Issue 55 • Winter 2014

Mallorn

The Journal of the Tolkien Society

SONG FOR LÚTHIEN TINÚVIEL

Philip Dodd

Fëanor he made the Silmarils,
revealed his power and his skills,
precious jewels of the Elven kind,
majesty moulded from his mind.

Elf maid, Lúthien Tinúviel
danced, held aloft a Silmaril.
I saw her laughing through the trees,
her white dress blowing in the breeze.

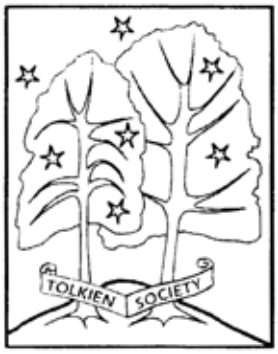
Entranced, I was lying on the grass,
saw Elven folk through a shining glass.
I saw Elves the lays of old had sung,
tall Elves from when the world was young.

Fëanor, his blue stone tower tall,
faraway, saw behind a wall,
felt I was poor in my heart and soul,
I was a fish, left by the shoal.

Felt I was young, knowing I was old,
I was a sheep, strayed far from fold.
On my quest over wild moor and fen,
I was lost and was lost again.

Unlooked for beauty came to my eye,
elf maid dancing beneath the sky,
fair elf the lays of old had sung,
fair elf from when the world was young.

Lúthien Tinúviel held aloft a Silmaril.



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Editor: Helen Armstrong
Production: Michael Afford
Cover art: *Balrog* by Jef Murray (By Appointment)
Back: *The Bridge of Khazad-Dûm* by Octo Kwan
Inside: Jenny Dolfen: *The Choice of Lúthien*. (p.2) Helen Armstrong: *Snowthorn* (photo) (p.2) Tomás Hijo: *The Flight to the Ford* (p. 11 and 12, details in two parts); Jay Johnstone: *The Hunt* (p. 16); Anke Eissmann: *Wiglaf* (p. 18) *The Challenge* (p.24) *The Dragon Awakes* (p. 26); Jef Murray: *Glaurung* (p. 20); John Cockshaw: *Encounter with Smaug* (p.25); Michael Afford: *Mordor* (p. 28); Thor Ewing: *Thor and the Cat* (p. 41); Catherine Karina Chmiel-Gugulska (Kasiopea) Cartoon (detail) (p. 34) Helen Armstrong: *Legolas walking in the woods on a nasty wet windy day* (p.47).

Mallorn is the Journal of the Tolkien Society, and appears once a year. It considers reviews, comment, scholarly articles, original poetry, artwork and fiction. Unsolicited material is welcome, but contributors should decide prior to submission to which category their manuscript belongs, and electronic submission is strongly encouraged. Full details on the preparation and submission to **Mallorn** are available on request from the Editor by email (mallorn@tolkiensociety.org). ISSN 0308-6674 .

The Tolkien Society Founded in London in 1969 the Tolkien Society is an international organization registered in the UK as a charity (No. 273809) dedicated to furthering interest in the life and works of Professor J. R. R. Tolkien, CBE (1892–1973) who remains its President in perpetuo. His daughter, Miss Priscilla Tolkien, became its honorary Vice-President in 1986. As well as **Mallorn**, the society publishes a bimonthly bulletin, Amon Hen. In addition to local gatherings ('Smials') there are annual national meetings: the AGM and Dinner in the spring, Summermoot and the Seminar in the summer, and Oxonmoot, a celebratory weekend held in Oxford in late September. For further information about the Society please contact the Secretary, Ian Collier by email (secretary@tolkiensociety.org) or by post at 22 Oaklands Road, Wolverhampton, WV3 0DS, UK, or visit http://www.tolkiensociety.org.

And it's Goodbye from me ... and Hello from him

Helen Armstrong

A quiet incognito stroll on Caradhras on a sunny day.

"You did volunteer to be Editor, didn't you?" said our Chairman, with rightful concern for my health and welfare.

"I recall volunteering to be Production Editor if you were stuck", I said.

"We have a production editor now", he said thoughtfully. "So I guess you're Editor."

So I am! Just for 2014.

And so welcome also to Michael Afford, who has laid out and produced this edition from a standing start. We have stayed with the excellent design instituted by Henry Gee and Colin Sullivan over the last few years, developing *Mallorn* during one of the periods of fastest change in the Society's history. A few years ago, colour pages were just a dream.

My particular standing start, apart from a general announcement that "Mallorn 2014 is now open for submissions", included a begging email to everyone I had heard in the past who I knew had some professional interest in the iconic Anglo-Saxon poem *Beowulf*, suggesting that they might like to submit something to celebrate the publication of Tolkien's translation and notes on the poem after many years of waiting. Those not irretrievably tied up with lesser tasks (earning a living, getting married, writing theses, etc.), and despite busy work schedules, have contributed a wide-ranging section on the poem, so special thanks to Tom Shippey, Dimitra Fimi, Mark Atherton and Britton Brooks. Like many people with an interest in ancient stories, I did some undergraduate work on Beowulf many years ago, and now to me for some reason, a mere 40 years on, it seems like a dialogue (literally and symbolically) between an old man and a young man (not always the same ones).

So the more charming to have a poetic take on the story by a reader in her first decade of the *Beowulf* experience. I hope that Beowulf did indeed enjoy daily feasts, a kingdom of his own and golden armour through all the intervening years.

Another unusual feature of this issue is writer Boris Gorelik's overview of the relationship of the Tolkiens with the South African city of Bloemfontein, where Tolkien was born. This includes photos taken or sourced locally, including one of younger generations of the family beside the (refurbished) grave of Arthur Tolkien, J R R Tolkien's father, who died when Ronald Tolkien was only 5. Thanks are due to Dux van der Walt, City Librarian of Bloemfontein, who took the photo, and the Tolkien Estate for facilitating this.

I am hoping there will be room here for the website addresses of artists from this issue who have their own art sites or book sites. Octo Kwan has recently published a collection of his drawings, and Anke Eissmann's illustrations are from her book *Beowulf and the Dragon*. Her picture on page 18 captures the moment that a fully qualified warrior realises that there is a live dragon just off to his left. Jay Johnstone's The Hunt is the lead picture on his website; a fine example of the growth of story around older story, the spirits of the Nazgûl's victims (or perhaps just those who didn't run fast enough) are imprisoned within his demon-haunted steed. Thanks to all those who offered artwork, whether included or not.

Ah! We've just found somewhere to put the website details ..

Artist websites:

Jef Murray http://www.jefmurray.com/ ; **Jenny Dolfen** http://goldseven.wordpress.com/galleries/tolkien/ ; **Tomás Hijo** www.etsy.com/shop/hijostore ; **Jay Johnstone** http://www.jaystolkien.com/ ; **Anke Eissmann** and her book Beowulf and the Dragon http://www.anke.edoras-art.de/ ; http://www.walking-tree.org/books/beowulf_and_the_dragon.php ; **Octo Kwan** (his art book) http://www.soleculture.com/pages/books/by-sole-culture.php Contact the publishers on able@soleculture.com for price and shipping; **John Cockshaw** http://jcockshaw-colourandmagic.blogspot.co.uk/ ; **Catherine Karina Chmiel-Gugulska (Kasiopea)** http://kasiopea.art.pl/en/home

'Africa… always moves me deeply': Tolkien in Bloemfontein

BORIS GORELIK

Does the world need an article on the Tolkien family's stay in South Africa? After all, Humphrey Carpenter described this period in much detail in his seminal biography of the Professor.

Fair enough. But Carpenter relied mostly on Mabel and Arthur's letters in his research. He hardly used South African sources, including archival materials.

Besides, a few interesting studies have appeared in South Africa since Carpenter's book saw the light, some in the Afrikaans language. Most of these studies mention Tolkien in passing, but they reveal some important facts. I intend to bring them to your attention in this essay – and also to mention how Tolkien is commemorated in the city of Bloemfontein today.

In March 1891, Mabel Suffield, the future mother of J R R Tolkien, sailed from England to South Africa. At the Cape of Good Hope, she was going to marry a man she had last seen around 3 years ago.

Arthur Tolkien, her fiancé, had proposed to her when he was still living in Birmingham. Mabel accepted, undeterred by the age difference: she was thirteen years the younger.

But it was too early to make wedding plans. Arthur's job at the bank wouldn't allow him to support a wife and children. To improve his situation, he was prepared to seek employment in the colonies. Though his engagement with Mabel had already been announced, Arthur joined the staff of the Bank of Africa at the Cape.

Plentiful deposits of diamonds were being mined in the Cape Colony. South Africa became a new Ophir. But in the early 1880s, the local economy succumbed to a major depression caused by a collapse of the price of diamonds.

The British-controlled Bank of Africa had been deeply involved in long-time funding of the diamond-mining industry, so the crisis affected it badly. The number of branches dwindled.[1]

Only the discovery of gold in the Transvaal in 1886 helped to improve the fortunes of the banking sector. The Bank of Africa started to pay dividends again and, more importantly for Arthur, it significantly raised salaries in an attempt to attract and retain skilled employees.

In late 1890, the bank posted Arthur to the Orange Free State, as Manager of the Bloemfontein branch. He was given a six-room flat and a good wage. At last, he was ready to invite Mabel to join him in South Africa.

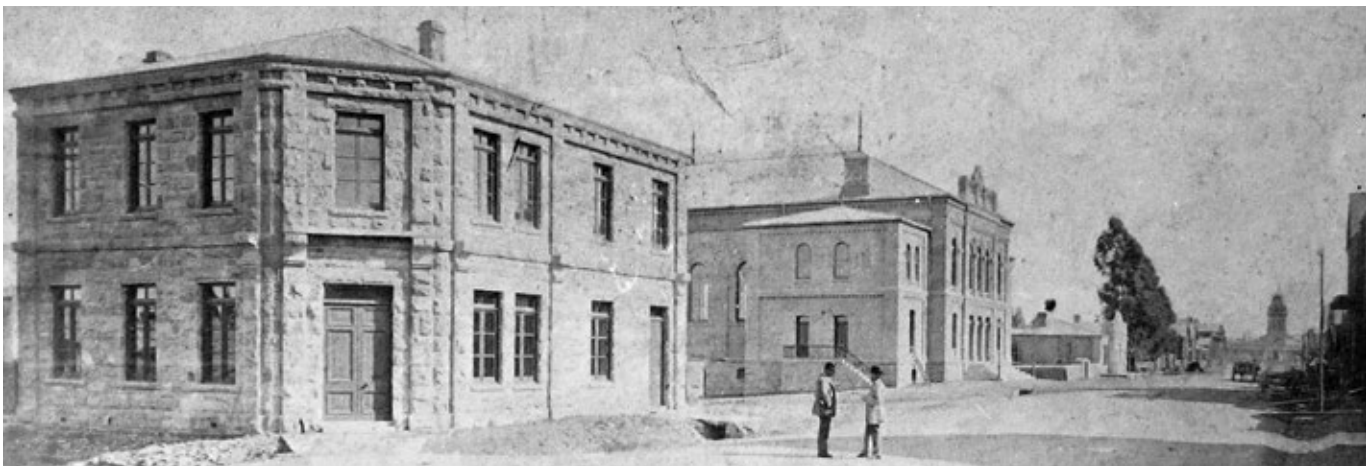
They were married in the Cathedral Church of St George the Martyr in Cape Town on 16 April 1891. The neo-classical building on the corner of Wale and Adderley Streets no longer exists. The current cathedral, designed by Sir Herbert Baker, was erected on the same site.

When they reached the capital of the Free State, after a 32-hour train journey, Mabel was not impressed. 'Owlin' Wilderness!... Horrid Waste!' she wrote to her family of Bloemfontein.[2]

'From the station front to East Burger Street, there was bare veld, with the exception of an iron shanty or two', recounted a British traveller who visited the town shortly after Mabel's arrival. 'Most of the shops had their own *stoeps* (verandas), and the roads were lit by oil lamps, which emphasized the darkness.'[3]

The Boer capital, with its population of 3,500, resembled a small provincial town. Wind blew through the streets, raising clouds of dust, from the vast treeless expanses less than half a kilometre from the central Market Square. In the veld, rheboks (antelopes) ran, and game was abundant.

In the centre of Bloemfontein, on the corner of Maitland Street (now renamed Charlotte Maxeke Street) and West



The corner of Maitland and West Burger with the Bank of Africa in the foreground (1880s). (Barron Morl. Free State Provincial Archives, no. VA 5289.)

Burger Streets, the bank had put up a double-storey flagstone building with large windows and a garden.

Bank House stood opposite a Wesleyan church and right next to the Town Hall. The latter, according to the British traveller, 'was the most prominent feature of [the Bloemfontein centre], as a double-storeyed building.'[3]

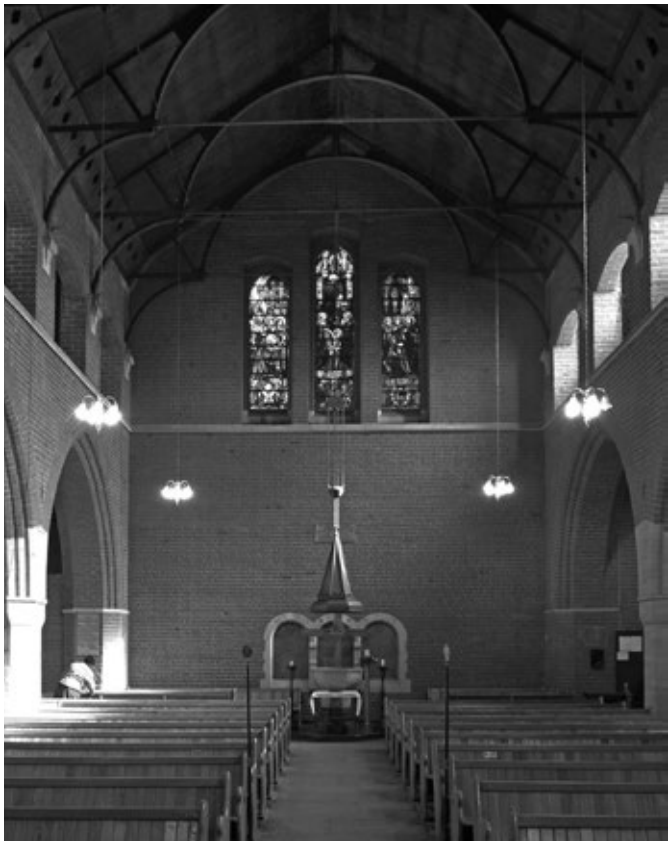
The Tolkien family occupied the flat on the first floor, above the bank premises. Humphrey Carpenter noted that it 'was to be Mabel's first and only home with Arthur'.[2]

BIRTH,—TOLKIEN,—On Sunday, the 3rd inst., at the Bank House, Maitland-street, Bloemfontein, the Wife of ARTHUR REUEL TOLKIEN, of a Son. b

Notice of Ronald Tolkien's birth. (The Friend of the Free State, 5 January 1892.)

Mabel and Arthur's first child was born at Bank House on 3 January 1892. He was baptised in the Anglican Cathedral of St Andrew and St Michael, the oldest church in Bloemfontein. The parents chose to christen him John Ronald Reuel. The third name sounded so unusual that the vicar misspelt it in the baptismal register.

The boy's godparents were Edith May Incledon, Mabel's sister, who had arrived from England; George Edward Jelf, Assistant Master at St Andrew's College, a local public school for boys; and Tom Hadley, Mabel's brother-in-law.



The interior of the Anglican Cathedral, Bloemfontein, facing towards the font. (Boris Gorelik, 2014.)

In November, the Tolkiens took the earliest known picture of Ronald. The family posed in the garden of Bank House, 'by our vines', as Mabel noted on the photo print she sent to her parents in Birmingham.

In the photograph, we see Ronald in the arms of an Afrikaner nurse who looked after him.

'My cradle-tongue was English (with a dashing of Afrikaans)', The Professor remembered in his article 'English and Welsh'[4] half a century later. Apparently, his nurse taught him words and phrases of her native language.

The servants, standing in the background, could also speak Afrikaans, like everyone who grew up in Bloemfontein. Isaak, the 'house boy', took such liking to Ronald that he brought the infant to his village and proudly showed to his kin. The parents, who knew nothing of this, were shocked by the sudden disappearance of the baby. Still, they forgave the servant when he brought Ronald back the next day. In gratitude to his employer – and the Queen - the servant named his own son 'Isaak Mister Tolkien Victor'.

Much later, when Ronald was learning to walk in the garden, he stepped on a tarantula spider,[5] quite possibly a baboon spider, a common African variety. [Letter 217] It bit his foot, which no doubt caused the boy much pain: this species can inflict deep wounds with its long fangs. The nurse saved him from further suffering by sucking out the poison, which is mildly toxic to human beings.

When Ronald grew up, he could recall his running in terror through the long grass in the yard, but the encounter with the spider had faded from his memory. 'I can only say that I remember nothing about it, should not know it if I had not been told,' he wrote of this incident, 'and I do not dislike spiders particularly, and have no urge to kill them. I usually rescue those whom I find in the bath!'[5] [Letter 163]

Researchers have claimed that this experience prompted Tolkien to include episodes featuring evil spirits in the form of huge venomous arachnids. In *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings,* we read of battles with the horrifying giant Spiders, Shelob and Ungoliant. When asked to comment on this theory, the Professor didn't confirm it, saying only that the commentators were 'welcome to the notion'.

In Bloemfontein, Arthur Tolkien was always busy. He studied Dutch, the official language of the Free State, and met prospective clients at the club on Market Square, of which he was a member. He also served as treasurer of the Anglican cathedral's finance board. The priest called Arthur 'one of our good, devoted business men' and hoped to interest him in missionary work.[6] The number of black Anglicans in Bloemfontein was growing rapidly at that time.

But Arthur dedicated most of his time to his managerial duties. This was a challenging period for the Bank of Africa in the Free State.

Under Arthur's predecessor, the bank's business in the Boer republic had dropped by nearly 80 per cent within six years.[7] Arthur had to make up for the lost time and money and also keep the existing clients. His institution was losing ground to the National Bank of the Orange Free State, the only competitor in the country.

With her husband away from home most of the day, Mabel had to satisfy herself with the company of other Bloemfontein residents, both Afrikaners and English. For instance, she performed in amateur plays staged by the Fischers and the Fichardts, two of the most prominent families in the republic.[8]

The local society, the climate, with its scorching hot summers and freezing cold winters, and the general atmosphere of Bloemfontein annoyed Mabel. But she saw that her husband didn't seem to be looking forward to the 'home leave', when the family would be able to return to Birmingham

'I think I shall do well in this country', Arthur wrote to his father, 'and do not think I should settle down well in England again for a permanency.'[9]

In February 1894, Mabel gave birth to her second son, Hilary. The boy was doing much better than Ronald. Although the Bloemfontein climate was considered beneficial, and quite a few British people settled in the Free State for health reasons, Ronald just didn't seem to thrive there. Perhaps, as a prematurely born child, he tended to be weak and sickly.

Ronald suffered from fever and the heat during a severe drought that arrived in the Free State. It was decided that Mabel should take the boys for a holiday on the sea. And in November 1894, when Ronald was less than three years old, they travelled to the ocean coast, near Cape Town.

'Tolkien insisted that he had a particularly strong impression of his time at the seaside', recounted Prof Arne Zettersten. 'I showed that I was a little sceptical, but Tolkien was very determined on the matter.'[10]

Soon after Mabel and the boys returned from their holiday, they started to prepare for the voyage to Britain. Arthur was unable to go with them: he had to stay in Bloemfontein to attend to important matters. The Free State economy was growing rapidly. Also, the diamond industry, the core of the Bank of Africa's business, was booming again. Meanwhile, the National Bank continued to expand, and Arthur needed to take countermeasures.

He promised to Mabel that he would follow her and the boys to England soon.

'Years later,' wrote the Professor's children, John and Priscilla, 'Ronald described to us the powerful sense he had during the preparations for that voyage of the weight of emotion between his parents at the coming separation. He retained an image of extraordinary clarity of his father painting 'A.R. Tolkien' on their cabin trunk, an item that Ronald kept and treasured in memory of his father.'[11]

Overall, Ronald spent just over three years in Bloemfontein. In early April 1895, Mabel, Hilary and he departed for England.

In Birmingham, they waited for Arthur for months, but something always prevented him from taking the leave. In November, they learnt that he had developed 'rheumatic fever'. There was no way he could go to England in this state.

Karel Schoeman, the author of the most comprehensive history of Bloemfontein, suggested that Arthur Tolkien had contracted an acute infectious disease. If so, most likely, it was enteric fever, a class of fevers that includes typhoid.[12]

At the time, the capital of the Free State didn't have a proper sewer system. Sources of drinking water were heavily polluted. No wonder that infections of the gastrointestinal tract were widespread. Since 1893, epidemics broke out annually, claiming up to thirty lives per month. During the Boer War, in March 1900, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle tended to hundreds of enteric casualties among the British troops in Bloemfontein, as volunteer infantry doctor.[13]

Months passed, but Arthur Tolkien still wouldn't recover. In January 1896, Mabel decided to return to South Africa alone to nurse him back to health. Ronald dictated a letter that he wished her to deliver to his father. This was perhaps the first text authored by him.

Ronald's letter has survived because it was never sent. On 15 February, while Mabel was still in England, the news came that her husband had passed away. He was only forty

DEATH OF MR. A. R. TOLKIEN.

We deeply regret to record the death, on Saturday last of Mr. A. R. Tolkien, the respected and capable manager of the Bank of Africa. The cause of death was the only too prevalent scourge of typhoid fever. About three weeks before his death, Mr. Tolkien, who was then unwell, and undoubtedly in the incipient stages of the disease, though without of course knowing it, went out to Mr. Style's farm in the Conquered Territory to try what a change of air would do. He remained there about ten days, and returned here on the 5th inst. with the disease clearly upon him, and his medical attendant, Dr. Stollreither, at once saw that he was seriously ill. With unremitting care and attention he improved, and it was hoped that he would pull through, but unfortunately early on Saturday morning perforation, and peritonitis ensued, followed by total collapse, and he expired about four o'clock in the afternoon; the Dean of Bloemfontein, his nurse, Sister Flora, and Mr. van Zyl, accountant of the Bank being present.

Mr. Tolkien was a native of Birmingham, and only forty years old at the time of his death. He had been manager of the Bank of Africa here for the past six years, and had won golden opinions by his many estimable qualities. He was an active and useful member of the Church of England in this city.

The funeral took place on Sunday afternoon and was numerously attended. There was a full choral service in the Cathedral.

What adds to the sadness of this melancholy termination of a useful life, is the fact that Mrs. Tolkien and her two young children are absent on a visit to her friends in England. She was to have sailed early next month. All Bloemfontein will sincerely sympathise with the afflicted widow and fatherless children so sadly bereaved.

Arthur Tolkien's obituary, The Friend, 18 February 1896. The Friend no longer exists, the final issue having been produced in 1982.

years old. The Anglican congregation buried him the following day.

Mabel could no longer afford the long voyage to South Africa, even to visit his grave. Nor did she intend to live in the Free State.

