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Tolkiens Weltbild(er)

Interdisziplinäres Seminar der DTG
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Tolkien Seminar 2005

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Rezensionen

Ein janusgesichtiger Blick zurück

Das Jahr 2 nach Jackson war geprägt durch ›Die Rückkehr der Normalität‹. Die »extended versions« der Filmtrilogie wurden ausführlich begutachtet, diskutiert und in den kritischen Diskurs eingearbeitet und sind nun Geschichte – wenn auch sicherlich mit Langzeitwirkung. Die drei wichtigen akademischen Ereignisse von nationaler und internationaler Bedeutung in 2005 haben sich dann auch nicht auf die Filme im Besonderen konzentriert (wenngleich diese nicht ignoriert wurden), sondern Tolkiens Bücher in den Mittelpunkt gestellt.

So fand das zweite »Tolkien Seminar« der Deutschen Tolkien Gesellschaft (DTG) an der Friedrich-Schiller-Universität in Jena statt. Neun Forscher präsentierten Vorträge, die Tolkiens Weltbild(er) beleuchteten und im vorliegenden Band in überarbeiteter Form abgedruckt sind. Die Tagung stand einem breiten Publikum offen und wurde von mehr als 80 Teilnehmern besucht – die zum Teil sogar von so weit her angereist waren wie Cambridge und Zürich.

Die zweite Konferenz, diesmal von internationalem Format, war die »2005 Tolkien Conference« an der Aston Universität in Birmingham mit über 600 Teilnehmern aus der ganzen Welt. Die Tagung konnte sich, was Größe, Dauer und Bandbreite betrifft, durchaus mit der »Centenary Conference« von 1992 messen. Die Organisatoren stellten, in Zusammenarbeit mit zahlreichen Tolkien-Gesellschaften aus aller Welt, ein abwechslungsreiches Programm zusammen. Unter anderem präsentierten Tolkien-Forscher mit Star-Status wie Tom Shippey und Verlyn Flieger, Autoren wichtiger Monographien wie Patrick Curry, John Garth und Christopher Garbowski, international bekannte Künstler wie Alan Lee, John Howe und Ted Nasmith ihre Werke und hielten Vorträge. Man darf auf die Publikation des Konferenzbandes gespannt sein. Und auch wenn den Organisatoren ihre wohlverdiente Ruhepause gegönnt sei: Eine ähnliche Konferenz in nicht allzu ferner Zukunft wäre wünschenswert.

Die malerische Stadt Wetzlar, Heimat der Phantastischen Bibliothek, war die Gastgeberin der dritten Konferenz, die gemeinsam von der DTG, den Inklings und der Phantastischen Bibliothek ausgerichtet wurde. Die Vorträge boten eine interessante Auswahl aus der vornehmlich deutschen Tolkienforschung, und ein Tagungsband wird in der Schriftenreihe der Phantastischen Bibliothek erscheinen.

Ein Blick in den Rezensionsteil des vorliegenden Bandes zeigt, dass 2005 zahlreiche Monographien und Sammelbänden zu Tolkiens Werk erschienen. Zu nennen

sind die *Tolkien Studies* 2, die mit einem sowohl inhaltlich wie umfangmäßig substantiellen Band an den Erfolg der ersten Nummer anknüpfen, und Verlyn Flieger, die ihre überarbeiteten Artikel zum *Silmarillion* in Buchform publizierte und damit einen wichtigen Beitrag zur Erschließung dieses oftmals vernachlässigten Werks leistet. Marjorie Burns analysiert die keltischen und nordischen Quellen und Einflüsse in Tolkiens Werken, und Lynnette Porter vergleicht die Darstellung der Nebenfiguren in Buch und Film. Damit hat die ›amerikanische Sektion‹ wieder einmal ihre Vorherrschaft unter Beweis gestellt.

Die ›Alte Welt‹ war jedoch nicht untätig. Alex Lewis und Elizabeth Currie stellten den zweiten Band ihrer mehrteiligen Serie zu den Einflüssen und Hintergründen von Tolkiens Werk fertig, Allan Turner publizierte seine gewichtige Studie zur Übersetzungsproblematik, und Walking Tree Publishers veröffentlichten einen weiteren Band in der *Cormarë Series*. Die deutschsprachige Tolkienforschung trat mit zwei Büchern in Erscheinung: Alexander van de Berghs Buch zur zeitgenössischen Relevanz von Tolkien und der Studie von Honegger/Johnston/Schneidewind/Weinreich zur moralischen Dimension von Tolkiens Werk.

Damit liegt die deutschsprachige Tolkienforschung zwar noch immer hinter der englischsprachigen, aber es herrscht Aufbruchstimmung. Und es ist zu hoffen, dass wir in der nächsten *Hither-Shore*-Ausgabe eine größere Anzahl deutschsprachiger Publikationen vermelden können.

Die (west-)europäische Tolkienforschung findet sich derzeit in der komfortablen Lage, dass sie zwischen drei auf Tolkien (und phantastische Literatur) spezialisierten Verlagen wählen kann: Scriptorium Oxoniae (Deutschland, Publikationen auf Deutsch und Englisch), Edition Stein und Baum (Deutschland, Publikationen auf Deutsch) und Walking Tree Publishers (Schweiz, Publikationen auf Englisch). Die drei Verlage ergänzen sich in ihren Ausrichtungen und bieten der (west-)europäischen Tolkienforschung eine ideale Plattform für den Dialog und die Zusammenarbeit mit den amerikanischen Tolkien-Forschern.

Auch die zunehmend bilinguale Ausrichtung von *Hither Shore* soll zur dringend notwendigen und erwünschten internationalen Zusammenarbeit beitragen. Denn, wie Gildor bemerkte: »Die weite Welt erstreckt sich rings um euch: ihr könnt euch absperren, doch könnt ihr sie nicht für immer aussperren.« Mit der Zweisprachigkeit von *Hither Shore* machen wir in diesem Sinne (sprachlich) einen Schritt in die Welt hinaus.

Thomas Honegger
Jena, November 2005

A Janus-headed View backwards

The year 2 after Jackson's movie trilogy, was marked largely by 'The Return of Normality'. The extended DVD versions had been released, watched, discussed, criticised, lauded, digested and absorbed into the critical scholarly discourse. In 2005, the three Tolkien-related academic events of national and international importance, respectively, did not focus on the movie in particular (nor did they make a point of ignoring it), but concentrated rather on Tolkien's books.

The first of these, in chronological order, was the Second Tolkien Seminar of the DTG held at the Friedrich Schiller University Jena (15 to 17 April). Nine scholars presented their papers exploring the question of Tolkien's view(s) of the world. The revised versions of these papers, which have been supplemented by additional essays on the topic, make up the bulk of the volume on hand. The Seminar, which was open to the public and attended by circa 80 people, some of which have come from as far as Cambridge or Zurich, provided a much-needed (inter-)national platform for the exchange of ideas and the discussion of Tolkien-related projects.

