entry about Elrond's wedding.

Year 420: See p. 228, Years 420-30.

Minor addition. The entry refers to an enlargement of Minas Anor, probably meaning the building of more (dwelling) houses within the walls, as it seems unlikely to assume that Ostoher reshaped the complete city into the likeness (ring walls etc.) we are accustomed with from the *The Lord of the Rings*. At least the First Wall (the outermost) must have been built in the founding years of Gondor in the SA.

Year 490: See p. 228, Year 490. Minor addition. Clarification about Gondor's problems with eastern invaders.

Year 500: See p. 228, Year 500. Minor amendment. The habit of the Gondorian Kings to choose surnames in case of (great) victories and conquests is first mentioned.

Year 541: See p. 228, Year 541. Minor addition. The outcome of the new strife between Gondor and the Easterlings is revealed. Also the son of Rómendacil I is mentioned by name.

Year 830: Addition about Falastur's queen, Berúthiel. The short outline Christopher Tolkien gives us in *Unfinished Tales* about her history does not mention Umbar, but Tolkien stated in an interview with New Worlds in November 1966 that 'she was a Black Númenórean in origin, I guess' which makes it likely that Falastur—being the first of Gondor's famous ship-kings—made her acquaintance when making first official contacts with the various other Númenórean colonies in the South. About this time there are no reports about hostilities between Gondor and Umbar, so it's really possible that there could be an arranged or love marriage between a King of Gondor and a Umbarean noble-woman with pure Númenórean descent. Especially if Falastur's original intentions were on trade with rather than to conquer the former Númenórean colonies at the southern coasts of Middle-earth. It is confirmed that Berúthiel is of Black Númenórean origin, but it is my decision to make her an Umbarean noble-woman. This

is most likely I guess, as Umbar is the greatest known Black Númenórean colony to survive, and if a King of Gondor of this time is going to look for a bride outside of Gondor, she would have to be of pure-blooded Númenórean descent and to be born into a powerful family. Thus Umbar would be the logical choice. But it is my conjecture, nothing confirmed by Tolkien. We have one snippet hinting against such an “Umbarean” interpretation (but still fitting with her supposed descent as a noblewoman of pure Númenórean heritage from a surviving southern colony) in UT where it is said that she was last seen on a ship flying “past Umbar”.

Whether this can be seen as a return to her home south of Umbar or only a story of a disappearance into the unknown cannot be said for sure. The “Umbarean” version would also fit nicely with the fact that King Eärnil I conquered Umbar twenty years after Falastur’s death. If Berúthiel returned to Umbar after the King exiled her, or if the Umbareans learned how the King and the people of Gondor mistreated her, the relationship between Gondor and Umbar most certainly rapidly deteriorated.

Year 861: See p. 228, Year 861. Major addition. Arnor is split up in the separate Realms of Arthedain, Cardolan, and Rhudaur. Their respective borders are roughly mentioned. Anúminas is deserted. This may be due to a civil-strife in the wake of the split-up of the realms, or because to avoid a deadly civil war all successor realms gave up their claims to the former capital of Arnor, whose continued occupation would be a strong symbol for claim to the united crown. The split of Arnor may also be seen as a move to avoid an impending civil war between different factions supporting different claimants to the crown. Following this line, Arnor took another approach in such a situation than Gondor, where the path of an all-out civil war was chosen. The Kings of Arthedain

(consisting of the elder line of King Eärendur) no longer are styled officially in Quenya but in Sindarin. Interesting is the establishment of the friendship between Círdan and Arthedain at this early point. Apparently the Dúnedain and Lindon did not only ally against Angmar later on, but were relatively close during the whole time.

c. 1000: See p. 228-9, Year c. 1000. This is a long text repeating stuff about the Istari from the introduction above. As I don’t want to repeat myself I made no amendments here despite—of course—mentioning that the Istari arrived about this year in Middle-earth.

Year 1050: See p. 229, c. 1000. Additions about the first mentioning of the Hobbits. This is drawn from the entry for ‘c. 1000’, but as it is a separate entry in the *ToY_LotR*, it needs to be here. It is interesting that both the Shadow on Greenwood and the expansion of Men are given as reasons for the start of their wanderings.

c. 1100: See p. 229, c. 1100. Minor precision about the position of Dol Guldur. In *ToY_PoMe* the Wise do not yet draw a conclusion after they discover the stronghold. It is merely stated that the Wise do not know for sure that ‘this was the shadow of Sauron himself’. But from *ToY_LotR* we do know that the Wise concluded that the shadow of Dol Guldur must be one of the Nazgûl. I moulded this into a synthesis: The Wise did not yet suspect that Sauron as in Dol Guldur, and therefore concluded that there had to be one of the Nazgûl.

c. 1150: See p. 229, c. 1150. Minor geographic amendments concerning the wanderings of the Hobbit tribes.

c. 1050-1150 [new entry]: Zenith of Gondor’s power

c. 1200 [new entry]: See p. 229, c. 1200. Under Atanatar Alcarin Gondor enjoys great wealth and splendour, but first small hints for its decline can be felt before the king’s death (taken from Appendix A).

Year 1248 [new entry]: New entry about the reign of Minalcar and his victories

in the East. I derived this from Appendix A,

Year 1250 [new entry]: New entry about Valacar being sent to Rhovanion.

This is important as a cause for the later Kin-strife

Year 1255 [new entry]: The Argonath are built and the line of the Anduin is fortified against the Easterlings.

c. 1300: See p. 229-30, Year c. 1300 and p. 230, Year c. 1350. I stick to the founding year of Angmar as it is given in *TOY_LotR*. Appendix A states that Angmar was founded ‘in the beginning of the reign of Malvegil’ who became King in 1272 TA, so one could argue that ‘c. 1300’ might be too late a date to fit with this quote as Malvegil died already in 1349 TA (setting the ‘c. 1300’ almost in the middle of Malvegil’s reign). But in my opinion this vague date entries work as a way to summarize certain developments which either took more than a year to unfold, or were not conclusively nailed down by later historians. After all, we have to keep in mind that the Witch-king mostly likely did not formally announce to the Dúnedain that he had set up a realm in their vicinity to attack them. If Angmar was founded rather stealthily, the Dúnedain might only have guessed the exact year of its founding.

ToY_PoMe sets 50 years between the founding of Angmar and the settling of the Hobbits in Bree. *ToY_LotR* has only one entry for those events, therefore I had to stuff everything into one entry.

Year 1356: See p. 230, Year 1356 and Year c. 1400. *ToY_PoMe* separates the death of Argeleb [1356 TA] from the wanderings of the Stooks [c. 1400]. I included a sentence of my own here to clarify the political situation between the Dúnedain realms and Angmar: *‘In secret Rhudaur was in alliance with the evil realm of Angmar’*. Without this amendment it would not have been revealed that the Witch-king was behind Rhudaur’s actions.

It is interesting that only Cardolan and Rhudaur were openly involved in

the conflict which lead to Argeleb's death. It seems that the three realms were no longer on friendly terms—if they were ever—and the Witch-king of course tried to strengthen these ill feelings before establishing/revealing himself and Angmar as a true power. In later years Cardolan becomes more of an ally of Arthedain whereas Rhudaur ends up under Angmar's thumb.

Year 1409: See p. 430, Year 1409. The war and the destruction of the Tower of Amon Sûl are summarized in detail. In *ToY_PoMe* Rhudaur is only conquered by Angmar here: '(...) and overwhelms the petty realms of Cardolan and Rhudaur'. But this outright contradicts *ToY_LotR* and parts of Appendix A. In addition there is mentioned a civil war among the Dúnedain of the North (probably meaning internecine warfare), but since the last of the Dúnedain of Rhudaur are supposed to have already been expelled by this time, this does no longer fit. Therefore I changed things so that only the petty realm of Cardolan is overwhelmed by Angmar in this entry. Once again I ended a phrase '(...) *which was in alliance with the Witch-king* (...)'

to make the political situation more clear. More important additions include the detailed circumstances which provoked the Kin-strife in Gondor. I changed 'of an alien king of the North-men of Anduin' into '*of an alien king of Rhovanion*', as we know from later drafts that the said daughter originated there.

Year 1432: See p. 230-1, Year 1432.

There is no mention of 'other descendants of Atanatar the Glorious' in *ToY_LotR*; only Castamir's heritage is outlined in Appendix A: 'grandson of Calimehtar, younger brother of Rómendacil II'. Of course, Castamir thus also descends from Atanatar. I included this phrase because it seems convincing that lesser branches of Atanatar's line would value the purity of the blood more than other members of the Royal House. Castamir's supporters thus might

have been members of other Atanataric cadet branches. I added a line about Castamir and his heritage in this entry to mention the Usurper's name already in that year.

Years 1437, 1447 and 1448: See p. 231, Year 1432. Minor amendments all drawn from long entry 1432.

Year 1601: See p. 231, Year 1601. Detailed additions concerning the coming of the Hobbits to the Shire. It is interesting that it was formerly private property of the Kings of Arthedain. Is that the explanation why it is called 'the Shire'?

Year 1634: See p. 231, Year 1634. The great-grandsons of Castamir Angamaitë and Sangahyando are called by name. In older versions they were originally Castamir's grandsons.

Year 1636: See p. 231, Year 1636. Small additions concerning the Great Plague. The Plague only reaches the North and West in 1640 TA in *ToY_PoMe*. Hobbits don't suffer much there.

Year 1640: See p. 231, Year 1640. Minor amendments. No relevant difference to *ToY_LotR*.

Year 1700 [new entry]: See p. 231, Year 1700. I deem the separate mentioning of the return of 'evil things' to Mordor important. This shows the immediate consequences of the abandonment of guards at its borders. Interesting is the ceasing of communication between Arthedain and Gondor. The *palantír* of Osgiliath was lost two centuries ago, it cannot be the main cause. And Gondor could still reach the Northern stones via the Orthanc stone. But I admit that talking through the *palantíri* via a mediator in Isengard sounds tedious and annoying, though exactly this was done later in the succession crisis after Ondoher's death (see below). On the other hand, the older conception included the destruction of the great *palantír* of Amon Sûl in 1409 TA. This could explain things. The essay 'The Palantíri' in *UT* confirms that the stones were used (most likely via the Guardian of the Orthanc-stone at Isengard) to talk about

the line of succession after the death of King Ondoher. Thus we have to assume that the fact that the stone of Osgiliath made the use of the stones to communicate with the North only more complicated and not impossible. It is likely that the warden of the Orthanc-stone communicated directly with the Arnorian stones and then relayed the information to the Anor-stone's warden.

Year 1810: Added the reference that Castamir's last descendants are killed in this war.

Year 1851: Minor additions about the attacks of the Wainriders on Gondor. I further included completely new information about a war between King Araval of Arthedain and Angmar from the drafts on Appendix A ('The Heirs of Elendil' from *PoMe*). There is no other source on this conflict, but it is problematic to assume that there were no major hostilities between Angmar and the last Dúnedan kingdom for over 500 years (especially after the Witch-king loosed two major invasions only 50 years apart early in Angmar's existence (TA 1356 and 1409 respectively) and sat idle for more than the next five and half centuries. So I gladly accept this source, especially as this attack coincides with the Wainraider invasion of Gondor, which finally could be one of the clues the Dúnedain needed to deduce that their enemies somehow seemed to coordinate their attacks on the two kingdoms.

