



Anor Issue 45, Lent 2015

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Editor's Note

Mae govannen, mellyn nín! Welcome, my friends, to Issue 45 of the Cambridge Tolkien Society's *Anor!* We have another packed issue for you to enjoy, and once again I have been forced to postpone some material until *Anor* 46!

Inside you'll find articles on translating *Oxford* and *Cambridge* into Elvish, the fourth part of *Dwarven Economy and Society*, the industrialization of the Shire (from a contributor in Spain!), Eru and God, a review of the final *Hobbit* film, speculations on Sauron's nuclear weapons programme, and ideas for the Middle-earth expanded film universe!

We have also got poems and songs towards the end, as well as another letter to Daeron. Please keep them coming!

My thanks go to our contributors: James Baillie, Samuel Cook, Alfonso Diaz and Jamie Douglas, and once again to Heather Douglas for the front cover. Daeron looks forward to receiving submissions for *Anor* 46!

Happy reading!

Jamie Douglas, Daeron (Editor of *Anor*)
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Contents

<i>Oxford and Cambridge in Elvish</i>	5
<i>Jamie Douglas</i>	
Dwarven Economy and Society IV: The Hold-State	9
<i>James Baillie</i>	
The Industrialization of the Shire	16
<i>Alfonso Diaz</i>	
Eru: Just How Omni Is He? Or, Eru v God: The Strife in the Afterlife	19
<i>Samuel Cook</i>	
TH: TBOTFA (The Hobbit: The Big Overdone Tedious Fighting Affair)	24
A Review and a Suggestion for Where Next	
<i>Samuel Cook</i>	
Mûmak Orcmahdinejad: Sauron's Nuclear Weapons Programme	30
<i>Samuel Cook</i>	
The Middle-earth Expanded Film Universe	33
<i>Samuel Cook & James Baillie</i>	
Two Wanderers	36
<i>James Baillie</i>	
Hey There Lord Sauron	36
<i>James Baillie</i>	
Eye of Lord Sauron	38
<i>Samuel Cook</i>	
The Final Durin	38
<i>Samuel Cook</i>	
Letters to Daeron	39

Oxford and Cambridge in Elvish

Jamie Douglas

Introduction

There are several symmetries and asymmetries between the two great English university cities of Oxford and Cambridge. The inspiration for this article comes from one particular linguistic asymmetry, namely Oxford has an Elvish name whilst Cambridge does not. The article is divided into two parts. In the first part, I will review Tolkien's translation(s) of *Oxford* into Elvish. It will be seen that Tolkien's Elvish translations are essentially calques. On this basis, the second part will be devoted to developing some candidate calques for *Cambridge* in Elvish.

Part 1: Oxford

Oxford has a number of Elvish names. The earliest attested names are *Taruithorn* (also the name of the Oxford Tolkien Society) and *Taruktarna*, which date from around 1916-1920 (see *The Book of Lost Tales II*). We are told that these two names, in languages that would later essentially become Sindarin and Quenya respectively, are cognates, i.e. words which share a common ancestor.

These names appear to be calques. A *calque* refers to a loan translation in which the internal structure of a borrowed word or phrase is preserved but its morphemes¹ are replaced by those of the native language. In other words, *Taruithorn* and *Taruktarna* more or less literally translate to *ox(en)+ford*. Let's take *Taruktarna* first. Although Tolkien's conception of his Elvish languages changed throughout his lifetime, the roots into which *Taruktarna* can be decomposed bear a striking resemblance to those which Tolkien seems to have later settled on (to the extent that this ever happened!).² The morphological decomposition is plausibly as follows:

Taruktarna = *taruk* + *tar(+)**na*

Taruk seems to be related to the root $\sqrt{\text{TARÁK}}$ 'animal horn' (cf. Sindarin *tarag* 'horn, steep mountain peak'). At this early stage, Tolkien gives the Quenya *taruku-* and Sindarin *tarog*, both meaning 'ox', and these are evidently derived from the word for 'horn', as can be seen by comparing Quenya *tarukka* 'horned', and *tarukko*, *tarunko* 'bull' (*The Book of Lost Tales II*, p. 347). It thus seems that the root $\sqrt{\text{TARÁK}}$ actually meant 'horned animal, ox, bull' in 1916-1920 but later came to mean 'animal horn' in Tolkien's mind.

¹ A *morpheme* is the smallest meaningful unit of a language. It is not synonymous with *word*, but represents a more technical concept. For example, *dog* and *dogs* are both 'words' in English, but *dog* contains one morpheme, namely DOG 'dog', whilst *dogs* contains two, namely DOG-S 'dog-plural'.

² Unless otherwise specified, the roots, lexicon and translations are from Salo, D. (2004). *A Gateway to Sindarin*. Utah: University of Utah Press.

Tar is related to the roots $\sqrt{\text{THAR}}$ and $\sqrt{\text{Á-THAR}}$ meaning ‘beyond, across’ and ‘beyond’ respectively (for $\sqrt{\text{THAR}}$, cf. Sindarin *thar-* as in *Thargelion* ‘(land which is) beyond Gelion’ and *Tharbad* ‘crossway’; for $\sqrt{\text{Á-THAR}}$, cf. Sindarin *athar/athra* (adverb or preposition) ‘across, beyond, *athra-* (verb) ‘to cross’, *athrad* (noun/gerund) ‘ford, (river-)crossing, *athrabeth* (noun) ‘debate (lit. cross-talk)’).

Na seems to be related to the (reconstructed) suffix *-na*, which served to mark past participles and also passive nominalisations (cf. Sindarin *garn* ‘property (lit. thing possessed)’ and *narn* ‘tale (lit. thing told)’). Combining *tar* and *-na* as *tarna* would thus result in the meaning of ‘thing crossed’, i.e. a crossing, a passage or (by extension) a ford.

Taruktarna thus literally means something like ‘horned animal crossing, horned animal ford’ or simply ‘ox(en) ford, ox(en) crossing’. Given that *Taruithorn* is cognate with *Taruktarna*, *Taruithorn* would also have the same meaning.³

As pointed out above, *Taruktarna* and *Taruithorn* date from around 1916-1920. However, in two letters from 1972 (*The Letters of J.R.R. Tolkien*, no. 342 and no. 345), Tolkien states that the Elvish word for *bull* is *undo* (*-und* being a possible suffix for bull-names).⁴ Furthermore, Tolkien translated the 1968 BBC documentary title *Tolkien in Oxford* into Quenya as *Arcastar Mondósaressë* (lit. Tolkien Oxford-LOCATIVE).⁵ We can morphologically decompose *Mondósaressë* as follows:⁶

Mondósaressë = *undo* + *asarë* + *-së*

undo is clearly related to *undo*, so we can assume it means ‘bull’. *Asarë* is related to the root $\sqrt{\text{Á-THAR}}$ discussed above (TH in roots probably represents an aspirate /t^h/, which became /s/ in Quenya). Finally, *-së* is the locative case suffix. We can also see that /o+a/ results in long *ó* /o:/. Therefore, the translation for *Oxford* in an unmarked case would be *Mondósarë*. This, too, is a calque, but crucially the root used to translate ‘ox’ is different in 1972 from what it was in 1916-1920. Given that this is the Quenya form, we can hypothesise that its Sindarin cognate would have been *Mundathrad*.

To summarise, Tolkien translated *Oxford* by creating a Quenya or Sindarin calque, even if the particular roots that he used to translate the English changed during his lifetime.

³ Tolkien also gives the forms *Taruithron* and older *Taruitharn* (*The Book of Lost Tales II*, p. 347).

⁴ Tolkien suggests *Aramund* ‘kingly bull’, *Tarmund* ‘noble bull’, *Rasmund* ‘horned bull’, and *Turcomund* ‘chief of bulls’ (*The Letters of J.R.R. Tolkien*, no. 345).

⁵ <http://tolkiengateway.net/wiki/Arcastar>

⁶ The analysis is taken from: <https://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/lambengolmor/conversations/topics/932>. There is also an analysis of the translation of *Tolkien* as *Arcastar*.

Part 2: Cambridge

As far as I know, Tolkien did not create any Elvish name for Cambridge. In this section, I will propose some candidates for an Elvish translation of *Cambridge*. Given that Tolkien deemed it appropriate to use a calque for *Oxford*, I feel I am justified in doing the same for *Cambridge*.

In order to form a calque, we must first know what *Cambridge* actually means. Transparently, we are dealing with the name of the River Cam and the familiar noun *bridge*. If we wanted to, we could stop here. The Sindarin for *bridge* is *iant* (or *ianu*) (cf. *Baranduiniant* ‘Brandywine Bridge’, *iant laur* ‘Old Bridge’ and *eilian* ‘rainbow (lit. sky-bridge)’, and the Quenya is *yanta* (or *yanwë*) (both are cognate, derived from the Eldarin root √JAT ‘join’)). We could imagine that *Cam* would be borrowed wholesale into Sindarin resulting in *Camiant*.⁷ *Cam*, however, would not be a phonologically well-formed word in Quenya given that Quenya words did not end in *-m*.⁸ We may suppose that Quenya would have rendered *Cam* as something like *Cama*, resulting in the calque *Camayanta*.