The second conference to be mentioned is, of course, the 2005 Tolkien Conference held at the Aston University Birmingham. It rivalled the 1992 Centenary Conference in scope, length and size. Over 600 registered participants from all over the world, among them a strong DTG contingent, convened in the town where Tolkien spent formative years of his youth. The organisers, in cooperation with numerous Tolkien societies, offered a rich and varied programme. Speakers with celebrity status (e.g. Tom Shippey, Verlyn Flieger), authors of important monographs on Tolkien (e.g. Patrick Curry, John Garth, and Christopher Garbowski), rubbed shoulders with internationally famous artists (e.g. Alan Lee, John Howe, and Ted Nasmith) and a plethora of Tolkien scholars and enthusiasts of lesser fame – though not necessarily of lesser quality. The conference committee had tried (mostly successfully) to arrange the panels, lectures, seminars etc. in coherent and meaningful sections; this effort paid off in so far as the individual speakers in a section would interact with each other and present different approaches to the same topic. We are all looking forward to the publication of the proceedings and although the organisers certainly deserve a break, a similar event in the not-too-distant future would be most welcome.

Wetzlar was the venue for the third conference, organised by the Phantastische Bibliothek, the DTG and the Inklings. On a slightly smaller scale than the DTG Seminar in Jena, it attracted about 50 people and offered a well-chosen

cross-section of (predominantly) German Tolkien scholarship. The papers, which dealt with a variety of Tolkien-related topics, are going to be published in the series edited by the Phantastische Bibliothek.

2005 also saw the publication of an ever increasing number of monographs and volumes of articles on Tolkien and his work. The review section of *Hither Shore* 2 bears witness to this. *Tolkien Studies* presented in spring a substantial sequel to their first issue, Verlyn Flieger reworked and united her articles on *The Silmarillion* into a monograph, Marjorie Burns explores the Celtic and Nordic influences in her book, and Lynnette Porter discusses the fate of the minor characters of *The Lord of the Rings* in Jackson's adaptation. The 'American section' has thus once more proven their predominance in the field.

Yet the 'Old World' has not been idle, either. Lewis and Currie finished the second volume of their multi-volume series on Tolkien's influences and background, Allan Turner published his masterful study on translating Tolkien, and Walking Tree Publishers brought out a new volume with articles. German speaking scholarship also contributed to the field. Alexander van de Bergh presented his study on the contemporary relevance of Tolkien's work, and Honegger, Johnston, Schneidewind and Weinreich co-authored a monograph on the moral dimension of Tolkien's fiction.

Apart from the general academic publishers, European Tolkien scholarship has now the choice between three specialised publishers: Scriptorium Oxoniae (Germany, publications in German and English), Edition Stein und Baum (Germany, publications in German), and Walking Tree Publishers (Switzerland, publications in English). The three complement one another and provide European Tolkien scholarship with an excellent starting point for its dialogue and collaboration with the American Tolkien scholars. The increasingly bilingual nature of *Hither Shore* is also due to this need and wish for international co-operation. As Gildor said: "The wide world is all about you: you can fence yourselves in, but you cannot for ever fence it out." So let us make a beginning by bringing down some 'linguistic' fences.

Thomas Honegger
Jena, November 2005

Vorwort

Zusammen mit dem Institut für Anglistik und Amerikanistik der Friedrich-Schiller-Universität Jena und mit freundlicher Unterstützung von Walking Tree Publishers konnte die DTG im April 2005 in Jena ihr zweites Tolkien Seminar veranstalten: »Tolkiens Weltbild(er)«. Leitgedanke war es, der im Vorjahresseminar verhandelten »Außensicht« (dem Blick verschiedener Disziplinen auf das Werk J.R.R. Tolkiens) eine Untersuchung der »Innensicht« folgen zu lassen, d.h. die verschiedenen ein Weltbild konstituierenden Aspekte zu analysieren.

Die schon im Titel anklingende und von den Tagungsorganisatoren intendierte Vielfalt der Zugänge und Interpretationsmöglichkeiten wurde m.E. von den Vortragenden in durchweg überzeugender Weise genutzt, um der Frage nach der Einheitlichkeit von Tolkiens Weltbild bzw. der Unterschiedlichkeit seiner Weltbilder, den Prägungen seines Werkes oder der Geschlossenheit oder Offenheit seiner Konzeption nachzugehen und aufzuspüren, ob und wie seine Weltsicht(en) in seinem Werk einen Niederschlag gefunden haben.

Bei aller Vielfalt der behandelten Themen – von der Geschichtswissenschaft zur Biologie, von der Literaturwissenschaft zur Theologie, von der Religionswissenschaft zur (politischen) Philosophie – kann nicht der Anspruch erhoben werden, dieses Thema erschöpfend behandelt zu haben. So können die hier versammelten Beiträge – ergänzt um zwei weitere Aufsätze aus ethischer bzw. kulturhermeneutischer Perspektive, die leider nicht als Vortrag in Jena präsentiert werden konnten – nur Schlaglichter setzen. Gleichwohl sollen sie insofern den weiteren Weg erhellen und beleuchten, als sie einer weiteren Diskussion und Auseinandersetzung nicht im Weg stehen, sondern diese gerade fördern sollen.

Den geneigten Lesern werden einige kleine Veränderungen gegenüber Band 1 auffallen. So haben wir zu Gunsten der deutsch-englischen Zweisprachigkeit von *Hither Shore* den längeren Aufsätzen Zusammenfassungen in der je anderen Sprache beigefügt. Ferner eröffnen Rainer Nagel und Thomas Honegger mit ihren kürzeren Beiträgen die Rubrik der »Notes«. Hier soll kleineren, aber deshalb nicht unwichtigeren, Detailfragen nachgegangen werden.

Abschließend bleibt die vielleicht wichtigste und schönste Aufgabe: der Dank. So sei zunächst Prof. Dr. Thomas Honegger und seinen Mitarbeiterinnen für ihren sehr kompetenten Beitrag zur Seminarorganisation und damit zu einer sehr gelungenen und bereichernden Tagung herzlich gedankt. Ferner natürlich auch denen, die den Inhalt dieses Bandes beigesteuert haben, sowie den anderen Beteiligten im Board of Editors für ihre wie gewohnt kompetente und zuverlässige Arbeit. Dank geht auch an die Verlegerin Susanne A. Rayermann sowie für die Vorlagenherstellung an Kathrin Bondzio.