Tolkien's remark that a re-occupation or –settlement of Cardolan by Araval is foiled by the terror of the Barrow-wights should be seen that this important region for communication (in the heart of old Arnor) is now barred. Other regions of Cardolan are of course not affected due to their remote location from the Barrow-wights, but communication with them and their supply probably is impractical given Arthedain's limited resources and the inaccessibility of the best springboard (the Barrow-downs) for re-settlement.

- Year 1856: Addition from Appendix A about the return of the Nazgûl to Mordor. It makes sense to include this in the ToY as the (suspected) movements of the Ringwraiths are very important for the history of Middle-earth.
- Year 1899: See p. 232, Year 1850 and 1899. Minor changes.
- Year 1940: See p. 232, Year 1940. The fact that the two Kingdoms, which formerly used *palantíri* to talk to each other had to use ridden carriers is not necessarily a sign of their decline. They still used the *palantíri*, but to discuss the perilous situation of both kingdoms and the dangerous conclusions behind it, it makes sense that some representatives of both kingdoms actually met somewhere, maybe at Isengard, which would also have been the perfect place for King Ondoher to officially deliver his daughter into the care of her new husband, Prince Arvedui.
- Year 1944: See p. 232, Year 1944, 1960. Details about the end of the direct line of Ondoher. *ToY_PoMe* has an interregnum by the Steward Pelendur. Eärnil receives the Crown only in 1960 TA. In *ToY_PoMe* Eärnil does not achieve a double victory over the invaders.
- Year 1945: See p. 232, Year 1944, 1969. More details about the decline of Arvedui's claim to the throne of Gondor.
- Year 1974: See p. 232, Year 1974. Report about the end of the Northern Kingdom. I stick to the story of the conquest and occupation of Fornost by the Witch-king. *ToY_PoMe* has the forces of Angmar destroy the capital of Arthedain, which contradicts Appendix A. Mentioning of the not-yet-destroyed *palantír* of Amon Sûl, as *ToY_PoMe* contradicts *ToY_LotR* in this point.
- Year 1975: See p. 232, Year 1975. Fall of Angmar and escape of the Witch-king. Unfortunately there is no mention of Glorfindel's prophecy to be found.
- Year 1976: See p. 232-3, Year 1976. Additions concerning the Dúnedain in the North, most importantly about the subsequent use of the royal prefix Ar(a) within the names of the chieftains. The fact that it is explicitly stated that the Shire-folk sent archers to Fornost is somewhat problematic, as one should have to assume that the Witch-king should have thus learned about the existence of the Hobbits. On the other hand, the mere fact that he ruled a realm for over half a millennium in the North, during which time he certainly gathered more than enough intelligence of the remaining Dúnadan realm of Arthedain should have brought the inhabitants of the Shire to his attention. The Prologue of the LotR is ambiguous about this matter, but I think we have reason enough that both the Kings of Arthedain pressed the Hobbits to support their struggle for survival, and that the Hobbits dutifully gave any assistance they could provide.
- Year 1979: See p. 232-3, Year 1976. The heritage of the Oldbucks is nailed down to Bucca.
- Year 1980: See p. 233, Years 1980-2000. I added minor details concerning the Nazgûl. A little bit more about the Balrog of Moria (including a mentioning of Thangorodrim), and a theory why it was woken by the Dwarves. In *ToY_PoMe* there is only one combined entry about the years 1980-2000 TA.
- Year 1981: Reference added that Galadriel and Celeborn return to Lórien (taken from *UT*).
- Year 2000: See p. 233, Years 1980-2000. The addition and '*and folk flee from Ithilien in terror*' may be somewhat problematic as Ithilien remained populated after Sauron returned to Mordor in the last century of the third millennium (until 2954 TA). But there can't be any doubt that the siege of Minas Ithil triggered a huge exodus out of the Ithil-vale and the regions of Ithilien close by. Especially after the people of Ithilien realized that Minas Anor would not be able to end the siege by sending fresh troops. We should really imagine Ithilien as a closely populated region, especially the Ithil-vale. Gondor was able to uphold its guard on Mordor for centuries. I doubt that would have been possible if people would not have been willing to live close to the vicinity of the Ephel Dúath. Addition about Fram slaying the dragon Scatha. This is entirely made up by me. Since we knew that Frumgar led the Éothéod into the northern Vale of Anduin in the TA 1977, we can deduce that Fram's heroic deed had to be placed some time around the year 2000. Apparently ICE also decided that this happened in this year, so I stick to that, as there is no source in Tolkien's work known to me which contradicts it.
- Year 2002: See p. 233, Years 1980-2000 and c. 2000. I added the re-naming of Minas Ithil into Minas Morgul. The mentioning of Saruman is somewhat problematic, as the fact that he is in Gondor at this particular time is closely linked to the fact that he gets the Keys of Orthanc from King Eärnil in *ToY_PoMe*. But I feel that the Istari in general and Saruman in particular are vastly under-represented in the entries of the ToY (one really gets the impression they did pretty much nothing for more than two millennia), so I gladly jumped on the opportunity to include Saruman here. I myself added the phrase that Saruman merely 'returned of one of his travels into the East' to make it possible for him to do other long travels, as he has not yet settled in Isengard. In any case, we have to assume that Saruman is back in the north-west some 400 years later, as he certainly would not have been chosen Chairman of the White Council *in absentia*.
- Year 2043: See p. 233, Year 2043. I added only minor details.
- Year 2050: See p. 233-4, Year 2050. I added exhaustive details about the death of Eärnur and amended exhaustive details about the Rule of the Stewards.

Year 2060: See p. 234, Year 2060. This continues the problem back from entry ‘c. 1100’. We know that it is canonical that the Wise concluded about that time that whichever power dwelled in Dol Guldur could only be a Nazgûl. As I have already told, in *ToY_PoMe* the Wise don’t draw a conclusion of any sort at this time. They merely note that there is some kind of Dark Power in Dol Guldur. It is only in 2060 TA that the Elves in general start to fear in *ToY_PoMe* that a Ringwraith might dwell in Dol Guldur, whereas Gandalf and Elrond in particular start to fear it might be Sauron himself, slowly taking on shape yet again. To uphold my synthesis from ‘c. 1100’ I had to reformulate the entry into ‘The Wise *deem yet that the Power there is one of these*’, inserting a ‘yet’ to stretch the point that this is no new conclusion. Most interesting and illuminating is the phrase ‘*The fear of the Ringwraiths or Nazgûl spreads far and wide*’, as it implies that Sauron’s original plan did not intend for the Nazgûl to sit quietly in Minas Morgul, but that he really intended to use the captured stronghold as a stepping stone and base to attack and destroy the remaining Dúnadan Kingdom, especially as—to his knowledge at this time—both royal lines were ended. It was only due to Gandalf’s visit and apparent show of force (which likely greatly surprised and intimidated Sauron), as he was not yet fully embodied (or not yet in full power), so that he had to retreat into the East, and to postpone his plans concerning the conquest of the West until—as it turned out—the end of the Third Age. The inactivity of the Nazgûl during the time of the Watchful Peace and beyond certainly was caused by Sauron’s absence and/or his explicit orders to keep a low profile until the strength of the West had waned even more, and he himself become more powerful (both personally and as commander of vast armies). See ‘*During that time the Nazgûl never again appeared in visible*

shape beyond the walls of Minas Morgul’ in the very next entry.

Year 2063: See p. 234, Year 2063.

There we have the entry which motivated to conduct this whole tedious business: ‘*But Sauron is aware of him [Gandalf]; and being not yet grown to great power, he fears the eyes of Gandalf and the strength of the Wise, and he deserts Dol Guldur and hides in the East again for a while.*’ I was really annoyed that Tolkien omitted these few words about the confrontation between Gandalf and Sauron at this time from the *ToY_LotR*. This stresses the point that Sauron was yet to weak to hope to surely win a personal confrontation between himself and the Istar Gandalf the Grey (which also hints that his new body was not yet as strong as he desired—see Tolkien’s thoughts on the corporeal forms of the *eälar* in Letter #200).

The so-called Watchful Peace is also interesting. It is really a stalemate in the Cold War between the returning Sauron and the West, as pretty much nothing happened in these 400 years (see the few entries during this time).

Year 2340: See p. 235, Year 2340. I made amendments concerning Isumbras I, being the first Thain of the Shire of the Took, and how the office remained in that line.

Year 2460: See p. 235, Year 2460. I added details on the end of the Watchful Peace and the return of Sauron to Dol Guldur. Obviously it’s important that Sauron ‘*gathers all evil things under his rule*’, especially in association with the entry ‘c. 2480’.

Year 2463: See p. 235, Year 2463; p. 233, c. 2000. I added much about the Founding of the White Council and its purpose which is ‘*(...) to unite and direct the forces of the West, in resistance to the shadow*’. This conjectures that the White Council was not supposed to be some kind of talking shop (as it appears later on) but a real operational center to plan and conduct united military campaigns of the West against Sauron. Unfortunately we have no evidence of connections between the White Council (which

consisted only of Istari and High Elves, it seems) and the Stewards of Gondor of this time. But I gather that there were some talks between them, and those most likely involved Saruman. It is entirely possible (and plausible) that Saruman and/or Gandalf had their fair share in the development of the events that lead to the oath between Cirion and Eorl. Galadriel’s wish, Gandalf may pre-empt over the Council, is explicitly stated within *The Lord of the Rings* in ‘The Mirror of Galadriel’.

It is also interesting that Saruman became the Chairman of the Council because he was most familiar with the arts of the Enemy. This can be taken as further clue that Saruman might have been in Gondor about 2000 TA, as the easiest way to study, for instance, the Nazgûl would have been to be close to them during their siege and conquest of Minas Ithil and the subsequent years. It’s good to know that his interest in the Rings of Power started about this time. So he was not obsessed with this stuff during all his life in Middle-earth.

Year 2470: See p. 233, c. 2010?. A few details about the banishment of Sméagol and his retreat into the caves of the Hithaeglir. This happened in *ToY_PoMe*, which also might explain Gollum’s intimate knowledge about the Witch-king and Minas Morgul in the *LotR*. If he had already lived around this time, he most likely would have heard many stories about its Fall.