She wrote a letter to the Bloemfontein Board of Executors, asking them to sell things from their Bank House flat, 'I hope they will fetch enough to clear all debts at Bloemfontein and here.'[14] Among their auctioned possessions were a piano, a Japanese vase and a Japanese tea set, two assegais (African spears) and two baby carriages.

According to Arthur's estate file at the Free State Provincial Archives, after all his debts in Bloemfontein were paid, Mabel was due to receive nearly £1500 as inheritance.[14]

Ronald's health had improved in England. As he was growing up, impressions of the West Midlands mingled with his memories of South Africa.

In a 1971 interview for the BBC, Tolkien said that he had 'a perfectly clear, vivid picture of a house that I now know is in fact a beautifully worked out pastiche of my own home in Bloemfontein and my grandmother's house in Birmingham. I can still remember going down the road in Birmingham and wondering what had happened to the big gallery, what happened to the balcony.'[15]

Tolkien grew to love the English countryside, where he 'first became aware of things'. But his childhood recollections of 'a hot parched country', of an African Christmas, 'blazing sun, drawn curtain and a drooping eucalyptus' remained with him for the rest of his life.

Prof Zettersten, a friend of Tolkien's, often spoke to the writer about his earliest memories. He found them very significant and influential because Tolkien, a creator of fantastic realms, very rarely travelled outside of England:

'A lively and receptive child like Ronald Tolkien would always have been affected by his surroundings, not least by his capacity to observe and compare at many levels … The importance of Tolkien's African memories should not be underestimated …'

Tolkien wanted to revisit South Africa. In 1920, he even applied for a professorship of English Literature at the University of Cape Town, the oldest in the Sub-Saharan Africa. The mining empire of De Beers sponsored this position.[16]

His application was approved, but, in the end, he had to decline the offer for family reasons and retained his post as reader at the University of Leeds. Soon, Tolkien was appointed professor at Oxford.

In 1944, his youngest son Christopher, who had enlisted in the Royal Air Force, was dispatched to South Africa to undergo training in Kroonstad (Orange Free State; 200 km from Bloemfontein) and Standerton (Transvaal). Tolkien had resumed his work on *The Lord of the Rings* earlier that year and sent chapters from the future book to his son in Africa.

In a letter of 25 May, he told Christopher that he wished he could travel to the country of his birth. He wrote about his constant 'curious sense of reminiscence about any stories of Africa, which always moves me deeply. Strange that you, my dearest, should have gone back there…'[5] [Letter 71]

When Christopher described to him the dry, dusty, 'satan-licked' veld that he saw everywhere, The Professor replied (on 12 August) that it 'only increases the longing I have always felt to see it again. Much though I love and admire little lanes and hedges and rustling trees and the soft rolling contours of a rich *champain*, the thing that that stirs me most and comes nearest to heart's satisfaction for me is space, and I would be willing to barter barrenness for it; indeed I think I like barrenness itself, whenever I have seen it.'[5] [Letter 78]

Tolkien never returned to South Africa. Nowadays, he wouldn't have recognised Bloemfontein. The town has turned into a city, the judicial capital of South Africa, spreading over 236 km^2. The population has grown seventy times since the day he last saw this place.

Most of the 19th-century buildings in the centre have been demolished. There's not much left in Bloemfontein that has any relation to the Tolkien family's stay.

The Bank of Africa, an imperial institution, went out of favour with the local public after the unification of South Africa in 1910. It was overtaken by the National Bank of South Africa, which, through further consolidation, merged into Barclays in 1926. Its direct descendant in this country is the First National Bank (FNB).

Bank House on the corner of Maitland and West Burger was purchased by the firm of James Brister, 'complete house furnishers' as the new sign over the door announced. In 1920, the Bradlows brothers, Russian Jews who arrived in South Africa two years after Tolkien's departure, bought the property for their countrywide retail group.[15] The 'Bradlows Furniture Emporium' opened its doors in the former banking hall.

In 1930, the Bradlows replaced the old 'bank building' with a new art deco-inspired structure. It has survived and still houses a Bradlows shop.

The corner of Maitland and West Burger. (Boris Gorelik, 2014.)

The National Monuments Council affixed a bronze plaque to the wall in commemoration of Tolkien. The plaque was stolen for scrap metal, rescued but eventually removed by authorities. Nowadays, nothing indicates that Bloemfontein's most famous son was born on this site.

J R R Tolkien expressed his concern about the condition of his father's grave in a letter to Christopher of 24 April 1944 [5] [Letter 63]: 'I have never done anything about it, but I believe my mother has a stone-cross put up or sent out … If not, it will be lost now, prob[ably], unless there are any records ...'

His worst suspicions proved to be true. The grave was considered lost for a long time.

Arthur Tolkien was buried just over the hill from the Cathedral, in what is now the President Brand Cemetery. It's known as the oldest in the city, with tombs of heads of state. The apartheid-era President John Vorster was laid to rest there as well.

The grave was unmarked, so Tolkien enthusiasts couldn't locate it. Finally, in January 1992, just before the visit of the Professor's family to Bloemfontein for The Tolkien Centenary celebrations, City Librarian Dux van der Walt initiated the search for Arthur's burying place.

'I heard that there was a chance that cemetery registers could be found at the municipality', recounts Van der Walt. 'I went to their offices, and an official hauled an old dilapidated book from underneath the counter. With his enthusiastic help, we could trace the grave.'

The Tolkien Trust put up a tombstone. It was consecrated during Priscilla Tolkien's next visit, in 1996.

As almost everywhere in South African cities, this cemetery is in a poor state. Most gravestones are untended, knocked down or missing altogether. Arthur Tolkien's gravestone is apparently looked after. But it's not easy to find: there are no pointers or guides to show you the way.

Arthur Tolkien's grave. (Boris Gorelik, 2014.)

Anyhow, only Tolkien fanatics would come here. The area is considered to be unsafe.

At the Anglican Cathedral, you'll find the only tangible evidence of J R R Tolkien's association with the city. In the neo-gothic nave, there's a large ornate font, carved out of sandstone, on a marble base. Installed approximately in

(L to R) Priscilla Tolkien, her cousin Una Cooper and JRR Tolkien's granddaughter Joanna (Joan) sitting by Arthur's (new) gravestone prior to its consecration in 1996. (Dux Van der Walt 1996.) (By kind permission.)

1880, it is covered by a heavy wooden dome suspended from the steel beams under the roof. Both Ronald and Hilary Tolkien were baptised in this font.

There are no other authentic Tolkien sites in Bloemfontein.

Curiously enough, the city's status as Tolkien's birthplace is perhaps Bloemfontein's biggest secret. *The Rough Guide to South Africa* points out, quite fairly, that the local authorities seem 'curiously reluctant to publicize' this fact.

The font in the Anglican Cathedral, Bloemfontein. (Boris Gorelik, 2014.)

At the National Museum in Bloemfontein, among the extensive permanent exhibition on local history, you'll easily notice Zola Budd's running shoes and a cast of her feet (she's also locally born). Or the stands with a description of the birth of the African National Congress and its rival pro-apartheid National Party, both of which were founded here. But it may take you a while to spot a photo of Tolkien and the two-sentence summary of his life and achievements in an overfull display dedicated to local personalities.

The award-winning Hobbit Hotel in President Steyn Avenue will probably give you the biggest dose of 'Tolkienana'. It was established by Jake Uys, the founder of the country's only Tolkien society (now defunct). They even have the bronze plaque from the Bradlows building, the only historical attribute here. Still, the charming hotel receives its fair share of tourists. Many of them believe, incorrectly of course, that this was Tolkien's birthplace.

The general feeling in Bloemfontein is that Tolkien never looked back after he left South Africa. It is believed that the fact that he was born in Bloemfontein has no particular meaning for him, since he only spent the first three years of his life there.

But I hope that my article has shown you that South Africa still had a special place in Tolkien's heart.

Boris Gorelik is a Russian historian based in Moscow and Johannesburg.

1. Webb, Arthur, *The Roots of the Tree: A Study in Early South African Banking: the Predecessors of First National of First National Bank 1838-1926*. Johannesburg: First National Bank of Southern Africa, 1992, pp 77-9.
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The Anglican Cathedral, Bloemfontein, where JRR Tolkien was baptised in 1892. (Boris Gorelik, 2014.)

Tom Bombadil and the Journey for Middle-earth

KERRY BROOKS

Tolkien was a very meticulous writer. Everything he created has its place in his legendarium, so when readers become lost along with the hobbits in the Old Forest and are found by the seemingly random Tom Bombadil, it's no wonder we feel confused. In a lot of ways, it seems like Tom doesn't fit into the wider story of *The Lord of the Rings*. In a world of things with explanations and histories so complex that it's easy to forget they aren't real, Tom is mysterious and highly fantasized. To name only his oddest characteristics: he dresses in bright colors, appears to be of an unknown race, talks in a sing-song rhythm, and brings with him an air that seems to send the hobbits into a trance. Whereas many aspects of Tolkien's world maintain humanistic features, Bombadil seems to have stepped out of a children's tale. He's oddly discordant with the rest of the story, yet Tolkien chose to keep him there. In fact, the encounter with Tom Bombadil is one of the few things that remains original to Tolkien's first drafts of the books. Although it may not seem so at first, Bombadil can be seen as a figure intertwined with the entire story. He provides a doorway between the hobbits' past and the journey that lies ahead, as well as functioning as a figurehead for power which is enlightening and kind. His relationship to goodness as well as to the future of Frodo's journey reveals the future of Middle-earth as a place in which benevolence reigns.

Previous critics on this topic – including Klaus Jensen, Liam Campbell, and David Gay – have treated Tom as an isolated character and therefore pulled him out of context to analyze him. Many of their answers to the questions of Bombadil's identity involve other characters in mythologies or histories outside of Tolkien's universe. Although these are valid and interesting interpretations, there is a wealth of information which can be gained by analyzing Bombadil fully within the context of the world he was written into. Tom Bombadil and his companion Goldberry are radically different from other components of Tolkien's realm; however, just because Tom is an *anomaly* doesn't mean he is *unimportant*. Tolkien would not have liked to hear his character discussed as an allegory, so I suggest we broaden our view and realize that Tom plays a crucial role within the book. He should be examined as a character who opposes the Ring's power and also guides the hobbits in a critical time, remaining immensely important throughout the story.

When examining Tom Bombadil, it is crucial to remember that he not only guides the hobbits on their journey but initiates the adventure that ultimately saves Middle-earth. He is single-handedly responsible for the continuation of the Ring quest, and thus is related to all the events that transpire afterwards. He saves Frodo and his companions on more than one occasion. Usually these occasions are initiated by moments of sleep: they are coaxed to sleep and nearly killed by Old Man Willow, face nightmares during their dreams at Bombadil's house, fall asleep on the Barrow-downs, and are subsequently captured by a Barrow-wight who also puts them to sleep. Bombadil saves them from Old Man Willow, eases their nightmares, and destroys the Barrow-wight who was hunting them. Sleep represents a state of inactivity, in which the hobbits are not moving forward or advancing on their quest. However, each time this sleep occurs, Bombadil is there to wake them up and set them on the right path. Although the hobbits tried to protect themselves, there is little doubt that without Bombadil's strength, they would have been doomed. The Ring would have fallen into the hands of evil, and Middle-earth would have been destroyed.

Hobbits and Swords

Tom also allows the quest to continue by providing the hobbits with swords. Doing this not only gives the hobbits a means to protect themselves but also prepares them for the journey ahead of them in a figurative sense. He forces them to realize that this will be much harder, and much more dangerous, than they had originally thought. These swords

prove to be a symbol of hope throughout the story, perpetuating the continual role Tom plays. Merry's sword helps to defeat the Witch-King of Angmar, eliminating one force of evil from the world. Sam also experiences a moment of darkness which is alleviated by the memory of Bomabdil. Alone in Shelob's lair, he reaches for the sword which was given to him by Bombadil on the Barrow-downs:

> "[A]nd he laid his hand upon the hilt of his sword; and as he did so, he thought of the darkness of the barrow whence it came. 'I wish old Tom was near us now!' he thought. Then, as he stood, darkness about him and a blackness of despair and anger in his heart, it seemed to him that he saw a light.[1]"

Tom also provides hope while the hobbits still reside in his home. When Frodo awakens after what seems to be his first night in the house of Bombadil, he runs to the Eastern window and opens it: "In the East…the sky spoke of rain to come; but the light was broadening quickly, and the red flowers on the beans began to glow against the wet green leaves."[2] The East is the direction in which Mordor lies and is symbolic of the future. The fact that the "sky spoke of rain to come" alludes to the troubles that lie ahead. They must endure many difficulties in order to destroy the Ring. However, "the light was broadening quickly," meaning that hope lies beyond all the strife. Tom is often associated with light imagery as he battles back the darkness, most clearly seen in his appearance at the Barrow-downs: "A low door-like opening appeared at the end of the chamber beyond Frodo's feet; and there was Tom's head (hat, feather, and all) framed against the light of the sun rising red behind him."[3] This connects the light of the hope Tom embodies with the light that Frodo saw on the horizon. Tom *is* that hope beyond the strife. As Frodo gazed towards the east, "Pippin looked out of the western window, down into a pool of mist. The Forest was hidden under a fog. It was like looking down on to a sloping cloud-roof from above."[2] This shows that the past, where the hobbits came from, is mysterious and not accessible. They will never be able to fully assimilate back into their past ways if they try to return to them. Because the hobbits are able to see both their past and future from Bombadil's house, readers may view him as a doorway between those two places in the lives of Frodo and his friends; additionally, he provides them with the hope they need to succeed.

It cannot be denied that Tom Bombadil appears at a time and a place which serve liminal roles in *The Lord of the Rings*. The hobbits are just leaving their home and embarking on their adventure. He happens to stumble upon the hobbits just when they are overwhelmed, and it seems that they will not be able to complete the task they were given by Gandalf. Michael Treschow and Mark Duckworth aptly describe that the hobbits "are shown to be unable to take care of themselves in the wide world and so unequal to the terrible quest that they have undertaken."[4] Bombadil comes to the hobbits' aid by saving their lives and pushing them forward, and serves as a transitional character by preparing them for the journey that lies ahead. He provides them with hope and a sense of purpose, a bridge in the journey between where they come from and where they are going. He unveils to them the gravity of their mission, initiating the journey that will ultimately destroy the Ring. His house is a segue, and a safe place for them to rest and collect themselves as the reality of how dangerous and difficult their quest will be sinks in. This time with Bombadil also allows them to face what lies ahead.

The hope Tom provides opposes the despair and evil embodied in the Ring. Although the help Bombadil gives the hobbits shows his clear sympathy with our protagonists, he has an unusual relationship with the Ring, one that differs from all the other characters'. Many of the story's characters are, at one point, confronted with the Ring and find themselves tempted. As Liam Campbell aptly writes: "the One Ring becomes a gauge; an object which when dealt with, considered or handled by a given character, betrays that character's true nature and his or her susceptibility

to the seduction of power."[5] Generally, we find that those whom we view as our protagonists reject the power of the Ring, while those whom we view as antagonists seek this power. There are certainly exceptions to this, with characters such as Boromir and Gollum, and at some points even Frodo, finding themselves warped by desire for the Ring even though they did not have evil intentions; however, the good characters' choice to actively resist the power of the One Ring largely separates them from the evil characters in the story.

Tom's morality, however, cannot be gauged simply by using the Ring. Although he is not the only character to appear in a "grey" area which challenges clear categories of good and evil, he is the only character who expresses absolutely no longing for the power of the Ring when confronted with it. Thus, even though he helps our protagonists, he cannot be branded as a simply "good" character, because this lowers him to the level of characters who must actively resist this corrupting power. It cannot be said that Tom refuses this power, because he is not tempted by it. This complete separation from the Ring raises Tom Bombadil above even Gandalf and Galadriel and places him as an opposite of the Ring. Even though the Ring is an object instead of a character, we see very clearly that it has autonomy. It takes the help of a powerful being such as Bombadil, and other powerful "good guys" such as Gandalf, Galadriel and Aragorn, to destroy it and oppose it. Tom not only sympathizes with Frodo, but seems to embody the higher level of "goodness" that they hope to gain by destroying the Ring.

Tom and the Ring

But what exactly is the source of this ethereal "goodness" which allows Tom to disregard any power the Ring promises him? Bombadil is never said to be a Maia or a Vala, so why is he such a strong figure? Why does he care so little for the Ring? Tolkien wrote in one of his letters that Tom is able to repudiate the Ring's power because "the story is cast in terms of a good side, and a bad side … but if you have, as it were … renounced control … then the questions of rights and wrongs of power and control might become utterly meaningless to you."[6] Although it seems instinctual to take the author's view as the final answer, it can't help but seem odd that Tolkien would say this when Tom clearly has so *much* power, and clearly has not renounced control. He destroys the Barrow-wight and fights off Old Man Willow, and we see in *The Adventures of Tom Bombadil* that he commands other parts of nature as well. Perhaps it is not that Tom rejects the Ring because he does not need power, but because he has his own power, a clean and pure power. This is why the Ring seems such a trifle to Bombadil. As the symbol of the kind of power which twists the mind with longing, it holds no sway over Bombadil, who represents power which fills the mind with knowledge. Thus, when confronted with the Ring, Tom merely plays with it, and in fact he *looks through it*. Campbell once again makes a good insight when he suggests that Tom does this to "expose the trick; to break the illusion rather than create one."[5] By holding the Ring before him like an insubstantial trinket, he undermines its power.

Tom Bombadil's influence on the entire story of *The Lord of the Rings* culminates in his role as a liminal character. He sends the hobbits from their past into their future and provides the source of hope which shows them the direction Middle-earth must take. *The Lord of the Rings* closes at the end of an Age, and Tom Bombadil helps usher this in. Frodo thinks of Bombadil in that beautiful, goose-bump-inducing passage at the end of the book, when the characters we have come to love sail West:

> "[O]n a night of rain Frodo smelled a sweet fragrance on the air and heard the sound of singing that came over the water. And then it seemed to him that as in his dream in the house of Bombadil, the grey rain-curtain turned all to silver glass and was rolled back, and he beheld white shores and beyond them a far green country under a swift sunrise.[7]"

As Frodo and other wardens of good, such as Gandalf, leave Middle-earth, they leave it in Bombadil's protection. Without the Ring, kindness and goodness are able to fully reign over the world, ushered into existence with Tom's influence pushing Frodo and his companions forward. Tom Bombadil's powers were able to oppose the Ring and ensure its destruction and, in the end, the citizens of Middle-earth have him to thank for their freedom. Tom Bombadil is the green country and the sunrise, the light broadening quickly on the horizon, the hope and goodness, which defeated the varying evils and corrupting power of Sauron and his Ring.

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"The House of his Spirit Crumbles." A medical consideration of Faramir's condition on his return from the retreat from Osgiliath, in *The Lord of the Rings*.

DR JENNIFER URQUART

In *The Return of the King*, Faramir, Captain of Gondor and only surviving son of the Steward, is seriously injured while attempting to defend his city, Minas Tirith, from attack by the forces of Mordor.

"… in his arms, before him on his horse … [Prince Imrahil] … bore the body of his kinsman, Faramir … found upon the stricken field."[1]

The reader of *The Return of the King* can glean information about several problems. Faramir is unconscious. He has received an arrow-wound, albeit a fairly minor one, and by twelve hours afterwards at the very latest, he has a very high body temperature, described as a fever, which seems not to abate at any time until Faramir is cured. Since he is so ill it is assumed that the arrow that hit him was a poisoned arrow from the Nazgûl and, therefore, that the wound is mortal. There are no signs that he initially receives any medical care beyond the extraction of the arrow and staunching of the wound by Prince Imrahil, and basic care for Faramir's comfort such as bed and extra blankets when he is moved outside. About thirty-six hours after Faramir is brought home, his father Denethor attempts to kill him, convinced that defeat and death are inevitable, and then commits suicide by fire. Faramir is covered in oil, although not burned or further injured, and is taken to the Houses of Healing. His condition, however, continues to worsen and by the time the returning king, Aragorn, sees him, he still has a very high temperature, is unresponsive and is close to death. It is noted that his brow is "drenched with sweat".[2]

Diagnosis is wrong?

Aragorn examines Faramir, and suggests that the diagnoses are wrong. The wound was not from an arrow of the Nazgûl, since in that case Faramir would have died much sooner; furthermore the wound was not poisoned or infected as it is healing well, despite the overall worsening of his condition. Aragorn suggests that Faramir's primary problem is the 'Black Breath', but that he is also suffering from exhaustion, "grief at his father's mood" [2] and a minor physical wound. Aragorn then saves Faramir's life by entering some sort of trance, expending much strength of his own in doing so, to bring Faramir's spirit back to his body. He subsequently wakes Faramir by causing him to inhale the steam from an infusion of the herb *athelas*, and Faramir is set on the road to recovery. He is completely recovered about two weeks later, and is able to take up the duties of ruling steward.

However, the details of Faramir's condition are not immediately apparent, and I have wondered about them. In particular, I have wondered why Faramir had a fever. Several characters were wounded in the battles against Mordor and, like him, suffered severely from the Black Breath. All the others, however, followed the normal course for those who have the Black Breath: progressive loss of consciousness and hypothermia, leading to death unless cured. He, however, had a high and persistent fever from early in the course of his illness. The obvious cause is an infection (or poison) in his wound, but we are told that his wound is clean and healing well even as he becomes increasingly ill. Why, therefore, does he have a fever?

Presented here are the conclusions of those musings.

Some of Faramir's problems fit easily into a modern medical paradigm; others do not. His arrow-wound is "not deep or vital"[2] and, if not poisoned, is thought by Prince Imrahil to be insufficient explanation for his desperate illness. Extreme exhaustion can kill; and "grief" (when called 'stress') is widely recognised by modern medicine to worsen many illnesses, even if exactly how it does so is not always well understood. The 'Black Breath', however, does not fit easily into a modern medical understanding of illness, in the same way that it did not really fit into the conventional Gondorian understanding either:

"Now all their art and knowledge were baffled; … And those who were stricken with it fell slowly into an ever deeper dream, and then passed to silence and a deadly cold, and so died." [2]

Black Breath

The Black Breath, which is contracted by coming into excessive proximity to the Nazgûl, appears to be primarily a spiritual malady, with additional psychological and physical symptoms and signs including fear, confusion, reduced levels of consciousness, hypothermia, weakness and death. However, Faramir's illness does not appear to follow this well-described course. Aragorn does not directly explain Faramir's fever, and it is not typical for the ailments from which he is suffering.

Faramir received his arrow-wound "… as he held at bay a mounted champion of Harad …"[1] only a few minutes before he is brought home at the end of a losing battle with which he has been engaged for the previous two days, culminating

in a retreat, lasting perhaps fourteen hours, of some twenty miles, during which time he has been fighting in the rearguard. Taking personal command of the rearguard, he is exposing himself to great personal danger, strenuous exertion over an extended time and considerable mental strain. By the time he is wounded, Faramir has probably been fighting for two days, in very humid weather, with very little rest. His enemies have fought night and day, judging by the signs of battle visible from Minas Tirith and the messengers that Faramir sends back at regular intervals to the city. He is also likely to have had little to eat or drink, possibly nothing at all since the start of the final rapid retreat which probably began in the early morning of the day he was wounded in the early evening.