TFP

Preface

Together with the Institute for English and American Studies of Friedrich Schiller University, Jena, and supported by Walking Tree Publishers, DTG held their second Tolkien Seminar, dealing with "Tolkien's World View(s)", April 2005 at Jena. The guiding thought behind this seminar was to follow up on the 'outside perspective', i.e., the look at Tolkien from the point of view of several disciplines from the first seminar, with an 'inside perspective', i.e. an attempt at analysing the different aspects that make up a world view.

It would appear that the speakers made good use of the great diversity of possible approaches and ways of interpretation already inherent in the title (and intended as such by the organisers) to treat the question of the unity of Tolkien's world view or, rather, the diversity of his world views, of the various nuances found in his oeuvre, and of the closedness or openness of his overall conceptions. Another avenue pursued during the seminar was to find out whether Tolkien's world views have actually left their mark on his writings.

Given the diversity of the topics addressed during the seminar – from history to biology, from philology to (political) philosophy –, we cannot hope to claim exhaustive treatment of the subject. Thus, the papers presented here – completed by two further papers approaching the topic from the position of ethics and cultural hermeneutics, respectively, which could unfortunately not have been presented at the seminar – can do no more than give a few tantalising glimpses on what is possible in this area of Tolkien studies. As such, they are intended to light the way to further discussion and analysis, not to impede or fence in such academic dispute.

Attentive readers may notice several small changes from our first issue. For instance, to make *Hither Shore* more accessible to the English-speaking world, now the German full-length papers are accompanied by English summaries. Furthermore, Rainer Nagel and Thomas Honegger have provided the first instalment of our "Notes" section, intended to feature less compact, but by no means less important, topics of a more specialised nature.

Saving the possibly most important, and most delightful, task for last: some words of gratitude. First of all, we would like to thank Prof. Dr. Thomas Honegger and his assistants for their substantial share in the organisation of the Tolkien Seminar at Jena; much of the success of the seminar is due to their efforts. Of course, we also want to thank all of the contributors to this issue, as well as the other members of the Board of Editors, who, as usually, have worked in their respective capacities competently and reliably. As regards the magazine proper, thanks go to Kathrin Bondzio for typesetting and to the publisher Susanne A. Rayermann.

<div align="right">TFP</div>

A Myth for the 20th Century – Blood, Race and Hereditary Memory in Tolkien

Dieter Bachmann, Thomas Honegger

Tolkien's rejection of the Nazi regime's racist politics and his disgust at their misuse of the Germanic legends is well known. Yet the motivation for Tolkien's personal grudge against Hitler is not so much political as cultural and artistic. As a philologist and scholar, Tolkien would use terms like *Aryan* or *Germanic* in their original sense and within a clearly defined linguistic framework and cast derision upon the Nazi's 'unscholarly' and muddled application of these expressions.

But as soon as Tolkien discusses questions of race, ethnicity and culture – and their relationship with languages – matters become more complicated and contradictory. This loss of clarity is mostly due to what Shippey called "Tolkien's linguistic heresy", i.e. his (publicly and privately stated) belief that a person's linguistic preferences are 'inborn' features and that we have to differentiate between the 'cradle tongue' (the language we learn as a baby, i.e. our mother tongue) and the 'native tongue' (the language we inherit genetically from our ancestors and which is often dormant).

By analogy, myths are also 'in the blood'. Such a theory, although not necessarily fascist or racist, is too close to racial and esoteric theories prevalent in the first decades of the 20th century for easy comfort. Tolkien's struggle to come to terms with the complex and often problematic connections between ethnic identity, race, blood, language and mythology may be one (if not the major) reason for his repeated crises during his work on *The Lord of the Rings* – a process which, incidentally, took up the years immediately before, during and after the World War II, and the actual writing of the epic shows often close parallels to contemporary events. Tolkien did not discuss explicitly the problem of the propagandistic misuse of myths, such as, for example, by the Nazi chief ideologist Alfred Rosenberg, whose influential book *Der Mythus des 20. Jahrhunderts* (1930) provides an involuntary and uncanny parallel to Tolkien's own myth-creational project.

Yet this does not mean that Tolkien ignored the matter altogether. There are, for example, possible references to this problem in his posthumously published *The Notion Club Papers* (written 1945/46). More topical, however, is the question how the treatment of the 'Germanic element' in his works of fiction changed as a consequence of his growing awareness that the Nazi misuse of Germanic (especially Nordic) myths and ideals made it impossible for future generations to deploy them freely in their own artistic creations. Tolkien's depiction of the Rohirrim can be seen, in such a context, as an attempt to set a 'composite' and

historicised Germanic people against the 'Wagnerised' Teutons of Nazi propaganda and thus to re-conquer some of the common Germanic heritage.

It is a source of consolation to see that, in the end, it is Tolkien's myth of the humble anti-hero that has become the "mythology of the twentieth century" (D. Day) and not Rosenberg's fascist vision of the same name.

Biology, Genetics, and Evolution in Middle-earth

Friedhelm Schneidewind

Studies in Tolkien's work have so far covered language and history, theology and ethics, and even architecture and economics. Nature and egology of Tolkien's world, too, have been analysed. This paper now deals with the biological foundations of Middle-earth.

If Middle-earth is indeed our world, as Tolkien has stressed repeatedly, the basic principles of evolution have to apply there as well. Tolkien must have been aware of these, at least in a very basic form. Thus, the article explains these principles as well as their relevance to Middle-earth, and also defines the important basic terms of "species" and "race", as well as the word "kindred", used by Tolkien with three different meanings. Based on the various fertile Men-Elf unions, the biological relation between Elves and Men (both being regarded as one species in biological terms) is explained as well as the concept "origo gentis" (history of bloodline) as favoured by Tolkien.

A look at Hobbits and Druédain then showcases 'normal' evolution, since Tolkien regarded both as "to be branches of the specifically human race" – their reduction in size may be explained by the typical scenario of natural selection.

A look at Orcs, Trolls, Dragons, and Spiders allows for the discussion of evolution by breeding and by degeneration. Of special interest are the various models of development Tolkien suggests for the Orcs – e.g., derivation from Elves, or from Men –, both within his published works and in his letters and unpublished manuscripts.

After a brief look at the 'special cases' of Dwarves and Ents, an analysis of longevity and quasi-immortality in Middle-earth concludes this paper.

Masquerade and Essence, Death and Desire
The construction of 'correct' femininity in J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*

Patrick Brückner

It is well known that Tolkien in *The Lord of the Rings* describes a world peopled with very few women, a fact that has given rise to an often polemic and ultimately sterile debate about what Tolkien thought of women himself. This paper steps clear of such an approach and attempts to analyse the breaks in the discourses of femininity, sex, and gender as played out in the text.