Year 2475: See p. 235, Year 2475. I added details about the War of Gondor with the Uruk-hai. The mentioning of a second flight of people from Ithilien in *ToY_PoMe* is important, as it indicates that Tolkien never intended to make Ithilien a depopulated wilderness this early in the Third Age.

c. 2480: See p. 235, c. 2480. The entry within *ToY_LotR* is very cut down. The fact that the Orcs could secretly conquer many ancient dwarf-cities in the Misty Mountains is, in my opinion, the cause of the abduction of

- Celebrían in the next entry. The Elves would not have been that careless if they had knowledge about the expansion of the Orcs in the Misty Mountains. Sauron's goal was to get the Hithaeglr firmly under his control. Sending his minions into deserted settlements was only a small part of this plan.
- c. 2500 [new entry]: New entry about repeated attacks from Easterlings from Rhovanion on Gondor. Source for this is Appendix A.
- Year 2509: See p. 235-6, Year 2509. I added details about the assault on Celebrían. In *ToY_LotR* she is only saved by her sons. As there is no other evidence whatsoever that Elrond should have been there, too, I did not include him as a member of the rescue team. He is mentioned though as healing Celebrían's wounds.
- Year 2510: see p. 236, Year 2510. Input from Christian Eberle enabled me to include the information on the cause of Celebrían's passing from Middle-earth (source: *ToY_PoMe*). Exhaustive details about the Battle on the Fields of Celebrant. I added the presence of Elladan and Elrohir there, although they are not mentioned elsewhere (as far as I can remember right now). Nonetheless, their Orc-hatred is rather fresh at this time, and as they continue to participate in nearly every campaign against the Orcs until the end of the Third Age, it seems proper for them to be there.
- Years 2569/70: See p. 236, Years 2569/70. Minor additions.
- Year 2620 [new entry]: See p. 236, Year 2620. Year of birth of Isengrim II.
- Year 2698: See p. 236, Year 2698. Amendments considering the rebuilding of the (so-called) White Tower of Ecthelion.
- Year 2740 [new entry]: New entry about Orcish attacks on Eriador during the time of Arassuil. Sources are both 'The Heirs of Elendil' in *PoMe* and Appendix A.
- Years 2745-48 [new entry]: Continuation of the entry above.
- Year 2747: See p. 236, Year 2747. I added more details on the Battle on the Greenfields. Explicit mentioning of the Orc-chief Golfimbul.
- c. 2750 [new entry]: New entry about the end of the Orcish attacks on Eriador.
- Year 2758: See p. 236, Year 2758-59. Minor amendments.
- Year 2758-59 [new entry]: I created a new entry for the Long Winter, but added nothing.
- Year 2759: See p. 237, Year 2763; p. 233, c. 2000. Minor amendments concerning Fréaláf's accession. As Saruman already settled in Isengard about the year 2000 in *ToY_PoMe*, there are no entries found on the desertion of Isengard and the closing of Orthanc. Also there is no mentioning of the *ToY_PoMe* fact that Saruman originally acted as governor of the Stewards.
- Year 2770: See p. 237, Year 2765. Amendments about the disaster at the Lonely Mountain.
- Year 2790: See p. 237, Year 2766. I added more details about the death of Thrór, and the desire of the Dwarves for vengeance; and I personally mention the name 'Azog'.
- Year 2793: See p. 237, Year 2766. A little bit more about the War of the Dwarves with the Orcs.
- Year 2799: See p. 237, Year 2769. Amendments about the Battle in Dimrill Dale. I personally added the name 'Azanulbizar'.
- Year 2802 [new entry]: I created a new entry for the date of Thráin's arrival at the Ered Luin. As Appendix A states that their home was located 'in the east of the Ered Luin beyond the Lune', it is evident that it has to be in the northern part of the Ered Luin rather than in the southern mountains, as else it would not have been 'beyond the Lune'.
- Year 2850: See p. 237, Year 2850. More details about Gandalf's second visit of Dol Guldur, the designs of Sauron, and the death of Thráin.
- Year 2851: See p. 237-8, Year 2851. Amendments about the meeting of the White Council. The fact that it met in Rivendell is derived from 'The Hunt for the Ring' in UT. In *ToY_PoMe* Saruman feigns at this meeting to have conclusive proof about the fate of the One. Also, Isengard is fortified there in the year 2911. But I did stick, of course, to the dates given in *ToY_LotR*.
- Year 2872: See p. 238, Year 2872. I consider 2872 TA to be the canonical year of death of Belecthor II. 2852 TA is only mentioned in *ToY_LotR*; 2872 TA on the other hand in *ToY_PoMe*, all three versions of 'The Heirs of Elendil' and in the published Appendix A of *The Lord of the Rings*. Also, I did a few additions about the death of the White Tree.
- Year 2885: See p. 238, Year 2885. Amendments about the devastation of south Ithilien and the deaths of the twin princes of Rohan in the service of Túrin II.
- Year 2890: See p. 238, Year 2891. In *ToY_PoMe* Bilbo is born in the next year. Minor amendment.
- Year 2901: See p. 238, c. 2880. Additions about the exodus of Ithilien, which happens in *ToY_PoMe* 21 years earlier. Interesting is the mentioning of the Uruks in *ToY_LotR*.
- c. 2905 [new entry]: New entry about the fortification of Cair Andros derived from Appendix A.
- Year 2929: See p. 238, Year 2929. Minor additions.
- Year 2933: See p. 238, Year 2933. More about the death of Arathorn II, and the fate of Aragorn II.
- Year 2939: See p. 238, Year 2911. More additions about Saruman finding out about Sauron's search of the One. The speculation that Sauron might have learned from Orcs about the fate of Isildur I interpret that these Orcs gathered intelligence, not that Sauron talked to survivors/descendants of the very same Orcs that slew Isildur's party. The fate of Isildur may no longer be common knowledge, but it most likely was still a tale known to people of Dúnadan heritage.
- Year 2941: See p. 238-9, Year 2940. In

ToY_PoMe Bilbo's adventure is set in the year 2940 TA. Amendments about the finding of the Ring, the attack of the White Council on Dol Guldur, the death of Smaug, and the Battle of the Five Armies.

Year 2942: See p. 239, Year 2941; p. 239-40, Year 2953. Amendments about Bilbo's and Sauron's return home (to Hobbiton and Mordor, respectively). Sauron only returns to Mordor in the year 2953 TA in *ToY_PoMe*.

Year 2948: See p. 239, Year 2948. Minor addition.

Year 2951: See p. 239-40, Year 2953. Exhaustive amendments. The year 2953 TA combines the years 2951 and 2953 TA in *ToY_PoMe*. Important is the passage about the foundations of Barad-dûr and the short report about Aragorn's first meeting with Arwen Undómiel.

Year 2953: See p. 251, Year 2953.

Amendments about the last meeting of the White Council.

Years 2954/56: See p. 240, Year 2954; Year 2956. Minor amendments.

Years 2957-80: See p. 240, Year 2956. More about Aragorn and his journeys, and the special person he becomes, even among the Dúnedain of the royal line.

Year 2976: See p. 240, Year 2984. Minor addition. *ToY_PoMe* summarizes the events around Denethor in the entry of year 2984.

Year 2980: See p. 240, Year 2980. Amendments about Aragorn's and Arwen's betrothal in Lórien. It is noteworthy that Arwen is only returning Aragorn's love after he becomes a real man physically.

Year 2984: See p. 240, Year 2984. Minor addition.

Year 2989: See p. 240. Addition about Balin's companions on his quest to Moria.

Year 2991: See p. 240. Mentioning the mother of Éomer.

c. 3000: See p. 240-1, c. 3000. Additions about the shadow of Mordor, and Saruman starting to use the *palantír* of Orthanc. In *ToY_PoMe* Saruman knows about Bilbo and Gollum's Ring. But as this is not confirmed elsewhere, I did not include it. It would need us to explain why Sauron did not learn about Gollum and the Ring from Saruman, and thus we also would have to explain why Saruman and/or Sauron did not find the Shire for yet another two decades.

Year 3001: See p. 241, Year 3001. More about Bilbo's disappearance, his journeys afterwards, and about Gandalf's suspicion concerning Bilbo's Ring.

Years 3004/9: See p. 241

Years 3004/16. Minor additions.



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Únati and Axani

The Boundaries of the Possible and the Moral

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Fantasy roleplaying games set in Tolkien's Middle-earth face many peculiarities. Especially the things doable by magic are always hotly debated. If a GM says to his players, that a certain thing is not possible, then a standard reply is "it's magic/a magical world", so why shouldn't it?

For genuine Fantasy RPG worlds, things might be otherwise, but for Tolkien's Middle-earth, there are certain limits even to magic. Unfortunately, the Professor did not publish these in a comprehensive form.

OM co-editor Neville Percy has taken on the task of assembling all the relevant passages that deal with what is possible with magic—and especially what is not!

A listing of únati was originally posted on www.merp.com. This revision of the material for *Other Minds* adds supporting detail, and further leads into a similar treatment of Eru's axani. The author is grateful for numerous discussions with members of the MERP mailing list (merp@merp.com) and 'Fan Sourcebooks' group at Yahoo! Groups. The views—and any errors—presented in this essay remain his own.



The High Elves of JRR Tolkien's Middle-earth, in their Quenya tongue, call "únati" those things impossible by the 'laws of nature' which constrain all of existence within the Circles of the World. That some things are truly impossible within Eä, even to those who command the greatest powers of magic, is proven by the inability even of Melkor Morgoth himself to defy certain unshakeable laws of Eru Ilúvatar's creation.

The Art of the Possible

Everyone is familiar with the regular laws of ordinary nature—the laws of physics if you will. 'Magic' is special partly because it transcends those laws, which evokes a sense of wonder in itself, and partly because the way in which it transcends them is not fully explained or understood, but always has a degree of mystique to it. Tolkien's success in creating a rich fantasy world containing credible magic was partly due to the way he avoided constraining it with 'mechanical' details of magic or discussing any 'laws of magic' with the sort of familiarity we have for the laws of nature. He once wrote:

[...] the fundamental literary dilemma [is that a] story must be told or there'll be no story, yet it is the untold stories that are most moving.

—Letters, §96^d

and:

Part of the attraction of The L.R. is, I think, due to the glimpses of a large history in the background: an attraction like that of viewing far off an unvisited island, or seeing the towers of a distant city gleaming in a sunlit mist. To go there is to destroy the magic, unless new unattainable vistas are again revealed. —Letters, §247²

By this I think he meant that the sense of wonder at the magical is destroyed if it is subjected to too close a scrutiny or too scientific an analysis, allowing it to become too familiar. And yet if Tolkien's sense of magic inspires gamers "to go there" and tell a story that engages directly with that magic—instead of only ever experiencing it as semi-aware spectators like the hobbit narrators of *LotR*—then we *must* risk identifying what magic can and cannot do, and therefore demystifying it to some degree. But despite "going there" we can hope that "unattainable vistas" will still exist. In telling stories of magic we may hope to glimpse greater stories beyond that still remain untold.

q

Tolkien clearly did not see magic as being infinitely powerful or able to transcend any law of nature. His writings maintain a sense of internal consistency in the way some things remain definite—even for wizards!

Fantasy [...] does not destroy or even insult Reason; and it does not either blunt the appetite for, nor obscure the perception of, scientific verity. On the contrary. The keener and the clearer is the reason, the better fantasy will it make. [...] For creative Fantasy is founded upon the hard recognition that things are so in the world as it appears under the sun; on a recognition of fact, but not a slavery to it.

—*Fantasy, On Fairy-Stories*³

In “On Fairy-Stories” Tolkien explained that in order to make an imaginary land (and the story that takes place within it) believable, the Secondary World must have the “inner consistency of reality.” The more a Secondary World differs from our Primary one, the more difficult it becomes to keep it credible. It demands “a kind of elvish craft.”

—*Introduction, Atlas of M-e*⁴

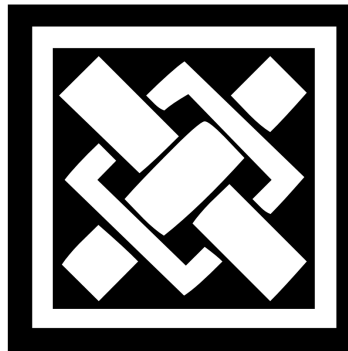
A goal in writing or roleplaying with Middle-earth magic is therefore to “go closer” without destroying the very thing we seek: to try to experience what it’s like to wield magic that defies the laws of ordinary nature, without defying the laws of magic implicit in Tolkien’s work. And of course the elves see no distinction between the laws of ordinary nature and the laws of magic; this is a limitation only in the experience and understanding of Men.

