



“Sinome Ilúvataris”



(In the place where I cleave to the Lord of All)



Note on the term and the symbol for “Sinome Ilúvataris”

J. R. R. Tolkien is famous for many reasons, not least of which is his construction of the fictional realm Middle Earth. Of course this mythical world is the setting for most of his greatest works included: The Lord of the Rings trilogy, The Hobbit, and The Silmarillion. Slightly less well known is the fact that he created four separate languages, two of which are fully functioning. Parallel to Tolkien's professional work as a philologist, and sometimes overshadowing this work, was his affection for the construction of artificial languages. The best developed of these are Quenya and Sindarin, the etymological connection formed the core of much of Tolkien's *legendarium*. Using numerous resources I devised the term *Sinome Ilúvataris*, which is a translation in Quenya that means, “in the place where I cleave to the Lord of All”. Tolkien was a devote Catholic who, through his close relationship with C.S. Lewis (and others), developed a personal relationship with the Lord.

The term:

The breakdown of the term follows the noun *Ilúvatar*, which is the Quenya name for the Creator God and Lord of All. When the suffix “ris” is added to a noun a connotation is created, indicating the idea of melding or cleaving to the stated noun; thus in this instance “cleaving to the Lord of Creation/All”. The Quenya word *simome* is much more straightforward; it simply means “in the place where...” a specific thing occurred.

The symbol:

The symbol combines the capital “S” rune  and the “I” rune  in the good Professor’s Cirith Erebor style - forming a fish-like symbol with an eye that points upward. A “fish” symbol was historically used by early Christians to secretly identify themselves during times of persecution. Five Greek letters form the word “ixthus,” and those letters inside the fish form an acrostic that is a message that Christians clearly identified with. The first letter represented the word Jesus. The second letter represented the word Christ, the next two, God Son, and the final letter represented the word Savior. This adds up to “Jesus Christ is God’s Son, the Savior.” During early Christianity, Christians were often put to death for practicing their faith, so they worshiped in secret places. A fish painted on the outside door of a house let other Christians know that they would be safe and welcome inside. The Christian fish symbol is now often used to identify Christians and/or Christian businesses.

So, in summary... it’s cool. I discovered (and designed) this about 10 years ago. Combining a love for Tolkien’s world (and his world/eternal view) and the archaic symbol for Christians tends to be an eye catching way to open conversations with many people. Use the symbol, people tend to ask about it and be ready to share what it means and how understanding the Creator of All can change lives and eternity.

Jef Anderson, MS
Adj. Prof. Behavioral Science, ULV