The character of Éowyn provides the focus for understanding which models of femininity are created in the text. The relationship of Éowyn and Aragorn is taken as a starting point: it is not read as 'romantic' love but as being clearly shaped by Éowyn's desire for a status in society that is grounded in a mythic past. Éowyn's historically founded claim to become a shieldmaiden needs Aragorn for it to be realized. Aragorn, however, bound to his own myth (that of the returning king), is in no position to fulfill Éowyn's demand. As a consequence, Éowyn becomes male by herself and turns into Dernhelm.

Éowyn's statement "but no living man am I" is almost universally interpreted as a confirmation of her being a 'woman'. It is of great importance, however, that Dernhelm must be interpreted with a clear understanding that the inseparable alignment of sex and gender is a phenomenon of modernity. A simplistic reading of "no living man" as 'no man but woman' suppresses important aspects of Éowyn's role in the text.

Starting from the observation that the paradigm of a stable sex/gender system based on the body is a product of modernity, and assuming that pre-modern societies used different modes of forming identities (modes that are not necessarily bound to anatomy), we may read Éowyn's transformation as an act surpassing simple pragmatic deception. In having her put on armour and take up arms, the text in fact turns Éowyn into a man.

The assumption that we are still faced with a binary gender model in *The Lord of the Rings* is underscored by the observation that the Witch-king is not vanquished by persons that are unequivocally male or female, but by the fact that the ambiguity of the utterance "man" is left unresolved as no clear sex can be attributed to it. It is evident that it is the very hybridity of the character Éowyn/Dernhelm, i.e. an identity with fuzzy sex/gender boundaries, that allows the prophecy "No living man may hinder me" to be fulfilled. Had Éowyn's story ended with her victory over the Witch-king, her character could indeed work as a counter model to modern constructions of gender. However, next comes the scene in the Houses of Healing, where the 'woman' Éowyn is

constructed as exclusively feminine so that she may enter a marriage that may be read as a patriarchal tool of control. Even though we can trace discursive breaks within the disparate character of Éowyn and thus infer different models for the construction of identities, the text never manages to actually transcend the gender stereotypes of its time.

On Covenants with and without the Sword
Impressions of ideal political constitutions in Middle-earth as a study in the political convictions of J.R.R. Tolkien

Frank Weinreich

Recently, papers and books studying Tolkien's fictional work tend to pay growing attention to theological, social, and political topics in Middle-earth. This article contributes to this line of interest in analysing the political structures of the Shire and Gondor in order to take a close look at how political organisations are portrayed in Middle-earth. Since the construction of the political organisation of the Shire and Gondor are connected to explicit evaluation of the described systems, this study also allows, though in a careful and restricted way, to reconstruct basic political convictions held by Tolkien.

The Shire and Gondor show totally different, even antagonistic, political constitutions, the first being some kind of near anarchistic democracy while the letter has been definitely built as an absolute monarchy. In the words of the political philosopher Thomas Hobbes, Gondor is a state ruled by the might of the sword (in the hands of the rightful king), while the Shire works as a covenant of the people without any need of the sword as the securing power within social and political life.

The Shire, which in Tolkien's own words "had hardly any government" (LotR I, 28), shows some kind of basic democracy which indeed can be sufficient for small rural communities, just like the example of the US-American ward system from the late 18th to the 19th century has proven to be feasible even in the real world. Though the Shire is a utopian ideal, its political situation reminds us of the elementary republic proposed by Thomas Jefferson, showing a non-utopian relation to the real world.

Gondor instead relies on a hereditary monarchy which is fitted out with non-restricted power. Such an approach can work out best for all citizens if there is a just and committed ruler like Aragorn turns out to be. Nevertheless, in the fate of Númenor in the Second and of Gondor and Arnor in the Third Age Tolkien seems to install a well-deserved warning that in reality a country

cannot count on having the kind of 'superhumanly good' monarch that Aragorn is, because both the fall of Númenor and the decline of Gondor after the senseless death of its last king come to pass through fatal decisions of their absolute rulers.

Tolkien shows fondness for both the political systems of the Shire and of Gondor. However, the, in contrast to his predecessors, extraordinary Aragorn shows that the author was well aware of the dangers of absolute monarchies. This observation receives backup through the leading topic of *The Lord of the Rings*: absolute power, embodied in the One Ring, corrupts absolutely. The Shire is instead relatively stable, even against Sharkey's intrusions, which may be a testimony of Tolkien's belief in the value of small democratic communities. This would be a rather modern thesis, one that is mirrored in recent discussions of political theory.

I am the Song: Songs, Poetry and Music in J.R.R. Tolkien's Middle-earth Mythology

Julian Eilmann

Confronted with the beauty of the Elven realm of Lothlórien, the simple Hobbit gardener Sam Gamgee finds an astonishing poetic metaphor for the impact that the overwhelming elvish art has on all sensitive mortals: "I thought that Elves were all for moon and stars: but this is more elvish than anything I ever heard tell of. I feel as if I was inside a song, if you take my meaning" (LotR 342).

This essay explicates that Sam's impression of the elvish enchantment is of central importance for an understanding of Tolkien's literary mythology: The feeling of being an element of song corresponds to the cosmic reality of the fictional world. By doing a precise analysis of the mythological background of Tolkien's world, the article clarifies that poetry and song are not only an indispensable part of the cultural communication in Middle-earth, but also allow Tolkien's beings to have a transcendent experience.

The ability of characters like Tom Bombadil, Goldberry, or the Elves to evoke living images and ideas in the recipient's mind may be further understood by taking into account Tolkien's definition of imagination in his essay *On Fairy-Stories*. The "power of Faerie" (FS 133) to enchant an audience through art functions as a text-inherent equivalent to Tolkien's poetologic concept of sub-creation. Furthermore, an excursus shows that music and song are not only capable of producing visions in the listener's mind, but also to influence and change reality verbatim – and in this way, work as magic.

Next comes a comprehensive interpretation of Frodo's music-dream in Rivendell (LotR 227) that examines how the listener's aesthetic pleasure from a musical performance is linked with a dream-like experience of boundlessness that culminates in the ecstatic vision of the true poetic structure of the cosmos. The scene's final metaphor of "a dream of music that turned into runnig water" (ibid) functions as a subtle but essential reference to the cosmic order of Tolkien's world as described in the *Silmarillion*. One of the most remarkable and most beautiful ideas of Tolkien's mythology is the musical creation of the world. Not only is the cosmos a manifestation of the divine melody, but the song of creation can be heard as an echo in the element of water. The essay follows up on this analogy of water and music in the Middle-earth mythology and uses Tuor's confrontation with the sea (UT 24f) to explicate how the Children of Ilúvatar may experience a brief state of joyful unity that overcomes the existential separation of the mortal subject. Inspired by the divine melody, the sea-enthusiasts get the urge to transform the formerly felt harmony into art – in particular, into music. The longing for the sea and the ultimate death in the water of those who cannot forget the echo of the divine music are strong images that Tolkien uses as symbols of the desire of the subject to realize the formerly experienced transcendent unification.