However, we can go further and delve into the origins of the name *Cam*. According to the Online Etymological Dictionary,⁹ *Cambridge* is derived from Old English *Grontabricc* ‘Granta bridge, i.e. bridge on the River Granta’.¹⁰ The original meaning of the Celtic river name *Granta* is obscure, and the change to *Cante-* and later *Cam-* was a result of Norman influence.¹¹ However, *Cam* also happened to be a legitimate Celtic river name, meaning ‘crooked’. *Cam* thus represents a back formation. I will therefore take *Cam* to mean ‘crooked, bent’.

How are we to translate ‘crooked, bent’ into Elvish? I have found two (possibly four) roots that seem to provide reasonable candidates: √S-LOK and √KUH (and maybe √KWIG and √SKWAR (the latter from *The Lost Road*)).

The root √S-LOK means ‘bend, loop’ (cf. Sindarin *lhûg* ‘dragon, snake, serpent’, *amlug* ‘dragon’, *limlug* ‘fish-dragon, sea serpent’, and Quenya *lókë* ‘dragon’).¹² We are thus dealing with *bend* or *loop* as in the coils of a serpent. It does not seem unreasonable that this could be metaphorically extended to the bends or meanderings of a river.

⁷ The graph *c* in Quenya and Sindarin represents the voiceless velar plosive /k/, not the voiceless alveolar fricative /s/ (see Appendix E).

⁸ In Appendix E to *The Lord of the Rings*, Tolkien writes that *calma* ‘lamp’ could be written without any overt symbol for *a* (*a* being very frequent in Quenya), i.e. *calma* would be written *clm*. He comments that *-m* can never be word-final in Quenya, so all Quenya speakers would know that an *a* must follow *m* in the absence of any other vowel symbol.

⁹ <http://www.etymonline.com/>

¹⁰ We could borrow *Granta* into Quenya and Sindarin, resulting in something like *Karanta* and *Grant* (or *Gran(n)*) respectively. This might yield *Karant(a)yanta* and *Grantiant* (or *Graniant*) respectively.

¹¹ Presumably, first /r/ was lost and /g/ > /k/ (devoicing), then /nt/ > /n(n)/ (nasal assimilation), before /nb/ > /mb/ (assimilation of place of articulation, /m/ is a homorganic nasal to /b/).

¹² The digraph *lh* in Sindarin represents the voiceless lateral approximant /l̥/, i.e. a voiceless *l* (see Appendix E).

The root √KUH means ‘bow, bend’ (cf. Sindarin *cû* (noun) ‘bow’, *Cúthalion* ‘having a great/strong bow (Beleg’s epithet)’, *cûn* (adjective) ‘bowed, bow-shaped, bent’, *cúron* ‘crescent moon (lit. bow moon)’, and Quenya *cú* ‘bow, crescent moon’).

There is also another root for *bow* (as in the weapon), namely √KWIG (cf. Quenya *quina* (noun) ‘bow’, *quingatelco* (adjective) ‘bow-legged’, and Sindarin *peng* (noun) ‘bow’ (Eldarin /kw/ became /p/ in Sindarin)).¹³ It is possible that such a root could have had derivatives meaning ‘bow-shaped’, but these are not attested, as far as I know, and would in any case have been in competition with the forms derived from √KUH above. Another option might be √SKWAR ‘crooked’ (cf. Quenya *hwarin* ‘crooked’, *hwarma* ‘crossbar’).

At this point, we are more or less free to choose what the name of the Cam would be in Sindarin and Quenya. If we wanted to capture the adjectival sense of ‘crooked’, Sindarin *cûn* would fit nicely, resulting in *Cûniant*. For Quenya, we could use *quina*, resulting in *Quingayanta*, which itself would perhaps be susceptible to reanalysis as ‘crooked/bow-shaped bridge(d)’. Alternatively we could use the root √S-LOK, resulting in Sindarin *Lhûgiant* or Quenya *lók(e)yanta*, both meaning approximately ‘dragon bridge’ assuming the Cam would be known as the Lhûg or the Lókë. Finally, we could use √SKWAR, resulting in Quenya *Hwarinyanta* (what the Sindarin cognate would be is unclear to me).

Conclusion

I have shown that Tolkien always envisioned the Elvish translations of *Oxford* to be calques: the earliest names, *Taruktarna* and *Taruithorn*, seem to have been replaced by Tolkien with *Mondósarë* in Quenya (I hypothesised the Sindarin replacement equivalent to be *Mundathrad*). Consequently, I proposed a number of candidate calques for the Elvish translation of *Cambridge*: Sindarin *Camiant*, *Cûniant* or *Lhûgiant*, and Quenya *Camayanta*, *Quingayanta*, *Lók(e)yanta* or *Hwarinyanta*. We are now in a position to redress the Elvish name asymmetry identified in the introduction, and I would be keen to hear any reader’s comments on or reactions to the suggestions made here. Of course, there is nothing to say that a calque must be used: I did so for convenience and because that is how Tolkien created his translation(s) of *Oxford*. However, even if desired, the creation of a non-calque Elvish name for *Cambridge* will have to wait for another day.

¹³ The digraph *ng* in Quenya and Sindarin generally represents the *ng* of English *finger*, i.e. /ŋg/. However, in Sindarin, initial and final *ng* represents the velar nasal /ŋ/ only. /ŋ/ also appeared initially in Quenya (see Appendix E).

Dwarven Economy and Society IV: The Hold-State

James Baillie

As I have written previously, the principal and increasingly central political office in Dwarf society in the Third Age was that of the *Uzbad*, the hold-lord. The reason for the importance of this office was, of course, the importance of the hold itself. The dwarf hold was always the key political unit in Dwarf society, in particular as a result of the economic base of Dwarf society, and this essay will attempt to dissect the workings of the individual hold in an admittedly rough manner, skirting over the basic political structures, occupations, and so on. This can be seen as a natural follow-on from the third essay in this series; whereas that dealt with the family and the base of the food economy, this will discuss the monetary economy and wider social structures. In this article I will primarily if not exclusively be discussing the hold-states of the Third Age, and to some extent the Second – the early Dwarf states should be dealt with somewhat separately.

I refer to the hold as a hold-state. It is not strictly speaking a wholly autonomous state, though increasingly through the Third Age the holds are effectively independent entities bonded together by a structure of mutual kin-bonds, oaths, and obligations rather than any formal or constitutional structure. The holds were more comparable to the Greek *polis*, or citizen-state, and the medieval Italian city-state, than a territorial nation-state. In almost every case they consisted of a central urban centre, usually tunnelled into the outside of a mountain (such that in Moria, the classic example, the city was in fact a relatively small area on the east side of the three peaks, overlooking Mirrormere),¹ and a hinterland, which had to contain both some mining resources and some overland terrain for food gathering. The latter point must be stressed here; the food supply basis for Dwarf states was probably mostly overland and based on a mixture of hunting and arable farming.

This state had its own institutions and was functionally wholly independent;² the largest variations between holds were in terms of two factors. The first of these was the quality of their hinterland regions, most specifically whether they were inhabited with a hinterland population who were the primary food producers (as in Dale), or whether they were not (as in Moria after the break-down of the upper Anduin alliance system, or presumably in the Iron Hills). The second was in their mining capacity, with Moria providing a high pull as a result of its *mithril* reserves.

Chieftains and Councils

Within a hold, the hold-lord, either an *Uzbad* or (more rarely) a King, had a wide range of administrative powers. These primarily concerned the outward affairs of the hold – diplomacy and warfare. It seems improbable that most Dwarf holds operated a functional

¹ Wynn Fonstad, "An Atlas of Middle-Earth", p.128-9

² See Dwarven Economy and Society I: The Structures of Power, *Anor* 41

system of regular taxation, given that war was probably a case of mustering individuals and calling upon allies bound by trading ties rather than money. Dwarf lords could probably muster craftspeople in times of peace as well to work for a period on behalf of the hold rather than themselves; this is the most obvious solution to the problem of how such extensive communal building projects were achieved in such a fundamentally individualist society.

Beneath the lord, the chieftains form a somewhat mysterious but probably crucial second social stratum. They were perhaps involved in advising their overlords, and we have mentions that they had a higher tendency to be married than average.³ This led to my suggestion in the previous paper in this series that political power was more likely to rest with those at the centre of families, even if social respect was more strongly bound to profession. The family core, so important to protect in a species with such a low reproductive rate, was the base unit; the *oikos* to the dwarven *polis*, to use the Ancient Greek terms.⁴ A wider family unit would have been a sensible body for other reasons; the larger amount of manpower could have helped with the manual work, administration, and actual trading journeys necessary to turn craft work into both an increased hoard and into food upon the table.