Presumably he is wearing armour, although this is not described. Since he is the heir to the stewardship, and probably at this point Gondor's senior battlefield commander, it seems reasonable to conclude that he is wearing the best armour available. It is not clear what sort of armour this might be, since other than the heirloom helmets of mithril and the mail worn by the citadel guard, the only specific details given about Gondorian armour are that Denethor wears mail (although mostly to prevent a decline in his physical fitness) and that Prince Imrahil has vambraces and mail. Given that Gondor seems to be a fairly sophisticated ancient society, geared towards war for many centuries, my opinion is that for an engagement of this kind, Faramir would probably have had at least some plate armour, which gives better protection than mail, possibly over a coat of mail, with the necessary thick padding underneath.

Faramir was not well-rested when he set out to battle. He had returned the previous day from a ten-day mission in Ithilien on the borders of enemy lands, so weary that he was unsteady on his feet. With only one night's sleep and an early rise the following morning, he had to leave for battle again, on an expedition which he thought ill-advised from a military point of view since "… [the enemy] can afford to lose a host better than we to lose a company." [1]

Many Stresses

Faramir is described by Aragorn as being psychologically strong, "… a man of staunch will ..."[2] and, as a fairly pure Númenórean, a man of considerable mental powers. However, at this point Faramir is afflicted by many sources of distress.

Firstly, he is suffering greatly from grief for his brother Boromir who had been killed a fortnight earlier. Faramir loved Boromir dearly, and his grief was compounded by the recently acquired knowledge that Boromir had fallen prey to the evil influence of the Ring and had acted very dishonourably shortly before his death.

Also, Faramir, during his recent mission to Ithilien, had met Frodo who was travelling into Mordor to destroy the Ring which was the key to Sauron's power. He had permitted Frodo to continue his journey, since he could see no better alternative, but expected Frodo, whom he regarded as a friend, to be captured and put "to death or to torment".[3] He was aware that the failure of Frodo's mission, which Faramir expected, would mean that the Ring would be re-captured by the enemy; this would be followed by the swift defeat of his city, the destruction of his nation and his own and his father's death or capture and torment.

In addition, on his return from Ithilien, the night before he left for battle again, Denethor became very angry with him, accused him of treason for failing to bring the ring to Minas Tirith, and compared him unfavourably with his dead brother. Finally, his father said he wished that Faramir had exchanged places with his brother, which Faramir may have taken to mean that his father wished that it had been Faramir who had died. The next morning, immediately before Faramir was sent out, there was further contention during the council meeting. Denethor cast aspersions on Faramir's courage in front of the council and the assembled commanders, and rebuffed his attempt to make peace between them and his explicit request for his father's love. Faramir was then denied the thanks and blessing that his father later said he should have received before leaving. "… I sent my son forth, unthanked, unblessed, out into needless peril, and here he lies with poison in his veins."[1]

Furthermore, according to Aragorn in the Houses of Healing, Faramir had not completely recovered from the Nazgûl's first attack on him, which took place when he was returning to the city from Ithilien. "… already he had come close under the Shadow before ever he rode to battle on the out-walls. Slowly the dark must have crept on him even as he fought and strove to hold his outpost."[2]

As the retreat approached Minas Tirith, the Nazgûl attacked. If the commander could be incapacitated then the rest of the retreating men would be relatively easy to destroy, which would undermine the morale of the defenders, who were watching from the walls of Minas Tirith. While the Nazgûl might not have been able to recognise Faramir personally, they might have been able to deduce his likely identity. This would give them additional cause to target him, since the loss of Faramir could be expected to do particularly severe damage to the city's morale as well as to his father's strength, and would deprive Gondor of an extremely capable commander. It seems reasonable to suggest that Faramir would, therefore, have suffered particularly sustained and concentrated assault.

None of the abovementioned is, however, a reason for a fever. In my opinion, this also may be a misdiagnosis. Clearly Faramir is very hot and very ill, but it is possible that what is perceived as a fever is in fact heatstroke. Even in modern medical practice the initial clinical differentiation of the two conditions depends to a considerable extent on the history of the illness. In Faramir's case I think confusion could arise fairly easily. Heatstroke is rare in otherwise healthy adults except in the case of those who undertake prolonged strenuous exertion, typically military personnel or athletes, especially those who are wearing protective equipment which prevents the evaporation of sweat – the primary mechanism for the loss of heat from the body. Heatstroke is worsened by dehydration, which if severe will

prevent further sweating, leading to an even greater increase in body temperature, and is more common under conditions of high atmospheric humidity.

Dehydration

In my opinion, a likely scenario is as follows: Faramir, as he approaches Minas Tirith, is exhausted, and has had little or nothing to eat or drink for some time. He is somewhat dehydrated, and suffering from early heatstroke due to being unable to lose heat through the evaporation of sweat because of his armour and the very humid weather. He would be feeling very hot, light-headed and weak, and possibly starting to have difficulty thinking clearly, but forcing himself to continue with the same strong will with which "he can master both beasts and men."[1] As the mounted sortie leaves Minas Tirith to cover the retreat, Faramir is assailed by the Nazgûl, who at the very least will be a further impediment to concentration and make it more difficult for him to give attention to his surroundings. At that moment he is struck by an arrow and falls from his horse, either due to pain from the wound, or from being physically knocked out of the saddle by the force of the arrow's impact. He loses consciousness from the Black Breath[4] or possibly from exhaustion and heatstroke. Faramir is then found by Prince

Imrahil, unconscious and very hot, but apparently with only minor injuries. Since fever is generally more common than heatstroke, and sometimes a sign of poisoning, Imrahil's assumption that the arrow that hit Faramir was poisoned is reasonable; especially since Faramir is now unable to say that he feels very hot, rather than feeling cold as those suffering from a constant high fever tend to do. Since he may have stopped sweating due to dehydration, he may have appeared more like someone fevered than someone too hot.

Faramir is then brought to the citadel, and put in bed. The traditional English treatment for any illness classed as 'a fever' was to keep the patient very warm with clothes and many blankets, until the fever 'broke', that is, the patient started to sweat, which, after a constant fever, was taken as a sign of the start of recovery. There may have been some merit in this treatment, because when an illness is caused by infection, fever may aid recovery, to a degree which might make a difference significant in the absence of antibiotics.[5] Such treatment may also provide comfort, since those with a fever tend to seek warmth as they are trying to maintain a body temperature higher than normal. Circumstantial evidence of this approach in Gondor is provided by the fact that when Faramir was taken outside at night, he was covered with additional "warm coverlets" [1] in an attempt to ensure his comfort.

In Faramir's case, however, blankets would have made the situation worse as it would have further impeded his ability to lose heat, leading to a possible further rise in his temperature, and worsening of his condition. As he was thought to be mortally wounded, the first consideration seems to have been for his comfort, leading to him being disturbed as little as possible. Denethor could have bathed his face or tried to give him a little water, both of which might have helped, but there is no record in the text that this actually happened.

When he was rescued by Gandalf after his father attempted to take his life, Faramir was moved rather roughly and he "… moaned and called on his father …",6 possibly in pain, suggesting that at that point Faramir was not completely unrousable. Unfortunately he had also been drenched in oil, which would further impede his ability to lose heat.

Faramir was then taken to the Houses of Healing, the main hospital in Minas Tirith, which was extremely busy treating the many casualties of the battle. He already had a fixed diagnosis of fever due to a poisoned arrow-wound, which may have seemed plausible and not been questioned, leading to further attempts to ensure that he was kept warm enough to aid his recovery from what was perceived to be a poison-induced fever. But the healers will at least have tried to cure him, since they were trying to save Faramir's life rather than merely mourning his apparently inevitable death. To that end, they may have made great efforts to get Faramir to take something to drink while he could, which would be helpful in the case of fever, or any wound leading to blood loss and also, incidentally, in heatstroke. If not awake enough to drink normally he might, when very dehydrated, have sucked fluid from a sponge or a cloth, and fluid could also have been given by other means. Once he was a little less dehydrated, Faramir would have started to sweat profusely. They may also have changed his clothes. It seems unlikely, however, that he would have been bathed and scrubbed vigorously all over with soap. This would have been necessary to remove all the oil and permit him to lose heat effectively through sweating, but might have been seen as unnecessarily distressing for a man who was very ill and for whom movement caused pain. Working against the possible slight improvement in his heatstroke would have been the gradual progression of the Black Breath as time passed and which would, without Aragorn's treatment, have killed him. The Black Breath would have led to deeper unconsciousness, preventing further administration of fluid by mouth.

Therefore, when Aragorn arrived, he found Faramir still very hot, but with his brow drenched with sweat, and near death from the effect of the Black Breath on a man battered down by physical exhaustion, psychological distress, and pain. Aragorn, who as the rightful king was the only one able to cure the Black Breath, did so, and over the following days Faramir recovered from his other ailments. It was fortunate the king did return, just in time to save the life of the man who would be his steward for many years thereafter.

It is left to the reader to judge whether the theories presented here are correct.

1. *The Siege of Gondor,* Ch. 4, Book Five, *The Return of the King*, J. R. R. Tolkien. London: George Allen & Unwin, 1955.
2. *The Houses of Healing*, Ch. 8, Book Five, *The Return of the King*, J. R. R. Tolkien. London: George Allen & Unwin, 1955.
3. *The Forbidden Pool*, Ch. 6, Book Four, *The Two Towers,* J. R. R. Tolkien. London: George Allen & Unwin, 1954.
4. *Strider*, Ch. 10, Book One, *The Fellowship of the Ring,* J. R. R. Tolkien. London: George Allen & Unwin, 1954. Merry, a hobbit, suffering briefly from the Black Breath at Bree, was rendered unconscious immediately by going too close to one of the Nazgûl.
5. *The Houses of Healing*, Ch. 8, Book Five, *The Return of the King*, J. R. R. Tolkien. London: George Allen & Unwin, 1955. Although since "the leechcraft of Gondor was … wise, and skilled in the healing of … all such sickness as east of the Sea mortal men were subject to. Save old age only." Tolkien implies that Gondor has effective treatment for infectious disease, a scourge in societies that do not have antibiotics.
6. *The Pyre of Denethor*, Ch. 7, Book Five, *The Return of the King*, J. R. R. Tolkien. London: George Allen & Unwin, 1955.

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Reconstructing the Politics of the Dark Age

DR TOM SHIPPEY

I've written elsewhere – see *http://www.lotrplaza.com/showthread.php?18483*, and note the complementary essay by Michael Drout, same reference but the number is 17739 – that what I regret about Tolkien's famous 1936 essay on "The Monsters and the Critics" is that he discredited and put a stop to any discussions about the historical value of *Beowulf*, by warning everyone that "[The poem's] illusion of historical truth and perspective … is largely a product of art", and that "the seekers after history must beware lest the glamour of Poesis overcome them". The seekers took the warning, and it's been axiomatic ever since that the poem is "valueless as history". It's also been very generally accepted – here contradicting what Tolkien called "one of the firmer conclusions of research" – that while we don't and can't know when the poem was composed, there's no strong reason to suppose it was very far from the date of the one surviving manuscript, which can be dated securely to close on the year 1000. Which means that since the events of the poem took place centuries before that (if they did at all), there is all the more reason for not taking the poem's complex political and historical narrative seriously, even as a memory.

Things are changing, if slowly, as shown by the volume of *The Dating of Beowulf: A Reassessment*, which will be reviewed in a future Mallorn by Nelson Goering (aka "Mandos", and very rightly, for he is a strict and impartial judge). The whole issue of historicity has also been revived by embarrassing archaeological discoveries at the village of Gamle Lejre in Denmark. This was long equated with the *Hleithra* of old texts, the legendary home of the Skjöldung dynasty, the Scyldings of *Beowulf*, but it was again generally accepted that the legends had no basis. Apart from its giant mounds (which is actually quite a big "apart"), it did not look like an important place. But in digs carried out up to the summer of 2009, archaeologists again and again unearthed the remains of enormous halls, six of them so far. The insignificant village really had been a power-centre for centuries, and the legends really did have a basis. For all this, see *Beowulf and Lejre*, ed. John Niles (2007), which gives a great deal of evidence for fact and for legend – accompanied, I have to say, by a good deal of squirming from people who really *don't* want to have to eat their hats.

Finn and Hengest

Something else we now know, however, is that Tolkien *did not really mean* all that he said about the poem and history back in 1936. He took it as history very seriously indeed. This would have been evident to anyone who read *Finn and Hengest* when it was eventually published in 1982. Unfortunately, almost no-one did, at least among the ranks of *Beowulf* scholars. I have seen no more than a couple of references to it in the voluminous literature of comment on the poem. Tolkien 1936 was too firmly established in the academic mainstream for Tolkien 1982 to be able to force its way in.

But now we have Tolkien 2014 as well, which in a way

complements Tolkien 1982, for its extensive "Commentary" on the poem omits the whole central section of which the "Finn and Hengest" story forms a part. Getting to my main and only point in this piece, what I appreciate most about that "Commentary" is Tolkien's very careful attempt to establish a working chronology for the events of the poem, and to show that the poem's many allusions and apparently random remarks about the past can be fitted together remarkably well. Now, that could be "the product of art", and art certainly comes into it, for Beowulf himself (who is probably completely fictitious) has been fitted in to just the right moment in several overlapping cycles of legend. But if one does take the poem seriously – and Tolkien wholeheartedly believed in taking ancient works seriously, however hard they were to understand – then it gives a remarkably consistent and coherent geo-political picture, of a place and time for which we have almost no other documentary evidence at all.

Briefly, it seems to me that Tolkien makes several points, or arguments, about what lay behind the central events of the poem.

Danes' Disaster

First, the poem starts off by telling us that the Danes suffered from a disastrous interregnum before the coming of the mysterious foundling Scyld. Scyld himself does not make a lot of sense. Does his description "Scyld Sceafing" mean "Scyld-with-a-sheaf" or "Scyld-son-of-Sheaf"? It can hardly be the latter, for he arrives as a baby, unable to talk or say who his father is. But if he just *has* a sheaf of corn with him, and his son is called (as Tolkien argued, see p. 145) Beow = "barley", then he looks like some kind of culture-deity, while his own name is readily explained as a back-formation from what the Danes called themselves, "the shieldings, the warrior-people". But the interregnum? Well, declared Tolkien (p. 143), and it makes simple and evident sense, the poem twice mentions a king of the Danes who was driven out for his cruelty, a king called Heremod. That caused the interregnum, the new dynasty started with Healfdene – and though Tolkien doesn't go on to state this, new kings have a habit of inventing illustrious or even semi-divine ancestry to authorise their power-grab.

Next, what Healfdene did was start the process of nation-formation which led to modern Denmark, by rolling up the many contending tribes into a coalition. Critical in Tolkien's view was the seizure of the site of Heorot, at what is now Lejre. This, he argued (p. 157), was a cult-centre of the non-Aesir gods Frey and Ing (p. 179), and it was seized in his view, by Healfdene, from the almost-forgotten tribe of Heatho-Bards ("Battle-Bards"). But the Bards under their king Froda came back and re-occupied it, in the process killing Heorogar, eldest son of Healfdene and brother of Hrothgar – it's significant that he has been completely forgotten by Scandinavian tradition, though there is a gaping hole where he ought to be, while Scandinavian tradition is also graphic on the determined attempt by Froda to finish off his (Heorogar's) two younger brothers. Those two brothers survived and in their turn killed Froda and re-occupied Lejre: this is the *heresped*, "success in war", with which Hrothgar is credited in the poem, and which he celebrated by building Heorot.

All this is in the past at the time of Beowulf's arrival at the now-haunted hall in the poem, but in the near future is Hrothgar's attempt to settle this long feud by a diplomatic marriage of his daughter Frea-waru (note the name: Frey-names are very rare in Old English) to Froda's son Ingeld, who has been growing up all the time since Heorot was built, twelve years according to the poem, time enough to reach maturity. The marriage will fail, Ingeld will be killed in battle, and Heorot burned to the ground: Tolkien thought this would be as the result of a Bardic campaign, but it would be more dramatic, as has been suggested, if the old feud was rekindled at the marriage itself, at the bride's home of Heorot – not quite what Beowulf predicts, but then he's predicting! The irony is he guesses right, the marriage isn't going to work, but he guesses wrong, in that the situation known to legend is *even worse* than he predicts. It's not some anonymous Danish youth who starts the brawl, as Beowulf imagines, it will be Ingeld personally.

Focus on the Geats

Meanwhile other things have been happening. One of the most striking and unpredictable ways in which *Beowulf* differs from the much later-recorded Scandinavian legends of this time and place is that it centres on the Geats, the inhabitants of East- and West-Götaland in what is now southern Sweden. The Geatas or Gautar never vanished, but they lost their independence, to the Swedes – well, some time way back when. In *Beowulf*, this hasn't happened. Actually, the Geats are on the up. In the poem their king, Beowulf's maternal uncle Hygelac, has fairly recently killed the Swedish king Ongentheow, who must have been succeeded by his elder son Ohthere – king, says Tolkien, of a reduced and defeated kingdom (pp. 219-20). It's also clear from the poem that the Danes and the Geats have not been on good terms, and that Hrothgar, looking as with the Bards for a diplomatic solution, has sent gifts to the Geats to try to heal the breach: a good time to have done that would be just after Hygelac had killed Ongentheow and succeeded himself to the Geatish throne (see pp. 217-20). Tolkien notes, however, that the arrival of Beowulf creates a bit of a problem of tact for Hrothgar, for Hrothgar's sister-in-law (also his niece, as a result of incest, but let's not go into that, the poem's scribe A seems to have been embarrassed by it too and done a bit of ineffective censorship) has been married off to a prince of the Swedes, the Geats' hereditary enemies. Indeed, if you take all the connections seriously (as Tolkien did), Hrothgar is welcoming to his hall the nephew of the man who killed his niece/sister-in-law's father. But just at that point, Tolkien argues (p. 220 again) her husband was only the younger brother of a weakened king, himself unlikely to succeed. Better to conciliate the rising power of the Geats.

But this wouldn't last. Two things are clear about history as imagined in *Beowulf*. One is that things are going to go bad

for the Danes and the Scylding dynasty – not right away, but in the end. After Hrothgar is dead, his sons and nephews will wipe each other out to the last man, in civil war. The other is that things are going to go bad for the Geats. Hygelac, warlike and aggressive, will launch a major raid on the kingdom of the Franks, get cut off and killed, a disaster from which only Beowulf (very implausibly) escapes. The Swedish prince who was once the younger brother of a weakened king (see above) will take over from his nephews and kill Hygelac's only son. The poem also says that Beowulf will take revenge for this and re-establish the Geatish kingdom, but even that is only temporary (and the last bit may well be total invention). The Danes and Geats are for the chop. The poet has set the first two-thirds of his poem just before things start to go pear-shaped, and the last third, many years later according to him (making time for Beowulf to have a long and successful life) just before a final catastrophe.

It's all very subtle, very appropriate, very consistent. The only thing that doesn't fit (apart from the unlikely career of Beowulf himself) was, in Tolkien's view, the representation of Hygelac as a man with a very young wife, Hygd daughter of Haereth. But he's said already to have a daughter, old enough to be married. By a first wife? But Hygelac is also said at this point to be young, while Hrothgar – great stress on this – is really old. But they seem to be sons of approximate contemporaries. Tolkien could only suggest that Hygelac's death in his prime led to him being remembered as a young warrior, while Hrothgar's death after a long life, and perhaps in his bed, led to his image being fixed as a greybeard (p. 322).

Tolkien's Chronology

But having said all that, Tolkien actually offered a chronology of events, starting with the birth of Healfdene c. 425, taking in (along with many other events) the birth of Hygelac fifty years later, his coming to the throne c. 505, and his death in battle c. 525. If I have followed Tolkien correctly, he would put the Danish – Bardish wars approximately 490-500, with in succession Healfdene dying in his bed c. 485, the Bards killing Heorogar c. 490, the Danes killing Froda c. 495, Heorot being built c. 500, Ingeld being killed and Heorot burnt down c. 515-20 (just after Beowulf's departure back to Geatland), with major events for the dynasties of Denmark, Sweden and Geatland taking place over the next, say, twenty or thirty years.

The anchor-point of this chronology – the only one we have, but it's a good one – is the death of Hygelac at the mouth of the Rhine, recorded by (among others) the sixth-century historian Gregory of Tours. He places this in the reign of Theudebert King of the Franks (died 533/4), before the killing of Baderic King of the Thuringians (529), but after either the accession of Bishop Quintianus (515), or maybe his death (525). Tolkien guessed the date as c. 525, one might say plus or minus about four.

One might note that this chronology can readily be integrated with the one Tolkien worked out in *Finn and Hengest*, though he seems to have moved his dates backward five years or so: in the 1982 volume he dates Hrothgar's birth c. 460-5, in the 2014 one it's given as 455, other events rescheduled to match. Meanwhile the major events in the Hengest story are early fifth century rather than early sixth – they've become history already to the characters in *Beowulf*.

Obviously the whole "reconstruction" – a loaded word for philologists like Tolkien – is open to challenge, but it's coherent, it's plausible (there are several telling details too complex to mention), and it does fit what seems to be the poet's keen interest, which he expected to have recognised, in the politics of the post-Roman Northern world. It makes several of the poem's apparently unnecessary grace-notes – like the fleeting reference to earlier Danish-Geatish poor relations – unexpectedly relevant. I'd add that it is not just the excavations at Lejre which have made this picture suddenly look not so easy to dismiss. There are also archaeological indications of serious trouble in the Northern world in the 530s, though its causes are not known. Tolkien would have been very interested.

A final point, and this one (at last) is about Tolkien: Tolkien worked very hard indeed at establishing a chronology for his own fictions, indeed many chronologies, day-by-day for the action of *Lord of the Rings*, but also extending back into time for Rohan, for Gondor, for First, Second and Third Ages. They contain many significant details, which most readers never notice: but they were not just doodling. The care which Tolkien devoted to the chronology of *Beowulf* ought to be matched by the care we devote to Tolkien's chronologies.

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'Seeing a Picture Before Us': Tolkien's commentary in his translation of *Beowulf*

DR MARK ATHERTON

Tolkien's commentary on *Beowulf* is rich in ideas and insights on the poem itself but also revealing of Tolkien's ideas as a thinker, literary critic and writer.[1] In his university lectures, now edited to form the commentary, we hear him exploring the world of the poem through the so-called *cruces*, the difficult words and expressions that need elucidation if we are fully to understand the text and the culture that it depicts. Famous words that he tackles are *meodosetl, duguth, wyrd, fæge, gydd* (for his comments see pp. 140, 205, 243-5, 259 and 260). Most of these cruces are well known to students of the poem *Beowulf* but I think that Tolkien's contributions are always refreshing, and sometimes also enlightening, for example when he offers 'new' interpretations of *fyrwyt* as meaning 'anxiety' (p. 195) and of *gilpcwide* not only as 'proud speech', a common gloss, but also as 'exultation' (p. 223).