The analysis of Tolkien's water-imagery is combined with references to the poetic and philosophical tradition of German Romanticism, which makes it possible to give a final and illuminating interpretation of Frodo's ecstatic music-dream: In moments of poetic enchantment, the musical structure of the cosmos may be intuitively grasped. Art reveals the true nature of creation.

The Holy and the Other

Martin Hopp

The contrast between Tolkien's intense personal religiosity and the absence of religion in the *Lord of the Rings* has often been noted. This study argues that a completely different picture emerges once the focus of attention is shifted from religious practice to religious experience. Taking Rudolf Otto's *Idea of the Holy* as a starting point, we see that the reactions towards the Elves fulfil every criterion of the numinous as described by Otto: they induce simultaneously fear and fascination, are regarded as a superior value in themselves and have a motivating, energizing effect on those who meet them, most notably Sam. This experience is furthermore ineffable – a point Tolkien stresses repeatedly. The hostility of many men towards the elves can also be explained either as the

demonic awe of the numinous or the "ambivalence of the sacred", whereby a sacred object can also be regarded as threatening or impure. All this happens despite the fact that even elf-friendly people are aware that the time of the elves is over and that their power is a far cry from that of gods. The importance of power for the numinous experience is thus dramatically diminished.

Within the elvish realm, another kind of religious experience takes place. The description of Cerin Amroth through Frodo's eyes bears a striking resemblance to so-called neo-mystical experiences: a kind of mystic union that is not directed towards God but to the world, and in which the separation between subject and object is overcome. This condition is also characteristic of the elvish relation to the world with its intense interest in and enjoyment of the otherness of things and beings: as ends in themselves and not as means to other ends. Also, the clear knowledge of their transience does not diminish, but instead strengthens, the bond between the elves and their environment. For the neo-mystical experience, power becomes completely unimportant.

The religious dimension of Lórien also becomes apparent in its regenerating time that equals "sacred time" as described by Mircea Eliade. But how can this intense linkage to worldly things and Tolkien's Christianity be reconciled? Ever since St. Augustine, the Christian answer to this has been that these worldly things must be used to further the knowledge of and love for god, but not be enjoyed as ends in themselves, and Tolkien expresses comparable thoughts in letters and in *Leaf by Niggle*.

But there are also traces of the opposite position, especially in *Smith of Wootton Major*. Here we find the strongest descriptions of numinous experiences in Tolkien's entire work, effected not only by elves but the world of Faerie as a whole. In Tolkien's accompanying essay, neo-mystical and numinous experiences fuse into a new relation to the Other that no longer relies on its spiritual or material usefulness. In this, there are some parallels between Tolkien and the thoughts of Adorno as well as the later Heidegger which suggest that Tolkien's "religion beyond power" should be seen firmly in a 20th century context.

Tolkien's Theology of Death

Thomas Fornet-Ponse

The subject of death and immortality can be regarded as one of the major subjects of *The Lord of the Rings* and other writings by Tolkien. Taking into account biographical facts, this is not surprising. The article deals mainly with Tolkien's concept of death in his scholarly and fictional writings.

In his non-fictional writings, Tolkien pictures immortality as a burden, thus expressing a positive meaning of death. This aspect plays an important part in his mythology, where he illustrates the positive meaning of death in the form of the elvish perception of death as a divine gift. By combining this view with the Assumption of Mary, Tolkien tries to unite the positive meaning of death as a gift with the negative meaning of death as a punishment for sin (cf. L 286). Furthermore, he regards death not only as an essential part of human life, but as necessary for the fulfilment of human desire. By death "alone can what you seek in your earthly relationships (love, faithfulness, joy) be maintained, or take on that complexion of reality, of eternal endurance, which every man's heart desires." (L 53f)

An analysis of his "'purgatorial' story *Leaf by Niggle*" (L 195) shows important elements of a theology of death because death is necessary for enjoying what you have begun and desired on Earth: it is combined with a purification of Man. Death is unavoidable and therefore it is necessary to prepare for it.

Dealing with death in Middle-earth, the elvish view of the Death of Elves and Men is fundamental for the *Quenta Silmarillion* and regards the Death of Men as a gift of Eru because Men are not bound to the world, but free from it. Elves and even Valar and Maiar are bound to the world and will last as long as it lasts; they are 'immortal' and experience this as a burden. Tolkien wrote in a draft letter: "Of course, in fact exterior to my story, Elves and Men are just different aspects of the Humane, and represent the problem of Death as seen by a finite but willing and self-conscious person" (L 236). Men's fear of death is explained by the malice of Melkor (S 36).

The different views of death of Elves and Men and the consequences of the unitiy of 'hröa' and 'fëa' (similar to body and soul) for death and immortality are discussed in the *Athrabeth Finrod ah Andreth* and Tolkien's commentary on this debate. Andreth expresses the human fear of death and refers to the *Tale of Adanel* as a human legend of the Fall that explains the human mortality considering the human conviction that Men were originally immortal. Furthermore, she mentions the 'Old Hope' of Men, that Eru will enter the world to overcome evil. Finrod expresses his hope that "by the Second Children we might have been delivered from death" (MR 319).

The characteristics of a Tolkienian theology of death drawn from Tolkien's letters, scholarly articles, and fictional writing show some important analogies to Karl Rahner's theology of death. Both regard death as a part of human life and the necessary beginning of its fulfilment. Without death, life would not be definite. Finiteness is affirmed finiteness and death as the end of earthly life, combined with a purification, can therefore be understood in a positive sense as the condition of the possibility of fulfilment. Therefore, it is not necessary to fear death, but hope is possible.

The Encounter with the 'Other'
in J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*

Petra Zimmermann

In Tolkien's novel *The Lord of the Rings*, the journey through foreign countries undertaken by the Fellowship of the Ring brings about contacts with representatives of other peoples and cultures. In these situations, a pattern in the characters' reactions to these experiences can be observed: The first reaction, amazement in view of the existence of the 'Other', is followed by efforts to classify the unknown and to newly orientate oneself.

The attempt at classification initially refers to ethnic affiliation, but a closer look reveals its fundamental objective of forming ethic jugdements. For the protagonists, a clear distinction between 'the good side' and 'the bad side' is of vital importance. Ethic classifications are often made on the basis of prejudices (i.e. preconceived jugdements not grounded in one's own experience). Sam Gamgee is an example of this approach towards the 'other'. This attitude, however, is juxtaposed by authorities in the novel (the narrator, Gandalf) who reject this way of classification. Instead, the emphasis is placed on the perception of the sound of language and voice as criteria for moral judgements.