The role of conciliarism in Dwarf society (and indeed in Middle-earth generally) is something that has not been discussed enough. Dwarven councils are discussed even as far back as the First Age, held then at Gundabad.⁵ The point of a council, as opposed to a negotiation, is the ability to make majoritarian or collective decisions – and so we know from early on that the Dwarves did not have a purely absolutist concept of political power. Whether councils existed within the hold is an interesting question. Certainly Glóin speaks in the collective form when discussing the chieftains of Erebor; he certainly does not seem to be someone excluded from the decision-making process entirely.⁶ I would argue that conciliarism fits well into a general pattern of Dwarf individualism; we have a pattern of Dwarves, particularly Dwarven elites, being very much able to act with a great deal of autonomy from their nominal kings (as Dáin with Thráin at Azanulbizar) or even from their hold-lords (Balin's expedition to Moria). On the other hand, it is certainly arguable that the role of the hold-lord may have been such that their voice was the final one; there may have been no formal constitutional role of councils. Nonetheless, the voices of his chieftains in unity would have been something for a leader to ignore at their peril.

³ See a longer discussion of this in my "Dwarven Economy and Society: Food and Family in the Later Holds Period", *Anor* 44

⁴ The *oikos* simply means the house. A comparison here with Aristotle's theories about the extent to which a state is a collection of relationships (rather than simply a collection of politically active individuals) would be very interesting, but must, alas, be left for another time.

⁵ *The Peoples of Middle-earth*, p.301

⁶ *The Lord of the Rings*, p.235

Social Status

This section elaborates on parts of my previous paper, in terms of what created and defined social pre-eminence within a hold-state. It seems clear that some roles in Dwarf society were given far greater pre-eminence than others. My thesis in the previous paper in this series was that agriculture was at the bottom end of a hierarchy of roles and jobs, with minimal social status and perhaps providing for a wide extended family. The whole hold was indeed considered at its most successful if it could minimise agricultural production.⁷ This, however, must be an evolved cultural phenomenon, as it makes very little sense in early Dwarf societies where there was no alternative labour force and where control of high-quality agricultural terraces or areas near a city would surely have been valuable in an early subsistence-based society. Even in early Nogrod and Belegost, who had significant trading relations with nearby states, it seems improbable that weapons trading actually brought in significant food simply due to the lack of settled populations in the direct hinterland of those holds. This nonetheless seems to be a relatively early phenomenon, perhaps linked to the emergence of hoarding behaviour which was more difficult for those not involved in trade.

Higher up the social strata, it seems reasonable to assume rough analogies to human society – status was gained by ability and respect in a craft, and more high value crafts (an armorer or goldsmith) would have had a higher social value. As to precisely which crafts “outranked” others, it is of course hard to get an accurate picture; to some extent it may have been a matter of supply and demand. Social status and political power need not have been always linked; a high status goldsmith who never married may have been the pride of his extended family, but as mentioned above a married chieftain may have been the official representative.

Finally, as well as (and linked to) status from a job, wealth or more accurately hoarding was an important statement of power. It is wrong to see Dwarven hoarding in exactly the same light as the equivalent human behaviour, though there are similarities. In both Dwarf and Human societies, a hoard could act to reward subordinates, offer friendship gifts,⁸ and provide an emergency source of funds. For the Dwarves, though, hoarding behaviour was probably far more of an expectation, and acted as a greater social signifier in and of itself. Dwarves could certainly succumb to gold-lust, the negative side of hoarding – but it was quality not quantity that tended to motivate hoarding behaviour,⁹ and a greater ethos of “caretaking” heirlooms in a hoard might have permeated Dwarven hoarding ideals.¹⁰

⁷ Dwarven Economy and Society III: Food and Famile in the Later Holds Period, *Anor 43*

⁸ Thorin giving Bilbo the *mithril* mail-shirt being one such example.

⁹ The Arkenstone and the Nauglamír are classic examples of this.

¹⁰ I envisage this similarly to, and partly on the basis of, Gimli’s discussion of caretaking the caves of Aglarond, as a general signifier of Dwarven attitudes to precious physical objects.

Technologies and Crafts

So we have a picture of what made a Dwarf a greater or lesser name in their hold; within this social hierarchy we have sketched, however, we still need to paint a picture of what exactly was going on. We have a wide array of trades depicted for Dwarves in Tolkien's work – their most notable skills were of course in metalwork, mining, and masonry/stonework, but they were also famed as toymakers.¹¹ We know that exports dominated the craft agenda where possible, but several lacunae exist. Lower level crafts, for example, we can be less certain about – brewing, pot-making, weaving, tanning, and other such crafts must almost certainly have been fairly common in Dwarf society, but we have little evidence of them.

Music appears to have held a significant role in Dwarf society. The most compelling evidence for this is of course Thorin's company itself – the fact that every single member both played and carried an instrument¹² indicates a breadth of musical ability across society that has perhaps never been paralleled in human culture. Likewise, the climax of Gimli's song in Moria is not the metalwork or stonework of Durin's semi-mythologised realm but the fact that "the harpers harped, the minstrels sang"¹³ – and the two items that the Dwarves wish to reclaim from Smaug in "Misty Mountains" are *harps* and *gold* specifically.¹⁴

The technology level of Dwarven holds is a subject that is difficult to get a clear picture on. Certainly, it is my opinion that we should not think of them as industrial: mining and production were artisanal, labour was expensive, and thus despite a very highly skilled workforce there was little surplus production as a result of a lack of mechanisation. This was perhaps the largest brake on Dwarven technological advancement, but on the other hand it probably helped keep income levels comparatively balanced, with much lower wealth inequality than in equivalent human societies. This in turn meant greater social stability. As I have suggested above, it may be that mobilising labour for larger communal projects was, as for warfare, a function of the hold-lords. Certainly, given the scale of Dwarven construction projects and the necessity of some sort of group enterprise when mining, it was not something of which the Dwarf state model was incapable.

Trade

Long-distance and short-distance trade were both, as has been noted, important to a successful Dwarf settlement in most ages of Middle-earth. Short-distance trade secured food supplies and enabled a hold to build a strong relationship with potentially useful auxiliaries from their hinterland. Long-distance trade, on the other hand, was more lucrative, allowed the Dwarves to import materials that they were otherwise unable to, and

¹¹ The Hobbit, p28

¹² The Hobbit, p17

¹³ The Lord of the Rings, p308

¹⁴ The Hobbit, p19

played a strong role in diplomacy (for example, getting Dwarf masons to rebuild the gates of Minas Tirith).

Dwarves probably did a lot of their own trading; certainly it is Dwarves, not humans or hobbits, who most frequently seem to move along the old road from the Blue Mountains.¹⁵ This is despite their lack of use of animals – presumably they bought pack-ponies from humans or hobbits to cart goods around. Nonetheless long-distance trade must have been relatively low in volume and high in risk before the end of the Third Age. The importance of auxiliary peoples and other nations in permitting trade is an interesting point – Dwarf states never had the manpower to provide long-term security to long distance trade routes, such that this security was a necessary feature of other states or structures.

The question of to what extent we should think of the Dwarves as a particular type of economy – family-based, subsistence, capitalist – is an interesting one, but in many cases I suspect it is unhelpful. The Dwarves were the least naturally autarkic of Middle-earth's races, and their preferred "natural" economic unit included a surrounding non-Dwarf society. Production relations within a Dwarf hold are nonetheless interesting to look at; my initial belief is that Dwarves largely tended to work for themselves, possibly combined with some material obligations to their chieftain's kin-group and to their hold-lord. There is, however, room for nuance within this picture; the familiarity with contracts shown in Thorin's dealings with Bilbo implies firstly that the concept of agreeing to work for or be contracted to someone else was not unknown, and secondly that there were mechanisms in place by which such disputes could be resolved (after all, a contract with no court or legal system is next to useless).¹⁶ Even if regular employment was not a major societal institution, then, contractual work was, and given the craft-based nature of Dwarf society it would seem likely that apprentices, contract-workers, and other itinerants not based in a family-group would be familiar sights around a Dwarf hold.

The Trading and Isolationist models

This section pulls together the previous trio. Dwarf states, throughout Middle-earth's history, were frequently heavily dependent upon trade. They could healthily survive without it, but the differences between a hold that was able to trade significantly and one that could not were nonetheless very considerable indeed. The key here is local rather than long-distance trade, usually with a politically weaker neighbour.

The trading state could afford to have a geographically far wider hinterland – a number of local valleys, with wider trading networks gaining food from miles afield. Production was geared to exports, especially of weaponry, toys, and other relatively low-

¹⁵ The Hobbit, p37

¹⁶ A fuller treatment of various considerations around this contract is given in Douglas C. Kane's *Law and Arda, Tolkien Studies 9* (2012). I disagree with some of Kane's points, but to date his is certainly the fullest discussion of the topic.

bulk, high value items that could easily be moved on trade journeys (an analogy may be drawn to early Punic trade in the Mediterranean). Most importantly, a larger and more consistent food supply permitted larger, wealthier families engaged in more specialised crafts. This may have been a technological drag on surrounding areas; the strong cultural pressure pulling Dwarves into certain trades, coupled with their jealously guarded skill, must have made it extremely difficult for local humans to compete. The artisan nature of Dwarf craftsmanship did, at least, mean that there was unlikely to be a tragedy of the commons as the market flooded with Dwarf wares. Trade in low-bulk, high-value items meant that demand probably remained high. A demand crash would, however, have been a great problem for such a state; keeping trade routes open and participating in militarily protecting the agricultural producer populations would be very much in the hold's interests.