In deciding what is possible with ‘magic’, the commonest position is to work only with the magic seen in the ‘canon’ of Tolkien’s own primary texts, which are of course guaranteed not to break his implicit laws of magic. (They may still exceed the canon in degree, if they allow wide access to, or easy use of, magics only exhibited by the Great, only in the First Age, etc.). And yet limiting magic to the canon remains artificial as the primary texts cannot have included all possible magic.

I feel it is better not to state everything and indeed it is more realistic, since in chronicles and accounts of ‘real’ history, many facts that some enquirer would like to know are omitted, and the truth has to be discovered or guessed from such evidence as there is.

—*Letters, §268*⁵

It is important to the goal of “going there” to identify to what extent we can extrapolate from the examples of ‘magic’ in the primary texts to establish what is possible without “insulting Reason” or undermining the “inner consistency of reality” of Middle-earth. This will always be a live topic of discussion but, to come at it from the other direction, there is considerable evidence as to what magic is not, and what is not possible even with magic. Understanding what is impossible may help to focus the ongoing discussions of the possible.



The Únati

The outer limits of the laws of magic ultimately define what feats might be possible to magicians, beyond those attested in the primary sources. No power of magic can encompass anything that is “únat”, as even Melkor Morgoth discovered to his immense and existential fury. The Quenya word “únat”, plural “únati”, is presented in the essay *Ósanwe-kenta*, where Tolkien gives us—in the words of the pre-eminent loremaster, Pengolodh—the following discussion.

There is indeed no axan that the barrier [of unwill] should not be forced, for it is únat, a thing impossible to be or to be done, and the greater the force exerted, the greater the resistance of the unwill. But it is an axan universal that none shall directly by force or indirectly by fraud take from another what he has a right to hold and keep as his own.

Melkor [would] abolish (for himself) all únati if he could. Indeed in his beginning and the days of his great might the most ruinous of his violences came from his endeavour so to order Eä that there were no limits or obstacles to his will. But this he could not do. The únati remained, a perpetual reminder of the existence of Eru and His invincibility, a reminder also of the coexistence with himself of other beings (equal in descent if not in power) impregnable by force. From this proceeds his unceasing and unappeasable rage.

—*Ósanwe-kenta*⁶

So we have an authentic Middle-earth term for an impossibility, but only a single únat is identified in that essay! Seeking to discover or guess at further únati through investigation of Tolkien’s works faces the problem that it is famously impossible to prove a negative, the absence of evidence for something not being evidence of its absence. But this article’s listing of proposed únati has undergone extended comparison against Tolkien’s works; anything which breaks with these únati probably introduces an inconsistency with his vision of Arda.

Those únati that have been identified to the great and the Wise—brought into Middle-earth chiefly by the Noldor Exiles who would have learnt them at the feet of the Valar themselves—might be codified along the lines of the following ‘Laws of Magic’. Not all, even of the Wise, necessarily know and understand all the únati or all their ramifications. Indeed it is likely that many a magician’s ‘life’s work’ was committed to seeking magical powers that were in fact impossible, along the same lines as the Númenóreans’ efforts to increase their

And the deceits of the Enemy may include the appearance of transcending the *únati*, to intimidate folk with pretended power, as in the Witch-king's feigning to raise the dead princes of Cardolan as barrow-wights, or to tempt ambitious men down his dark paths. There are rich gaming possibilities if an adventure can combine lore-seekers' discovery of the hidden truths of Eä with exposing deceits to confound the plots of the Dark Religion.

Q

Nothing Can Be Created out of Nothing, Nor Can Anything Be Truly Destroyed

No power within Arda allows the creation or destruction of anything: matter, energy or spirit, for the Flame Imperishable is with Eru alone.

No true 'Creation' or 'Destruction'

This is Eä's Law of the Conservation of Energy. Any magic that seems to create or destroy must in fact be achieved by the "sub-creative" processes of converting, transforming, shaping or reshaping something which already exists in some form.

Melkor could not, of course, 'annihilate' anything of matter, he could only ruin or destroy or corrupt the forms given to matter by other minds in their sub-creative activities.

—*Myths Transformed, HoMe10*⁷

Energy cannot come from nowhere. The interconversion of matter and energy may be possible with magic, but the cost is punitive.

GANDALF: "I must have something to work on. I cannot burn snow."

— *The Ring Goes South, FotR*

Spirits, *ëalar* or *fëar*, can be created only by Eru but *may* have some leeway to

hive off more or less autonomous entities. This might be suggested by the black sword, Anglachel, in which "the dark heart of [Eöl] the smith still dwells",⁸ by Aghan the Drúadan's animation of 'the Faithful Stone'⁹ and by Sauron's investing the large part of his will into the Ruling Ring.

Spirits also cannot be annihilated: only reduced to a level of impotence from which they cannot recover by their own action (but could still conceivably do so if power were given to them by an external source).

The fëa is indestructible, a unique identity which cannot be disintegrated or absorbed into any other identity.

— *Commentary on the Athrabeth, HoMe10*¹⁰

Nothing Can Pass the Walls of the World

No power exists to summon up any being, matter, energy or spirit from any other plane of existence, nor to banish such from this world into any other, save by Eru's will.

No Extraplanar Communication, Conjunction* or Abjuration

No magical practice can communicate with, summon, bind or command 'otherworldly' beings other than Maiar, *ëalar* or their fallen counterparts. (And there is an *axan* against compelling the wills of other beings.)

Arda is described as including one or more "other worlds", sometimes collectively called "the Unseen". The "wraith-world" of the Ring and the Ringwraiths, the only example of the Unseen that is ever identified, exists within Arda and shares its dimensions of space and time.

The 'æther' (*Ilmen/Vaiya*) and the 'Void' are merely the furthest reaches of Eä, roughly corresponding to the stratosphere and outer space, and not separate

For they hold that all Creation of any sort must be in Eä, proceeding from Eru in the same way, and therefore of the same Order. They do not believe in contemporaneous non-contiguous worlds except as an amusing fantasy of the mind. They are (say they) either altogether unknowable, even as to whether they are or are not, or else if there are any intersections (however rare) they are only provinces of one Eä.

— *Laws and Customs, HoMe10*¹¹

ethereal or astral planes. The only hint that these places have any denizens is the example of Ungoliant, who is probably 'only' a particularly estranged *Úmaia*.

References to 'hell', 'devilry' etc. do not imply an extraplanar otherworld, but should be seen as the English translations of Middle-earth turns of speech; "hell" is Tolkien's own gloss of the S. "Udûn"¹² deriving from Q. "Utumno", the subterranean stronghold of Morgoth. 'Demon' refers to *Úmaiar*, as the S. *balrog*: "demon of might".¹³

Any 'place' which does not share Arda's dimensions of space and time is in "the Timeless Halls" and may not be reached nor communicated with, even by the mightiest Valar, except by Eru's grace.

[...] many of the greatest and the most fair [of the Ainur], took the leave of Ilúvatar and descended into it [Eä]. But this condition Ilúvatar made, or it is the necessity of their love, that their power should thenceforward be contained and bounded in the World, to be within it forever, until it is complet [...]

— *Ainulindalë, Silm.*

[Manwe] alone of all persons or minds in that time is represented as having the power of direct recourse to and communication with Eru.

— *Myths Transformed, HoMe10*¹⁴

* Sandyman the miller describes Gandalf as a "wandering conjuror" ('A Long-expected Party', p 24) and Butterbur describes Frodo's disappearance as "conjuring" ('At the Sign of the Prancing Pony', p. 158). Neither should be thought to be using the term "conjuror" literally, in its sense of binding spirits with oaths or compelling pacts.

Placement In Time Cannot Be Transcended

It is not possible for any matter, energy or spirit to travel back or forwards in time, save by the normal persistence of its nature. Nor is any communion possible across time.

No Time Travel

There is no time travel in the primary sources on Middle-earth. Outside of those, the “time-travel story” (as Tolkien called it¹⁵), the Notion Club Papers,¹⁶ experimented with perception going back in time. The 20th century lead character developed a meditative means of perceiving the impressions of the past that objects retain, and navigating them back through time—ultimately to learn Númenorean! This meets the Middle-earth canon’s descriptions of things having memories, like the stones of Eregion remembering the Noldor and most explicitly the palantír of Denethor freezing on the image of his fiery suicide.¹⁷ But there is no suggestion that this talent could have been extended to actual interaction with the past.

The future of Middle-earth is not fore-ordained to any within Eä beyond the broad themes of the Ainulindalë, and not even perception can be projected into a future that has not yet come to pass.

“But the Mirror will also show things unbidden, and those are often stranger and more profitable than things which we wish to behold. What you will see, if you leave the Mirror free to work, I cannot tell. For it shows things that were, and things that are, and things that yet may be.”

[...] “Remember that the Mirror shows many things, and not all have yet come to pass. Some never come to be, unless those that behold the visions turn aside from their path to prevent them.

– The Mirror of Galadriel, FotR

When Tolkien refers to things or thoughts “unbidden”, this is his coded way of saying that they come from the

Ainur. (See ‘No Mind Can Know That Which Is Not In It’, below.) So Galadriel’s Mirror is a mighty enchantment indeed: affording a channel of communication between the Valar and those who are worthy of being sent anything.

But as for the Valar themselves, [...] All that was past they could fully perceive; but being in Time the future they could only perceive or explore in so far as its design was made clear to them in the Music, or as each one of them was specially concerned with this or that part of Eru’s design, being His agent or Subcreator. In this way of perception they could foresee none of the acts of the Children [...] they could only deduce likelihood, in the same way as can the Children themselves, though from a far greater knowledge of facts and the contributory events of the past, and with far greater intelligence and wisdom.
– *Myths Transformed, HoMe10*¹⁸

This essay does not address the relationship of the time that has not yet passed within Eä and how its temporality is perceived by Eru Ilúvatar and his host in the “Timeless Halls”. The only certain foreknowledge belongs only to them.

Placement In Eä Cannot Be Transcended

No power exists to cause any being, matter or spirit to be relocated without passing normally through the space between one location and another.

No ‘Teleportation’

It has become a cliché that *LotR* would not have been written if teleportation were possible (or even if the Great Eagles could be commanded by the Free Peoples), as the disposal of the Ring in Mount Doom would not then have required a quest. Even if the prime motive for this is such a story-external ‘metaplot’ consideration, it does not become any less a law of Tolkien’s Secondary World.

Beings of pure spirit are able to

travel ‘very rapidly’, as when Sauron abandoned his Annatar body in the destruction of Númenor and ‘flew’ back to Middle-earth (somehow presumably bringing the Ring with him by telekinesis).

The only things that can transcend the laws of physical space are thought and perception, as in *ósanwë* (“For distance in itself offers no impediment whatever to *ósanwë*”¹⁹) and the various examples of far-seeing with the palantírs, the Mirror of Galadriel etc. As magical powers can also work through such channels—e.g. Saruman’s projecting more than thought, but a weariness of the heart upon the Three Hunters²⁰—it can be argued that ‘magic’ can cause energy to change location without passing through the intervening space.

No Incarnate Can Defy Gravity

No power affords an Incarnate the ability to ‘levitate’ or fly if it cannot do so of its own body.

No Magical Flight

Beings of pure spirit—not Incarnates—are not necessarily constrained to remain at the surface of Arda, and winged creatures may fly upon the airs by natural physical ability (including those who use magic to shift their shape into that of a winged creature). Magical command of the movements of the air itself may also be possible.