In his essay on translating *Beowulf* in the book *The Monsters and the Critics and Other Essays* Tolkien wrote eloquently of the poet's use of condensed poetic phrases and compounds: two words conjoined are used to 'flash […] a picture before us, often the more clear and bright for its brevity'. These poetic compounds (termed *kennings*) – these small, brief pictures – accumulate to form a much larger panorama of the world of the poem and the role of human beings within it. For an example one might think of the kenning *hronrad*, often rendered 'whale-road' by other translators of the poem. But as Britton Brooks shows in this issue of *Mallorn*, Tolkien in his translation very often expands these kennings into short explanatory phrases. So also here Tolkien translates the expression *ofer hronrade* (line *10 of the poem) as 'over the sea where the whale rides' (lines 7-8 of his translation).[2] And in his commentary (p. 142), he adds the insight that *hron* denotes not necessarily mean a whale but a smaller member of the whale family, and he emphasises that *rad* though the ancestor of modern *road* does not mean simplistically 'road' but rather the 'action of riding'. Instead, the expression *hron-rad* evokes a picture of the watery fields where the dolphins play, or where they seem 'to gallop like a line of riders on the watery plains'. Horsemanship on the wide plains (echoes of Rohan here?) is here interpreted as the *Beowulf* poet's unique metaphor for describing the sea.

Another technique that the *Beowulf* poet employs has been compared to that of a movie camera. A classic case would be the way the poet shows the monster Grendel setting off to attack the hall, then immediately cuts to the hall itself and the sleeping men, all asleep except Beowulf himself, who is waiting for Grendel; the poet then cuts back to Grendel again setting off to attack the hall. The effect is to heighten the tension. In another example, the 'film-maker' wants to convey the awe-inspiring impression made by a band of approaching warriors in full and rich war-gear; accordingly the camera 'zooms in' on a bright mailcoat as it shone in the sun (line *321), or on the skilfully wrought iron link in that mailcoat as it jangled or 'sang' as the warrior moved (*323). In order to capture the way the poet focusses on one single artefact or detail of that artefact, Tolkien employs the term 'the representative singular' (p. 202). The zooming-in on one single mailcoat is used to represent the sights and sounds of all fifteen armoured men as they march towards the hall.

Scribal Errors

A similar effect occurs in a description of a helmet just a little earlier in the poem (translation 246-8; poem *303-6). Generally, as a philologist, Tolkien saw his task as the recovery of the original text as written by the author, and in the case of *Beowulf* he thinks the poet wrote perhaps 250 years before the actual copy was made by the two late tenth-century scribes. Like all medieval scribes, these two copyists sometimes made errors or mistakes and sometimes reinterpreted and rationalised what they copied because the word or image was no longer current in their own day in the tenth century. In the description of the helmet, then, Tolkien uncovers another example of the representative singular which the scribe had missed. Correcting the error, Tolkien amends the original Old English text, explaining his rationale in the commentary. The scene is the arrival in Denmark: the Geats disembark and parley with the Danish coastguard, who grants them passage, and they set off from the shore in their full war gear for the king's court. In the description of the helmet Tolkien's translation reads: 'fierce and challenging war-mask kept guard over life' (line 248). For 'war-mask', the scribe actually wrote *grummon* (line *306), which could mean 'they raged forward, hurried on', though most editors feel that the word does not fit. In a modern popular student edition, George Jack rewrites the word as *grimmon* meaning 'for the fierce ones'. Thinking of the boar images on the cheek guards of the helmet Jack translates metaphorically or perhaps even magically: 'the boar, of warlike spirit, kept guard over life for the fierce warriors'.[3] Tolkien in his commentary prefers to amend to *gríma*, which means another part of the helmet, the mask or vizor covering the face. By restoring the corrupt text in this way, Tolkien is more in spirit with the style of the passage and its use of the concrete detail, the representative singular; he shows us that the poet's focus was on one single war-mask whose purpose was to protect, to 'keep guard over life'.

It will be seen then that Tolkien's commentary pays close attention to the fine detail of the poem but he also likes to picture a whole scene. In his reading of the earlier exchange

between Beowulf and the coastguard, for example, when the coastguard had to challenge the newcomers and assess their credentials, Tolkien observes not only the careful weighing of words and the cloaking of the hostile challenge in courteous phrases, but also the 'blocking' of the scene – in terms of where and how each person is standing. For Tolkien it is obvious (p. 196) that the coastguard was driven by *fyrwyt* i.e. anxiety, to know who and what these fifteen men were, but we may be sure that he remained further away than an 'easy spear's cast' and that he shouted his challenge 'in a high clear voice from a fair distance' (readers will recall a number of similar scenes of challenge and parley at a distance in *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*).

Yet another case of challenge in *Beowulf* is practically the opposite in terms of the constellation of characters and their positioning on the 'stage'. This is the scene of 'flyting' (though Tolkien seems to doubt whether it is a true example of a real flyting. i.e. a ritual exchange of insults). The scene presents the moment of welcome at Heorot when Unferth, sitting at the feet of King Hrothgar, directly questions the veracity of Beowulf's supposed previous exploits, which occasions a sharp rebuff from Beowulf himself in reply. But in Tolkien's considered opinion, Unferth's challenge is not delivered in a high voice from one end of the hall to the other, for the three men are sitting close together; and, as Tolkien points out, we learn in the later report to Hygelac (1690-2, *2011-13) that Beowulf was sitting close to Hrothgar's young son and so not at all far away from the king himself. Moreover, the king is the dignified head of a courtly world, like King Arthur in later medieval literature, and he would not allow Unferth to shout his challenge, for that would be savagely discourteous and break the time-honoured rules of hospitality. So the register of Unferth's speech is outwardly polite, and begins almost with a compliment until it artfully shifts into challenge. The dynamics of this scene, as Tolkien analyses them here, are subtly different to that similar confrontation between Gandalf and Wormtongue in the chapter 'The King of the Golden Hall' in *The Two Towers*. There is no doubt that Tolkien based the Meduseld of King Theoden on the Heorot of King Hrothgar, but the two scenes of challenge require different analyses.

Folk Tale and Hero

Tolkien does not restrict himself to word, phrase and scene. At times he departs from minute analysis to look at greater issues. One large idea that he tackles is the tension between the folk-tale character and the hero of the historical epic, which emerges sometimes in the way Beowulf the man is presented in the poem (these two significant themes, folk-tale and history, are discussed by Dimitra Fimi and Tom Shippey elsewhere in this volume). One refreshing insight is the 'stern young pride' that Tolkien discerns in the character of the man *Beowulf*, as well as later in the poem what he calls Beowulf's 'political sagacity'. The latter quality is found in that very dramatic homecoming speech by Beowulf at Hygelac's court in Geatland (1697-1739; *2020-69). Here Beowulf has returned home bearing gifts and good news, and he talks about how Hrothgar king of the Danes has agreed to betroth his daughter Freawaru to Ingeld of the Heathobards in order to weave peace and put an end to a feud between the two nations. The marriage will not last, fears Beowulf, though not through any fault of the young lovers. Instead Beowulf imagines an an old embittered Heathobard warrior who will stir up thoughts of revenge among the impetuous youth of the court when they see the Danish visitors bearing weapons and rings that once belonged to Heathobards who had fallen in the earlier feud (pp. 324-8). Tolkien admires the conception of this scene, though he finds it too precise in detail for a political prophecy (the poet of course had hindsight – he knew that the scene with the old warrior actually did take place and that the vendetta and the violence did break out once again). In passing, it is worth mentioning the love-interest that Tolkien detects in this narrative, and the intriguing remarks on the peace-loving nature of the (Heatho)bards, 'whose traditions are of Frey and the Vanir rather than Odin the Goth' (p. 338); Tolkien evidently finds the mythological associations of the Vanir more congenial than those of the Aesir – an interesting insight, which invites further exploration.

There has not been space here to cover all of Tolkien's preoccupations, but it is time to pull at least some of the strands of Tolkien's varied *Beowulf* commentary together. At first sight it is an elaborate glossary, as found, admittedly, in many philological editions of Old English texts, but I think this is tempered by a profound knowledge of the cultural world of the poem, and as well as a study of words the commentary frequently offers a pictured scene. A number of larger ideas also informed the way Tolkien wrote his lectures: a mythological awareness, an emphasis on 'Arthurian' courtliness and courtesy in the world of the poem, a feeling for the drama of characters in confrontation. A highpoint is his summary of the key themes of the poem on pages 273 to 275, which should be recommended reading for any student of the poem. Tolkien is a poet as well as a critic, he feels keenly the moods and emotions of the poem *Beowulf*, and he responds with sympathy to the Anglo-Saxon poet's imaginative pondering and re-picturing of the old histories and legends that had passed down to him.

1 The commentary, found on pp. 137-353 of Tolkien's *Beowulf*, is based on extracts selected by Christopher Tolkien from the lecture courses that his father taught at Oxford University.

2 Christopher Tolkien uses plain numbers to indicate the lines of the now published translation and an asterisk to indicate the line numbers of the original *Beowulf* poem.

3 George Jack (ed.) *Beowulf: A Student Edition* (Oxford, 1994), p. 46.

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Tolkien's Technique of Translation in his Prose Beowulf: Literalism and Literariness

BRITTON BROOKS

J.R.R. Tolkien was an author and scholar of profound imagination, and his translation of *Beowulf* is no exception. As evidenced in his famous tower allegory in *The Monsters and the Critics*, he sought imaginatively to understand Anglo-Saxon poets and their poetry, to hear and see as they would have: 'He who in those days said and who heard *flæschama* "flesh-raiment", *ban-hus* "bone-house", *hreðer-loca* "heart-prison", thought of the soul shut in the body, as the frail body itself is trammelled in armour, or as a bird in a narrow cage, or steam pent in a cauldron'.[1] Tolkien's translation technique for his *Beowulf* arises from this soil. As Magennis notes, [2] Tolkien's overarching concern is the utilitarian function of prose translation, how it provides access to the Old English text. This is connected to Tolkien's own scholarly development, where the very act of translation is in itself valuable, not simply for the end product, but also 'for the understanding of the original which it awakes'. The translation itself, however, must also be in an appropriate register for such a text, one that is 'literary and traditional', Tolkien argues, because it maintains fidelity to *Beowulf*'s own elevated register, which is 'poetic, archaic, artificial'. Tolkien's technique for translation seeks a balance between literalism, and its associated benefits for engagement with the original text, and literariness, by which the translation may avoid 'false modernity' and retain a degree of integrity to the Old English.[3]

The starting point for this essay will be a representative section from lines 1903b–1913, which describe the return sea-journey of Beowulf and his companions after the defeat of Grendel and his mother:

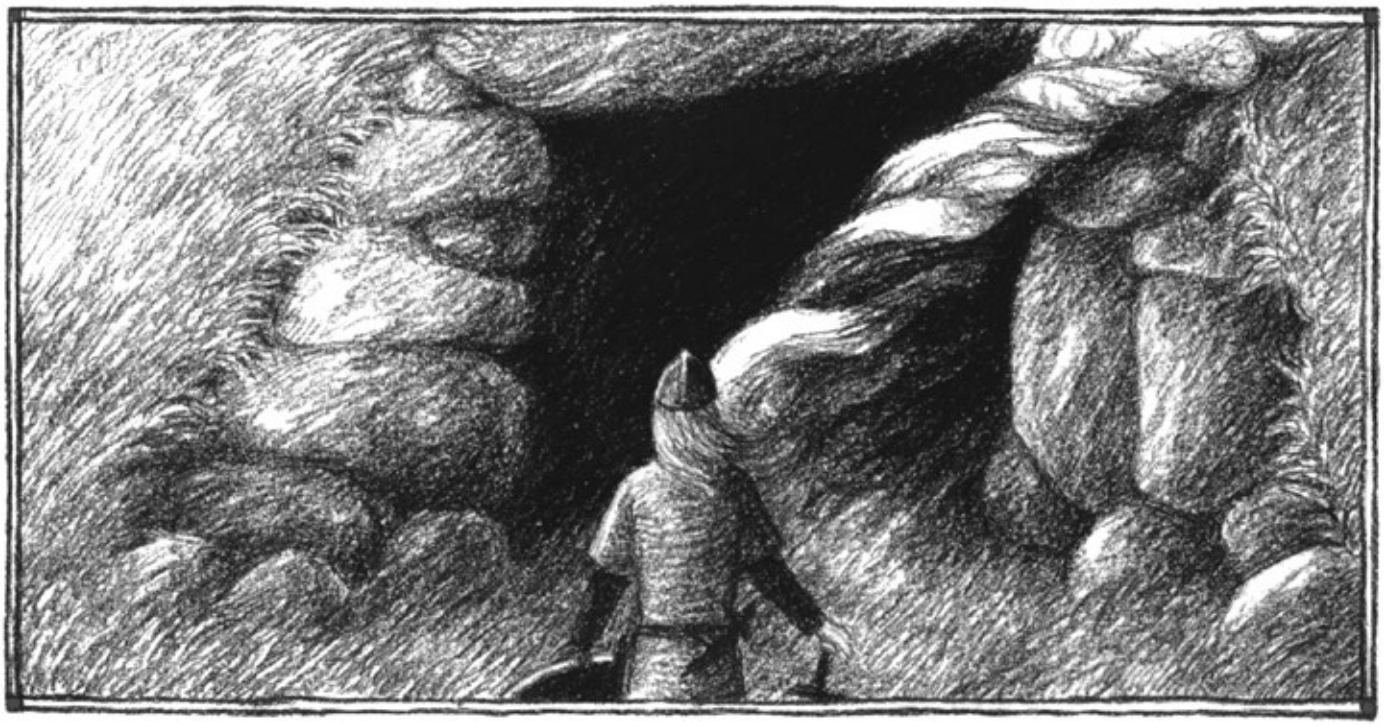
> Gewat him on naca
> Drefan deop wæter, Dena land ofgeaf.
> Þa wæs be mæste mere-hrægla sum,
> Segl sale fæst; sund-wudu þunede;
> No þær weg-flotan wind ofer yðum
> Siðes getwæfde; sæ-genga for,
> Fleat famig-heals forð ofer yðe,
> Bunden-stefna ofer brim-streamas,
> Þæt hie Geatu clifu ongitan meahton,
> Cuþe næssas; ceol up geþrang,
> Lyft-geswenced on lande stod.[4]

Forth sped the bark troubling the deep waters and forsook the land of the Danes. Then upon the mast was the raiment of the sea, the sail, with rope made fast. The watery timbers groaned. Nought did the wind upon the waves keep her from her course as she rode the billows. A traveller upon the sea she fared, fleeting on with foam about her throat over the waves, over the ocean-streams with wreathéd prow, until they might espy the Geatish cliffs and headlands that they knew. Urged by the airs up drove the bark. It rested upon the land.[5]

The most immediately striking feature of Tolkien's translation is his attempt to preserve the word order of the Old English; this can be seen in the inverted syntax of the first sentence, which begins with '[f]orth sped' translating *gewat*[6] and follows with word for word correspondence with 'troubling', *dreofan*, 'deep', *deop*, 'waters', *wæter*. Likewise in the second sentence where the inversion of syntax is even more marked, his translation retaining even the positioning of the poetic variation for the subject 'raiment of the sea' and 'sail'. While this is not always the case, as in 'until they might espy the Geatish cliffs' for 'þæt hie Geatu clifu ongitan meahton', the trend toward retaining the word order when possible is noticeable throughout the translation. The prevalence of this technique is notable even when compared to other literal prose translations. The 1940 translation by Clark Hall, in which Tolkien's essay first appears, gives '[t]hen the ship went on, to ruffle the deep water',[7] for example, just as the 2010 translation by R.D. Fulk gives '[t]he ship set out onward, stirring the deep waters',[8] both following modern syntactical structure. This attempted adherence to the word order of the Old English helps the translation to function as Tolkien believes it should; for by such close rendering, the original Old English is more easily read. Yet Tolkien's translation is not slavish to the Old English, and his attempt at balance with literary prose often leads to sentences in a recognizably modern syntax.

Literary Equivalents

In concert with this balance of literalism and literariness Tolkien goes to great lengths to translate each word into acceptably literary equivalents, though not often via cognates. This is borne out clearly in the words *naca*, *ongiton*, and *fleat*. *Naca* is a general poetic term for a boat, ship, or vessel. Here Tolkien renders it 'bark',[9] a decidedly literary term given the more prosaic but equally accurate 'ship' or 'boat'; the choice is all the more curious, as this is the only time he does so.[10] The word appears five times in *Beowulf*, and Tolkien renders three of them as 'vessel', one of them as 'ship', and only here as 'bark'. The term fits Tolkien's method, as it is both literary and traditional, and was still in contemporary literary use, primarily in poetry, in the 19th century.[11] Likewise he renders *ongiton*, 'perceive, see; recognize, know',[12] as 'espy'. Once again he has combined accuracy with an elevated register, 'espy' covering most of the lexical breadth of *ongitan*, connected to the OED's 1a, 'to descry, discern, discover (what is distant or



partially hidden)',[13] which remained in literary use up to the 19th century. Finally, he translates *fleat*, meaning 'to float, swim; drift or sail', as its contemporary English derivation, 'fleet'. Tolkien's choice here represents his twin interests as a whole, for the term is both still in literary use, and is also an extremely literal rendering. This is a form of deliberate archaism, but one that in Tolkien's view is justified.[14]

Connected with this is a second form of intentional archaism, found throughout the translation, which can be characterized as the employment of a chivalric lexis; this includes, among others, 'prince', 'knight', 'court', and especially, 'esquire'. Once more Tolkien himself provides the rationale for such choices in *On Translating Beowulf*, where he argues there is 'no reason for avoiding *knights*, *esquires*, *courts*, and *princes*', as these men 'were conceived as kings of chivalrous courts', which aligns with Tolkien's view of *Beowulf* as moving upon 'the threshold of Christian chivalry'.[15] One example is 'esquire', which he employs a number of times in the text to translate a variety of Old English terms, including *magu-þegn* and *ambiht-þegn*. What unites his use of 'esquire' to translate these and other terms is a clear effort to designate subservient positions. In the first instance, *magu-þegn* is used by Hrothgar's coastal guard to refer to his subordinates that he is ordering to protect Beowulf's boat;[16] and in the second, *ambiht-þegn* is used to describe an attendant who is charged with holding Beowulf's wargear while he fights Grendel.[17] In a note in the commentary to line 673, 'ombihtþegne', Tolkien explains that Beowulf is clearly meant to be envisioned as a 'prince', and therefore 'has a *þegn* attached to his personal service, as "esquire"'.[18] The rationale is evident in his choice of lexis; for in both uses the term is being applied to designate a young warrior functioning in a subservient and supportive way. Thus the literal and literary are upheld.

Old English Compounds

Another translation technique is Tolkien's consistent resolution of Old English compounds. Of this passage's six compounds he retains only one, 'ocean-streams', resolving the rest. This is in keeping with his explicit methodology, where he highlights the inherent difficulty in translating compounds, but ultimately leans towards resolving them into phrases.[19] Many of his translations are fairly literal and succinct expansions of the imagery in the compounds: *merehrægla*, a combination of *mere*, meaning 'sea, lake, or mere', and *hrægel*, meaning 'garment, dress, or robe', to 'raiment of the sea'; or *bundenstefna*, a combination of *bindan*, 'to bind, tie', and *stefna*, 'the prow or stern of a vessel', to 'with wreathéd prow'. Alternatively, however, Tolkien's translations become expansive phrases teasing out the implications of the poetic compound. For the compound *sundwudu*, a combination of *sund*, here meaning 'sea', and *wudu*, 'wood', metonymically for a wooden boat, Tolkien gives 'the watery timbers'. When combined with the verb the full image, 'the watery timbers groaned', it is clear that Tolkien's resolving is a literary exercise by which the implications of the compound are drawn out and descriptively imagined. Liuzza, for example, renders the phrase 'the timbers creaked'.[20] Tolkien is focusing on expanding the metaphor but retaining his literary prose; so it is not just wood or timbers, but watery timbers, the adjectival *watery* implying planks made wet in the sea-crossing. It is more vivid and more acceptable as literary prose. A similar type of imaginative expansion occurs in the rest, helpfully exemplified by *wægflotan*. This compound is meant to function as a variation on the subject 'ship', and is constructed from *wæg*, meaning 'wave, water, sea', and *flota*, meaning 'ship or vessel', which other translators, such as Fulk and Liuzza, render literally as 'wave-floater'.[21] Tolkien resolves the compound into a highly descriptive and

dynamic image of the vessel traversing the swelling waves, 'as she rode the billows', which furthers the general image of a ship travelling rough seas. It is easy to imagine this translation being re-condensed by a student, or indeed by Tolkien himself, as he read *wægflotan*, no longer seeing the passive 'wave-floater', but instead a sailing ship riding the billows 'with foam about her throat'.

Tolkien's translation of *Beowulf* therefore adheres closely to his own later methodology, including his attempt at balancing literalism with literariness, but also is directly tied to his own maturation as a scholar, where through the resolution of compounds he seeks to explore their full imaginative potential, so that when the original Old English is reread, the text is further illuminated. This desire to imaginatively to understand Anglo-Saxon poets and their poetry, to hear and see as they would have, brings a distinctive potency to Tolkien's translation. The perilous crossing of the sea is heightened, reflective of the Old English poem itself, allowing the reader to move back towards the original text as the once unfamiliar language opens up, to feel the spume of the waves with *yþa*, hear the groaning of the sea-soaked ship with 'sund-wudu þunede', and recognize the familiar cliffs that signaled the end of their sea-journey. In this way the translation is as much Tolkien as it is *Beowulf*.

1 J.R.R. Tolkien, 'On Translating Beowulf', *The Monsters and the Critics, and other essays*, ed. Christopher Tolkien (London: HarperCollins Publishing, 2006), p. 60.
2 Hugh Magennis, *Translating* Beowulf*: modern versions in English verse* (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2011), p. 22; see also Tolkien, 'Translating Beowulf', pp. 51–52.
3 For these quotations on translation method see Tolkien, 'Translating Beowulf', pp. 53-54.
4 *Klaeber's Beowulf and the Fight at Finnsburg*, eds. Fulk, Bjork, Niles, 4th ed. (Toronto; London: University of Toronto Press, 2009), ll. 1903b–1913. Text taken from 4th edition with consultation from first edition, published 1922, which Tolkien would have been familiar with.
5 J.R.R. Tolkien, *Beowulf: a translation and commentary, together with Sellic Spell* (London: HarperCollins Publishers, 2014), pp. 68–69, ll. 1598–1607.
6 The initial position grants greater force to the verb and is clearly intentional as elsewhere, line 217a (OE *Beowulf*), for example, Tolkien translates *gewat* as the simple past 'went'. See Tolkien, *Beowulf*, p. 19, l. 177.
7 *Beowulf and the Finnesburg Fragment*, trans. Clark Hall (London: G. Allen & Unwin, 1940), p. 117.
8 *The Beowulf Manuscript: complete texts and The Fight at Finnsburg*, ed. and trans. R.D. Fulk (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2010), p. 211.
9 'bark | barque, n.2.' *OED Online*. Oxford University Press, 'in modern use, applied poetically or rhetorically to any sailing vessel'.
10 Space prohibits a further discussion, but the variation in Tolkien's lexis for the various terms relating to vessels (including *naca* and various forms of *flota*) seems to point to an attempt to mimic the inherent variation of the Old English poem
11 'bark | barque, n.2.' *OED Online*. See esp. 'Shakespeare *Merchant of Venice* II. Vi 15 The skarfed barke puts from her natiue bay'; 'Pope tr. Homer *Iliad* I. I. 182 We launch a Bark to plow the watery plains'.
12 Joseph Bosworth. *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Online*. ed. Thomas Northcote Toller et al. Comp. Sean Christ and Ondřej Tichý. Faculty of Arts, Charles University in Prague. All definitions for Old English taken from this dictionary.
13 'espy, v.' *OED Online*. ADD that once again this section seems particularly dense in literariness; as in 1484a and 2770b, Tolkien gives 'perceive' as a translation. RETHINK, but it seems this section was mean to be descriptive and even more literary than other sections?
14 Compare with William Morris' *The Tale of Beowulf* (Hamersmith: Kelmscott Press, 1895), which archaizes to an extraordinary degree.
15 Tolkien, 'Translating Beowulf', p. 57.
16 *Klaeber's Beowulf*, l. 293; Tolkien's *Beowulf*, p. 21, l. 236.
17 *Klaeber's Beowulf*, l. 673; Tolkien's *Beowulf*, p. 32, ll. 547–550, at 549.
18 Tolkien's *Beowulf*, pp. 264–265.
19 See Tolkien, 'Translating Beowulf', p. 58,
20 *Beowulf*, trans. and ed. R.M. Liuzza, 2nd edition (Ontario, Canada: Broadview Press, 2013), p. 167, l. 1906.
21 *The Beowulf Manuscript: complete texts and The fight at Finnsburg*, ed. and trans. R.D. Fulk (Cambridge, Mass; London, 2010), p. 213; Liuzza, p.167, l.1908.