An isolationist model is perhaps most clearly represented by Moria in the later Second Age.¹⁷ Here, the hinterland was very restricted to a small area of high-intensity agriculture, with an economy geared heavily towards defence of vital food supplies. Hunting, tanning, and lower-level crafts made up a much larger part of the economy. Whilst reserves of mineral wealth were still built up, metalworking was focussed heavily towards what production was needed for defence and for dwarf use specifically. Dwarf weaponry would in general not have been useable by a hobbit, human, or elf; the difference in the style of production would have been significant. Most importantly of all, the extended family needed to gear much of their labour to food production. It should not be taken as a given that an isolationist state, despite its lower population growth rates and economic prosperity, was necessarily "worse" in all situations, on the other hand. The more autarchic nature of its production meant that the isolationist model sacrificed prosperity for stability and durability; where the trading hold created and grew, the isolationist hold stood and endured.

Whilst I have presented these models as a binary, I should make it clear here that they are intended to simply be the two main end-points of a spectrum; broad images that can give us an idea of the range of experiences in different Dwarf settings and settlements.

Conclusions - End of Part One

There is not a great deal to conclude from this particular adventure into the realms of the Dwarves; the aim has been to survey and contextualise rather than drawing great new conclusions. I hope nonetheless that this paper has gone some way towards building up a basic and generic picture of a Dwarven hold-state. The framework I have pieced together has been built up from the fragmentary source material rather than constructed externally. As such, I hope it will prove reasonably robust in future research, though I am very ready to concede that there will likely be gaps that can be filled in over time.

¹⁷ Though we should not fall into the trap of assuming that Moria was "normal" – it certainly was not.

To come onto more specific matters arising from this paper, I have sought to demonstrate that one of the key driving factors in later Second Age and Third Age Dwarf polities is the presence or absence of trade, around which the hold's struggle for resources and food supplies was predominantly based. The high social value placed upon exportable craft work (especially as a route to respectability for those unsuccessful in the ever-difficult realm of marriage), coupled with the importance of hoarding and cherishing the finest fruits of such work, created a very strong socially constructed pull towards the world of trade. I see this – at least tentatively – as an enterprise largely focussed upon an extended family group with ancillary workers joining via apprenticeship or contract. The craftspeople themselves were not necessarily wielding decision-making power within this unit, that being the role of a chieftain who provided the component of the family that was politically represented within the hold-state as a whole.

I consider this the “End of Part One” of my history of the Dwarves, with a basic framework laid out that will hopefully provide the conceptual tools for more in-depth studies of specific events, artefacts, trades, states, people and ideas. I have a number of these that I hope to look at in more depth; these include mining further backwards down the timeline in “Technology and Demography” to my suggested age of the kin-polities discussed in “The Structures of Power”, and looking in more depth at the early hold and what we can discover or analyse about it. There is more to be done in the Third Age, too, particularly focussing on individuals such as Dáin and Balin, and upon the artefacts (the Arkenstone especially) and holds that may have provided the spiritual foci of Dwarven life.

The Industrialization of the Shire

Alfonso Diaz

Some critics blame Tolkien for not using a realistic approach in many aspects of his fantasy world, in particular those considered important in our times, like economics. This paper will try to explore this point by first studying whenever Tolkien tried or not to describe or trace some economic matters in his works. Secondly, we will study the case of the Shire in *The Lord of the Rings* as an example of his point of view on the matter. Finally, we will try to trace a conclusion about the depth and awareness of his economic thought.

George R.R. Martin, author of *Game of Thrones*, has often criticised *The Lord of the Rings* for what he considers an over-simplification of some themes. In a recent interview with *Rolling Stone* magazine he said “(...) Tolkien doesn’t ask the question: what was Aragorn’s tax policy? Did he maintain a standing army?”¹

Such questions try to apply the schemes, rules and ideas of the reality we are living in to another and completely different world, far in time, space or both, from ours. Tolkien’s world is essentially fantastic and medieval. A stage that is not always comfortable for modern and sceptical critics. Sometimes, as Michael Drout pointed out, “critics who don’t follow Tolkien’s references also lack erudition”.²

But the question about economics in Middle-earth does not only refer to how realistic a fantasy world should be. It also has many moral implications. Modern economics answers all questions about production and distribution with a single word: efficiency. According to the *Oxford Dictionary of English Language*, being efficient means achieving maximum productivity with minimum wasted effort or expense. Considering the rules of Tolkien’s fantasy world, there’s only one simple way to be completely efficient: putting the Ring on your finger. But this is precisely what Tolkien is telling us to take precautions against. Modern economics consider matters like productivity and minimum expense, but they do not consider ethics. Fairy tales and traditional fantasy stories do. They do not teach us that the best way to do something is the easiest. Usually they advise us to avoid such ways. Killing a dragon could make you earn a lot of gold, but your greed will make a new dragon out of you. *The Lord of the Rings* is not different in this to any other traditional fantasy story.

Due to the complexity and richness of Middle-earth, Tolkien has to deal somehow with economics. Not following the modern dogma of “maximum efficiency” doesn’t mean not offering any solution to the problems of what, how and for whom to produce. When

¹ The *Rolling Stone* magazine, “Interview with George R.R. Martin”, www.rollingstone.com/.../george-r-r-martin-the-rolling-stone-interview-20140423 (April 23rd, 2014).

² Drout, Michael, “Children of Húrin or Tolkien: The Scholar and the Critics” <http://wormtalk.blogspot.co.uk/2007/04/children-of-hrin-or-tolkien-scholars.html> (April 8th 2007)

Tolkien was asked about the apparent simplicity of the economics of his world, he wrote “I am more conscious of my sketchiness in the archaeology and *realien* than in the economics”.³ He defined himself as “not incapable of or unaware of economic thought” and defended that “as far as the ‘mortals’ go, Men, Hobbits and Dwarfs, (...) the situations are so devised that economic likelihood is there and could be worked out”.

Considering his points of view about modernity, machines and technological progress, it is not strange that his answers to the three basic economic questions (what, how and for whom to produce) differ from those of an economist of the 21st century.

We can find an example of his ideas in the economic aspects of his description of the hobbits. The Shire is described as an agrarian paradise. The hobbits produce just what they need to be happy. They are farmers and gardeners and their “exports” consist mainly in their famous pipe-weed.⁴ The only industrial site mentioned is Sandyman’s Mill, used to grind corn.

When Saruman’s minions, in the absence of Frodo, Sam, Merry and Pippin, took control of the Shire, the old agrarian mill is destroyed and a new industrial mill is built in its place. The new one is powered by fire and produces iron. The way that Pimple and Sharkey took control of the mill and the whole of the Shire is also significant. They bought the productive properties of the hobbits (their lands and also Sandyman’s Mill).⁵ This speculative behaviour may sound familiar in our times.

As a consequence of these changes, the former farmers and owners become workers in the mill or farm labourers without lands. By losing their properties, they have lost their economic independence and so their political rights. This is the way that Saruman, under another identity, rules the Shire. The concentration of property in a few hands, that is typical of modern economies, changed the society of the Shire completely. The former agrarian paradise, where hobbits lived happily according to their traditions, has become a dystopian industrial county, where they have to work hard to produce iron for war purposes. The consequences on the environment are also huge, especially for the trees, because the new mill demands a lot of timber.

This is how Tolkien is writing about industrialization. The greed of humans and the cold roughness of machines (it is not clear whether the latter are serving the former or the former are serving the latter) combine perfectly to destroy a relatively happy society and a picturesque environment. “This is worse than Mordor!” are the words that Sam used to describe the situation.⁶

³ Carpenter, H. (2000) Letters of J.R.R. Tolkien, letter 154, p.196.

⁴ Tolkien, J.R.R. (1954) The Lord of the Rings, page 8.

⁵ Tolkien, J.R.R. (1954) The Lord of the Rings, page 1012.

⁶ Tolkien, J.R.R. (1954) The Lord of the Rings, page 1018.

When the hobbits are finally able to expel Saruman and his men from the Shire, they try to restore it and to take it back to its original status, with the help of the magical seeds that Galadriel gave to Sam. Magic, in this case, helps to restore what greed has destroyed.

In this chapter of *The Lord of the Rings* we find an example about the awareness of Tolkien's economic thought. The deep messages and ideas underlying Tolkien's works could also be applied to economics. Money and resources, like power, are not always the most important things. That doesn't mean to waste valuable and limited resources, but to consider that our more valuable and limited resource is time. The message of Tolkien about transcendence, ethics and life in general, about what is really important and what is not, could lead us to a better use of, in Gandalf words, "the time that is given to us".⁷

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⁷ Tolkien, J.R.R. (1954) *The Lord of the Rings*, page 51.