Acoustic impressions often precede visual perception when strangers are introduced into the narrative, indicating the importance Tolkien places on listening rather than seeing. His academic background as a linguist plays an important part in the novel's concept of linguistic aesthetics, which is based on the differentiation between beautiful and hideous languages and the moral implications inherent in this distinction. The beautiful sound of the Elves' languages and voices, for instance, does not only provide a basis for aesthetic jugdements, but also for ethic classifications by equating beauty with goodness. In addition, the beautiful sound has the function of overcoming even deeply rooted resentment – one's own beautiful language spoken by a stranger bridges the gap between two cultures.

On the other hand, the hideous sound of the Orcs' voices and of the languages they use increases an already existing distance – denoting, however, only one component within a complex pattern that pictures the Orcs as barbarians. The underlying national stereotype (originating from the ancient Greek concept of labelling all non-Greeks as barbarians) also includes the following attributes: lawlessness, monstrous appearance, dirt and stench, and cannibalism. Interestingly, Tolkien allows both 'the good side' and 'the bad side' to express contempt for the other by using the same set of attributes, demonstrating the relativism inherent in such accusations and thereby unmasking the concepts of 'bad' and of the 'Other' as inventions of prejudicial perspectives.

This idea that 'Otherness' is a mere construct is also expounded by the premise of the novel itself: that it is an English translation of a chronicle actually written in the Common Speech. In his 'translation', Tolkien utilizes the concept of 'dynamic equivalence', which replaces foreign notions with equivalent ones that are immediately familiar to the reader. Thus, Tolkien simultaneously constructs the category of 'Otherness' (by skilfully elaborating the fiction of a foreign authorship) and seeks to overcome the cultural distance through his 'translation method'.

The Ethic or Ethics of Tolkien

Gregor Raddatz

In that article, biographical data, academic papers, letters, and stories of the Oxford professor are examined with the purpose of finding indications as to his moral values and to establish a connection between his life and his academic and literary work. In order to do so we have to, among other ways, journey into Tolkien's Middle-earth to follow not only one track but four of them, those of the characters of Frodo, Sam, Faramir, and Galadriel, under the headings of love of the enemy, friendship, courage, and sub-creation.

The essential question is whether all these tracks finally lead to a single compact ethic or instead to multiple, independent ethics in Tolkien's world. In the end, the answer provided points in the direction of there being many ethics.

Maybe the characters of Frodo, Sam, Faramir, and Galadriel do not act according to their corresponding moral principles at every time and in every place, but instead decide to do so at crucial moments.

Frodo practices love of the enemy to Gollum. On the way to Mount Doom, Sam proves himself as a true friend when trouble arises. Faramir keeps a critical link to the virtues of courage even when the Ring is close. Galadriel succeeds in resisting the temptation of the Ring and in letting go of her sub-creation, Lórien. They are all (morally) good in their own way.

There is a difference in loving even one's enemies or exclusively loving one's friends, and another difference between fighting for political ideals with sword and bow and enriching God's creation by pacifistic sub-creation. All these characters contribute to the victory over evil in their own, specific way. Frodo's love of the enemy has as much a share in the destruction of Sauron as Sam's friendship, Faramir's fighting courage and Galadriel's sub-creations (Lórien, Phial, …) have.

In the world of Middle-earth, the central characters choose differing ethical principles as the highest maxim of their actions. These differing ethical principles either oppose or complement one another, depending on the viewpoint of the observer. They are opposing in the decision of each single character for or against a certain action, and complementing in the final consequences of all their decisions.

Depending on the perspective towards which we are most inclined, we thus find in Tolkien either opposing or corresponding ethics, but not – in this we agree with Johnston (107) – a compact ethical concept.

The findings applying to Tolkien's work also seem to apply to his life. For instance, Carpenter and Shippey indicate several times that the Oxford professor as "a man of extreme contrasts" (Carpenter 151) was constantly trying to reconcile his Catholic beliefs with his fascination for old Nordic heroism and with the way he saw his literary self as sub-creator (151f, 219f, Shippey 351f, 353ff).

"There was an old woman, lived under a hill…" – A Proto-Hobbit uncovered?

Thomas Honegger

Hobbits, though they have allegedly become rare and shy of the Big People, are one of the most widely known of Tolkien's creations. It is by now common knowledge how Tolkien's 'inspired jotting' of what was to become the opening sentence of *The Hobbit* gave birth to Bilbo Baggins and the other halfling protagonists[1]. Tolkien has always convincingly claimed that he did not know where the unknown word 'hobbit' had come from, and it took scholars almost four decades to prove the pre-Tolkien existence of the word.

In 1976, Katherine Brigg pointed to the occurrence of 'hobbit' in the so-called *Denham Tracts*. There, 'hobbits' are mentioned on page 79 of the second volume (published 1895) in a list containing the names of 197 sprites haunting the English countryside[2]. The implications of the existence of such a 'precursor' and other possible sources of inspiration have been discussed in depth by Shippey (*Road* 60-64 and *Author* 1-11), and the connection between hobbits and other (better known) creatures of British folklore (hobs, hobthrusts, robins, roberts) has been explored most recently by Helen Armstrong.

It is no new insight that the hobbits exemplify aspects of 'Englishness' dear to Tolkien. In *The Lord of the Rings*, the homely, peace-loving, down-to-earth and utterly unheroic hobbits are the counterpart to the heroic and warlike Rohirrim, who represent yet another aspect of 'Englishness'.

Ever since the publication of *The Hobbit*, the concept of 'hobbit' has fascinated a wide audience and, in spite of the 'heroic' exploits of some hobbit-protagonists, 'hobbit' has come to stand for comfort, contentedness, peace, a fondness for growing things and for a well ordered society.

The ultimate roots for these elements must be sought in rural English society, as has been convincingly shown by critics such as Shippey, Carpenter or Curry.

Yet there may also exist a more concrete starting point: a drawing by Leslie Brooke illustrating one of the nursery rhymes in Andrew Lang's *The Nursery Rhyme Book*. On page 155, we find the following rhyme:

"There was an old woman, / Lived under a hill, / And if she's not gone / She lives there still."

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1 See *Annotated Hobbit* 8-9; *Biography* 181 and *Letters* 215 and 219

2 See *Annotated Hobbit* 9 for an easily accessible photographic reproducion of the relevant passage.

The illustration shows a benign looking plump woman seated next to an entrance resembling a hobbit hole, with a broad smile on her face. Tolkien's published writings make no direct reference to *The Nursery Rhyme Book* or to this particular drawing. Yet circumstantial evidence would seem to indicate the likelihood of a link.