‘Magic’ can exert a burst of force at a distance, as when Gandalf the White disarms Gimli and later Denethor:

He lifted up his hand, and in the very stroke, the sword of Denethor flew up and left his grasp and fell behind him in the shadows of the house; and Denethor stepped backward before Gandalf as one amazed.

– The Pyre of Denethor, RotK

But such has never been known to raise a living being.[†]

† The battle in which Gandalf the Grey and Saruman hurl one another about until Saruman levitates Gandalf up to (and through the floor of?! the top of Orthanc, is movie invention.

The stars and the vessels of the Sun, Moon and Eärendil suggest more that the gravity of Arda has no force so far out into the realm of Ilmen, than that they use any power of flight that might be available to an Incarnate being.

Not even the mighty Noldorin sons of Fëanor could conceive of securing the Silmariel of Eärendil once it was aloft in the heavens.

Bodily Injury Can Be Healed Only By The Body Itself

All power to effect healing is achieved by enhancing the organic processes of the patient's hröa, either directly or mediately by strengthening their fëa so that it can do so.

No Healing that the body itself could not naturally attain

Severed body parts cannot be re-stored, as we know from the examples of Beren's lost hand, which was beyond recovery even through the powers of the half-Maia Lúthien, and Maedhros' hand that Fingon had to amputate to rescue him.²¹

[The Elves' own fëar] imposed long endurance on their bodies; for they were (as a fact of experience) in far greater control of them. (Author's Note 5)

Note 5

[The Elves] were not subject to diseases; they healed rapidly and completely after injuries that would have proved fatal to Men; and they could endure great physical pain for long periods. Their bodies, could not, however, survive vital injuries, or violent assaults upon their structure; nor replace missing members (such as a hand hewn off).

—*Athrabeth, HoMe10*

Proceeding beyond this, there is no evidence anywhere in Tolkien of such magical powers of healing such as wounds being instantaneously healed

closed, or broken bones re-knitted. The only influence any magic or power seems to have over 'assaults upon a being's structure' is to accelerate that being's natural healing process. This is consistent with the other thing we know not to be amenable to healing, true²² aging:

the leechcraft of Gondor was still wise, and skilled in the healing of wound and hurt, and all such sickness as east of the Sea mortal men were subject to. Save old age only. For that they had found no cure...

— *The Houses of Healing, RotK*

It seems reasonable that effects that bolster the spirit, or heal the hurts of the spirit, may allow it to speed the body's healing processes,²³ more so in Elves than in Men. Tolkien's depictions of healers' feats often also distinguish between the relatively mundane treatment of physical injuries, and their impact upon the sufferer, who may be "healed of his pains"²⁴, "troubled no more by his wounds"²⁵, "feel the pain lessen"²⁶, or "grow easier"²⁷ or "leave him".²⁸ Such examples suggest pain relief and/or the improvement of the patient's state of mind, heart or spirits.[‡] The extreme case is the spiritual affliction seen especially with the 'near death experiences' of the Black Breath, which surely are healed by power (though Tolkien still sought to assert that this was not really 'magic' in *Letters*, §155).

No Mind Can Know That Which Is Not In It

All true knowledge ultimately derives from memory of experience (previously forgotten or otherwise), deduction and extrapolation from existing knowledge, or from an external source.

No Knowledge without a Source

No experience is ever utterly lost from memory, though it may be lost from conscious or easy reach. The minds of Incarnates and the object-memory of things retain all their experiences. Any mind with knowledge that is certain, and which it cannot have known through normal means, must have received it from a source that does possess that certain knowledge. Tolkien addressed this comprehensively himself in a statement expressed through Pengolodh the loremaster:

No mind, he asserts, knows what is not in it. All that it has experienced is in it, though in the case of the Incarnate, dependent upon the instruments of the hröa, some things may be "forgotten", not immediately available for recollection. But no part of the "future" is there, for the mind cannot see it or have seen it: that is, a mind placed in time. Such a mind can learn of the future only from another mind which has seen it. But that means only from Eru ultimately, or mediately from some mind that has seen in Eru some part of His purpose (such as the Ainur who are now the Valar in Eä). [...]

Minds that have great knowledge of the past, the present, and the nature of Eä may predict with great accuracy, and the nearer the future the clearer (saving always the freedom of Eru). Much therefore of what is called "foresight" in careless speech is only the deduction of the wise; and if it be received, as warning or instruction, from the Valar, it may be only deduction of the wiser, though it may sometimes be "foresight" at second hand.

— *Ósanwë-kenta*²⁹

‡ The main ups and downs in Tolkien's narratives are changes in spirits and/or weariness rather than states of injury. Decipher addressed this theme nicely under 'Weapons, Violence, Injuries and Healing', *LotR RPG* pp. 271-2. The online community game *LOTRO* similarly has 'Morale' as a character's main changing status. For games such as *MERP* where actual physical injury is a real possibility, combatants may need to be reminded to parry more!

Considering this with the previous point about none within Eä having certain knowledge about the future, all ‘foresight’ derives from the normally-acquired knowledge of the unconscious mind or the *fëa* itself, or sent to the *fëa* by another through *ósanwë*.

[Olórin] loved the Elves, he walked among them unseen, or in form as one of them, and they did not know whence came the fair visions of the promptings of wisdom that he put into their hearts. In later days he was the friend of all the Children of Ilúvatar, and took pity on their sorrows; and those who listened to him awoke from despair and put away the imaginations of darkness
— Valaquenta, *Silm.*

No Mind Can Compel The Will Of Another

No power ultimately affords the means of controlling the thoughts or actions of another being without their first having surrendered their own will.

No Mind Control, No Mind Reading... as such

Neither Morgoth nor his Úmaiar, nor even Manwe with all Eru’s Authority as vice-gerent of Eä, can technically impose their desire upon any Ainu or Incarnate that is unwilling (*aníra*) to comply with them.

[...] extortion of the secrets of a mind may seem to come from reading it by force in despite of its unwill, for the knowledge gained may at times appear to be as complete as any that could be obtained. Nonetheless it does not come from penetration of the barrier of unwill.
— Ósanwë-kenta

But this is a technical distinction to make. Practically speaking, an individual may be induced to ‘relinquish their *aníra*’ by means of deception, or threats and torture of the physical body beyond the ability of the *fëa* to endure. Whilst the deception or torment may take time, almost any being will eventually abandon their resistance before a sufficiently cunning, cruel or powerful assailant.

Of course such practices are deeply immoral, in breach of a major *axan* of Eru, and powerfully corrupting. These considerations are addressed in the next section.

Q

The Knowing of Right and Wrong

“Once we have eliminated the impossible, whatever remains, no matter how improbable, must be—” at least possible in some respect.

The possible includes many feats that would be unattainable for those who are not Ainur, Maiar or high elves, especially in later Ages of the world. No attempt is made here to ‘calibrate’ power levels, not least because people differ widely in the degree to which they want the magic in their games to adhere to canonical power levels. But however one decides what might be possible to a character, it remains important to decide what is right, wise or appropriate to do.

Tolkien had strong convictions about the moral consequences of right and wrong actions, which he made objectively real in Middle-earth. Right action should be its own reward and may—in sufficiently epic situations—lead through strange twists of fortune to a better outcome than more pragmatic decisions. Wrongful action may be the cause of its own failure (see Tolkien’s many epithets about evil bringing about its own undoing), but even if it has no immediate consequences it represents a step down a darkening path. Those who wield magic have a heightened power over the world and may therefore ‘take larger steps’; they are at greater risk of becoming corrupted³⁰ like the expedient Saruman until they turn into the very thing they originally opposed.

[Rebelling] against the laws of the Creator [...] will lead to the desire for Power, for making the will more quickly effective,—and so to the Machine (or Magic).

—Letters, §131

Possible Effects of ‘Corruption’

Roleplaying games will often want to have morality be as central as it is in Tolkien’s original works. But only the wielding of major power or moments of extreme drama would necessarily be likely to result in significant changes to characters’ moral statuses, let alone any immediate consequences of such changes. Incremental subversion by temptations like those of Saruman and the mannish wielders of the Nine Rings, or the waning into despair of Denethor or Théoden are only likely to be recognized with the passing of more time than most adventures cover. Corruption will only come into short adventures if they focus on a poignant moral dilemma, include the discovery in the present of something that has been going on for longer, or deliberately exaggerate the impact of ‘corruption’ to make it relevant within their timescales. This last may also be appropriate to discourage players from ignoring moral consequences just because they wouldn’t otherwise impact them within the timescale of the adventure.

Such impact could include (depending on the magnitude of the events at stake):

- Denial of Grace—“the enhancement of our powers as instruments of Providence”,³¹ especially the power to resist dread or despair.
- Denial of Valian intervention—“chance, if chance you call it”; some insight/foresights
- Deafness to the insight/foresight of one’s own *fëa* (including the loss of one’s own ‘moral compass’, possibly hastening one’s fall)
- Loss of inner reserves: the willpower of the *fëa*
- Reduced gift of healing³²
- Susceptibility to ‘temptation’
- Loss of the good will of those with Insight, Foresight, the gift of healing, etc.

Bodily impulses (Q.: *hröafelmë*, pl. —er): weariness, chronic pain, hunger, intoxication or withdrawal from a depend-

ency tend to drown out the impulses of the spirit (Q.: *fëafelmer*), and drain it of its ability to resist selfishness, self-pity and other temptations to negativity. It is in adversity that people's true qualities are tested.

The Axani

The “*axani*” are the laws of Eru: not the laws of nature or of magic, but the laws governing right behaviour, as received by the elves from the Valar and transmitted to whatever degree to the inhabitants of Middle-earth. The word is defined in *The War of the Jewels* (as one of the few explicitly originating from the Valar's own language):

axan, ‘law, rule, commandment’. *V [alarin] akašān*, said to mean ‘He says’, referring to Eru.
— *Quendi and Eldar, WJ*³³

But whilst the *únati* constrain the feats possible to Incarnates and Ainur alike, the *axani* are only advisory. Some *axani* are there to make clear what behaviours are wrongful in and of themselves, and likely to have negative consequences for the individual in the long run. Others, the laws of the Valar themselves rather than of Eru, are practicalities of the Valar's rule over Arda and the beings who live in it. But as it is (all but explicitly) an *axan* itself never to impose one's will on the Free Will of another, the Valar themselves would never use compulsion even to prevent a person from breaching an *axan*!

Despite the *axani* being unrevealed to many or most of the inhabitants of Middle-earth, people of good heart and clear conscience are given every opportunity to do the right thing, more explicitly in Tolkien's Arda than our in modern day experience.[§] If a being is unclouded by vested interests or conflicting emotions (such as arise for Incarnates and self-

incarnated Ainur primarily from their bodily existence), and if the decision is of sufficient importance that urgency lends strength to their *fëa*,** their conscience can make the right course of action known to them.

The Elves believed that the ‘lightening of the heart’ or the ‘stirring of joy’ (to which they often refer), which may accompany the hearing of a proposition or an argument, is not an indication of its falsity but of the recognition by the fëa that it is on the path of truth.

— Note to *Athrabeth, HoMe10*

It is nevertheless common, of course, for temptation to overwhelm the voice of the conscience.

Sadly, Tolkien appears only to have devised the word “*axan*” relatively late, in 1959-60^{34,35} and it otherwise appears only in *Ósanwë-kenta*, in connection with spirit-beings' taking of *hröar*, and as unneeded for things which are already *únat*.