Eru: Just How Omni Is He? Or, Eru v God: The Strife in the Afterlife

Samuel Cook

One of the notable influences on Tolkien's work was his devout Catholicism, which can be clearly seen in his cosmology and history for Middle-earth. However, it is important to recognise that Middle-earth is not just some sort of Catholic allegory (something Tolkien was very keen to avoid) and that its theology is not just God and His angels with some false noses and silly hats on.¹ One of the most important differences between Catholicism and Middle-earth is, indeed, the very nature of the Supreme Being (God/Eru). In this article it is proposed to focus on this with regards to three qualities traditionally assigned to the Christian God:² omnipotence, omniscience and omni-benevolence. Otherwise, this will end up turning into a rather time-consuming and pointless (from the point of view of me getting any sort of degree out of it) thesis ...

The Christian God and Eru undoubtedly occupy broadly the same position in Christian and Middle-earth theology and cosmology. They both created the universe, the world and everything in it;³ they both have an immortal race of divine underlings with regrettable obedience problems to do most of the heavy lifting (angels/Ainur); and they both have a special regard for humanity/Man. However a framework for exploring their differences is provided by three qualities usually attributed to the Christian God: omnipotence (He can do anything), omniscience (He knows everything) and, to a slightly more varying degree, omni-benevolence (He loves/cares for everything).⁴ How far does Eru match up to these characteristics?

Firstly: omnipotence. It seems pretty clear that Eru is omnipotent. After all, he created the Ainur, the world (Arda), Men and Elves, and the rest of the cosmos (Ēa) as well as the Timeless Halls outside the material universe.⁵ Then, when the Valar get finally fed up with the intransigence of Men,⁶ he just casually remodels the basic geometry of the world. This seems a pretty clear demonstration of omnipotence, or, at least, so close that it's functionally indistinguishable. This doesn't mean Eru does do everything, just because he can. Generally, at least with regards to Arda, he only seems to get involved when specifically

¹ For a start, there's no obvious parallel to Jesus in Middle-earth – there's no Aslan character, that's for sure. The closest is probably Gandalf, but I think it's fair to say there are some pretty significant differences between the two. Jesus is not known to have been any good at making fireworks.

² After His radical personality change between the Old and New Testaments, presumably involving some sort of cosmic anger management course.

³ Perhaps in a more indirect manner for Eru, at least when it came to Arda, whose shaping he largely left up to the Valar.

⁴ Suffice it to say, this is taken slightly more literally by some denominations than others.

⁵ See the *Ainulindalë*.

⁶ To be fair, this is the point at which the supposedly-enlightened Númenóreans have started worshipping Sauron and doing human sacrifice, put together the largest army and navy ever seen and sailed it straight at you, in contravention of the Valar's explicit instructions and despite all their (maybe rather ineffectual) attempts to avert it. One imagines most people would probably have had enough at this point and would have put Men up for adoption.

called upon (usually by Manwë in one of his frequent moments of not-being-able-to-think-for-himself), as is the case with the Breaking of the World. Like God in *Paradise Lost*, he generally seems to prefer to get things done through intermediaries once all the original Creation business is over and done with.⁷

Similarly, with omniscience, it's difficult to argue that Eru doesn't perform in this area. He shows the assembled Ainur a complete vision of the history of Arda, at least up until the coming of the Dominion of Men,⁸ and the *Ainulindalë* states that "to none but himself has Ilúvatar [Eru] revealed all that he has in store" (*The Silmarillion*, p.18). The strong implication is that Eru knows everything that is going to happen, even if he hasn't necessarily told anyone else yet. This seems a pretty clear admission that Eru is omniscient and has all of Time planned out.

Having established his omnipotence and omniscience, how does Eru fare in terms of omni-benevolence? The answer here is rather less clear. There is obviously an awful lot of suffering in Arda, e.g. the Kinslaying, the Nirnaeth Arnoediad, the War of the Ring, etc., etc. This doesn't necessarily disprove Eru's omni-benevolence – theologians have come up with numerous arguments to explain why the Christian God, whose love for His Creation is a point of doctrine, seems so happy to let elements of it blow up/torture/enslave/poison other elements on a regular basis. These normally revolve around the idea of it all being part of human free will – people have to be free to be evil so that they can be free to be good too. Enforced goodness isn't really a positive moral choice. Indeed, arguably, you can't have good without evil – both concepts have to be defined by reference to the other.⁹ However, setting several millennia of philosophical ethical speculation on the nature of good and evil to one side, I think Eru's actions are inconsistent with those of an omni-benevolent being, regardless of where you sit on the whole suffering-free will debate.¹⁰

This is most obvious in his behaviour in the Breaking of the World; about the only time in the history of Middle-earth that Eru is seen to take an active role. According to the *Akallabêth* (*The Silmarillion*, p.278-9)

"But Ilúvatar showed forth his power, and he changed the fashion of the world; and a great chasm opened in the sea between Númenor and the Deathless Lands, and the waters flowed down into it, and the noise and smoke of the cataracts went up to heaven, and the world was shaken".

⁷ The "Do One Week's Work and Get Eternity Off" one-time, never-to-be-repeated special offer at the Institute of Chartered Divinities and Associated Ethereal Beings was evidently very popular.

⁸ According to the *Ainulindalë* (*The Silmarillion*, p.20). All page numbers from the hardback edition of *The Silmarillion*, illustrated by Ted Nasmith.

⁹ It may perhaps be obvious that I'm not a massive fan of absolutist schools of ethics.

¹⁰ Also, it wouldn't be very interesting to rehash all of that, just replacing "God" with "Eru".

Furthermore “Númenor...was utterly destroyed. For it was nigh to the east of the great rift, and its foundations were overturned, and it fell and went down into darkness, and is no more” (*The Silmarillion*, p.279).

These do not seem to be the actions of a being that cares for all his creation. For a start, there is the unexamined, likely cataclysmic, piscine, cetacean, molluscan and crustacean death toll occasioned by a large portion of the ocean being sucked into an abyss. Then there is the complete destruction of a rather large island, with all the attendant loss of flora and fauna, not to mention people. Most of the Númenóreans were rather unpleasant by this point, but surely not all the children¹¹ were irredeemably evil? Even Tar-Míriel, the queen, who is canonically one of the Faithful, gets overtaken by the waters. It’s understandable that Eru might be pretty disappointed with the majority of the Númenóreans,¹² but he could have punished them in such a way that was slightly less devastating for every other living organism within fifty miles.¹³ That’s the whole point of omnipotence – you can do *anything*. You don’t have to resort to the divine equivalent of nuking the Meneltarma. Eru could have just given all the Númenóreans an array of interestingly-repulsive and itchy skin diseases or caused their legs to fall off. Or transported everyone to the middle of the deserts of Harad and then just caused Númenor to cease to be, without visiting undeserved death on millions of unsuspecting and innocent babies, fish, lobsters and dolphins.

Also, putting my Geography hat on briefly (as opposed to my Irreverent-Tolkien-Speculation-with-Extra-Footnotes one), the first passage above suggests there was a sizeable earthquake. In fact, so large that “the world was shaken”. This should not perhaps be taken literally, as an earthquake that literally shook the entire world to a noticeable degree would most likely presage the entire planet coming apart at the seams.¹⁴ However, it does mean it would have been pretty big, which is understandable, given the displacement involved (a massive new rift suddenly appearing and a large island entirely sinking – earthquakes normally lead to displacement of a few metres); at least magnitude 7, probably

¹¹ The “THINK OF THE CHILDREN!” card. Based on empirical studies of modern children, some of them were probably pretty unpleasant, but it’s difficult to see a 6-month-old baby as an incontrovertible agent of Sauron. Maybe Eru just got really annoyed by the sound of crying?

¹² Even if, seeing as he’s omniscient, he presumably knew it was coming. Though *The Silmarillion* (p.41) indicates that Men are not bound by the Music of the Ainur “which is as fate to all things else”, so he might not have known it was coming beforehand (though I reckon he did), but he’d still know of what had happened.

¹³ That’s a purely conjectural radius of great-rift-induced annihilation – without knowing how long the rift was and how long it was open for, it’s rather difficult to compute how much of the ocean might have been sucked into it.

¹⁴ Given magnitude 9.0 earthquakes, which are about as large as humanity has ever experienced, aren’t detectable by people unaided on the other side of the world (though seismometers will detect them) and assuming Arda is broadly similar in size and composition to Earth, something that would actually shake the entire globe to a noticeable degree would have to be very, very big. On the other hand, magnitude 9+ earthquakes do alter the rotation of the Earth, and thus the length of a day, to a measurable degree, and also cause it to wobble very slightly on its axis, so they do affect the whole world in a sense (we’re talking microseconds of difference in the length of a day and centimetres of axis wobble). Just not a literal noticeable shaking one.

more likely 8 or 9. And, if you have a large earthquake underwater (which is effectively what happened here), with an associated large displacement of the water column, you generate a tsunami. These waves are barely noticeable in the open ocean, but they travel very fast.¹⁵ It's only when they reach land and get slowed down by the shallower water that they turn into multi-metre-high engines of destruction. Given their speed, coastal locations might only have 20 minutes' notice of the impending wave; in other places it might be a few hours.¹⁶ And, when it does hit, you can end up with a wall of water tens of metres tall, sweeping miles inland that does a pretty good job of destroying everything in its path. Large rocks, weighing several tonnes, on top of cliffs in Shetland that stand tens of metres high are conjectured to have been left there by a large tsunami 8,000 years ago.¹⁷ The point is: tsunamis are really nasty, and the Breaking of the World would almost certainly have created a large one that would have raced across Belegaer and caused rather a lot of death and destruction in Lindon, Minhiriath, Enedwaith, and the entire coastline of Gondor¹⁸, including such unpopulated places as Gil-Galad's realm, Mithlond, Dol Amroth, Pelargir and Umbar. It's therefore quite likely a lot of people died, at least some of which had nothing to do with the Númenóreans, were part of the Faithful, and certainly weren't at fault for Ar-Pharazôn's folly. Not terribly benevolent that.