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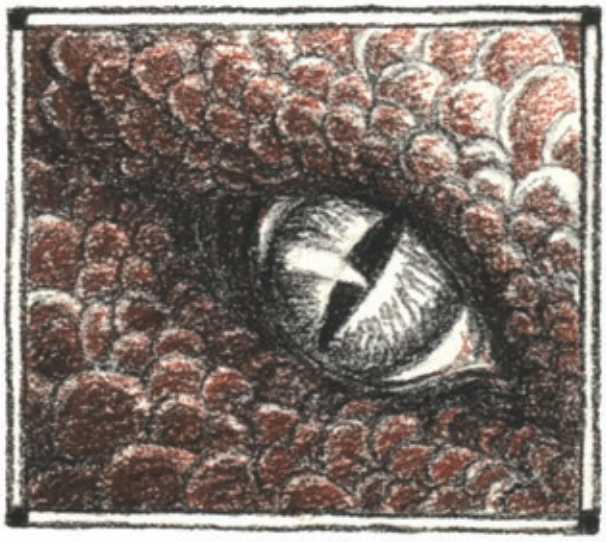
Beowulf

KATE PERLOT

On a misty night cold and clear,
a king and his men had a feast with no fear,
for no army had beaten them yet,
and every cold night at the great hall they met.
but far, far away in a swamp with a smell,
a huge beast named Grendel lay asleep where he'd dwell,
and when night time came Grendel snuck out,
and walked to the castle with a smirk on his snout.
when Grendel snuck in and the men there lay quiet,
he ate fifteen up, as if on a man-eating diet!

Grendel did this for a while
and every time on his snout was a smile.
and so while Grendel did this sin,
a strong man named Beowulf gathered his kin,
and set off to the castle high and strong,
off to fight Grendel until he was gone.
when they got to the castle the king rushed out,
and ran to meet them with joy in his shout.
he said to the men, "do you need sharper swords?"
and Beowulf said, "no, we'd be bored!
if we fought this monster from the heath,
all he has are sharp claws and teeth.
and so if we used our swords,
it wouldn't be fair,
and so I'll take off my sword
and leave my hands bare."



So that night Beowulf locked the door,
and they waited for Grendel while pretending to snore.
when Grendel came, ready to feast on some men,
Beowulf twisted Grendel's arm again and again
Beowulf twisted again and the arm popped off
making Grendel un-able to trot!
Then Grendel hopped off and men looked all around
but when they got to the lake, Grendel had jumped in and drowned.
and then the king said,
"Beowulf so mighty of hand,
you shall be lord over my land,
for killing this big and frightening beast,
all of your days you shall have a grand feast,
and you and your tale shall never grow old,
and to thank you again, armor made of pure gold.
you have shown your bravery in many ways,
and so you will be in my heart for all of my days."

The End

Tolkien and Folklore: *Sellic Spell* and *The Lay of Beowulf*

DR DIMITRA FIMI

In his landmark essay "*Beowulf*: The Monsters and the Critics" Tolkien had already recognised (and briefly discussed) the importance of folklore in *Beowulf*, but mainly to defend the poem against those critics who denigrated it as "a wild folktale". In this new volume, as part of Tolkien's lecture notes on *Beowulf*, the reader gets a much clearer picture of Tolkien's understanding of the poem as a composite work made up of "two fundamental materials": "'Historical' legend and Fairy Story" (p. 205). Tom Shippey has discussed in this issue Tolkien's valuable and original insights into the historical value of *Beowulf*, but Tolkien's commentary pays no less attention to the other ingredient of this great epic: folk-lore/folk-legend/folk-tale/fairy-tale/fairy-story (Tolkien seems to be using these terms more or less interchangeably).

The hunt for folkloric sources and analogues has played an important part in *Beowulf* criticism for over a century, most importantly since Friedrich Panzer's 1910 seminal study *Studien zur germanischen Sagengeschichte, I: Beowulf* (Munchen: Beck). Panzer amassed an enormous amount of comparative evidence (more than 200 folktales from all over the world) to argue that the first part of *Beowulf* was based on a variant of the "Bear's Son" international folktale pattern, also attested in other Germanic texts such as *Grettis saga*. (Panzer also demonstrated that the second part of *Beowulf* was a version of the widespread northern European legend of the dragon-slaying hero.) The "Bear's Son" tale usually begins with a boy born to, or raised by, bears, who has bear-like characteristics, including super-human strength. The young hero sets out on adventures with various companions, fights a supernatural being which has already defeated his companions, and descends under the earth or under water to finish off the monster and/or fight its mother, often by means of a magical weapon. The hero is left in the lurch by companions who were supposed to wait for him and draw him up, but – of course – all ends well with the hero returning safe and being rewarded.

A Northern Folktale

In *Sellic Spell*, Tolkien attempted to "reconstruct" a specifically "Northern" version of this folktale, the version that the *Beowulf*-poet could have heard and used in his epic composition. The title *Sellic Spell* itself comes from line 2109 in *Beowulf* (line 1772 in Tolkien's translation) which Tolkien translates as "wondrous tale", a significant term, as the "wonder tale" is the particular folktale genre that gave birth to the literary "fairy-tale" that we all recognise today (for a discussion see my brief video lecture on *Sellic Spell* for the Tolkien Society: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XGmeRMUYah4). Tolkien believed that his "reconstructed" folktale provided a good solution to many strange and puzzling elements in *Beowulf* (not just the monsters!), including:

- Beowulf's exaggerated strength: "he hath in the grasp of his hand the might and power of thirty men" (lines 305-6 in Tolkien's translation) – the hero of *Sellic Spell*, Beewolf, has the strength of seven men when he is seven years old, and of thirty men when he's a young man (presumably of thirty years), a typical folktale hero's characteristic (note that both 7 and 30 are "magic" numbers in many folklore traditions). Both Beowulf and Beewolf also seem to have a voracious appetite, as befitting their bear associations.

- Beowulf's relative indifference to Grendel attacking Handscioh before he fights Grendel himself – Tolkien hypothesized that Handscioh was the only remnant of what was originally the main hero's other two companions (three companions is a common folktale staple) and in *Sellic Spell* we have indeed Ashwood, Handshoe and Beewolf as the three companions who try their luck with Grinder (rather than Grendel)

- The role of Unferth, a character with a clearly "folkloric" name ("Unpeace") that seems to describe his character – Tolkien's idea was that Unferth's original role in the folktale the *Beowulf*-poet knew was actually that of the traitor who accompanied the hero to the monster's underground lair but deserted him to his fate; indeed, in *Sellic Spell* that's exactly what Unfriend does (note that Beewolf's companions also have "folkloric" names that indicate their qualities).

Tolkien summarizes many of the folktale echoes in *Beowulf* in this passage, which clearly guided his treatment of the plot in *Sellic Spell*:

Behind the stern young pride of Beowulf, on the surface credible enough, lies the roughness of the uncouth fairy-tale champion thrusting his way into the house. Behind the courtesies (tinged with irony) of Hrothgar lies the incredulity of the master of the haunted house; behind his lament for his vanished knights lurk still the warnings given to frighten off the new-comer, with stories of how everyone who has tried to deal with the monster has come to a bad end.

In a way, therefore, *Sellic Spell* is the imagined fairy-story "behind" *Beowulf*, one of the main building-blocks of this famous poem, alongside legendary history. No wonder that Tolkien's friend and colleague Gwyn Jones thought that *Sellic Spell* should be "prescribed reading for all university students of *Beowulf*" (Scull and Hammond, *Tolkien Chronology*, p. 292).

Last but not least in this wonderful volume the reader finds one more specimen of Tolkien's interest in folklore: two "lays" (narrative poems – usually shorter than traditional ballads) on Beowulf's exploits, both written to be sung to the tune of the well-known folk song "The fox went out on a winter's night". Tolkien fans will recognise the metre and rhyming scheme of this poem from Sam's "Stone Troll" song in *The Lord of the Rings* (reprinted in *The Adventures of Tom Bombadil*). Tolkien seems to have been especially fond of this English folk song (versions of which can be traced back to the 15th century) as he used it also for one of the *Songs for the Philologists* ("The Root of the Boot", reprinted in Douglas A. Anderson's *The Annotated Hobbit*, p. 74). Tolkien's two *Beowulf* "lays" show some signs of heroic poetry and strike a melancholy tone towards the end, prefiguring the end of Heorot and Beowulf himself, but the thrust of these verses (especially if one attempts to sing them aloud) certainly rely on the gusto with which "Grendel gnaws the flesh and bone of the thirty thanes of Heorot" (p. 417).

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Tolkien's Arthurian Twilight: Ancient Influences in *The Fall of Arthur*

GREGORY J. LIEBAU

J.R.R. Tolkien's alliterative poem *The Fall of Arthur* was published for the first time in 2013. Though Tolkien began writing it at least as early as 1934, the poem is unfinished, comprising 953 lines in its current edition, with much additional material hinted at in drafts and notes on the poem. All of the material was compiled and edited by Christopher Tolkien. The original inspiration for most of the poem's material was a series of late medieval Arthurian tales, namely the *Alliterative Morte Arture* and the last book of Sir Thomas Malory's *Le Morte Darthur*. The plot of these stories revolves around King Arthur's last continental campaign and the betrayal by Mordred in Britain. Arthur and his knights return to England and regain the throne from Mordred, but only after a bitter civil war that claims Arthur's life. At a relatively early point in his retelling, Tolkien "ceased to work on *The Fall of Arthur*," in his son's view "one of the most grievous of his many abandonments" [1.] (122).

Christopher Tolkien's Commentary

Readers hoping to familiarize themselves with the material that directly inspired *The Fall of Arthur* will find comfort in Christopher Tolkien's commentary, which takes up the larger part of the first edition text. Despite their "decidedly optional" nature, the commentaries contain a wealth of information concerning the conception of *The Fall of Arthur*. The most elaborated section, 'The Poem in Arthurian Tradition', is recommended for understanding the medieval influences on Tolkien's poem. According to Christopher Tolkien, it "is an account of the derivation of my father's poem from particular narrative traditions and its divergences from them," and it contains little else (13). In the foreword to Tolkien's recently published translation of *Beowulf*, Christopher Tolkien reflects on his work in *The Fall of Arthur*, stating that his intention is not to offer "a critical survey of [Tolkien's] views..." but rather a portrait "of the scholar in his time, in words of his own, hitherto unpublished" [2.] (xiii). Christopher achieves this admirably in his commentary, and particularly in 'The Poem in Arthurian Tradition'.

It is perhaps fortunate that Christopher Tolkien does not critically examine *The Fall of Arthur*, for his methods do not correlate with his father's ideas about literary critique. In *Beowulf: The Monsters & The Critics*, Tolkien suggests that the "comparison of skeleton 'plots' is simply not a critical literary process at all," and that the popularity of that method has more antiquarian appeal than anything else. [3.] (14) Tolkien's critical approach is best conceived in his examination of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, a fourteenth century Arthurian poem which he held in high esteem. Tolkien is not concerned with "the origins of the tale or its details," nor even with the form that these reached the author. Rather, the antiquity that brought *Gawain* "part of its life, its vividness... [and] its tension," intrigues Tolkien. Though admittedly the "figures of elder myth... echoes of ancient cults, beliefs and symbols" did not likely directly influence the poet, their impression on the final form of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* is precisely what makes it worthy of detailed attention. [4.] (72)

Ancient Echoes

Whether Tolkien reveals many of the apparitions that haunted the *Gawain* poet is questionable. He could only guess at many influences on a six hundred year old poem, whose author is now completely unknown. It is fortunate that many of Tolkien's views are preserved in his copious writings; and it is clear that he was fascinated by the 'ancient echoes' that he attempts to decipher in *Gawain*. *The Fall of Arthur* provides an exciting reflection of the Celtic origins that Tolkien often sought for in medieval literature. Various literary motifs in the poem expose the influence of *Beowulf* and other, antiquated traditions that may hardly be recognized without scrutiny. Taken into consideration with Tolkien's views on the Celtic influences on Arthurian legend and British literature, it becomes apparent that *The Fall of Arthur* is an attempt by Tolkien to bridge the antiquity of his subject and the lateness of his material.

In the medieval poems on the Death of Arthur, vague mentions of Rome suggest that those writers recognized Arthur's antiquity, though little evidence is ever presented in the texts about when or why this was so. Christopher Tolkien argues that his father chose a particular time period in *The Fall of Arthur*. It takes place "after the final end of the Roman rule of Britain with the withdrawal of the legions in 410, and from memories of battles fought by Britons" against "invaders, Angles and Saxons, spreading from the eastern regions." This is suggested by Tolkien mentioning "the ancient world," the world "fading," and the "tides" of time, and alludes to the weakening of Roman Christendom (13, 88). In the late medieval stories, Arthur's goal is to subdue Roman ambitions in Britain, but Tolkien instead makes Arthur a defender, attempting to protect the vestiges of Roman civilization in fifth century Britain – a far more likely scenario.

Farmer Giles of Ham

One of Tolkien's most interesting references to Arthurian times is in the introduction to *Farmer Giles of Ham* (1937). In his chronicler's persona, Tolkien admits that the "time and space" for Giles and the Little Kingdom was not exactly known, being "somewhere in those long years, after the

days of King Coel maybe, but before Arthur or the Seven Kingdoms of the English..." Characters from Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Brittaniae* (c. 1136) are cited as evidence, including the legendary founder of the British Kingdom, Brutus, and his successors, Locrin, Camber, and Albanac. The *Historia* also provided inspiration for the legend retold in *The Fall of Arthur*. Despite this, Christopher Tolkien comments on it only briefly, stating that no evidence suggests that it directly influenced his father's work. This may be true, though all these characters came to feature in Middle Welsh literature, a tradition with which Tolkien was intimate. However it arose, his knowledge of them evidently added to his conception of Arthur in Late Antiquity.

Arthur's Campaign

Christopher Tolkien expresses doubts about the extent and purpose of Arthur's campaign in *The Fall of Arthur*, due primarily to the brevity of his father's words on the subject and the representation of Mirkwood. Tolkien's interest in Germanic and Norse myth led him to use the term liberally in his works, though in this instance the location of Mirkwood is not clear. It was where Arthur and his army halted after a tireless campaign through central Europe, and its margins stood "on the houseless hills ever higher mounting / vast, unvanquished, lay the veiled forest" (I.70-71). Christopher Tolkien can only suggest that Arthur was "far to the east of the regions of Saxon settlement" (86). It is possible to seek more precisely where Tolkien may have envisioned Mirkwood to be, in *The Legend of Sigurd and Gudrún*.[5.] In both of these poems Tolkien makes explicit references to Mirkwood that may shed light on his conception of the place in *The Fall of Arthur.* Mirkwood is mentioned being "on the marches of the East" (*Volsungs* VII.14) [5.] where Goths ruled and were numerous, and also as a place where Atli (Attila) mustered his armies (*Gudrun* I.6).[5.] In the Roman period this would denote an area east of Saxon dominion, as Christopher Tolkien suggests, but also not far over the mouths of the Rhine, which Tolkien mentions in *The Fall of Arthur*. That the foes in Mirkwood were nameless and more akin to phantoms than men suggests that Arthur may have stood at the brink of the Roman – and therefore the known – world.

The chance did not come for Arthur to march into Mirkwood. Tolkien follows the medieval tradition of Sir Cradoc's arrival to warn Arthur of Mordred's betrayal (effectively ending the campaign), but Tolkien's presentation is new. His version of Sir Cradoc's warning strikes me in much the same way as the watchman of the Scyldings' words to Beowulf: both are pivotal announcements by secondary characters, directed at the protagonists. Their statements are important for their people in each case, declamatory but practical, strong in style. The differences between Sir Cradoc's warning in the *Morte Arture* and Tolkiens' text are also clear:

> "Sir, thy warden is wicked and wild of his deedes, /For he wandreth has wrought senn thou away passed. / He has castels encroched and crownd himselven, / Caught in all the rentes of the Round Table; / He devised the rewm and delt as him likes..."
>
> (Sir Craddok, *Alliterative Morte Arture* 3523-3527.)

> "While war ye wage on the wild peoples / in the homeless East, a hundred chiefs / their seahorses swift and deadly / have harnessed in havens of the hidden islands. / Dragon-prowed they drive over dark billows; / on shores unguarded shields are gleaming / and black banners borne amid trumpets." (Sir Cradoc, *The Fall of Arthur* I.153-159.)
>
> 'What warriors / are ye, clad in corslets, that have come thus steering your / tall ship over the streets of the sea, hither over deep waters? / Lo! I long while have dwelt at the ends of the land, keeping / watch over the water, that in the land of the Danes no foeman / might come harrying with raiding fleet..." Watchman, Tolkien's *Beowulf*, 193-198.

(The words of the watchman were also of course paralleled in *The Lord of the Rings* by Théoden's captain Háma, acting as the doorwarden of Meduseld.) (*LotR* 'The King of the Golden Hall')

Beowulf's Words

In *The Fall of Arthur*, many passages suggest Tolkien's interest in renewing the speech familiar to him from *Beowulf*, though this is perhaps the best representation in the finished verse. In Christopher Tolkien's commentary on 'The Unwritten Poem' he discusses a drafted scene involving King Arthur grieving Sir Gawain's death. He states, "my father dashed down a few words here, with a heading 'Sir Iwain comforts [Arthur] with Beowulf's words,' and goes on to relate Beowulf's words to King Hrothgar concerning vengeance and grief.

It is possible that the influence of *Beowulf*'s verse on Tolkien has nothing to do with an interest in revitalizing Arthur's ancient roots, though there are other connections to suggest otherwise. Tolkien's attention to detail when describing weaponry and armour is often notable in his works. In Sir Cradoc's warning (above) Tolkien writes of 'seahorses' and 'dragon-prows', ideas inspired by the high-prowed longships that haunted the North during the 'viking' raids – very like Beowulf's ship. Both terms are repeated in Book IV of *The Fall of Arthur* to describe the ships of the Saxons defending Britain against Arthur's return (177-78). In battle, Tolkien gives the heathen lords of Lochlan "helms boar-crested" (IV.205). The richly crafted helmet that Beowulf wears into the mere to fight Grendel's mother is covered in "images of the boar" (1211), which are also found on surviving Anglo-Saxon and Norse helmets. These descriptions suggest a particular impression of the pagan foes in *The Fall of Arthur*.

Sword in Tolkien

Detailed accounts of swords abound in Tolkien's writings, from *Farmer Giles* to *The Silmarillion*. His style suggests that descriptions in *Beowulf* were influential throughout. Hrunting is "pre-eminent" and has a "blade stained with a device of branching venom, / made hard in the blood of battle" (1215-17). The giant sword that Beowulf recovers from and killed Grendel's mother with is "the work of trolls," with a

golden hilt covered in runes and "snakelike ornament" (1406, 1420). Arthurian swords are named in Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae*, [6] c. 1150, and their names remained popular into Malory's time. The famous Excalibur is only mentioned in Tolkien's draft work (as Caliburn), but in the finished text Sir Gawain "brandished / his sword renowned – smiths enchanted / ere Rome was built with runes marked it / and its steel tempered strong and deadly" (IV.197-200). It was called Galuth, and the *Morte Arture* calls it a 'good' sword (Though it seems unlikely that Tolkien was inspired by that description!)

The alliterative verse itself is one of the most ancient elements of *The Fall of Arthur*. Christopher Tolkien dedicates an appendix to 'Old English Verse', in an attempt to appreciate its influence on his father's work. The alliterative tradition began as a "great vernacular literature" during the Anglo-Saxon period, though "only a tattered fragment" remains today (226). The metre likely developed from an interest in providing a stage for Germanic words, which stress the beginning of syllables and phrases – very different than rhyming in French. *Beowulf* is among the earliest and most prominent surviving alliterative poems, and obviously held a particular place in Tolkien's mind. The alliterative verse continued to be used in medieval English, with *Beowulf* and the *Morte Arture* representing opposite poles of the tradition explored in *The Fall of Arthur*.

Tolkien's Remarks

Tolkien made some interesting, albeit obscure, remarks about medieval Arthurian literature. In a letter from 1949, he argues that his incorporation of a blunderbuss (an antiquated form of shotgun) into the otherwise medieval world of *Farmer Giles* was "not really worse than all medieval treatments of Arthurian matter" (*Letters* 133). Such treatments were the result of Arthur being put into the 'Pot,' as Tolkien describes the process in his essay *On Fairy-Stories*. King Arthur "was boiled for a long time, together with many other older figures and devices," to create the pseudo-historical figure that dominated the medieval imagination (126). The result was a larger-than-life character that consulted with wizards, dueled giants and sought the Holy Grail. In varying degrees, Tolkien took issue with all of these qualities. In a letter explaining his intentions for writing *The Lord of the Rings,* Tolkien switches tracks to discuss the fidelity of the Arthurian world. He scorns the lavishly "fantastical, incoherent and repetitive" motifs that derive from Arthur having been woven into so many different stories; Tolkien also disapproves of Arthur's explicit Christianity, which casts him in a strictly medieval light (144). Despite an apparent lack of realism, Tolkien does not doubt that in the late medieval England, Arthurian 'history' was official. In *English and Welsh* he goes so far as to say that it "was hardly safe to express in public doubt of [Arthur's] veracity" [7] (165).