The Elves believed that the ‘lightening of the heart’ or the ‘stirring of joy’ (to “We do not know the axani (laws, rules, as primarily proceeding from Eru) that were laid down upon the Valar with particular reference to their state, but it seems clear that there was no axan against these things [the taking of physical form by a spirit]. Nonetheless it appears to be an axan, or maybe necessary consequence, that if they are done, then the spirit must dwell in the body that it used, and be under the same necessities as the Incarnate.

— *Ósanwë-kenta*³⁶

The *axani*, even more than the *únati*, are therefore mostly unrevealed, both to most of the denizens of Middle-earth and to the reader. Some few are identified, others may be deduced to be likely, and it may be valuable to speculate on further ones. The consequences, moral or otherwise, of breaking the different *axani* are

likely to differ widely, following the rules of ‘natural law’ according to circumstances, and rather than the legalistic letter-of-the-law judgements of a Blind Justice. When the soul of one of the Children comes before Mandos, he knows all, and is anything but blind!

Melkor repudiated all axani.

— *Ósanwë-kenta*

Give worship to no other but me

In The Lord of the Rings the conflict is [...] about God, and His sole right to divine honour. The Eldar and the Númenóreans believed in The One, the true God, and held worship of any other person an abomination.

— *Letters, §183*

This is recognizably the First Commandment of the Old Testament: “Thou shalt have no other gods before me”, further clarified by allowing no other gods (as such) after him either.

The Valar—though perhaps in the original (pre-canonical) *Book of Lost Tales* intended to be pagan gods and often described in shorthand as gods—are expressly of an angelic order and “reverend, but not worshipful”.³⁷ To worship any being but Eru is at best ignorant, and at worst in peril of leading to other crimes. Compelling worship from the Children of Eru was a main motivation of both Morgoth and subsequently Sauron, and *theologically* the gravest of their crimes.

§ Though it's peripheral to a discussion chiefly of motive in magic, the example of the Hobbits is relevant here. They know less of the lore transmitted from Valinor than most peoples, and yet one of their purposes in the tales is to exhibit—and enjoy the benefits of—an innate right-mindedness that other peoples may have lost.

** “Urgency” has a strengthening effect on the ability of the *fëa* to make itself heard through the background noise of the *hröa* of an *ósanwë*-recipient (*Ósanwë-kenta*, *op. cit.*). The same is surely true of the *fëa* making itself heard to its own conscious mind.

Seek no dominion over others

The supremely bad motive is (for this tale, since it is specially about it) domination of other 'free' wills.

– Letters, §155

[...] in the view of this tale & mythology Power—when it dominates or seeks to dominate other wills and minds (except by the assent of their reason)—is evil [...]

– Letters, §181

Manwë could not by duress attempt to compel Melkor to reveal his thought and purposes, or (if he used words) to speak the truth.

– Ósanwë-kenta

Take not from another what he has a right to hold

There is indeed no axan that the barrier [of unwill] should not be forced, for it is únat, a thing impossible to be or to be done, and the greater the force exerted, the greater the resistance of the unwill. But it is an axan universal that none shall directly by force or indirectly by fraud take from another what he has a right to hold and keep as his own.

– Ósanwë-kenta³⁸

Whilst quoted in the context of another angle on the sovereignty of the individual's free will, this statement (reassuringly!) confirms the Seventh (or Eighth) Commandment 'Thou Shalt Not Steal' as an *axan* forbidding robbery, theft, extortion, fraud, embezzlement etc.

Use force only in need, and only in measure of that need

"power' is an ominous and sinister word in all these tales"

– Letters, §131

An *axan* of this nature should indeed be inferred (if not a stronger one!), and deals with the area of greatest relevance to magicians. In the words of ICE, it does not incur corruption if "an appropriate spell was cast for 'pure' goals".³⁹

Tolkien's position is clearly that power corrupts (and presumably, if it need be stated, that absolute power would corrupt absolutely).⁴⁰ As already cited, rebelling against the laws of Eru will lead to the desire for Power, and then even having one's own natural powers enhanced leads to the risk of corruption!

But also they [the Rings of Power] enhanced the natural powers of a possessor—thus approaching 'magic', a motive easily corruptible into evil, a lust for domination.

– Letters, §131

The vicious circle seems clear. Further, any exercise even of "appropriate" power may run the risk of going to one's head. It may be that the use of force or power in anything other than self-defence against another force or power is perilous to the spirit. Going beyond self-defence and using power to win is perilous too!

You can make the Ring into an allegory of our time, if you like: an allegory of the inevitable fate that waits for all attempts to defeat evil power by power.

– Letters, §109

Do not take the name of Eru in vain

The Second (or Third) Commandment of the OT is also recognizably present in Arda.

Then Fëanor swore a terrible oath [...] which none shall break, and none should take, by the name even of Ilúvatar [...]

– Of the Flight of the Noldor, Silm.

None May Come Uninvited into the Blessed Realm

But the Lords of Valinor forbade them to sail so far westward that the coasts of Númenor could no longer be seen; [...] the design of Manwë was that the Númenóreans should not be tempted to seek for the Blessed Realm, nor desire to overpass the limits set to their bliss [...].

– Akallabêth, Silm.

Of course all Elves *were* invited, and no other kindred but the Númenóreans were likely to have sought or managed the voyage. This *axan* was not merely authoritative, but was for the Númenóreans' own good.

"To the Númenóreans they said [...] Eru had forbidden them to admit Men into the Blessed Realm; and they declared also that Men would not there be blessed (as they imagined) but accursed, and would 'wither even as a moth in a flame too bright'.

– Aman and Mortal Men, HoMe10⁴¹

Tolkien's essay on this goes into considerable depth on the theory of why mannish *hröar* would not become immortal in the 'Undying Lands', owing to the conflict this would raise with their *fëar* which are fated to pass beyond the Circles of the World.

The Fear of the Dead should pass into the West

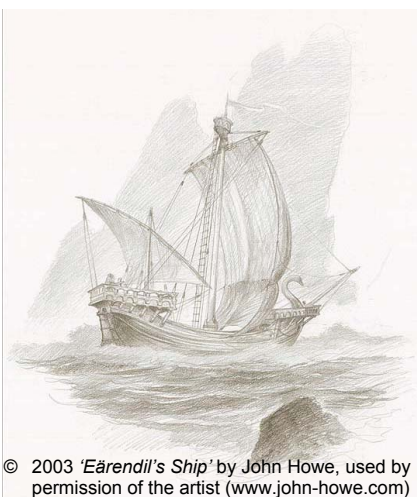
The souls of Men lack the strength to resist the Call of Mandos even if they wished to.⁴² Only the Nazgûl—called at the Flood of Bruinen if not before—are known with certainty to have resisted it, who had developed their wills through an unnaturally long existence, and with the sorcerous enhancement through their Rings. (The Oathbreakers of the White Mountains never received the Call of Mandos.)

Some Elves do refuse the Call; some may be corrupted into fearing or disbelieving it whilst others are so attached to aspects of their living lives that they refuse. Thus the Avanim, the Unwilling, become the Houseless...

Also, re-incarnated Elves were no longer permitted to return to Middle-earth once Aman was removed from the Circles of the World—though they mostly showed little inclination to do so in any case.

[After] the 'Change of the World' and the Drowning of Númenor [...] no living embodied creature, 'humane' or of lesser kinds, could return from the Blessed Realm which had been 'removed from the Circles of the World'. This was according to a general ordinance proceeding from Eru Himself...

— *Last Writings, HoMe12*⁴³



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Speak not with the Souls of the Dead

It is a foolish and perilous thing, besides being a wrong deed forbidden justly by the appointed Rulers of Arda, if the Living seek to commune with the Unbodied

— *Laws and Customs, HoMe10*⁴⁴

Whilst this passage continues to describe the necromantic interaction with 'houseless' spirits that is possible, the Vala, Námo Mandos, holds the Halls of Waiting inviolable, and permits none to communicate with the souls of the dead within them.

For it was a Doom of Mandos that only those who took up life again might operate in Arda, or commune with the fear of the Living, even with those that had once been dear to them.

— *Laws and Customs, HoMe10*⁴⁵

No Incarnate and none of the Ainur but Mandos himself, possibly his Maiar helpers and arguably his spouse, Vairë (according to one version of the tale of Miriel), may communicate with the dead. And Mandos et al. never normally recount their communions. It is also known that naked souls in the Halls of Waiting are introspective and solitary and communicate little even with one another.

The Gift of Death Shall not be Denied

For it was not permitted of the Valar to withhold Death from him [Beren], which is the gift of Ilúvatar to Men.

— *Of Beren and Lúthien, Silm.*

Beren was re-embodied for a brief period, and enjoined to live apart from other folk, and Tolkien states this to have been the unique exception to this rule, achieved through Eru's own action.

A soul may be undeparted for a short period following what could loosely be called death, and during this time it may be entreated not to depart. Such healing

efforts e.g. of Aragorn are considered to be merely of 'near death'; some witnesses might fail to appreciate the distinction...

Endnotes

- 1 *The Letters of JRR Tolkien*, HarperCollins 1995 paperback p. 110
- 2 *ibid.* p. 333 (my bold emphasis)
- 3 *The Monsters and the Critics*, HarperCollins 1997 paperback p. 144 (my bold emphasis)
- 4 *The Atlas of Tolkien's Middle-earth*, Karen Wynn Fonstad, HarperCollins 1994 paperback, p. ix. (my bold emphasis)
- 5 *op. cit.* p. 354
- 6 'Ósanwe-kenta: Enquiry into the Communication of Thought', in *Vinyar Tengwar* 39 (1998)
- 7 'Notes on motives in the Silmarillion': Myths Transformed VII, *Morgoth's Ring*, HoMe10, HarperCollins 1994 paperback, p. 395
- 8 'Of Turin Turambar', *The Silmarillion*, Unicorn 1986 paperback p. 243
- 9 'The Drúedain', *Unfinished Tales*, Unicorn 1983 paperback pp. 380-2
- 10 'Athrabeth Finrod ah Andreth', *Morgoth's Ring*, HarperCollins 1994 paperback, p. 330 Also: "no *fëa* can be annihilated, reduced to zero or not existing" in 'Notes on motives in the Silmarillion', *op. cit.* p. 407
- 11 'Laws and Customs among the Eldar', *Morgoth's Ring*, *op. cit.* p. 252
- 12 Index, III—Places, *The Lord of the Rings*.
- 13 Index, *The Silmarillion*.
- 14 'Notes on motives in the Silmarillion', *op. cit.* p. 402.
- 15 *Letters, op. cit.*, §92, p. 105
- 16 'The Notion Club Papers' in *Sauron Defeated* (HoMe 9), HarperCollins 1993 paperback, pp. 161 ff. & 222 ff.
- 17 This object memory or "artefact memory" has been named Q.: *carmolor*, and the technique of "time-wandering" Q.: *lúmeránë*, has further been suggested to be available to the viewer of a *palantír*.—'The Palantíri', C. Seaman, *Other Minds* 3.
- 18 'Aman', Myths Transformed XI, *Morgoth's Ring*, *op. cit.* p. 425
- 19 *Ósanwe-kenta, op. cit.*
- 20 "There is some will that lends speed to our foes and sets an unseen barrier before us: a weariness that is in the heart more than in the limb." / "Truly!" said Legolas. "That I have known since first we came down from the Emyrn Muil. For the will is not behind us but before us."—'The Riders of Rohan', *The Two Towers*.
- 21 'Of the Return of the Noldor', *The Silmarillion*
- 22 The condition of Théoden King was attributed to age, but was 'only' despair instilled by twisted words.
- 23 "As with Éowyn and the Black Breath, the state of one's spirit... hope or despair... strongly dictates the recovery of the pa-