And, just to prove I'm not going completely off on a geographical tangent, the *Akallabêth* offers this piece of evidence:

"And all the coasts and seaward regions of the western world suffered great change and ruin in that time; for the seas invaded the lands, and shores foundered, and ancient isles were drowned, and new isles were uplifted; and hills crumbled and rivers were turned into strange courses" (*The Silmarillion*, p.280).

That seems a pretty unequivocal description of the consequences of a large earthquake followed by a large tsunami. Clear vertical displacement, coastal erosion and major coastal flooding. The result of which would again have been the pointless death of vast expanses of flora and fauna, but also a lot of Men and Elves (probably not Dwarves – they'd abandoned Nogrod and Belegost by this point and their holds in the Blue Mountains only became

¹⁵ 500mph+ in the open ocean, with wave heights of only a metre. This means that the waves that picked up and transported Elendil and his ships were not tsunami – they were far too large and slow. They would have just been more normal storm waves. The wave that engulfed Númenor itself, however, could well have been a tsunami – the opening of the rift itself would have generated one, as the water column suddenly dropped, and then the fall of the island would have generated another as it displaced a very large amount of water.

¹⁶ To illustrate the point, the Boxing Day tsunami of 2004, the result of a magnitude 9 earthquake, occurred not far off the north-western tip of Sumatra, yet still caused significant damage on the eastern coasts of Africa, particularly Somalia and Kenya, 3,000 miles away and 6-7 hours later on the other side of the Indian Ocean.

¹⁷ Can you tell this was part of my degree? In this case, a bit of the continental margin off Norway collapsed, generating a massive underwater landslide – the Storegga Slide.

¹⁸ And, presumably, the coastline onwards further south into Harad. The waves would also have radiated westwards from their origin, so would, in theory have hit the far eastern coast of Middle Earth (Valinor having been removed at this point – interesting philosophical discussion: would a tsunami be able to travel the Straight Road?).

significant once Moria fell, which was still two millennia in the future). Eru is not exactly coming off well in the not-wantonly-killing-everyone stakes, I feel.

Even if you argue that Manwë just asked Eru to remove Valinor from the Circles of the World and deal with those pesky Númenóreans without specifying the crucial caveat of not wrecking the entire place; as an omniscient being, Eru would have known exactly what was going on. The fact that he still visited his displeasure and “showed forth his power” in such a brutally-indiscriminate way is indicative of the fact that he is not unconditionally protective of his creation – in other words he is not omni-benevolent.¹⁹

Finally, there is one other interesting passage in the *Ainulindalë*, just after the music has finished, that sheds light on Eru’s psyche:

“And thou, Melkor, shalt see that no theme may be played that hath not its uttermost source in me, nor can any alter the music in my despite. For he that attempteth this shall prove but mine instrument in the devising of things more wonderful, which he himself hath not imagined” (*The Silmarillion*, p.17).

What this passage seems to be saying is that all of Melkor’s spite, malice and evil has its ultimate source in Eru himself and is only a reflection of one of his many aspects. If that is indeed the case, Eru can hardly be omni-benevolent. Taking it further, Eru even seems to be saying that the existence of evil is necessary for his creation to reach its very pinnacle of wonder and perfection. Again, this is hardly consistent with an omni-benevolent being – it is possible that Eru’s ends are omni-benevolent (he wants his creation to be the best it can), but his means (including the existence of evil, war, death and destruction) are not.

In conclusion, therefore, whilst Eru would appear to fulfil a very similar role to the Christian God and share the attributes of omnipotence and omniscience, he does not seem to be entirely benevolent, as evidenced by his rather indiscriminate, enthusiastic and impressively large-scale smiting of Númenor, and the apparent existence of evil elements in him, and his belief that this evil is necessary to perfect his creation. In some ways, consequently, the Jewish or Muslim God might be a better parallel.²⁰ What is clear from this short study of just three aspects of Christian divinity is that Eru is not just a re-branded Catholic God that Tolkien shoehorned in, but a being with a rather different (i.e. genocidal) approach to his creation. This is not to say that Eru does not care at all (he saves Elendil and his sons and followers from the Downfall, for example); just that he’s not averse to inflicting death, destruction and murder when it suits him.

¹⁹ Also, he put Manwë in charge. If that doesn’t show a lack of care and compassion, I don’t know what does. It’s almost as if he wanted the Valar to spend large portions of time sitting around bemoaning their fate without doing anything. Otherwise, Ulmo or Oromë would have been running the show ...

²⁰ That doesn’t mean Eru is Yahweh or Allah. As briefly mentioned earlier, there are quite a few other differences between Tolkien’s cosmology and the Christian version, let alone the Jewish or Muslim one. But that would be several thousand more words, which I don’t intend to write here.

TH: TBOTFA (The Hobbit: The Big Overdone Tedious Fighting Affair) A Review and a Suggestion for Where Next

Samuel Cook

Unless you're stuck with Ar-Pharazôn in the Caves of the Forgotten, you've probably noticed that the latest (and final) instalment in Peter Jackson's Hobbit trilogy has been released. This marks an end (fortunate or unfortunate, depending on your point of view) to his Middle-earth films for the foreseeable future – certainly, Christopher Tolkien is not going to license any further adaptations, given what may be charitably described as his disapprobation of the current state of affairs. However, he is 90, and whoever takes over management of the estate after him may look more kindly on further filmic escapades in the legendarium. It is therefore perhaps too early to definitively say that the current offering is Jackson's last foray into Middle-earth. However, it is almost certainly the last for the next decade or so, so how does it compare to his other films and how does it do in its own right? I'll go through some major plot points first, before giving an overall verdict and thinking about what could happen next if further films were made. Needless to say, there are spoilers galore, so you may not want to read this before seeing the film.

The Death of Smaug

I enjoyed this scene. I think it captured the sense of total dread and panic engendered by a fire-breathing dragon destroying your town. Smaug was, again, very impressive and well-acted. The Master and Bard both acted much as you would expect them to. It was also pretty close to the book description of what happened, complete with Smaug spouting up into the air and then falling back down to earth on top of Laketown. It would perhaps have been nice to have a whole company of archers shooting at Smaug, rather than just Bard, and I'm still rather unconvinced by the feasibility of his makeshift ballista¹ or how Smaug completely failed to notice it,² but that's just standard movie dramatisation. I think the scene worked well overall.

The attack on Dol Guldur

I also liked this scene. I think Jackson offers a plausible interpretation of the few lines we have in the Hobbit and the Appendices on the matter. Personally, I would have liked to see more of the White Council involved – I would certainly have expected Círdan and Celeborn to be there, and probably some of the other Elf-lords, such as Glorfindel and

¹ I mean, he just seemed to jam the broken ends of the bow into convenient bits of the ruined tower. Would he really have been able to generate sufficient force without the whole thing snapping to propel a quite large and (presumably) heavy projectile far enough and hard enough to inconvenience Smaug? And he could have taken Bain's ear off!

² Possibly, he put too much faith in physics, forgetting he was a movie villain. The usual Bond problem – if the baddy just did the sensible thing and shot Bond straight away, there'd be one short film of five minutes, instead of 23 of 2 hours each.

Erestor. However, as these are all very minor or non-existent characters in the film universe, I appreciate why Jackson kept it to just Galadriel, Elrond and Saruman (and Radagast, sort of). It was good to see Elrond and Saruman actually get to do some fighting, and to see the Ringwraiths being useless. Again. Despite all nine of them being there. With Sauron. I also enjoyed Galadriel going green – she is, after all, the most powerful and senior of the Elves left in Middle-earth³ and bearer of Nenya, so it was nice to see her actually displaying it, especially after her apparent fainting fit just because the place was a bit evil.⁴ Just generally, I would have quite liked the scene to be a bit longer – it seemed a bit rushed compared to the main event, as if Jackson just wanted to get it out of the way so he could get back to the main storyline. I also question the apparent ease of Sauron’s defeat. In the books, it is suggested that he wasn’t beaten so much as made a tactical retreat, and that the White Council realised this. In the films, it seems as if Galadriel has pretty much single-handedly beaten Sauron and brought him close to final destruction, which isn’t really consistent with his apparent power in the LOTR films. A small niggle, but quite an important one.