First, Tolkien had a keen interest in Andrew Lang's books. He read the *Red Fairy Book* as a boy (*Biography* 30) and was probably familiar with Lang's other books, which were, some years later, found on his own children's bookshelves (*Biography* 43). His academic interest in Lang's writings is made evident by his essay *On Fairy-Stories*, which was originally given as the Lang Lecture at the University of St Andrews in 1939.

Second, the date of publication, 1897, makes it very likely that Tolkien (born 1892) would have come across *The Nursery Rhyme Book* at some time or other.

Third, the book also contains those nursery rhymes that provided the inspiration for Tolkien's 'asterisk' poems *The Man in the Moon Came down too soon* and *The Cat and the Fiddle*.

And last, Brooke's drawing of the old woman who lived under the hill embodies, to my mind, all that makes up a hobbit – one need merely add a pipe and the 'morning letters' – and we would have Bilbo Baggins taking the air at Bag End.

Brooke's drawing may have played a role similar to that of the postcard depicting 'Der Berggeist' ('The Mountain-Spirit', a painting by Josef Madlener),[3] to which Tolkien added the note "Origin of Gandalf" (*Biography* 59). Unfortunately, Tolkien left us no picture of the old woman under the hill with a note saying "Origin of Bilbo".

Thus my arguments remain unproven and I must leave the final judgment to the discretion of the reader.

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3   See the comprehensive discussion of the date and origin of the postcard in *Annotated Hobbit* 36-39, note 14.

THERE was an old woman
    Lived under a hill,
And if she's not gone
    She lives there still.

155
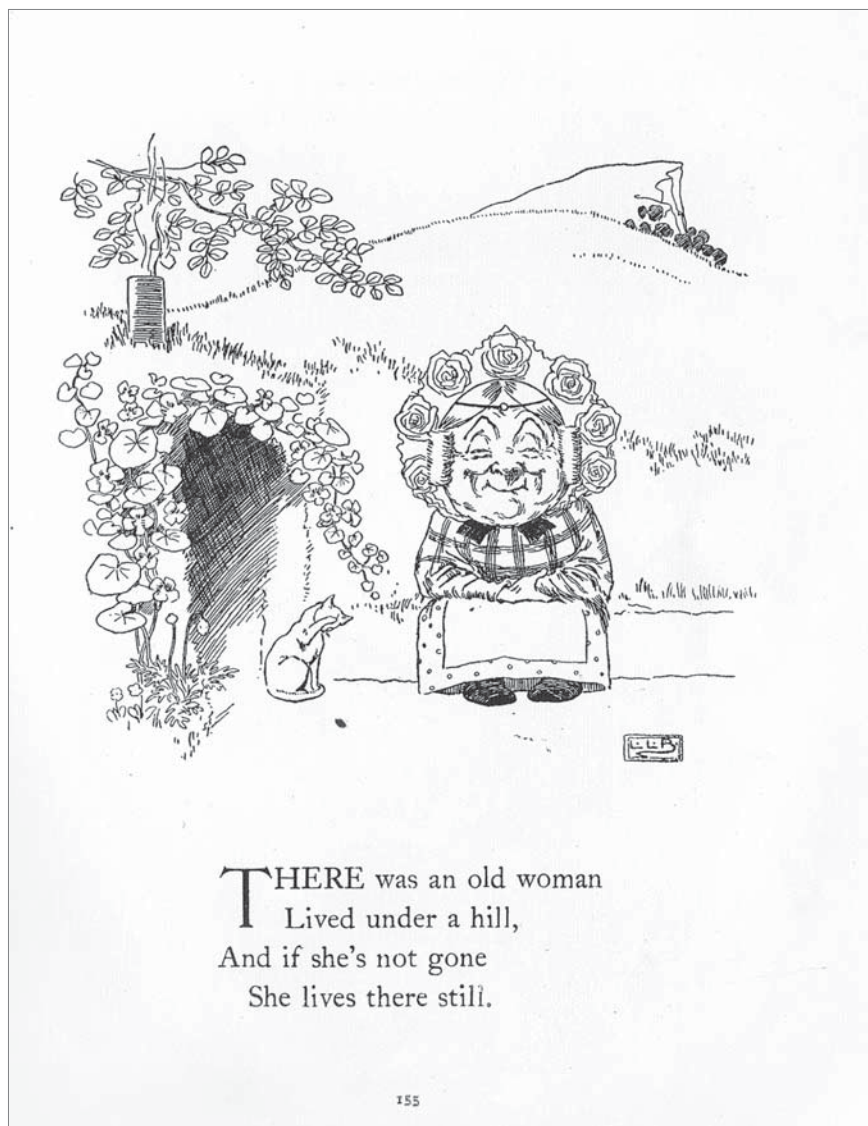
Illustration by Leslie Brooke to page 155 of Andrew Lang's *The Nursery Rhyme Book*.

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A Note on Shelob

Rainer Nagel (Mainz)

Shelob is placed as an obstacle in the path of Frodo and Sam at a critical stage in their journey. Tolkien provides potential translators with the following:

> "Though it sounds (I think) a suitable name for the Spider, in some foreign (orkish) tongue, it is actually composed of *she* and *lob* (a dialectal English word meaning 'spider'; see Bilbo's song in chapter VIII of *The Hobbit*). The Dutch version retains *Shelob*, but the Swedish has the rather feeble *Honmonstret*." (173)

While this "etymology" does make sense both within the story and without, etymology alone does not suffice for some Tolkien critics:

> "Although we could not call the adventures with the Balrog and with Shelob dull, they both seem to fail, not in execution but in conception. Tolkien has invented these monsters rather than created from the raw material of folklore as he did with his other creatures." (Gasque 157)

A thorough analysis of the etymological as well as folkloristic roots of "Balrog" has already been given (Lewis/Currie 55-7). A similar assessment shall now be undertaken for "Shelob", centering on the origin of *lob* and the use of this word in Old English and Middle English literature.

As regards *lob(be)*, the *Oxford English Dictionary* has this to say:

> † **lob**, *n.[1] Obs*
> [OE *lobbe* wk. Fem.; cf. *Loppe*, LOP n.]
> A spider.
> **c1000** *Lamb.* Ps. Lxxxix. 10 (Bosw.) Ure gær swa swa lobbe [Vulg *sicut aranea*] oððe rynge beoþ asmeade.
> **a1325** *Prose Psalter* xxxviii. 15 þou madest his soule to stumblen as a lob [Vulg. *sicut araneam*].
> Ibid. lxxxix. 10 Our yeres shal þenchen as þe lob.