- tient.”—‘The Healing Arts of Middle-Earth’, <http://www.squidoo.com/lotr-healing>, accessed 1 Oct 2010.
- 24 Beleg, by his own elvish nature/skill/power, in ‘*Narn i Hîn Húrin*’, *Unfinished Tales*, *op. cit.* p. 94.
- 25 Isildur, by the sprouting of the fruit of Nimloth he had rescued, in ‘*Akallabêth*’, *The Silmarillion*, *op. cit.* p. 328.
- 26 Frodo, on having his morgul-wound bathed with athelas, in ‘*A Knife in the Dark*’, *FotR*.
- 27 Frodo, at Glorfindel’s touch, in ‘*Flight to the Ford*’, *FotR*.
- 28 Frodo, on having his spear-thrust wound bathed with athelas, in ‘*Lothlórien*’, *FotR*.
- 29 Note 6 in *Ósanwë-kenta*, *op. cit.*
- 30 “Corruption” is a strong word, applicable only to the ‘darker end of the path’, but is used as the technical term for this in gaming. See *MERP 2nd Ed.* p. 71 and *LotR RPG* pp.234-5.
- 31 *Letters*, *op. cit.* §246
- 32 ‘Laws and Customs among the Eldar’, *Morgoth’s Ring*, *op. cit.* pp. 213-4
- 33 *The War of the Jewels* (HoMe 11), HarperCollins 1994 paperback, p. 399
- 34 *The War of the Jewels*, *op. cit.* p. 359
- 35 See *Ósanwë-kenta*, *op. cit.*, pp. 1-2.
- 36 Note 5, *ibid.*
- 37 *Letters*, *op. cit.*, §153, also §156
- 38 Note 5 in ‘*Ósanwë-kenta*’, *op. cit.* (my bold emphasis)
- 39 “[...] For example a *Fire Bolt* is not appropriate to use on a bully or a thief but a *Sleep* spell might be.”—*MERP 2nd Ed.* p. 71 (all italics original)
- 40 See e.g. Ch. III—‘The Lord of the Rings (2): Concepts of Evil’ in *Author of the Century*, T. Shippey.
- 41 Myths Transformed XI, *HoMe10*, *op. cit.* p. 427
- 42 Note 4 in ‘*Athrabeth Finrod ah Andreth*’, *Morgoth’s Ring*, *op. cit.* p. 340
- 43 ‘Glorfindel’, Last Writings, *The Peoples of Middle-earth*, HarperCollins 1994 paperback p. 381
- 44 ‘Laws and Customs among the Eldar’, *Morgoth’s Ring*, *op. cit.* p. 224
- 45 *ibid.* p. 223



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Appendix A

“Things a PC Should Know”

What is Middle-earth?

Middle-earth is a land similar to our own, filled with magic and wonder, and populated not only by humans but by other races. It is a land where the ‘Free Peoples’ are threatened by the Darkness and oppression of the Shadow.

Differences between Earth and Middle-earth

1. *Magic and the ‘Rightness of Things’*

Unlike our normal Earth, magic exists throughout Middle-earth – the land itself possesses innate qualities that are lacking on Earth. These can be summarised as follows:

‘The Rightness of Things’—the land of Middle-earth will underline actions that are either ‘right’ or ‘wrong’, for example, flowers will always bloom on Snowmane’s burial mound, but no flowers—or any vegetation in general—can grow at the spot where the Witch-king’s Fell Beast was burned. In game terms this can be addressed in two ways, firstly the Gamemaster can always ignore the result of a dice roll that seems to contradict this concept, and secondly through the use of Corruption. Rightness and Wrongness are illustrated by how places such as Rivendell are beautiful, while lands that are controlled by the Enemy such as Mordor are harsh, unfriendly, defiled and corrupted.

Beast-speech—in Middle-earth there are many animals that can think and talk to the Free Peoples.

Honouring Heroes—the subtle magic of Middle-earth will tend to reward any actions that are brave, heroic etc., and will hinder those actions that are malicious and wicked. In game terms Player Characters use Courage to achieve tasks they normally could not achieve.

The Power of Words, Oaths, Fate & Prophecy—In Middle-earth words can have power, whether used in a spell, or in an oath or curse, or to foretell some great event. Many social skills used by PC’s represent this aspect of Middle-earth.

Common Knowledge

2. *The Free Peoples*

In Middle-earth humans are not the only intelligent beings. Dwarves are a short and stocky race, who stand usually about four feet tall, strong and hardy, able to endure hardships greater than other races. They are renowned for excelling in crafts of inanimate objects, and as a result they tend to

live underground in mountainous areas. Elves are the oldest and wisest race of Middle-earth, they stand as tall or taller than humans, but of slighter build and fairer features. As elves do not die except from wounds or grief, they seem to other races both aged and ageless, possessing both the lore and wisdom of the old and the joyfulness of the young. Elves are rarely found these days, and usually only in woods or forests far from human lands. Hobbits or halflings are akin to Men and although about the same height, less stocky than dwarves, they are divided into those mysterious and rarely seen inhabitants of *The Shire* and all other halflings. Men – humans – are the most numerous and diverse of all the Free Peoples both in population and appearance, from the elven-influenced Dúnedain to the seemingly “primitive” Woses.

3. *The Enemy*

There is nearly always a Force of Evil present in Middle-earth, often referred to as *The Shadow* or *The Enemy*, usually Sauron or one of his servants. Most of the Free Peoples learn to repudiate and fear *The Enemy* and his works, but not all. Some even worship *The Enemy* as a god. Middle-earth is also populated by monsters such as dragons etc. which are attributed to *The Enemy*. Orcs are an intelligent race but are not counted as one of The Free Peoples as they usually serve *The Enemy* in some way.

4. *Respect, Deference & Social Class*

In Middle-earth some hold positions of authority and are known as nobles. They receive deference and respect from others and in return they act as leaders. Nobility is either hereditary (as in Gondor), or earned through achievements, wealth etc., differing between cultures. Other folk work as: craftsmen (most people, as this includes farmers and herders), warriors, loremasters, merchants, mariners, minstrels, monks, priests, magicians or adventurers/rogues.

5. *Trade and Travel*

Most trade in Middle-earth is done by barter or by valuable items, as few people carry much coinage on them. Trade is usually only at a local level from the farm to the town and vice-versa, at a greater level only with foodstuffs to areas short of food such as armies, Gondor’s larger towns and the Dwarves. Overland trade is difficult as most roads are poor, not patrolled and tolls at bridges and passes are common.

So trade and travel are more common and easier by sea or river. Most merchants are from Gondor, delivering the crafts of Gondor all over Middle-earth in return for various products. On average a man can walk about 20 miles/day, assuming such factors as regular rests, height, 8hrs of travel and easy terrain. A rider on an 'average' horse can cover about three times this distance. Travel by boat or ship can vary greatly but usually averages about 30 miles/day. On major overland trade routes such as the Great South Road an inn can be found every seven leagues.

6. *Myths, Religion and Magic*

The beliefs of the Elves spread to other cultures over time. The Elves believe that an infinite being known as Eru or Ilúvatar created offspring known as the Ainur, who then created the world as known by the Music of the Ainur. Some of the Ainur then chose to enter the world to complete the creation, the fourteen most powerful of these are known as The Powers (Valar) by the Elves, and are often revered as gods by many cultures, which tend to favour one Vala in particular.

Some cultures, being superstitious, can be susceptible to the Dark Religion: worship of The Enemy. Such cultures have different beliefs to the Elves. According to the Elves magic comes from one's own being whereas sorcery is a device of the Enemy. How magic is seen varies from one race/culture to another, but magic is generally rare enough to be viewed with suspicion by most folk.



7. *Northwestern region of Middle-earth—main landmarks*

Most people in Middle-earth are only familiar with the land in their local area, and few know much even of lands adjacent to theirs. On a map of the NW area these landmarks are commonly known:

- **Blue Mountains:** these mountains run North to South in the Far Northwest and are known as the mountains that separate Lindon or 'Elf-land' from the rest of Middle-earth.
- **The Shire:** a mysterious land also known as The Land of the Halflings, located somewhere in the North-west of the region.
- **Fornost:** the largest city in the North and a major centre of trade.
- **Forochel:** very little is known of the 'Far North', what is known is that it is inhabited by the Snowmen and is a land of snow and ice and cold.
- **Bree:** a small town where the Great South Road meets the East Road and thus a trade centre.
- **Tharbad:** a large city on the Great South Road and also a major river port & trade centre.
- **Misty Mountains:** a large and forbidding mountain range that runs North to South and is difficult to cross except at the Rohan Gap or passes in summer, due to high peaks and lots of orcs.
- **Mirkwood:** the largest forest in the region through which travel is often difficult.
- **Anduin River:** The Great River is known by most, and its lower reaches are a major highway for travel.
- **Rhûn:** a general term used for all the eastern lands, seen as inhabited mostly by nomadic tribes called 'Easterlings'.
- **Dorwinion:** the 'Wine-Land', although few know where it lies, famed for wine & merchants.
- **Rohan:** the 'Horse-land', inhabited by people who tend and ride horses.
- **Gondor:** the most prosperous & populated region, it has a number of large cities, the largest being Osgiliath, the trade port on the Anduin River.
- **Mordor:** a name of evil rumour as most know of this land as the land of The Enemy, though only those near it know where it lies.
- **Harad:** a general term used for 'The South', and seen as lands that are mostly desert and hot.

Appendix B

“Simplified System—Chronicles of Middle-earth”

See the following page for a skill listing for the system.

See the page thereafter for a character sheet for the system.