One Hundred Pages

Though less than a thousand lines were written, Christopher Tolkien collected more than one hundred pages of draft material for *The Fall of Arthur*, suggesting that the completed poem would be much longer. If Tolkien thought that Arthurian literature was tarnished and confounded, what motivated him to dedicate so much thought to Arthur? A final clue comes from *English and Welsh*, the memorial lecture that Tolkien presented in 1955. In it he refers to the Celtic influence on *Beowulf*, which is "full of dark and twilight, and laden with sorrow and regret" (172). Some of the last vestiges of the Celtic world reside in the Welsh language, Tolkien states, and it may only be glimpsed through "the names in Arthurian romance that echo faintly the Celtic patterns of their origin" (194). In his own Arthurian tale, freed from traditional boundaries, Tolkien replaces late medieval material that he is critical of, with aspects from *Beowulf* and other traditions reflecting his enthusiasm for the Celtic twilight. An impression of Arthur is revealed that is at once unique to Tolkien, yet more feasible than many other renderings of the legendary king and his times. Despite its unfinished state, there is no doubt that *The Fall of Arthur* is a commendable attempt to lift Arthur back out of the Pot.

Page numbers in the text either refer generally to The Fall of Arthur, or specifically to the volume under discussion at that point.

1. Tolkien J.R.R., ed. Christopher Tolkien. *The Fall of Arthur*. London: HarperCollinsPublishers, 2013. Page numbers are given in the text.
2. Tolkien J.R.R., ed. Christopher Tolkien. *Beowulf: A Translation and Commentary*. London: HarperCollinsPublishers, 2014.
3. Tolkien J.R.R., ed. Christopher Tolkien. 'Beowulf: The Monsters and the Critics.' *The Monsters and the Critics and Other Essays*. London: George Allen & Unwin 1983; HarperCollinsPublishers 1997.
4. Tolkien J.R.R., ed. Christopher Tolkien. 'Sir Gawain and the Green Knight.' *The Monsters and the Critics and Other Essays*. London: George Allen & Unwin 1983; HarperCollinsPublishers 1997.
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6. Geoffrey of Monmouth, Trs. Lewis Thorpe. *The History of the Kings of Britain*. London: Penguin Classics, 1973.
7. Tolkien J.R.R., ed. Christopher Tolkien. 'English and Welsh.' *The Monsters and the Critics and Other Essays*. London: George Allen & Unwin 1983; HarperCollinsPublishers 1997.

Texts of the ancient poems can generally be found on the internet by Googling the title required (original or in modern form, depending on the kind of edit you are looking for) and Text. The editor is not seeking to give URLs as these often change over time. Geoffrey can also be found, in whole or in part.

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Friendship in Tolkien's world

MARTINA JURIČKOVÁ

In some degree friendship is present in all of Tolkien's writings, but it is never so vivid and developed as it is in *The Lord of the Rings*. The overall importance of friendship in the War of the Ring is hinted at even by the subtitle of the first volume, *The Fellowship of the Ring*. Yet we must keep in mind that a title is usually a result of argument between the author and the editor or publisher in which the latter's word has greater weight, because he knows better what would attract the readers. So the choice of 'the fellowship' may and may not indicate how big a role friendship played in Tolkien's imaginative world of Middle-earth. But knowing what a pedantic writer Tolkien was, it can be assumed that there must have been some reason why he agreed upon this particular subtitle.

It is certain that the problem of appropriate subtitles for the three volumes of the book was a matter of lengthy discussion between Tolkien and his publisher and friend Rayner Unwin, that lasted about half a year as it is briefly mapped out in Carpenter's *Letters* (2006, pp. 165-170). The first subtitles Tolkien suggested, after his intention to publish it as one volume failed, were more closely related to the Ring and its actual position during the journey. There were originally six, one for each book. These were later dropped when the publisher wanted only one title for each volume. Only after Rayner's personal visit did Tolkien settle on the current subtitles. "The Fellowship of the Ring will do, I think; and it fits well with the fact that the last chapter of the Volume is The Breaking of the Fellowship" he reasoned (ibid., p. 170).

Apropos of *The Breaking of the Fellowship*, a remarkable fact is that the word 'company' in reference to the Nine Walkers was used in the text over 130 times, whereas the term 'fellowship' appeared only in 9 cases apart from the title of the chapter and the volume, plus once in the Prologue and three times in the Appendix B. And out of that, in one instance they are both used in the same sentence as equal synonyms (Tolkien, 2011, p. 955). Moreover, the phrase 'the Fellowship of the Ring' with capital first letter in 'fellowship' is used only once! It is when Aragorn said farewell to his friends at the end of the story: "*Here then at last comes the ending of the Fellowship of the Ring*" (ibid., p. 981).

Why then did Tolkien prefer 'fellowship' rather than 'company' for the titles, when he so seldom used it in the text? An answer to this may be found in the philological description of these words. Though nowadays words 'fellow' and 'companion' are often used interchangeably, their meanings slightly vary and Tolkien as a professor of philology was well aware of this.

Companion

'Companion' comes from Old French *compaignon*, originally from Latin *companio* meaning literally "one who shares bread". It indicates someone who associates or goes along, accompanies another; who shares in an activity with another or spends time with him often only by a chance. In the past it mostly denoted people who were travelling together. Similarly, 'company' was first used this sense to mark a group of co-travelers, companions. Among other definitions there is: a group of people joined together for some common purpose; or in general, a number of people gathered in one place, a small society. It also represents a military unit. But 'company' can denote also the feeling of togetherness, a 'companionship'. This kind of relationship typically involves only little or no emotion and personal affection, since a company is usually created rather out of need and inevitability than desire.

'The Company of the Ring' then may seem more suitable a name for the Nine Walkers. They are characters of different races who came to Rivendell to seek advice. It may be only by chance that they all arrived around the same time when big things were due to be decided. When they met for the first time, each of them was full of opinions and prejudices which they were not easily willing to give up. Some of them were even suspicious, unfriendly, spiteful, almost hating because of personal or historical conflicts, such as the elves and the dwarves. And suddenly, they were chosen to travel together for an undefined period of time until a certain death would find them. They were appointed for a hopeless task full of danger and struggles, and were then expected to help and rely on each other. When they set off, most of them were total strangers; they did not know anything about their co-travelers.

The group thus meets all the basic characteristics of 'company' as defined by dictionaries. It is a group of people who happen to travel together, rather by a chance than by their own wills. They were joined together for one common purpose, destroying the Ring. Consequently, they spend much time together and need to co-operate in many activities that are necessary for their survival and achievement of their task. They even literally share bread and all food as the original ancient meaning of 'companion' implies. Moreover, it is obviously an organized group, because not everyone has an equal position. Some persons are more important than others, and the leaders can be easily identified; and even though they do not really have war ambitions, their aim is closely war related. So in this sense it can be understood as some kind of military unit, too. Moreover, since it involves representatives of all the free nations of Middle-earth, it is an example of the society in microcosm.

However, the group does not remain the same throughout the whole story. The relations within it change and evolve towards friendship. And that is where the definition of 'company' ceases to be enough. The meaning of 'fellowship' thus has to be considered.

Fellow

The root word 'fellow' comes from Old English *feolaga* and originated from Old Norse *felagi* which is a combination of words meaning "money" and "lay" and implies "one who puts down money with another in a joint venture".

This original business connotation was later extended to any kind of partner and nowadays is also used as a synonym for 'companion' or comrade. But in the most general sense it is applied to any man, while two extreme attributes of meaning can be distinguished: in a positive way it can be used to name someone who is in the same situation as me, of the same class, my equal, a peer with whom I have something in common; and in a negative way it can be used to point out that someone is of lower rank or considered to be of little importance or worth.

Such meanings hardly correspond to what is needed to define the group of the Nine Walkers and their actual relationships. 'Fellow' is too general and used too carelessly, even more than 'companion'. And Tolkien knew this for he used it similarly widely; for good and bad creatures alike.1 But the most significant difference is found in the ' –ship' derivates of these words.

A 'fellowship', in spite of its modern scholarly and religious connotations, implies in each of its definitions some degree of friendship. It can be said that friendship is essential for the formation of fellowship. *The New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* provides the following definition of fellowship: "Friendliness; the spirit of comradeship; an instance of this" (1993, p. 932). Other dictionaries describe it as "a close association of friends or equals sharing similar interests" or even likening it to a brotherhood. It can be observed that, like 'companionship', it is based on shared interests, experiences and aims, but 'fellowship', in addition to this, provides something extra – a feeling of closeness and intimacy, mutual love, a friendship. Thus actions between the members of such a group are no longer done only out of duty, but are motivated by fellow feeling and concern for the well-being of one's co-travelers. This is a much more appropriate description of the relations between the Nine Walkers.

It is not certain when the transformation from pure 'company' into a 'fellowship' happened, but from their stay at Lothlórien on the group is perceived rather as a 'fellowship' and the friendly bonds between them are much strengthened. All the time they were absolutely free to leave when they wanted, but none of them did, some out of pride like Boromir, but most of them out of friendship; they could not betray their friend in his greatest time of need.

The best manifestation of why 'fellowship' is more suitable for them can be found in the scene when Aragorn, after the breaking of their company, has to decide whether he, along with Legolas and Gimli, will follow the Ring-bearer or the kidnapped hobbits. If he acted out of duty, he would need to go after Frodo. But he did not. He decided to chase the orcs in hope to save his dear friends from their claws. This does not mean that he loved or cared about Frodo and Sam less. They just were not in an immediate danger; moreover, their success depended on secrecy and three such strong figures as they were would seem suspicious in such a land as they were going to. So it might have been rather Aragorn's love and friendship that kept him from going with Frodo, either because he could not help him much or because he did not want to attract unwanted attention to him. Instead, he chose the evidently more hopeless task to run after the enemies and save Merry and Pippin or die trying. Actually, the two of them were very dear to everyone in the company and almost everyone who met them treated them with special kindness as if they were small children. No one wanted them to get hurt, but rather to keep them safe and that is why they often felt like a useless baggage always left behind during the great deeds.

But returning to the original question of why Tolkien preferred the Fellowship of the Ring to Company in the subtitle of the first volume, the choice now seems natural. Not only that 'fellowship' better captures the relations and feelings created between its members, but the connotations of this word for most people make it more attractive for the readers, since people are more likely to reach for something with an emotional undertone. Consequently, both the writer and the publisher could be satisfied.

Mellon

Another feature that indicates how significant friendship was in Middle-earth is the writing on the gate of the ancient underground city of dwarves, Moria: "*pedo mellon a minno*" (Tolkien, 2011, p. 305).

Gandalf, being the best skilled in ancient Elvish languages, read it as follows: "Speak, *friend, and enter*" (p. 306, my emphasis), presumably understanding the word *mellon* to be only a way of addressing the potential reader of the note, and adding emphasis on the first word of the utterance. However, as it was later revealed, with the missing punctuation in Elvish it was in fact a riddle with self-contained answer and the correct reading should have been: *"Say* "Friend*" and enter"*(p. 308), with emphasis on the word 'friend' as being the keyword which opens the gate. Had it been written this way, it could have saved them much time and also some serious trouble. But that is part of the story's magic which increases the tension.

However, here again a question arises: Why the word 'friend' had been chosen to be the password? Does it have any special importance in the world of Middle-earth? As it is explained in the book the password had to be some easy-to-remember and generally known word because the gate it opened guarded an entrance to the famous dwarf-craft centre which stood along a busy trading route between the realms of Man and Elves. In time of peace the Gate of Moria was much frequented, being used by all the three races of the Free Peoples. It may be that this word had been chosen to mark those friendly terms between them.

1 To use the term 'fellow' so freely is a typical feature of hobbitic speech as a sign of their easy-going lifestyle. In Book I, the four hobbits use it not only for their friends or acquaintances, but in the general sense even in reference to the Black Riders until Aragorn explains them what they actually are. As for the bad characters, the orcs use it too among themselves. In total, the word appeared in the text 53 times.

Yet, the gate should have kept all evil creatures, like mountain orcs, out. And that is what I want to point to, the contrast in friendship as perceived and realized by the Dark Lord and by the Free Peoples. Not that the Dark Lord and his servants know nothing about friendship. He does and he even offers his friendship to many people or nations, such as to Dáin the dwarf king from the Lonely Mountain. But Sauron is perverted and his friendship unfair. He only desires domination and power over others. He cannot share or help, that is why he is not capable of any kind of friendship, because these two, sharing and mutual help, are the principal characteristics of friendship. He can only pretend it to achieve his goals. But the history reveals that everyone who had ever been offered his pseudo-friendship was betrayed afterwards, it always ended in disaster for them, as for example the Númenoreans or Elves from Eregion.

Moreover, Sauron also initiates and supports unfriendliness between the nations who stand against him, because then they are weaker and he can subdue them more easily. He does this by means of suspicion and lets false and misleading information spread over the world, for example the rumour that the Rohirrim pay a tribute of horses to him. It is therefore necessary to maintain friendship between the Free People, so that they can better defend their land from Sauron's raiding servants. Such nation-friendships - Alliances, although they were formed especially for war purposes - had long-term effects on the relations of the nations. One of the greatest importance was the Last Alliance, when only thanks to the united forces of Men and Elves were they able to defeat the Dark Lord. This co-operation was never forgotten and in the story it is often recalled or used as an example to break race prejudices. There were also some minor alliances related only to a specific area or situation, such as the one between Elves, Men and Dwarves during the Battle of Five Armies (though this one was formed out of sudden necessity rather than willingness), or friendly-help pacts, like the one between Gondor and Rohan that had its roots even further in the past.

In general it can be said that in *The Lord of the Rings* some kind of friendship is necessary for survival, whether for individuals or whole nations. Tolkien experienced it in his own life and knew the real value of friendship. He knew that true friendship has a magical power when one is alone and with an unfortunate fate, as when he became orphaned, or like Frodo when he realized how dangerous the Ring is; and very likely it was friendship that kept Tolkien from going mad in the trenches. So the significance of friendship that can be perceived in his books is not surprising. The inscription on the Gate of Moria is just the clearest and most apparent expression of this truth.

Linguistic note

The Elvish word *mellon* itself is azz perfect example of the process behind the creating of languages as understood by Tolkien the philologist. It is well known that Tolkien's invented languages were not made up randomly, but the word *mellon* proves that they were inspired by Latin and Old Finnish not only phonetically and grammatically, but also semantically.

Mellon is translated as 'friend', being derived from root *mel-* meaning 'love'. So it actually means 'the one who is loved'. However, Tolkien did not assign the word such meaning just because he liked it, but it involved a deeper reasoning. In his language-making he followed the very same principles which are observable within real languages. The construction of *mellon* is similar to the Latin word for friend, *amico*, which is derived from the verb *amare* 'to love'. And *amicitia*, a word which Cicero used for 'friendship', has the same base as well. Similarly, the Greek word *philia* which Aristotle used denotes one of four kinds of love the Ancient Greeks recognized, derived from *philos* - 'loving', and *philein* - 'to love'. Even the English word *friend* has the same etymology, originating from Old English *freond*, verb *freogan* which means 'to love, to favor'.

Having given these examples, it seems that the notion of 'friend' is the same in most European languages, though expressed in different words. So naturally, Tolkien could do no other than follow this pattern if he wanted his Elvish to resemble real languages. Moreover, the word *mellon* as 'the loved one' is thus in correspondence with the philosophical understanding of friendship described as a special type of love.

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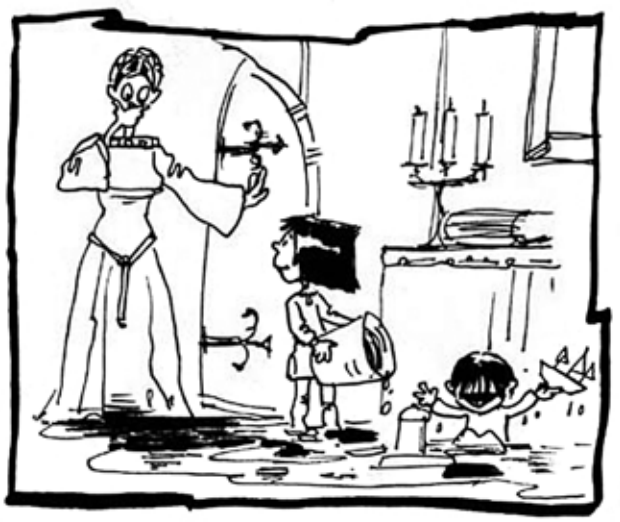

Boromir recreating Númenor in Denethor's study
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The Human Image and the Interrelationship of the Orcs, Elves and Men

DAVID TNEH

The race of the Orcs, one of the more 'complicated' characters in *The Lord of the Rings*, has similarities with the races of Men and Elves from the "free peoples" (LotR 453-454). There is an interconnectedness between the three races that cannot be denied. The bond between the Orcs, Elves, and Men goes beyond the physical, into areas of history, conflict, symbolism, character delineation, and blurring of images that ultimately unite them. While unravelling the complexities of such relations, I shall be dwelling deeper on the nature of the Orcs by discussing the infusion of the human image in them, drawing comparisons with Elves and Men, and finally distinguishing the character of the Orcs from being merely background characters to characters worthy of our attention and essential to the development of the novel.

The Major Races of Middle-earth

Who are the "free peoples" of Middle-earth? Treebeard the Ent briefly described the origins of the free men and elves that fall under this grouping. The "free peoples" of Middle-earth consist of the Elves, Dwarves, Ents, Hobbits, and Men. They are 'free' because they are independent of Sauron's power and any other powers that be. The Orcs, however, are constantly subjugated to the will of the Dark Lord and do not belong under this category. Treebeard, an Ent, recited this grouping to Merry and Pippin in Fangorn Forest:

> "Learn the lore of Living Creatures!
> First name the four, the free peoples
> Eldest of all. The elf-children;
> Dwarf the delver, dark his houses;
> Ent the earth born, old as mountains;
> Man the mortal, master of horses;"

Merry and Pippin insist that the catalogue be 'updated' and the race of the Hobbits be included. Treebeard makes a place for them between Ents and Men.

> "Half-grown hobbits, the hole dwellers."
> (LotR 453-454)

This rhyme of "living" and "free creatures" lists the intelligent races of Tolkien's Middle-earth. It is interesting to note that each member of the Fellowship is chosen from this hierarchical chain of being that catalogues several major races in order of their appearance in the world.

Another important feature of the "living creatures" is that they are capable of speech, and W.H. Auden commented that "In the Secondary World of Middle-earth, there exist, in addition to men, at least seven species capable of speech and therefore of moral choice – Elves, Dwarves, Hobbits, Wizards, Ents, Trolls, Orcs" (138). Auden's view is that speech constitutes the ability of making moral choices and would denote a certain degree of intelligence. While it is debatable whether the Orcs are capable of making moral choices, it is undeniable that they are capable of speech and have a degree of intelligence. Here lies one of the earliest links of men and elves to the Orcs. The race of the Elves, Dwarves, Ents, Hobbits, and Men (including the Orcs) are pivotal, and one important feature unites them. The similarity is the image of Man in all the "free peoples" of Middle-earth as well as the Orcs. This recurring image is constantly seen in the race of the Orcs and Elves and could reveal the dynamics of the relationship between the races for a greater perception and understanding of the novel.

The Justification for Middle-earth

It is in this image that the diverse and multifaceted "free peoples" of Tolkien's world complement one another. I shall only be studying the Elves and Men because they are the races that have the closest association with the Orcs in terms of origin, conflict and resemblance. We must understand the reason for Tolkien's creative impulses that might shed some light on our understanding of the characters in this study. Being a devout Catholic, Tolkien's reason for writing such an elaborate mythology was for a more intense purpose. He believed that: "…in one sense he was writing the truth. He did not suppose that precisely such peoples as he described, "elves", "dwarves", and malevolent "orcs", had walked the earth and done the deeds that he recorded. But he did feel, or hope, that his stories were in some sense an embodiment of a profound truth." (Carpenter 99)

What was this 'profound truth'? Tolkien has said that while writing *The Silmarillion*, his actions were more than that of a writer creating tales of the mind. This 'truth' lies embedded in him and grows accordingly as it progresses. According to Tolkien, the 'truth' that he was writing about: "…arose in my mind as "given things", and as they came, separately, so too the links grew…yet always I had the sense of recording what was already "there", somewhere: not of "inventing". (Carpenter 100)

For Tolkien, his role as a mythmaker is not complete in merely conjuring a world that he thinks should be real; it

is also about universal truths and fundamental Christian values. The core of such a creation should also never exclude its spiritual aspect. In this respect, Tolkien's Middle-earth contains a geography that is not only 'latent and symbolic' but: "…where mysteries are forever beyond the reach of objective examination meet us on every hand, as indeed they do the great physicist, in such "contemptible" things as matter and light. It is a world in which God still happens to be alive and man is still responsible, an elusive but not at all illusive world." (Kilby 75)

It is also important that *The Lord of the Rings* is not an overtly religious work, and while the presence of God is felt and the image of Man is infused in many of his characters, Man himself has an important role to play in carrying out God's plan. Middle-earth is in fact earth is earth as it is. While conceptualising it, Tolkien also wanted: "…the mythological and legendary stories to express his own view of the universe; as a Christian he could not place this view in a cosmos without the God that he has worshipped. At the same time, to set his stories "realistically" in the known world, where religious beliefs were explicitly Christian, would deprive them of imaginative colour. So while God is present in Tolkien's universe, He remains unseen." (Carpenter 99)

Thus we sense the importance of Man and the influence of God in Tolkien's work. With this in mind, let us move on to the importance of the elusive image of Man in the race of the Orcs and their relationship with the races of Men and Elves.

Orcs and Elves

The Orcs and Elves in *The Lord of the Rings* have long been feuding races and a part of Middle-earth's history. They are similar and yet dissimilar. Both are bitter rivals from the start and share an almost binary existence that dates back to the creation of Middle-earth's universe. In *The Silmarillion*, the creation of the elves by Ilúvatar and the capture of some of the elves by Melkor (Morgoth), to be turned into orcs, could be the only similarity between them in terms of creation. The creation of the Elves themselves is described as an awakening from a deep slumber into a new paradise.

> "By the starlit mere of Cuivienen, Water of Awakening, they rose from the sleep of Iluvatar; and while they dwelt yet silent by Cuivienen their eyes beheld the first light of all things the stars of heaven." (*The Silmarillion* 56)

While the creation of the elves was intended to fulfil the grand designs of Iluvatar, Melkor ensnared some of them and "…by slow acts of cruelty were corrupted and enslaved; and thus did Melkor breed the hideous race of Orcs in envy and mockery of the elves, of whom they were afterwards the bitterest foes" (*The Silmarillion* 58). Thus the Orcs and elves share a calamitous past, made worse when Melkor stole the Silmarils (jewels) of Feanor. There raged total war between the elves and the orcs, who were primarily Melkor's servants. The orcs in *The Silmarillion* are described as ruthless creatures interested in wanton destruction and full of hatred for the elves. It was Melkor's doing in instilling his evil will into his servants that the orcs became ruthless and violent.

> "Now the Orcs that multiplied in the darkness of the earth grew strong and fell, and their dark lord filled them with a lust of ruin and death; and they issued from Angband's gates under the clouds that Morgoth sent forth, and passed silently into the highlands of the north." (*The Silmarillion* 113)

The Orcs were also responsible for slaying Denethor, leader of the Nandorin elves.

