

Gummed up works or got lives?

The Urth list — 2 messages, 2 voices, 16 Dec 2011

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/6140>

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Andrew Mason — 16 Dec 2011, 17:08

David Stockhoff wrote:

On 12/15/2011 10:21 PM, Lee Berman wrote:

I think, by todays standards, Tolkien's geo-social biases might not be considered so

policially correct. I mostly mean his implication that those dark-skinned types from the

south and east are evil and not to be trusted. Conversely that north and west are the "good"

directions, not to mention those wonderful (american) eagles who always fly in at the last

crucial moment to save the day. If he'd used falcons it just wouldn't have worked the same,

I think.

Dead on. Much of our Western myths, and as they are perpetuated today by Hollywood, involve the brave and capable few who are besieged by the weak and cowardly many. This has little basis in reality, of course, and it has always struck me as a bit pathological. And so often the few are blond and big and the many dark and small. So too with Tolkien.

West is certainly a good direction. North less so - in the first age material the North is the seat of evil (and it's not Tolkien's fault that wasn't published first). By the time of LOTR the region has been devastated.

It is indeed true that dark-skinned people from the South, apparently Africans, figure among Sauron's hordes - though that's because they've been subjected by him; at the end of the war they are liberated. It's also true that the Uruk-hai, Man-orc crosses, have dark skins. On the other hand there are plenty of light-skinned villains as well. (It's not clear that the easterners are dark-skinned; they can be read simply as eastern Europeans. Though that might bring its own problems.) As for small. the principal heroes, the hobbits, are small, and some, though not all, of their opponents are unusually large.

David Stockhoff — 16 Dec 2011, 17:25 · in reply to Andrew Mason

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Few are large. Most are smaller than Men. The main thing is that there are apparently millions of them and they fight like girls. ;)