The first entry, taken from the *Lambeth Palace Psalter*, translates as: "Our years like the spider or the rings be considered" (in itself based on the Latin *anni nostri*

sicut aranea mediabuntur; the meaning is that the significance of human life in the eyes of God is about the same as that of a spider's web to humans, with the concept of the "rings" absent from the Latin psalter). The second and third examples are taken from a Middle English psalter, translating as "You made his soul stumble like a spider" and "Our years shall deem as like the spider".

Bosworth/Toller, in the entry "**lobbe** a spider", list the psalter quote as given above and add an additional citation from the *Law of the Penitent*: "Místlíce þréala gebynaþ for synnan bendas oþþe dyntas carcernþýstra lobban" ("various punishments are proper for sins, bonds or blows, prison darkness, spiders") (644).

There are no extant Old English entries for lobbe being used outside of religious texts. In those (rare) cases where spiders do appear in other contexts (such as in medicinal texts), usually the compound $\bar{a}t(t)or$-*coppe* "poison-cup" is used – a word we know fairly well from *The Hobbit* ("Quite apart from the stones no spider has ever liked being called Attercop […]", Anderson 211f). The word was still used as recently as 1825, in a glossary entry in John Brockett's *Glossary of North Country Words* (quoted from the 12 December entry of Kacirk):

> "A spider's web; [from] *atter*, poison, and *coppe*, a cup. Receiving its denomination, according to Dr. Jamieson, partly from its form and partly from its character – a cup of venom. The word is occasionally used to denote the spider itself, and a female of a virulent or malignant disposition is sometimes degraded with the appellation."

This is pretty much the etymology given in the *Oxford English Dictionary*: "OE. *attorcoppa*, f. *átor*, *attor*, poison + *coppa*, deriv. of cop top, summit, round head, or *copp* cup, vessel; in reference to the supposed venomous properties of spiders. Cf. also Du. *spinne-cop* 'spider,' and cob-web, formerly *cop-webbe*; whence it appears probable that the simple *coppa* was itself = 'spider.'" The original source for this word is in a charm against spider-bite, used in this sense for instance in Cockayne: "wið áttorcoppan bíte" = "against a spider's bite" (92). It does make sense for Tolkien to use the more secular word for "spider" in *The Hobbit*, since there is not really any moral connotation or deeper significance to Bilbo's encounter with the spiders.

Returning to *lobbe*, there is finally Holthausen, shedding some insight into the etymological vagaries of the word:

> **Lobbe** f. »Spinne«, ne. *Lob*, mnd. *Lobbe*, *lubbe* »Hand-, Halskrause;
> Hängelippe, großer Hund, Stockfisch«, alem. *Loppen* »wackeln«;
> ais. *Lubba* »dicker Dorsch«, schwed. ~ »dickes Weib«, *lubbig*
> »dick«; s. *loppe*
> …
> **loppe** f. »Spinne, Seidenraupe«, me. ~, s. *lobbe* (205f)

The distinction between *lobbe* and *loppe* is vague in Old English, and it is often hard to distinguish the meaning of "fly" from that of "spider". What is more, there are compounds like *ātor-loppe*, where it is rather hard to decide whether this is actually a *lobbe* compound or rather a misspelling of a *coppe* form.

Kurath/Kahn no longer list *lobbe* as a Middle English entry, but give an additional seven citations under their *loppe* heading. Three of these are taken from Geoffrey Chaucer's *Treatise on the Astrolabe* (c. 1393, a Late Middle English text on astronomy), being used for the first time in a non-religious connotation. The "latest" examples are marked "a1500" and taken from a rather late copy of *John Mandeville's Travels*, probably the most popular Middle English travelogue.

The late 15th century sees *loppe* being slowly replaced by *spider*, first recorded in English in *Ayenbite of Inwit* (1340), also in a religious connotation. *Spider* quickly replaces *lop(pe)*, probably due to the fact that there is the additional meaning of *lop*, going back to the Scandinavian *loppa* and indicating a type of fly. This instance of homophony is solved by the "newer" *spider* replacing *lop* to avoid confusion. We then lose sight of *lob(be)/lop(pe)* rather quickly. Shipley lists the word as having had a "lifespan" of about "9th to 14th century" – with Chaucer being the last to use it (which, as shown above, is not correct) (cf. 392). There is, however, one entry in Coles: "*Loppe*, o. a spider, or rather (as in *Lincolnshire*) a flea".

The abbreviation "o." here stands for "old word" in the same sense that the *Oxford English Dictionary* uses obsolete. Coles' book at least points to the fact that both meanings were still used in the second half of the 17th century.

The (rather extensive) subtitle of Coles' book (E*xplaining The difficult Terms that are used in Divinity, Husbandry, Physick, Phylosophy, Law, Navigation, Mathematicks, and other Arts and Sciences. Containing Many Thousands of Hard Words (and proper names of Places) more than are in any other English Dictionary or Expositor. Together with The Etymological Derivation of them from their proper Fountains, whether Hebrew, Greek, Latin, French, or any other Language. In a Method more comprehensive, than any that is extant*) already classifies his work as an early dictionary of English for Special Purposes, demonstrating

how words that are slowly fading out of general language use might still find niches in more restricted, and specialized, fields of language.

In this case, special languages seem to have become the final resting place for *lop* in its meaning of "spider".

To sum up: Until rather late in Middle English, *lob(be)/lop(pe)* refers to the spider in a religious sense/context, associated with the more negative qualities spiders have in mediaeval bestiaries.

For instance, the Middle English *Physiologus* (c. 1250) associates the spider (called *spinnere* here) with betrayal and deception, inflicting pain while doing so and centering on the spider as a murderer (see Armistead 72-6). Chance also mentions the mediaeval sin motif in connection with Shelob, but does not center on what the *Physiologus* has to say about spiders, but rather links Shelob to "perversion of the body" (163) in general, specifically citing gluttony, sloth, and lechery.

However, since none of these have any real bearing on the spider's function in the narrative and the evidence is somewhat circumstantial, this might be going a step to far in elevating *The Lord of the Rings* into a morality play.

Combined with the dangers to the soul hinted at in the psalter texts, it seems obvious that the spider is a symbol of religious danger, especially given the fact that bestiaries are not manuals of zoology, but rather religious maxims using animals to symbolize attributes that are beneficial or detrimental to living a devout Christian life. Thus, the spider embodies several of the pitfalls for the unwary.

In *The Lord of the Rings*, Shelob enters the story at exactly this point. The heroes are led into a trap and (not metaphorically, but rather physically) waylaid and hindered in their quest.

Given the fact that Tolkien was not only fully aware of the mediaeval connotations associated with spiders, but also himself a highly religious man, the choice of spider with a clearly religiously-defined name element tells the informed reader as much about the function of this particular part of the narrative as the story itself does, Gasque and other critics notwithstanding.

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