> "But the victory of the Elves was dear-bought. For those of Ossiriand were light-armed, and no match for the Orcs, who were shod with iron and iron-shielded and bore great spears with broad blades; and Denethor was cut off and surrounded upon the hill of Amon Ereb. There he fell and all his nearest kin about him…" (*The Silmarillion* 113-114)

Another example of their ancient battles was fought when the Noldorin elves drove the Orcs away in the Battle-under Stars.

> "The Noldor, outnumbered and taken at unawares, were yet swiftly victorious; for the light of Aman was not yet dimmed in their eyes, and they were strong and swift, and deadly in anger, and their swords were long and terrible. The Orcs fled before them, and were driven forth from Mithrim with great slaughter…" (*The Silmarillion* 126)

In *The Lord of the Rings* the struggle between the Orcs and the Elves is renewed in a manner parallel to *The Silmarillion*. Like inseparable entities, they continue the rhythm and flow of the tale that sees tension between them growing in a similar pattern. Their close involvement is intertwined with the struggle of a higher cause involving powerful forces of good and evil.

The battle for the One Ring sees the Orcs under another dark lord, this time Melkor's lieutenant Sauron, who holds the reins of evil power. The elves eventually create an alliance with the other free races, for the common cause of freedom and goodwill for all of Middle-earth. The Orcs are not only a precursor of darker events and uncertainty but provide the necessary tension with the Elves and other free peoples of Middle-earth.

> "That name the hobbits only knew in legends of the dark past, like a shadow in the background of their memories; but it was ominous and disquieting. It seemed that the real evil in Mirkwood had been driven out by the white Council only to reappear in greater strength in the old strongholds of Mordor. The Dark Tower had been rebuilt, it was said. From there the power was spreading far and wide, and away far east and south there were wars and growing fear. Orcs were multiplying again in the mountains." (LotR 45)

In Tolkien's portrayal of orcs and elves, he made it clear from the beginning that they share a common source of

existence, the will of Ilúvatar. In *The Lord of the Rings* the Orcs and elves reprise their roles as mortal enemies. Elrond says in the council that the threat of the enemy is growing and must be contained at all cost.

> "Not all his servants and chattels are wraiths! There are orcs and trolls, there are wargs and werewolves; and there have been and still are many Men, warriors and kings, that walk alive under the Sun, and yet are under his sway. And their number is growing daily." (LotR 216)

Orcs and Men

Like the elves, the race of Men had their fair share of troubles with the Orcs. Melkor, the first dark lord, vowed to disunite Elves and Men and anything else created by the will of Ilúvatar. The more he failed to thwart Ilúvatar's plans, the more determined he was in creating chaos in the land.

> "But Morgoth, seeing that by lies and deceits he could not yet wholly estrange Elves and Men, was filled with wrath, and endeavoured to do Men what hurt he could." (*The Silmarillion* 175)

And in *The Lord of the Rings*, we have an example of conflict between Orcs and men. Eomer, the Third Marshall of Riddermark tells Gimli the reason for his people's hatred for the Orcs.

> " 'Some years ago the Lord of the Black Land wished to purchase horses of us at a great price, but we refused him, for he puts beasts to evil use. Then he sent plundering orcs, and they carry off what they can, choosing always the black horses: few of these are now left. For that reason our feud with the orcs is bitter.' " (LotR 426)

The race of Men consists of different communities, the earliest of which were the First House of Beor, the Second House of Haladin, and the Third House Of Hador. In the First Age, there were the Easterlings and Swarthy Men who were evil and '…proved unfaithful and though feigning friendship with the Elves, they betrayed them to Morgoth, the Dark Enemy' (Day 154).

At the time of The Lord of the Rings, the Northmen of Rhovanian (the vales of Anduin) had become the people of Rohan, while those who followed the elves to the South were the Dunedain, formerly the Men of Westernesse Island or Numenoreans. The Numenoreans had been a great seafaring nation before the Valar destroyed the island. Isildur and Aragorn are Dunedain. Other groups of men include barbaric Men of the South, the Haradim, Dunlendings, Easterlings and Variags. The Balchoth, Wainriders, Beornings, Lake Men of Esgaroth, the Bardings of Dale are from the east and north.

What will be discussed specifically is the blurring of the physical attributes between Orcs and Men and the role of the human image in the Orcs. Here it is pertinent to discuss the Uruk-hai for they are one of the newer breeds of greater Orcs who were made by Saruman and Sauron for diabolical purposes.

The "uruks", a new breed of foot soldiers with 'improvements' in them emerges as a new threat to Middle-earth. The most notorious of them are the Isengarders, the "Uruk-hai" of Saruman. Under the banner of The White Hand, the Uruk-hai waged battle with the people of Rohan at Helm's Deep. So much devastation had they caused in cutting down ancient trees of Fangorn Forest to feed the furnaces of Isengard that Treebeard is deeply angered at Saruman for creating such a horror.

> "And now it is clear that he is a black traitor. He has taken up with foul folk, with the Orcs. Brm, hoom! Worse than that: he has been doing something to them;…I wonder what he has done? Are they Men he has ruined, or has he blended the races of Orcs and Men? That would be black evil!" (LotR 462)

Thus it would seem that the blending of Orcs and Men is something that is forbidden, against the laws of nature for Men and Orcs to crossbreed, and since evil sorcery was (apparently) used to produce this unnatural race, the laws of the universe and the will of the creator had been violated. Ugly, devious, cruel, and even cannibalistic, the Orcs and the Uruk-hai seem to be portraying Man in his most primitive existence. Compared to the races of lesser Orcs, this new breed of Orcs seems to exemplify a closer resemblance to Man. One example was when Aragorn, Gimli, and Legolas were inspecting some of the Orcs they had slain near Parth Galen; a curious physical resemblance was noted.

> "And Aragorn looked on the slain, and he said: 'Here lie many that are not folk of Mordor. Some are from the North, from the Misty Mountains, if I know anything of Orcs and their kinds. And here are others strange to me. Their gear is not after the manner of Orcs at all!'
> They were four goblin-soldiers of greater stature, swart, slant-eyed with thick legs and large hands. They were armed with short broad-bladed swords, not with curved scimitars usual with Orcs; and they had bows of yew, in length and shape like bows of Men." (LotR 405)

The mélange between Orcs and men even appears in the race of half-orcs whom Foster describes as '…the product of a cross between Men and Orcs. Although tall as Men, they were sallow-faced and squint-eyed' (Foster 185). Whereas the Uruk-hai have a certain likeness to men, in the 'half-orcs', whose existence is inferred by the hobbits, Tolkien shows us examples of men who seem to resemble Orcs. The blurring of the image of Men and Orcs appears in the chapter "The Scouring of The Shire", where the Chief's Men (half-orcs of Saruman) have taken control of the Shire. Merry and Sam chance upon some of the men and note that their likeness is disturbing.

> "When they reached The Green Dragon, the last house on the Hobbiton side, now lifeless and with broken windows, they were disturbed to see half a dozen large ill-favoured Men lounging

against the inn-wall; they were squint-eyed and sallow-faced.
'Like that friend of Bill Ferny's at Bree,' said Sam.
'Like many that I saw at Isengard,' muttered Merry."(LotR 981)

In another instance, when the hobbits were engaged in a battle with the Chief's Men, Merry in the heat of the moment "…slew the leader, a great squint-eyed brute like a huge Orc. Then he drew his forces off, encircling the last remnant of the Men in a wide ring of archers." (LotR 992). The recurring blurring of Orcs and Men in various parts of the novel seems to suggest a play of images that mirror Tolkien's view of humanity. The lesser Orcs, Uruk-hai and half-orcs (who are called "ruffians" in the Shire) seem to project images of Man in different shades of diabolical behaviour.

The Image of Man

Tormented, confused and angry, the Orcs are men in a very fragmented state of existence. In general, the Orcs represent men who are evil and cruel, but that does not mean that they are not entirely irredeemable. The introduction of two separate Orc breeds by Tolkien could signify how complex Tolkien sees the image of Man in both versions but it is undeniable that a stronger image of Man lies in the Uruk-hai and half-orcs because of their physical similarities. In the Uruk-hai, Tolkien wanted a new evil breed, deeply feared and with a stronger resemblance to Man to reinforce our involvement at a deeper level. The Uruk represents Man at a deeply fragmented stage and in an era of new complexities besieging humanity. Therefore man's image must be made stronger to signify humanity's deeper involvement in the struggles of the Third Age before the coming of the Age of Man, the Fourth Age. This seems to justify the importance of the Orcs to highlight the diverse nature of men, from their tormented side to other multiple facets of their character.

The Elves also share a close resemblance to Men in many ways.

"Immortal were the Elves, and their wisdom waxed from age to age, and no sickness nor pestilence brought death to them. Their bodies indeed were the stuff of Earth, and could be destroyed; and in those days they were more like the bodies of Men, since they had not so long been inhabited by the fire of their spirit, which consumes them from within in the courses of time." (*The Silmarillion* 124)

The elves may have similar physical attributes to Man including their avidity and outlook towards life, but they are naturally immortal, and if they are killed, their spirits go to the Halls of Mandos ("Houses of the Dead", *The Silmarillion* 408), and their Paradise would be a journey to the Undying Lands/Deathless Lands in a time unknown to them. For the elves, the "Undying Lands" is a parallel to the desires of Man; though they will never grow old, their continuous existence on Middle-earth will be a sorrowful experience for them as dictated in the will of Ilúvatar. Hence, a 'return' is a must for the elves as they make way for the dominion of men in the fourth age.

The physical bodies of the Elves are equivalent to those of Men, but their physical fairness denotes their great wisdom and ethereal origin. They resemble a "perfect" or almost perfect race of Men as envisioned by Tolkien. They constantly crave for perfection in knowledge and the arts. "In those days Elves and Men were of like stature and strength of body, but the Elves had greater wisdom, and skill and beauty…" (*The Silmarillion* 123).

The Elves have the most perfect and ideal human passions, contrasted to the most basic human desires of the Orcs. Humphrey Carpenter says the elves epitomize Man before the Fall. "They are all intents and purposes *men*: or rather Man before the Fall which deprived him of his powers of achievement. Tolkien believed devoutly that there had once been an Eden on Earth, and that man's original sin and subsequent dethronement were responsible for the ills of the world; but his elves, though capable of sin and error, have not 'fallen' in the theological sense, and so are able to achieve much beyond the powers of men…Most important of all they are, unless slain in battle, immortal. Old age, disease, and death do not bring their work to an end while it is still unfinished or imperfect. They are therefore the ideal of every artist." (Carpenter 100-101)

These, then, are the elves of *The Silmarillion*, and of *The Lord of the Rings*. Tolkien himself summed up their nature when he wrote of them: "They are made by man in his own image and likeness; but freed from those limitations which he feels most to press upon him. They are immortal, and their will is directly effective for the achievement of imagination and desire." (Carpenter 101).

Thus, just as Orcs are related to Elves in terms of their origin and conflict, and to Men in the blurring of physical likeness, the interrelationship of Orcs to both races is consistent with the deep involvement of the major races in the story. I hope by highlighting such interconnectedness to show the depth of the importance of the Orcs as purveyors of tension and conflict in the story. The Orcs also share a bond with Elves and Men in the unifying of the human image in all three races. For the Orcs, Man's likeness has empowered their character to a point of realism.

"Most of the other creatures are more or less 'human,' with human-like motives and responses. The use of superficially nonhuman beings is Tolkien's method of characterization: "Much that in a realistic work would be done by 'character delineation' is here done simply by making the character an elf, a dwarf, or a hobbit. The imagined beings have their insides on the outside; they are visible souls." (Gasque 156)

The infusion of the image of Man creates coherence and unity while making it easier for readers to relate to the characters. With similar physical attributes, human emotions and experiences, a reader would be able to identify with the characters while affirming and acknowledging their roles and values. It must be understood that Tolkien constantly utilizes the image of Man embedded in the races of the epic, to make his tale believable.

"Tolkien keeps probing into various facets of the differences between elf and mortal as the epic runs its course. But

he knows he must keep showing resemblances, too, if we are to believe in the elves." (Kocher 91)

With regard to the Orcs, Tolkien's 'probing' of the human image has not only made them believable but he has shown such affiliations as recognisable human relationships. It is the "…mythical and heroic quality" (Lewis 15) of men that Tolkien finds inspiration from to fuse subtle humanistic nuances in his story. This he does with great effect in *The Lord of the Rings*, portraying Middle-earth as a world with a diverse society of other races other than Man. He created a host of beings with their own languages, cultures and histories. From his imagination, Tolkien has wrought a believable tale with believable races and creatures that resemble and divulge human passions because it is an obviously human audience he is writing for, and Christian too.

"But Tolkien is one of us: a member of the race of men, in the twentieth century after Christ. And we only know one intelligent race: our own. The three divisions of human beings (*Hobbits, Elves and Men*) which we call 'races' are merely subdivisions of one basic kind of being. Since we only know one kind of intelligent being, our imagination is limited…What we do, therefore - what any author trying to show other beings does – is to use aspects of the one rational race we do know. And of course our one race does have as many different aspects as one could wish. Partly, then, Tolkien's seven different races are aspects of man." (Rogers 70-71)

With the distorted human image 'planted' firmly in the race of the Orcs, we are given another view of humankind in its pristine state from the race of the elves. The human image then serves as a subtle reminder to us so that we do not emulate the Orcs and their darker passions but follow the example of the Elves and to strive for perfection and goodwill. This process of identification of the human image then serves as a method for us to recognise fundamental values of goodness. While Tolkien does not dismiss the Orcs completely, he is saying that it is *better* to follow the examples of the Elves and perhaps even the Hobbits.

Conclusion

While it is undeniable that the Orcs are often associated with wickedness and violence, they are creatures with the human image embedded in them and perhaps it is in this light that Tolkien wants us to look at every race in Middle-earth (including the Orcs) as being affiliated with humanity at large. It is through this that we recognise the diverse human experiences to be universally linked. Even in the parallel world of Middle-earth, the multiplicities of races are all extensions of Man. And in the case of the Orcs, the blurring of the human image reconciles us to the condition of the Orcs, who are slaves of Melkor and Sauron, corrupted and forced to serve him for all eternity. Feelings of compassion might be felt for this malignant race and it is here that the human image has successfully elevated the Orcs as a race to be pitied and feared at the same time.

While Tolkien himself was not satisfied with his own answers concerning the Orcs' existence and creation, the difficulties he had in finalising their roots only demonstrate the complexity of their character and their nature which is fragmented and deeply intersected with the Elves and Men. Although Tolkien left the creation of the Orcs unresolved, the complexity, diversity and affinity of the Orcs has made them indispensable and a significant race vital to the overall meaning of the tale. C.S. Lewis has said that Tolkien's characters all play a vital role in the story: "…no individual, and no species, seems to exist only for the sake of the plot. All exist in their own right and would have been worth creating for the mere flavour even if they had been irrelevant." (Lewis 14)

With this in mind, the importance of the image of Man in the Orcs, Elves, and Men is undeniable. This image also gives some depth to the Orcs as a shadowy and complex image of terror that is elusive in the saga. The strong image of Man in the Orcs serves as an important symbol that reflects the universal conditions of Man. Their embodiment of the fragmented image of humanity speaks of the plight of the human self that begs understanding towards the misguided race of the Orcs. This image also unites the three races and portrays the multiplicity of human conditions. By drawing on the image of Man, Tolkien has built the foundations of Middle-earth on common experiences and images that compel the reader towards an understanding of humanity and self.

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Votes for Tauriel - but not the Love

SHAUN GUNNER, RICHARD GONSOWSKI, SOPHIE WATSON

The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug.

Directed by Peter Jackson

New Line Cinema (2013).

Shaun Gunner

The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug was always going to be a difficult film: like all middle films in a trilogy it has to provide a substantial filling between a grand entrance and a climatic conclusion. Thanks to Smaug, it very nearly stands up in its own right.

Unlike the frustratingly slow start to *An Unexpected Journey*, the second instalment in Jackson's unexpected trilogy hits the ground running in an incredibly fast-paced affair. Beorn is a much more threatening and less jovial character – no-doubt to emphasise the idea that Middle-earth is a place full of enemies – but his role is so trivial it might as well have been cut. Mirkwood, however, was an absolute joy to behold and I crave for more screen-time in the Extended Edition (due out in November); of all the locations in this film Mirkwood feels the most authentic and the most original.

Gandalf, of course, disappears when the Company enter Mirkwood, and here rather pointlessly goes off to visit the 'High Fells' to see nine empty tombs. Later we see him entering Dol Guldur (alone) in what has to be some of the best Gandalf battle action ever witnessed. The audience is fully behind Gandalf, only to have their hopes and dreams scuppered as he is captured by the Necromancer (painfully revealed to be Sauron) – the failure of Gandalf feels like an unforgivable betrayal of the audience.

I cannot review this film without discussing the changes from the book. The idea of the dwarves taking on Smaug in a direct confrontation has merit and adds excitement but, sadly, the scene was rather over-done and certainly required a little editing. Similarly, the progression of the storyline through Mirkwood and Lake-town feels coherent and well-considered albeit with a handy dose of serendipity. The barrel scene, however, is a ridiculous piece of slapstick comedy but, I hope, at least be appreciated by the younger audiences that Warner Bros. are trying to appeal to – after all, *The Hobbit* is a book aimed at younger children. The film-makers were right to add Tauriel – a strong and warm voice in the story – but were wrong to cheapen the character by putting her in a love-triangle and turning her into 'a bit of skirt'. Despite her entirely uncanonical nature, Tauriel is both the biggest gem and missed opportunity of this film. The other big missed opportunity was to reveal to the audience in the closing scene that Bilbo *was* in possession of the Arkenstone – a revelation that would have made for a much more intriguing cliffhanger.

Despite all of this, I liked this film. I liked seeing Smaug. I liked seeing Mirkwood. And I liked seeing Lake-town. I'm disappointed to say, though, that I did not *love* this film: the action sequences felt a little contrived and forced – to the point of near boredom – whilst the barrel scene and the capture of Gandalf really spoilt this for me. Saying that, one thing is clear: roll on *The Battle of the Five Armies*!

Richard Gonsowski

On the most basic level, "The Hobbit: Desolation of Smaug" adheres to the storyline of the book, ie Beorn to the Elvenking to Laketown. But once you seek to get about 9 hours of movie from 305 pages of text, that is when things can get interesting. Lest you think I did not like it, let me say once and for all: I did, and saw it on opening day and again twelve days later on Christmas in a local Staten Island theater.

I truly enjoyed the addition of Tauriel and her interaction with Legolas. Her addition might even make it more appealing to families with girls who were not familiar with the novel. I do, however, see an unhappy and tragic end for Tauriel.

I was also happy to see Beorn and look forward to his appearance in the Battle of Five Armies, and Jackson's treatment of the same.

I did not like the way Thranduil was depicted as a class conscious, arrogant, greedy and dishonorable killer. Also, the hint of romance between Fili and Tauriel was a stretch, given the hostility between Elves and Dwarves owing to the murder of Thingol by the Dwarves in the First Age. Lastly, Bard the Bowman as Bard the Bargeman/Ballistaman is not to my liking.

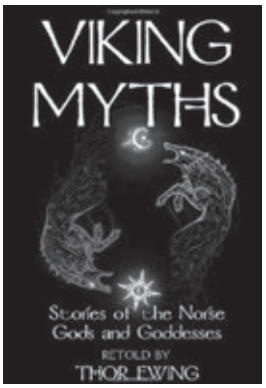
The dialogue of Bilbo and Smaug was interesting. I still prefer the late Richard Boone to Benedict Cumberbatch as the Voice of Smaug. Still, only 173 days to Part III as at time of writing this review.

Sophie Watson

My reaction to DoS can be summed up in the comment I posted on Facebook as we came out of the cinema: it's a rollicking adventure film but it isn't The Hobbit. Taking it purely as a film, it's rather good fun in places; taking it as an adaptation of one of my favourite books it's a bitter disappointment.

Some of the changes do at least make sense up to a point: for example, the scene where Gandalf tells Beorn of the Dwarves' adventures to date probably wouldn't work so well on film, because it would be ten minutes of repeating what we already know. Many of the changes, though, are just utterly bizarre, particularly the much-discussed Kili-Tauriel-Legolas love triangle. You may or may not agree with the view that it was necessary to have another female character; I have my own opinion. But a love triangle? Really? In The Hobbit?

The first film contained a lot of variances from the book, but I thought it was at least recognisable as being an adaptation of the book. The second film bears so little resemblance to the book that I am torn between running a mile from the third one and going to see it purely out of curiosity.



Viking Myths: Stories of the Norse Gods and Goddesses retold by Thor Ewing.

Welkin Books 2014
ISBN-13: 978-1910075005,
204pp, 45 b&w illustrations

PAT REYNOLDS

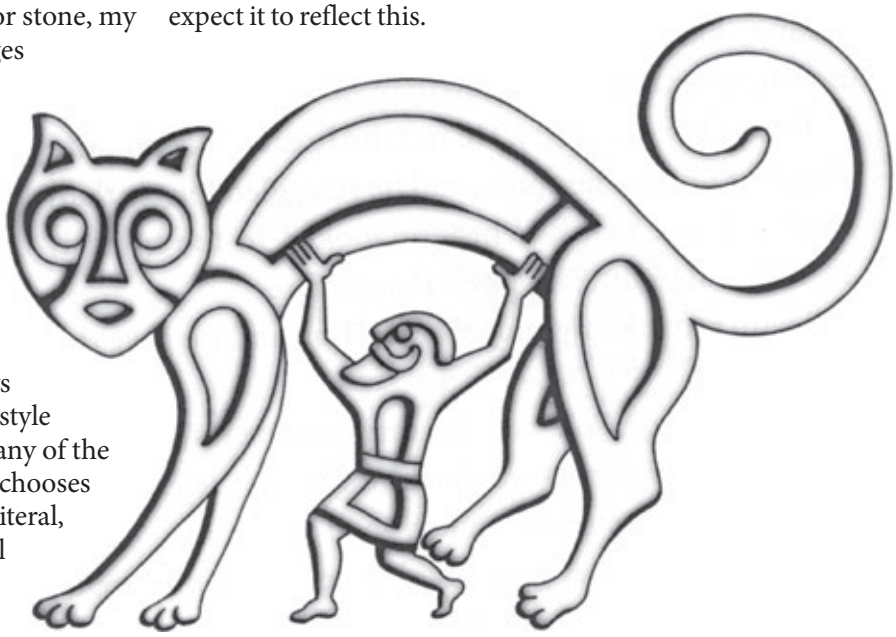
Author Thor Ewing avows that this is a version for the current generation. Being, personally, of the generation which had Roger Lancelyn Green's Myths of the Norsemen (1960) Kevin Crossley-Holland's The Norse Myths (1980) and (with more academic leanings) H R Ellis Davidson's Gods and Myths of Northern Europe (1964), all of which I read in secondary school, I do not feel this generation is better served than my own.

In his introduction, Thor Ewing says "I hope the style used for the illustrations reflects something of the attitudes and beliefs of the original mythmakers . Unlike the Viking artists who were carving their work into wood or stone, my illustrations were to be printed on the flat pages of a book. The illusion of solidity had to be drawn into the pictures themselves - rather like the retellings of the stories themselves - a deliberate adoption of Viking style for the modern world".