Skill	Charact.	Advances	Modifications	Total
Acrobatics:	(DX)	+	+	=
Acting:	(CH)	+	+	=
Agriculture:	(IN)	+	+	=
Alchemy:	(LO)	+	+	=
Appraise:	(LO)	+	+	=
Astronomy:	(LO)	+	+	=
Authority:	(Will)	+	+	=
Axes:	(ST)	+	+	=
Balance:	(DX)	+	+	=
Blind fight:	(IN)	+	+	=
Bluff:	(CH)	+	+	=
Bow craft:	(DX)	+	+	=
Bows:	(DX)	+	+	=
Bribery:	(CH)	+	+	=
Carpentry:	(DX)	+	+	=
Charge:	(ST)	+	+	=
Climatology:	(IN)	+	+	=
Climb:	(ST)	+	+	=
Clock smith:	(LO)	+	+	=
Confuse:	(CH)	+	+	=
Cooking:	(IN)	+	+	=
Crossbows:	(DX)	+	+	=
Dance:	(DX)	+	+	=
Diplomacy:	(CH)	+	+	=
Disable mech.:	(DX)	+	+	=
Draw:	(DX)	+	+	=
Dreaming:	(IN)	+	+	=
Drive wagon:	(IN)	+	+	=
Empathy:	(IN)	+	+	=
Enigmas:	(LO)	+	+	=
Escape artist:	(DX)	+	+	=
Etiquette:	(CH)	+	+	=
Falsify:	(DX)	+	+	=
Fishing:	(IN)	+	+	=
Geology:	(LO)	+	+	=
Handle animals:	(IN)	+	+	=
Herbalism:	(LO)	+	+	=
History:	(LO)	+	+	=
Hunting:	(DX)	+	+	=
Ice skating:	(DX)	+	+	=
Interrogate:	(Will)	+	+	=
Intimidate:	(Will)	+	+	=
Jewel smith:	(DX)	+	+	=
Jump:	(DX)	+	+	=
Kick:	(ST)	+	+	=
Knot making:	(DX)	+	+	=
Knowledge:	(LO)	+	+	=
Law:	(CH)	+	+	=
Leadership:	(CH)	+	+	=
Leather worker:	(DX)	+	+	=
Lock:	(DX)	+	+	=
Locksmith:	(LO)	+	+	=
Long rung:	(ST)	+	+	=
Luck games:	(DX)	+	+	=
Maces:	(ST)	+	+	=
Management:	(LO)	+	+	=
Masonry:	(LO)	+	+	=
Mechanic:	(LO)	+	+	=
Medicine:	(IN)	+	+	=
Meditation:	(IN)	+	+	=
Metal smith:	(ST)	+	+	=
Metallurgy:	(LO)	+	+	=
Minery:	(ST)	+	+	=

Skill	Charact.	Advances	Modifications	Total
Music instrum:	(DX)	+	+	=
Music:	(IN)	+	+	=
Mysticism:	(LO)	+	+	=
Navigation:	(IN)	+	+	=
Oratory:	(CH)	+	+	=
Paint:	(DX)	+	+	=
Perception:	(IN)	+	+	=
Persuasion:	(CH)	+	+	=
Pick pockets:	(DX)	+	+	=
Poetry:	(IN)	+	+	=
Resilience:	(ST)	+	+	=
Ride:	(Will)	+	+	=
Row:	(ST)	+	+	=
Sailing:	(IN)	+	+	=
Sculpt:	(DX)	+	+	=
Search books:	(LO)	+	+	=
Seduction:	(CH)	+	+	=
Self-control:	(Will)	+	+	=
Sense of magic:	(IN)	+	+	=
Shepherd:	(IN)	+	+	=
Shipwright:	(LO)	+	+	=
Shoe maker:	(DX)	+	+	=
Signals:	(IN)	+	+	=
Sing:	(CH)	+	+	=
Skiing:	(DX)	+	+	=
Spears:	(ST)	+	+	=
Spirit attack:	(Will)	+	+	=
Spirit defence:	(LO)	+	+	=
Spirit gaze:	(IN)	+	+	=
Spirit mouth:	(CH)	+	+	=
Sprint:	(DX)	+	+	=
Stealth:	(Will)	+	+	=
Stilt walking:	(DX)	+	+	=
Strengthcraft:	(ST)	+	+	=
Strike:	(ST)	+	+	=
Survival:	(IN)	+	+	=
Swim:	(ST)	+	+	=
Swords:	(ST)	+	+	=
Tailor:	(DX)	+	+	=
Tale telling:	(IN)	+	+	=
Throwing:	(DX)	+	+	=
Track:	(IN)	+	+	=
Trade:	(CH)	+	+	=
Tramp maker:	(LO)	+	+	=
Two-weapon:	(DX)	+	+	(-20) =
_____:	()	+	+	=
_____:	()	+	+	=
_____:	()	+	+	=

Paradigms of Magic:

Varda:	(Will)	+	+	=
0-00-000-0000-00000-000000-0000000				
Yavanna:	(IN)	+	+	=
0-00-000-0000-00000-000000-0000000				
Estë:	(IN)	+	+	=
0-00-000-0000-00000-000000-0000000				
Oromë:	(DX)	+	+	=
0-00-000-0000-00000-000000-0000000				
Eönwë:	(CH)	+	+	=
0-00-000-0000-00000-000000-0000000				
_____:	()	+	+	=
0-00-000-0000-00000-000000-0000000				
_____:	()	+	+	=
0-00-000-0000-00000-000000-0000000				

CHRONICLES OF MIDDLE EARTH

Name of the character _____
 Name of the player _____ Chronicle _____
 Concept _____
 People _____ Age _____ Size category (SZ) _____
 Description: _____
 Personality: _____

People's modifiers

Drawing of the character

CHARACTERISTICS

Strength (ST) = _____
 Dexterity (DX) = _____
 Logic (LO) = _____
 Intuition (IN) = _____
 Charisma (CH) = _____
 Will (Will) = _____

Movement (MV) _____ m/r = _____ + _____ + _____
DX SZ Other
 Travel speed: _____ Km/h
1/2 MV

Initiative

_____ + _____ + _____ + _____ + _____ = _____
DX Weapon Armour Load Other

DB _____ = _____ + _____ + _____ + _____
DX Shield SZ Other

DR

HP _____ = (_____ + _____) * _____
ST Will SZ

Damage

Money

Gold pieces (gp): _____
 Silver pieces (sp): _____
 Bronze pieces (bp): _____
 Copper pieces (cp): _____
 1 gp = 4 sp, 1 sp = 4 bp, 1 bp = 4 cp

SKILLS

Characteristic Advances Other TOTAL

Missile combat: _____ (DX)+ _____ + _____ = _____
 Melee combat: _____ (ST)+ _____ + _____ = _____
 Brawl: _____ (ST)+ _____ + _____ = _____
 Outdoor skills: _____ (IN)+ _____ + _____ = _____
 Stealth _____ (DX)+ _____ + _____ = _____
 Subterfuge _____ (LO)+ _____ + _____ = _____
 Social skills _____ (CH)+ _____ + _____ = _____
 Craft skills _____ (LO)+ _____ + _____ = _____
 White magic _____ (Will)+ _____ + _____ = _____
 Black magic _____ (Will)+ _____ + _____ = _____
 Perception _____ (IN)+ _____ + _____ = _____

Progression Table

Advances	Humans	Elves	Improves 1 point for:
01-15	01-30	---	Each (serious) attempt
16-30	31-50	01-15	Each success or fumble
31-50	51-70	16-30	Each open roll or fumble
51-70	71-90	31-50	Each open roll
71+	91+	51+	Each maximum roll

Equipment (weapons, armour, etc.)

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The Issue listing below should be largely self-explanatory. The “page” column lists the beginning page of the contribution in question.

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Editorial: Here we are!	Thomas Morwinsky, Hawke Robinson	2	any
Opinion – The Acroteriasm of Other Hands	W.A. Hawke Robinson	3	any
The Battle Over Role Playing Gaming	W.A. Hawke Robinson	6	any
Mapping Arda	Thomas Morwinsky, Stéphane Hoerlé, Gabriele Quaglia, Oliver Schick, Christian Schröder	9	any
Of Barrow-wights – Part One	Neville Percy	21	any
Magic in Middle-earth	Chris Seeman	28	any
Thoughts on Imladris – Part One	Thomas Morwinsky	31	any

Issue 2, January 2008 (75 pages) – Focus theme: Númenor

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Other Minds Conventions	Thomas Morwinsky	3	any	
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Númenóreans in Endor	Gabriele Quaglia, Stéphane Hoerlé, Thomas Morwinsky	10	any	Optional
Númenórean Maritime Technology	Thomas Morwinsky	26	any	Optional, House
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Of Barrow-wights – Part Two	Neville Percy	5	any	Core
J.R.R. Tolkien, Words, Phrases & Passages in The Lord of the Rings – A Game Designer’s Guide to Parma Eldalamberon 17	Chris Seeman	9	any	Core
The Rings of Power – History and Abilities	Thomas Morwinsky	15	any	Core, Optional
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A Brief History of the Dwarven Mansions	Thomas Morwinsky	11	any	Optional
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Swept Off By Your Feet...	Thomas Morwinsky	24	any	House
Outer Names for the Western Dwarves	Neville Percy	25	any	House
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The Eöldrim	José Enrique Vacas de la Rosa	23	any	House
Tharbad Map Name Changes	Chris Seeman, David Salo	28	any	Optional
Banks of the Northern Anduin	Johannes Lomborg	30	MERP	House
Born of Hope – An Overview	José Enrique Vacas de la Rosa	58	any	House
Book Review – "Isildur"	Thomas Morwinsky	60	any	Core

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Title	Author	Page	Game System	Category
Editorial: A Magical Number	Thomas Morwinsky	2	any	
Inside Information	Thomas Morwinsky	3	any	
The Angmarrim	Thomas Morwinsky	4	any	Optional
The Other Side	José Enrique Vacas de la Rosa	10	any	Optional
MERP Supplementary Rules	Thomas Morwinsky	16	MERP	House
The Ebbs and Flows of Númenórean Technology	António Simões	26	any	House

Issue 8, November 2009 (39 pages) – Focus Theme: Magic

Title	Author	Page	Game System	Category
Editorial: Surprise!	Thomas Morwinsky	2	any	
A Sense of Magic	Neville Percy	4	any	Core
Sense of Magic	Neville Percy	6	MERP	House
Between Canon and Dogma	Daniel “Vaco” Vacaflares	8	any	Core
A Journey in the Dark	Daniel “Vaco” Vacaflares	15	any	Core
The Ways of Magic	Daniel “Vaco” Vacaflares	19	any	Optional
The Nine Nazgûl	António Simões	24	any	House
The Age of Sauron – Preview	Padraig Timmins	32	any	House

Issue 9, February 2010 (65 pages) – Focus Theme: The Fourth Age

Title	Author	Page	Game System	Category
Editorial: The Dominion of Man	Thomas Morwinsky	2	any	
Inside Information	Thomas Morwinsky	4	any	
The Age of Sauron	Padraig Timmins	5	any	House
The Heirs of Elessar and the Fourth Age	Thomas Morwinsky	14	any	House
A Fourth Age Chronology	Tom Davie	29	any	House
Religion in Angmar	Thomas Morwinsky	39	any	House

Issue 10, August 2010 (69 pages)

Title	Author	Page	Game System	Category
Editorial: Finally Here!	Thomas Morwinsky	2	any	
Balrogs do not have wings –but they do fly!	Thomas Gießl	4	any	Core
The problem of Gil-galad and the ‘House of Finrod’	Thomas Morwinsky	13	any	Core
A History of Story-Telling Games and other Imaginary Depictions of Middle-earth	Travis Henry	23	any	House
The ‘Other Hands’ Restoration project	Thomas Morwinsky and Ronald K.	25	any	House
An October weekend in Middle-earth	Thomas Abbenhaus	28	any	House
The Art of Magic – a magic system for Middle-earth	Daniel “Vaco” Vacaflares	31	house system	Optional/House

Issue 11, January 2011 (126 pages)

Title	Author	Page	Game System	Category
Editorial: A belated Christmas and New Year’s present	Thomas Morwinsky	2	any	
Inside Information	Thomas Morwinsky	4	any	
Agazlam	Severin, Isildur’s Heir	6	any	House
Roleplaying Battles in Middle-earth	José Enrique Vacas de la Rosa	77	any	House
Simplified System—Chronicles of Middle-earth	Daniel “Vaco” Vacaflares	79	own system	House
Moldewarp stats for LotRRPG	José Enrique Vacas de la Rosa	87	LotRRPG	House
Things a PC should know	Tom Davie	89	any	Optional/House
The Tale of Years	Thomas Gießl	90	any	Core
Únati and Axani	Neville ‘Osric’ Percy	107	any	Core