I also think Jackson missed a comedy chance when the Ringwraiths all resurrect and line up in front of Sauron to carry on the fight. There really should have been some sort of “Extra Life”, “Level up” or “Level 2” sound effect/announcement. Possibly, that was just me.

The Preamble to the Battle

I thought this was all fairly well done. Thranduil (and his war-elk, Belegaras⁵), as per usual, rather steals every scene he’s in by being so fabulously icy and dismissive,⁶ whilst Martin Freeman as Bilbo is similarly joyous to watch. Thorin’s attempt to win the Sulk of the Age⁷ award was consistent with the book and well-acted, as was his treatment of Bilbo, Bard and Thranduil. Within the film universe, Legolas⁸ and Tauriel’s jaunt to Gundabad was necessary to tie Bolg in and actually get the whole “Bolg of the North” thing going. Similarly, the survivors of Laketown removing to Dale seems sensible within the film. The use of Alfrid as a sub-Master figure also served to provide some comic relief, and, as one would expect, the visuals of Dale and the Erebor were very good.⁹

³ Círdan, and possibly Celeborn, are older, but they’re both Moriquendi, so Galadriel outranks and out-powers them considerably. In theory, there could be some older Noldor floating around, but, being of the House of Finwë, Galadriel would outrank them too.

⁴ Well, a lot evil. And, to be fair, Sauron could be described as having a rather overbearing personality,

⁵ That’s not its actual name. That’s just the CTS’s previous best guess at the Sindarin for “elk”. “Belegaras” = “Great Deer”.

⁶ Perhaps overdone, to be fair. He’s supposed to be a bit more kindly by this stage.

⁷ Fëanor had already won the Lifetime Achievement award.

⁸ Winner of the Basil Exposition “State the Obvious” award every year since 2001.

⁹ Though I do think there were a few scenes, usually with Tauriel and Legolas, where the CGI looked surprisingly bad.

The best bit, without a doubt, though, was the very last bit before the battle started: the arrival of Dain (and his war-pig¹⁰). Very definitely the best minor character in the film. A particular highlight was him asking the assembled Elves and Men to politely sod off, just after Gandalf describes him as less reasonable than the, at-that-point, very unreasonable Thorin. Later on, his ability to apparently nut legions of Orcs into submission and heft his hammer as if it weighs nothing is also noteworthy. Basically, Billy Connolly is great.

The Battle

This is where you realise that there wasn't really enough material left over to make a third film.¹¹ There are a lot of very impressive set pieces, but the whole thing, from the arrival to the death of Azog, just seems rather overblown and drawn-out in order to pad the film out past the two-hour mark. To be fair: it ends in the right way, with Thorin, Fíli and Kili all dead, and does a good job of tying everything up within the universe of the films. However, it just gets a bit silly. First, particularly impressive points:

- The Elves jumping over the Dwarves right at the start – a really good opening to the battle, and a scene which I think nicely encapsulates the difference between the two races: the Dwarves as immovable and as solid as a mountain, the Elves agile and deadly.
- Thranduil clearing an entire causeway of Orcs with Belegaras and then decapitating all the ones stuck on his antlers – OK, it's extremely silly, but it's a great scene and proves Thranduil isn't all mouth, no trousers.
- Thorin and Company charging out of Erebor – pretty much exactly the same as the book (except for the massive bell, which I thought looked really fake) and very impressive.
- It all tied up well with LOTR – the very end, with old Bilbo, was a really good nod to the Fellowship of the Ring film, and namechecking Aragorn (even if he was about 10 at this point¹²) worked well. It unites the two trilogies so they flow together well.
- Thorin's death – he spoke the right lines from the book in a suitably emotional way. If only he'd watched Jaws or any action film ever, he wouldn't even have died. Rule 1 of cinema: The baddy is never dead the first time the hero "kills" him. Thorin basically died due to a lack of cultural awareness.

Annoying bits:

- The War-Goats – at this point, the film does seem to be Jane's All the World's Warbeasts. The elk and pig are fine – it's not entirely surprising commanders are

¹⁰ Why didn't it have tusks? If you've got a war-pig, you want some hideously-hairy, tusked brute of a boar, not something that looks just like an amiably-docile, oversized farm animal. Honestly.

¹¹ 80 pages of *The Hobbit*, plus a few more from the Appendices.

¹² Though, with the films' loss of the 17-year gap between Bilbo's party and Frodo leaving the Shire, within the film universe, he'd have been closer to 25-30, so it's internally consistent.

mounted – and they seem appropriate to the characters, but mountain goats?¹³ My main problem is not so much that they exist, but that they seem to appear from nowhere – Dain’s army, of which we see aerial shots, didn’t have any, and I’m pretty certain they weren’t hiding in the mountain – and then disappear equally mysteriously. Thorin, Fili, Kili and Dwalin ride them to Ravenhill, dismount and then the goats vanish.

- The Orcish warbeasts – basically, a continuation of the above point. First, we have the giant worm/rock drill things;¹⁴ then we have the variety of siege- and war-trolls, of varying degrees of ridiculousness. And, perhaps more oddly, no Wargs, who were definitely supposed to be there. It does seem a bit like Jurassic Park in Middle-earth.
- Legolas’ physics-defying abilities – now, one of Legolas’ main selling points is his ability to do some fairly crazy things, but, this time, it gets a little bit ridiculous, even by his standards. First, we have his bat airlift followed by a perfect fall, then we see him driving a siege-troll thing by using his sword stuck in its brain as a joystick, then we see him able to push up off falling rocks in his fight with Bolg.¹⁵ There’s a limit.
- Bard’s joyride – you know that scene with the cart careering downhill and Bard flying off and stabbing that troll? Yeah, that. Someone said, I imagine, “remember that really cool scene at Helm’s Deep where Legolas slides down the stairs on a shield? Couldn’t we do that again?” To which someone else said “But we’ve got him doing so many ridiculous things already.” To which another person said “Couldn’t we get one of the other characters to do it in a cheap imitation way?” Probably.
- Tauriel not dying – I really hoped she would. As it was, at least Kili died, though there was still far too much soppy and completely unrealistic romance. On a more serious note, it does mean Jackson has to explain why she wasn’t in LOTR (and, to an extent, he has the same problem for Thranduil and Dain). I have disturbing visions of Episode VI force ghosts and inadvisable meddling.¹⁶

Overall, I enjoyed the film for what it was, and it is a good fantasy action film, but it’s not a very good Tolkien film. It diverged too much from the books as a result of decisions earlier in the trilogy, which meant the battle had to follow a rather different path, and was

¹³ Technically, they might be a kind of sheep, but they look like ibex, so I’m going with goats.

¹⁴ There is a reference in the Hobbit to the “wild were-worms”, but it’s Bilbo saying it in a way that suggests these aren’t real. Of course, there’s also Gandalf’s allusion to strange things in the deep places of the world after the fights with the Balrog and the Watcher in the Water, but these are deliberately described as being outside of Sauron’s (and, presumably, by extension, any of his minions’) control. Also, they’re not very deep in the film. More sort of on the surface. And where do the worms go? Presumably wherever the goats went.

¹⁵ In the tower of suspiciously-convenient variable solidity

¹⁶ Though, whatever happens, Legolas will still shoot first. He’s that quick. And he’s only shooting clear baddies, so there aren’t any morally-dubious scenes to edit. If you’re unaware of the reference here, George Lucas is infamous for tinkering with the original Star Wars trilogy after the prequel trilogy came out, so that Vader’s force ghost at the end of Episode VI was replaced with one of him as Anakin (among other things). The scene where Han shoots Greebo was also altered – originally, Han shot first, but this was felt to make him too morally-dubious, so it was changed so that they fire simultaneously. Hopefully, Jackson will avoid such unnecessary tinkering.

just obviously padded out with gratuitous action, though Howard Shore's soundtrack was, again, very impressive. By far the weakest of Jackson's six Tolkien films and, in some ways, a disappointing finale to his forays into Middle-earth. Rating: 3/5

Looking ahead, the next obvious target for any Tolkien-inclined filmmakers is, obviously, *The Silmarillion*. Leaving aside the issue of whether, if ever, the estate would release the rights to it, how could one even render such a disparate and wide-ranging tome into the medium of film?

One possibility would be to film the entire thing, from the *Ainulindalë* through to *Akallabêth* and the Last Alliance, as a *Game of Thrones*-esque multi-season TV series. Whilst this could well work, it might perhaps struggle with the sheer length of time it would have to cover and would, arguably, be a larger undertaking that would be harder to finance. Also, it would seem more fitting to have the whole timeline in film form, rather than part in film and part on TV. So, assuming you were aiming to put *The Silmarillion* into film form, how could you do it? Some parts would seem to work very well as standalone films – *Akallabêth*, *The Lay of Leithian*, *The Narn i Hîn Húrin*, and the stories of Tuor and Eärendil would all potentially seem to be effective films in their own right, but that still leaves a very large period of time uncovered. Here is one suggestion for how the entire corpus could be covered in a relatively small number of films whilst retaining nearly all the key characters and events.