In the illustrations, this is achieved through the well known conventions of varying the thickness of lines and stippling to indicate depth. Sadly, the same effect has not been achieved in the text. Thor Ewing says he "wanted to avoid the solemn and ponderous style which has bedevilled some retellings. For many of the multitudinous Viking names, for example, he chooses "translations [which] aren't always completely literal, but they take us closer to the spirit of the original tales, and away from the mystique of foreign names". The result is a very plain text indeed; with few exceptions the impression is of a two-dimensional world, stories stripped to their bare bones, Coles Notes style.

In his introduction Thor Ewing observes the moral ambiguity of many of the stories, and hints that this is what they are 'good for thinking about', so it is a shame that there is very little observation of the ambiguity, and it more often looks like insufficient character development and inexplicable action than a space to consider such questions.

I miss the strong voice of a storyteller: the depth which gesture and intonation give to an oral story need to be introduced in some way. Developing the narrator as a character is only one way of doing this, but there are others missed. The use of new names, for example, often results in flattening the original. Thus Magni and Móði become Strength and Courage, Huginn and Muninn become Thought and Memory. An exception is the use of Scots dialect 'etin' to translate the cognate 'jǫtunn', more usually translated as 'giant'. Thinking about what has changed since Kevin Crossley-Holland's day, I would argue that there have been fundamental changes in the popular appreciation of Viking-age cultures. The excavations in York and Dublin in the 1970s in particular were popularised, and our understanding of the complex and connected societies deepened by later work. Similarly, work on the economic and social history of the period has developed. If I were expecting any shift to make a retelling for the early 21st century, I would expect it to reflect this.



"Helpful, deprived, insulted, vengeful": The use of Norse mythology in Tolkien's representation of Dwarves

LILIAN DARVELL

Dwarfs, or Dwarves as they are referred to within Tolkien's work (a difference he explains as "a piece of private bad grammar" [*Letters* 17]) [*See our final article - Ed.*], are notoriously hard to define due to their differing origins, attributes and activities. It is clear that Tolkien uses the figure of the Norse dwarf as the original basis for his creation of Dwarves but the idea of the dwarf progresses and Tolkien's representation of the race throughout his works changes and develops until he has created an entirely new idea of Dwarves. In this essay I will use Tolkien's "private bad grammar" to differentiate between my discussion of Tolkien's Dwarves and Norse mythology's dwarfs.

The similarities between the dwarfs and the Dwarves does not end at the names, which Tolkien took from the 'Völuspá' section of the *Poetic Edda*; "There was Motsognir | the mightiest made/Of all the dwarfs, | and Durin next" (10:1-2). This clear borrowing from the Norse dwarf creation story is not the limit of Tolkien's engagement with the *Poetic Edda* and its companion, the *Prose Edda*, in his early representations of the Dwarves. Despite the eventual development of his own distinct 'dwarf' later in *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Silmarillion*, remnants of the earlier concepts remain in *The Hobbit* and other parts of the legendarium. Jakobsson, in his essay 'Dwarfology', opens with "When trying to understand Old Norse dwarfs, one problem is knowing too much." (52). It is easy to bring preconceived notions of what the dwarf is from other myths, fairy tales, novels, games and even films and it is important to have a clear definition of the Norse dwarf.

Motz defines every dwarf as an underground smith figure, "a craftsman who lives mysteriously in stone and rock in distance from the community he may serve and whose position before gods or heroes may be described by one or more of the following adjectives: helpful, deprived, insulted, vengeful" (49). Even this definition can be considered an over-generalisation. The few named dwarfs within mythology make it hard to make any statement that unifies them, but this definition is particularly important in its lack of detail. The dwarfs are ambiguously and inconsistently defined, which emphasises the importance of identifying specific examples to explore the similarities and differences between dwarfs and Dwarves.

Smaller?

One aspect of 'the dwarf' that has become an assumed trait is their smaller siz. Tolkien uses this feature in his own descriptions, and pictorial representations of the dwarfs of fairy tales are often diminutive (possibly this is due to the association with the medical condition of dwarfism). However, within Norse mythology dwarfs are not consistently physically described. Litr, a figure within the *Prose Edda* who makes a brief appearance in 'Gylfaginning', is the only example of a dwarf to be explicitly described as being very small and this was potentially just to make it easier for Thor to kick him into a funeral pyre (74). The dwarf's interchangeability with giants within the myths indicates that size is not their defining feature; even Litr is described elsewhere in 'Ragnarsdrápa' as being a giant (15:48). In the *Prose Edda* the ambiguity continues as three variants of Elf are identified: Light Elves, Dark Elves and Black Elves. Of these only the Light Elves are completely distinct; "there is yet that place which is called alfheim (Elf-World); there lives that people, which is called light elves, but the dark elves dwell down in the earth, and they are unlike in appearance and much more unlike in experience." (Gylfaginning). However, the Dark Elf and Black Elf distinction is often harder to separate as the terms are sometimes used interchangeably whilst they are referred to as different races elsewhere in the mythology. The differences remain hard to define. For example, Black Elves are - in the tales concerning the sons of Invaldi who crafted Sif's hair - considered to be, and described as, dwarfs.

Various solutions have been offered to resolve this seeming inconsistency. Some suggest they are the same; an idea further confused by references which describe dwarfs living in the world of the Black Elves, which implies they are distinct from the Black Elves even if they do occupy the same realm. The Black Elves and Dark Elves are also described as living underground, their size and appearance are often not mentioned and the words are so frequently interchangeable that it calls into question the existence of the race of the dwarfs within Norse mythology. Wilkin claims Tolkien engages and solves this quandary within his work and "rather than equating dark elves with black elves, Tolkien has instead disregarded the latter term, favouring the less ambiguous name - 'dwarves' while giving to the term 'dark elves' a new distinction of its own" (75). There is less ambiguity with the Dwarves of Tolkien and they are better, or at least more extensively, described. While most of their attributes change over the course of Tolkien's works from his original concept, these changes are well documented through Tolkien's extended writings and it is possible to track the common features of Gold Lust, Craftsmanship, Creation, Death and Martial Prowess through their progression from Norse mythology to something of Tolkien's own.

Gold Lust is an attribute that has long been identified with the dwarf. Throughout Norse mythology dwarfs such as Andvari, later adapted into Wagner's Alberich within *Der Ring des Nibelungen*, channel the lust for Gold traditionally ascribed to their race. In the example of Alberich, itself a development from the Norse dwarf, this Gold Lust is shown through him foreswearing love in order to be able to create a ring of power that allows him to gain more wealth.

In the earliest drafts of the *The Hobbit* Gold Lust, to the exclusion of all other emotion, is clearly in Tolkien's portrayal of the Dwarves. The entire company at some point or other show an overwhelming desire for the treasure even in the knowledge that there is a living dragon protecting it. However, this attribute of the Dwarves is downplayed in the second edition where the majority of the references to Gold Lust are embodied within Thorin as his fatal flaw rather than being established as a racial trait. This idea of Gold Lust is also shown though the effect Sauron's rings has on the Dwarves. It has a limited effect on the Dwarves when compared to the effect of the rings on the other races of Middle-earth. Whilst the rings given to the men turn them into wraiths and affect other races in dramatic ways, Sauron was frustrated that the Dwarves were harder to bring under his dominion. Unlike the, in this case, wiser Elves they wore and used their rings however, the effect was limited to exacerbating their Gold Lust ''wrath and an over-mastering greed of gold were kindled in their hearts, of which evil enough after came to the profit of Sauron" (S 288).

Sauron's Influence

Although not as extreme or immediate as the effect on men, it is nonetheless damaging. Excessive greed that removes the ability to have other emotion echoes Alberich's deal but the deal is made unknowingly by the Dwarves. The greed in Dwarves was kindled by Sauron's rings, indicating that greed, while innate, is not under normal circumstances a defining feature of the Dwarves' racial identity. In the same way as lust for power is seen as the fatal flaw for men despite not being displayed by all, Gold Lust is a flaw displayed when exacerbated for evil purposes; potentially inherent within all Dwarves but existing at low levels. It is telling that one of the most extravagant examples of Gold Lust by a dwarf was by Thrór who exhibited these traits whilst under influence of one of the rings. This detail was only added to *The Silmarillion* later on, suggesting that Tolkien was attempting to move away from the image of senseless greed portrayed in other representations of dwarfs. By moving away from greed as an almost defining feature Tolkien allows for greater depth in his representation of the race of Dwarves and encourages us to see a dwarf with Gold Lust as an individual peculiarity and not a damning trait of the whole race.

The Hobbit is the first time Tolkien shows us lengthy interactions within a group of Dwarves. The individual Dwarves have different personality traits and despite the different levels and manifestations of Gold Lust all are interested in the treasure to some extent. However, it is Thorin's intense desire that is seen as pernicious and not the greed of the entire company. His excessive greed cannot be considered entirely genetic as his forefathers, though demonstrating Gold Lust, were under the influence of one of Sauron's rings. A ring which was taken back by Sauron and not passed on to Thorin. During the exploration of Erebor in *The Hobbit* the ''…lust of it was heavy on him."(283). Here, Thorin is singled out as having extreme Gold Lust in contrast to his company, thus suggesting that this potentially an inherent predilection but ultimately evidenced as individual flaw.

Craftsmanship, and the importance of the association of craft with dwarfs, is shown through Motz's definition. The dedication of Dwarves to their craft was such that their already insular race becomes more introverted, distanced from other settlements due to their need to be close to the materials they work with. Their existence as craftsmen cannot be separated from their creator, Aulë who created them to have someone to teach his craft and also gave them another method of distance. Their language was created by Aulë at the moment of their creation, "he made it hard and harsh just like its speakers" (Åberg 1) and because of the manufactured nature of their language it shares few roots or similarities to the Elvish languages further distancing them from other races. This is further exacerbated by their unwillingness to share their language with outsiders, the only noted non-dwarf speaker of Khuzdul is the Dark Elf Eol, and is another manifestation of willingness to self-exclude shown by the dwarves.

Dwarfs often focus on their craft to the exclusion of everything else. In 'Völuspá' they are created in order to create the images of man for the gods to breathe life into and it is to the dwarfs the Gods come when they are in need of crafting expertise. This is shown in the story of Loki and Sif. After cutting off Sif's hair Loki, in order to replace it, goes to see the dwarfs who are described as ''twisted creatures, who were both wicked and ugly, but who were the best craftsmen in the world." (Colum 32). Here their craft is what redeems them to the rest of the world and it is only their expertise that cause interaction. Loki tricks them by offering them a great reward which, of course, never appears.

Throughout Norse mythology bullying and trickery are used to get artefacts or services from the dwarfs. In contrast Tolkien seems to consciously try and keep the balance between the Dwarves and their clients as far more equal. Dwarves receive food and other payment in return for their services, however, the element of trickery remains in the earlier versions of stories. This is shown in the story of the Nauglafring, the Dwarf Necklace, told in *The Book of Lost Tales, Part 2*. Here King Tinwelint (later changed to Thingol) scornfully pays the Dwarves six gold pieces after forcing them to remain within his kingdom for months to craft the Nauglafring out of cursed gold. This treatment of Dwarves and their craft shows the early drafts of *The Silmarillion* were influenced by the dwarfs of Norse mythology and their treatment by the Gods. Of course, the deed does not go unpunished as the Dwarves murder Tinwelint and contribute to destroying his kingdom.

Tolkien takes over

In the later version of this tale the Dwarves attempt to take the necklace from Thingol despite handsome payment and murder him in the struggle. This version is far less flattering to the Dwarves but it does show the Dwarves as being far more willing to create items of value for other races even if, on this occasion, they were overwhelmed by the strength of the curse on the necklace (described as akin to the influence of Sauron's rings). This change in the function of the Dwarves within the story, though pejorative, shows Tolkien moving away from the precedents set within Norse Mythology.

In *The Book of Lost Tales* it is said of the Dwarves 'Old are they, and never among them comes a child.' (LT2 224). This apparent lack of procreation, and female equivalents to procreate with, is changed in Tolkien's later work although they are still portrayed as primarily interested in their craft. A third of the Dwarf population are female but Tolkien writes that more than a third of men "do not desire marriage, being engrossed in their craft" (*LOTR III* 447*)*. But the earlier lack of female counterparts within their race, and therefore lack of procreation within their race described in the early editions of Tolkien's work, does not mean that sexuality is not a feature of the Dwarves, and this is where the events of *The Silmarillion* echo those of Norse mythology once again.

The dwarf Alvíss was promised he could marry Thor's daughter in exchange for a service he rendered the other gods. Thor tricked him into reciting words in several languages to show off his knowledge until the sun rose at which point Alvíss turns to stone. This is similar to the Dwarves' request of Tinwelint. When they are finished creating the necklace they request "a fair maiden of the woodland elves" (*Lost Tales II* 228) alongside various monetary rewards. Tinwelint, already unwilling to share his hoard, could never "deliver maidens of the Elves unto ill-shapen Dwarves without undying shame." (229). This unusual association of dwarfs with sex, in early versions of the story, is more comparable to the characteristics of the fairy tale dwarf in a tale such as *The Yellow Dwarf,* who helps a desperate maiden on the understanding that she will marry him. The dwarfs are shown to be interested in women of other races through Alvíss, but the inclination was removed from the dwarves in *The Silmarillion* through the late addition of dwarf women and the removal of the above episode from the tale of Nauglafring.

This shows Tolkien, again, moving away from the traditional view of the dwarf. Aulë is said to have created thirteen Dwarves in the beginning, six pairs, male and female, and Durin to represent the seven houses. By creating the dwarf women Tolkien gives Dwarves a means for propagation as well as a more rounded society than is portrayed in Norse mythology. Jakobsson claims the dwarfs' lack of ability to propagate shows that "They are losers. They are small, they disappear, they do not propagate." (69). While this is an overstatement it is certainly true that in the dwarfs we see a lesser species; bullied and used by the Gods, the Giants and Men. This is however, untrue of the Dwarves, their staunch resistance to influence from the rings of power as well as their aggressive defence of the race against intruders, while perhaps being xenophobic, proves the strength of their race.

The death and creation of any race is important. It is particularly important in light of the strange and complicated nature of the creation of the Dwarves and the uncertainty lingering around their deaths. The creation of both the Dwarves and the dwarfs was asexual and they were, in one way or another, created for their crafting abilities. For the dwarfs this skill was far more elemental as their purpose was to craft the images of man; an instrumental part in the creation of another species. Dwarves on the other hand were initially created by Aulë to be his children and a people with which to share his knowledge and skills. Like Melkor's creations, Aulë's children were a weak imitation of the Children of Ilúvatar and were bound to his will. When discovered and confronted by Ilúvatar, Aulë offered to destroy his creations but as he raised his hammer the Dwarves flinched from him showing that Ilúvatar had given them free will and therefore, life.

In the early version of Tolkien's creation myth the Dwarves were still soulless and upon their demise they returned to the earth. This is consistent with the way the dwarfs are depicted as dying. An example of this was Alvíss, who turned to stone when the daylight hit him. Gould maintained, after researching the links between dwarf's names and death, the dwarfs were not truly living; "The dwarves are the dead; they are one phase of the Living Corpse, the draugr, that has experienced the First Death and will experience the final and Second Death when the body disintegrates" (959). While this theory has more recently gathered support from scholars such as Vries and Turville-Petre, it could be taking the link between names and existence too far. The lack of a soul implies for dwarfs of both kinds that they are supernatural beings that merely exist rather than live.

Tolkien takes over again!

In *The Lost Road* the Dwarves are described as "have[ing] no spirit in-dwelling, as have the Children of the Creator, and they have skill but not art; and they go back into the stone of the mountains of which they were made." (129). Lacking a soul severely affects the Dwarves in their crafting activities as well as removing any possibility of an afterlife. As the status of the Dwarves progressed the myth was adapted to incorporate the Dwarves having souls; "Aulë the Maker, whom they call Mahal, cares for them, and gathers them to Mandos in halls set apart; and that he declared to their fathers of old that Ilúvatar will hallow them and give them a place amongst the Children of Ilúvatar." (S 39). This is another example of the initial parallel treatment of Tolkien's Dwarves and dwarfs and their subsequent divergence as Tolkien rewrites the race of Dwarves to have souls and a distinct identity.

The Dwarves are a warlike race due to necessity, "Since they were come in the days of the power of Melkor, Aulë made the dwarves strong to endure." (S 39) This strength

is where the main difference between the Dwarves and the dwarfs lies. The dwarfs are known to be weak, considered misshapen by the gods and bullied and tricked as demonstrated through previously discussed examples. Jakobsson describes them as "unimaginative and uncreative, apart from their skills as artisans … not particularly dangerous and not very hard to fool." (61) This assessment may be damning but elements of it are also true - although calling the dwarf uncreative, when their primary reason for being is the creation of the images of man, is problematic. The dwarfs were far from ideal fighters and while there were instances of violence committed by dwarfs, this was not considered a strength nor was it celebrated. Bragg traces the derivation of dwarf as "probably a word meaning 'the damaged one' or 'crippled'." (15).

This interpretation of the dwarfs being crippled is supported through the language earlier used by Loki describing them as "twisted creatures" (Colum 32), and is supported within Tolkien by Tinwelint's description of the "illshapen Dwarves" (*Lost Tales II* 229) however, this early incarnation of the 'crippled' dwarf is eclipsed later on in *The Silmarillion* by the Noegyth Nibin, or Petty-Dwarves, who were possibly created in part to explain the difference between the early drafted Dwarves and the Dwarves of Durin we see in the later books. The Petty-Dwarves are a mixture of various houses of Dwarves and are described in *The War of the Jewels* as having been "driven out from the Communities, being deformed and undersized, or slothful and rebellious" (388). And thus by Bragg's definition of dwarf we see the true Norse dwarfs of Tolkien's world; the 'crippled' Dwarves display many of the dwarf characteristics previously discussed. At the time of the War of the Jewels they have been hunted almost into extinction by Elves, who believed them to be animals, and there are only three remaining - Mîm and his two sons - all of whom have died by the beginning of the Third Age. And so we see a group driven from others of their race, potentially due to their disabilities, a form of eugenics, and then hunted to extinction by the Elves.

Petty-Dwarves were potentially used by Tolkien to be the scapegoats of the Dwarves, in order to ameliorate the representation of the Dwarves to allow them to become the warrior race we see in *The Lord of the Rings*, the great crafters of Middle-earth, resistant to Evil and not the greedy Dwarves of the first ages. The undesirable elements of the early Dwarves are then absorbed by the Petty-Dwarves and we see them as a doomed race; unable to propagate, crippled, greedy and easily manipulated and bullied. Whilst this is perhaps an extreme view of the significance of the Petty-Dwarves when there are also other existing potential explanations within the extended legendarium of Tolkien for the 'Wicked Dwarves'. However, their significance as a contrast to the later Dwarves emphasises Tolkien's development of their race in to something quite different from his original concept.

Tolkien has established a new tradition of Dwarves that originates in the traditional Norse mythologies. The early representations of dwarfs in *The Hobbit* and parts of his legendarium are immature, aligned with the depiction of the Norse dwarf but, it is through Tolkien's adaptations that we see a significant divergence culminating in the Dwarves eventual involvement in saving Middle Earth. Some of the essentials remain - the Dwarves' focus on crafting, a tendency to avarice, their underground cities and the insulated social structure. However, Tolkien's Dwarf is "stone-hard, stubborn, fast in friendship and in enmity" (S 39) possessing a distinct identity from which we can see the foundation for the modern dwarf of fantasy fiction, video games and films.

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Of Dwarves and Dwarfs

THOR EWING

In a letter written shortly after the publication of *The Hobbit*, Tolkien remarks how relieved he is that no reviewers have picked him up on his use of "the 'incorrect' plural *dwarves*. I am afraid it is just a piece of private bad grammar, rather shocking in a philologist; but I shall have to go on with it" (Carpenter, *The Letters of JRR Tolkien*, Letter 17, 15/10/1937).

Go on with it he did, and indeed we are still going on with it to this day. In an introduction to *The Hobbit* and an appendix to *The Lord of the Rings*, Tolkien explained how his idiosyncratic plural is used to distinguish the 'dwarves' of Middle-earth from the 'dwarfs' who appear in what he dubs "the sillier tales of these latter days." In this glorious phrase, Tolkien turns on its head a scholar's assumption that he has pilfered old myths and fairy tales to create his own story. Instead, he suggests that the dwarfs who appear in our traditional stories and myths are mere pallid reflections of the real dwarves of his Middle-earth.

So how do Tolkien's dwarves differ from the dwarfs of earlier literature? We might easily dismiss the dwarfs of fairy tale as silly, especially once they have received the Disney treatment. Certainly, Tolkien's dwarves are more credible than these animated buffoons. The dwarves of Middle-earth appear as proud and haughty warriors with a ruthless streak and an overwhelming obsession with gold. Yet there is a touch of humour in Tolkien's dwarves too, not least as they tumble over each other on Bilbo's doorstep at Bag End. For a brief moment, they could almost have stepped into Middle-earth from Disney's *Snow White* – which coincidentally was released in the same year *The Hobbit* was published.

Although many names like Thorin, Fili, Kili and Durin are drawn directly from Scandinavian mythology, Tolkien's dwarves are also different from the dwarfs of Viking myth. But there's nothing silly about Viking dwarfs. These were made from maggots crawling in the corpse of Ymir, the first living being, and seem to have been figures of fear and even revulsion – more like Gollum than Gimli. Like Tolkien's dwarves, the Viking dwarfs are skilful craftsmen, forging objects of great magical power buried deep beneath the earth. But the Viking dwarfs are not warriors; their strength lies in spells and curses rather than in weapons. The dwarfs are ambivalent in the great struggle between gods and etins (or giants) which dominates the Viking myths, and play no part in the final battle of Ragnarok, the Doom of the Powers, when they will only moan beside their doors of stone.

Because of these differences, when it came to my own retelling of the Viking myths, I was keen to keep the established distinction between dwarves and dwarfs. But I wonder how long this distinction will hold.

Tolkien noted that although his reviewers had politely overlooked his own misspelling, they had 'all carefully used the correct *dwarfs* themselves' when writing of his Middle-earth dwarves. This attitude would remain the norm for some decades. At the time of the first seminal collection of Tolkien criticism, *Tolkien and the Critics*, published in 1968, the contributors were evenly divided between those who used 'dwarves' and those who used 'dwarfs'.

Now, perhaps, the wind is blowing the other way. Not only would it be inconceivable for a Tolkien scholar to use the spelling 'dwarfs' for the dwarves of Middle-earth, but the '-ves' spelling is making headway in the world of mythical literature. In one recent academic book on otherworldly creatures in Germanic myth and tradition, (*The Shadow Walkers*, 2005) Tolkien's spelling has already ousted the traditional 'dwarfs'. According to Google's online Ngram Viewer, the last 20 years has seen a steady decline in the use of the plural 'dwarfs', whereas over the same period the use of 'dwarves' has more than doubled.

What would the man himself have made of this? I can imagine a wry Gandalf-like smile, as he explains once more that the dwarfs of myth are merely garbled memories of the real dwarves who thrived long since in the Third Age and before.

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Bye all! Have a lovely Yule, don't eat too many Orcs!