Film 1 – The Madness of Fëanor:

The Ainulindalë as a prologue (like the Last Alliance in *Fellowship of the Ring*) detailing the creation of Arda and the cosmos, followed by the initial wars between the Valar and Morgoth, the destruction of the Lamps, the awakening of the Quendi at Cuiviénen and the journey of the Eldar to Valinor. That sounds as if it's a lot to get through in the prologue to a film, but the salient points could be conveyed quite quickly, I think. The rest of the film would then focus on the life of Fëanor and the House of Finwë, covering all the major events through to the Dagor-nuin-Giliath and his death. As an epilogue, the film could go up to the Dagor Aglareb, leaving the viewer with some hope that Fëanor's death wasn't in vain.

Film 2 – The Lay of Leithian:

This film would open with a quick run-through of the major events between the Dagor Aglareb and the Dagor Bragollach (the appearance of Glaurung, the arrival of Men and the founding of Nargothrond and Gondolin would perhaps be the main ones¹⁷), and then recount the events of the Bragollach and the immediate aftermath to set the scene for Beren arriving exhausted in Doriath. The film could then follow the story of Beren and Lúthien through to its conclusion and their return to life in Tol Galen.

¹⁷ I think the wanderings of Aredhel and her return, with Maeglin, to Gondolin would be a bit too tangential to be covered. Maeglin could be introduced at a later stage, but I think the full story would detract from the main thrust of the plot, yet isn't robust enough to be the main plot on its own.

Film 3 – The Children of Húrin and the Fall of Doriath:

The starting point would be the Nirnaeth Arnoediad. Hador, Galdor, Húrin and Huor would have been introduced briefly in the previous film. The film would then follow the story of the Children of Húrin through to Húrin's death. It would then carry on to show the death of Thingol (the link being Húrin's delivery of the Nauglamír), and the later story of the Silmaril retrieved by Beren and Lúthien through to Elwing's arrival at the Mouths of Sirion.

Film 4 – Tuor and Eärendil:

This film would jump back in time to portray the story of Tuor, the birth of Eärendil, the Fall of Gondolin, and Tuor, Idril and Eärendil's arrival at the Mouths of Sirion. It would then carry on to cover the remaining events of the First Age,¹⁸ culminating in the War of Wrath and the final defeat of Morgoth. The coda would be the fates of the other two Silmarils and Sauron's evasion of punishment or imprisonment.

Film 5 – Akallabêth:

This would cover the entirety of *Akallabêth*, from the arrival of Elros and the remainder of the Edain, through the growing power and glory of Númenor whilst the shadow of death grew ever stronger. The focus would be on the later history of Númenor, probably from Ar-Adûnakhor onwards, once the kings were in open rebellion. Ar-Pharazôn and his enchantment by Sauron and hopeless war on the Valar would obviously be a major part. The film would then run through to the Last Alliance, making the link with LOTR.

Film 6 – Gil-Galad was an Elvenking:

This would cover the same time period as the previous film, but would show the chief events of the Second Age in Middle-earth itself, with Sauron, Gil-Galad, Elrond, Galadriel and Círdan as the main characters. It would cover the history of the Rings of Power, show how Sauron acquired the One and, again, run through to the Last Alliance.

Beyond this, there is obviously the Third Age history of Gondor and Arnor that could be covered, but I think another six films are enough to be getting on with. I realise this is just one interpretation, but restricting it to six films mirrors the current oeuvre nicely, and I'd argue it would be possible to make each film largely standalone, but to also maintain links between them and LOTR, so that the whole corpus would flow together well. Obviously, I've elided a lot of events above, rather than writing out everything that happens in *The Silmarillion*, but I reckon six films should be able to cover nearly all the major events and characters whilst remaining a sensible length (though I imagine we'd be looking at three hours or more for each one's runtime).

However, while I think I've shown it might be possible to make a fairly rational set of films of *The Silmarillion*, there remains the entirely different question of whether such a thing should be attempted. That is a question for the Tolkien Estate to decide.

¹⁸ We'd get to see Young Elrond!

Mûmak Orcmahdinejad:¹ Sauron's Nuclear Weapons Programme

Samuel Cook

On reading that title you may be forgiven for thinking I've finally lost it.² Middle-earth had barely entered the Gunpowder Age, let alone the Atomic Age. If anyone had, somehow, been messing around with a nuclear reactor or weapon, you would imagine there would be a very large bang, a big cloud and a big hole in the ground. And not much of them left. However, I intend to present a short argument that the text can be interpreted as supporting the claim that Sauron was developing nuclear WMDs and may have been very close to using them, despite the apparent improbability of such a situation.

The main evidence for this claim comes from the descriptions we have of Imlad Morgul, the Valley of Living Death, which was clearly the location of Sauron's nuclear programme. For a start, we have the name of the valley: the Valley of Living Death suggests there's something rather sinister lurking there. On its own, this is relatively innocuous – it's where the Witch-King lives, so there are plenty of opportunities for living death to appear. But combined with what else we're told about the valley, it adds up to a troubling picture. For instance, Morgulduin, the river in the valley is described as "the polluted stream that flowed from the Valley of the Wraiths" (LOTR, p.684) and there is also Faramir's injunction to Frodo and Sam: "Do not drink of any stream that flows from Imlad Morgul, the Valley of Living Death" (LOTR, p.679). The highly-polluted nature of the river is further elaborated upon when Frodo and Sam reach the valley: "The water flowing beneath was silent, and it steamed, but the vapour that rose from it, curling and twisting about the bridge, was deadly cold" (LOTR, p.689). For the river to be that polluted, one has to imagine some sort of heavy industrial process is going on in the valley and dumping its waste into it. A uranium mine, enrichment facility and poorly-constructed reactor would certainly qualify.

Then there is the description of the plant life:

"Wide flats lay on either bank, shadowy meads filled with pale white flowers. Luminous these were too, beautiful and yet horrible of shape, like the demented forms in an uneasy dream; and they gave forth a faint sickening charnel-smell; an odour of rotteness filled the air" (LOTR, p.689).

These flowers sound rather mutated – something that could be the result of growing in a chronically polluted and radioactive environment.

Further supporting the radioactivity hypothesis, we have Gandalf's opinion on whether the Host of the West should try to assail Mordor by the Morgul Pass rather than the Morannon:

¹ Sorry about that. I couldn't resist the pun. It's not even that good.

² The jury is still out on that one.

“But against this Gandalf had spoken urgently, because of the evil that dwelt in the valley, where the minds of living men would turn to madness and horror” (LOTR, p.866).

The obvious implication is that he was concerned about the Ringwraiths’ ability to unman the strongest. However, it could also be that he knew of the radioactive threat in the valley – long-term exposure to significant background radiation could well turn men mad as they suffered the symptoms of ever-worse radiation sickness. It would also be a particularly horrific and lingering way to die.

Finally, there is Aragorn’s comment on the area’s future, after the fall of Sauron:

“Minas Ithil in Morgul Vale shall be utterly destroyed, and though it may in time to come be made clean, no man may dwell there for many long years.” (LOTR, p.948)

This fits very well with the modern understanding of a radioisotope-contaminated area. Depending on how contaminated the area is and with what radioisotopes, it can take months, years, decades, centuries or even longer for it to be safe for human habitation. For instance, some farms in upland regions of the UK were only released from radioactivity controls due to fallout from the 1986 Chernobyl disaster in 2012. Areas closer to the power station are expected to be unsafe until the end of the century and the Exclusion Zone, covering a 19-mile radius from the reactors, is projected to remain contaminated for the next 20,000 years. There is no evidence the Morgul Vale saw a radioactivity release on the scale of Chernobyl,³ but still, Aragorn’s assertion that it would be many lives of men before it would be safe to inhabit is probably accurate, assuming the area had been exposed to lower levels of radioactivity over a long time.⁴

While none of this suggests that Sauron was ready to nuke the Free Peoples of Middle-earth,⁵ the descriptions of Imlad Morgul and characters’ reactions to it do strongly suggest a highly-polluted and radioactive environment. In light of this, the passage below, however, does suggest that Sauron might actually have been near creating some sort of nuclear weapon:

“At that moment the rock quivered and trembled beneath them. The great rumbling noise, louder than ever before, rolled in the ground and echoed in the mountains. Then with searing suddenness there came a great red flash. Far beyond the eastern mountains it leapt into the sky and splashed the lowering clouds with crimson... Then came a great crack of thunder. And Minas Morgul answered. There was a flare of livid lightnings: forks of blue

³ Someone would probably have noticed if everyone in Minas Tirith started dying from thyroid cancer.

⁴ Quite how long depends on when Sauron started his nuclear programme. Minas Ithil fell to the Ringwraiths in T.A. 2002, so a nuclear programme could have been ongoing for a millennium, but Sauron only re-entered Mordor in T.A. 2942, so it may only have been a few decades. Even so, that would still have been enough to seriously contaminate the environment. I suspect a shorter timescale is more likely, because none of the Wise seems to have been really aware of the programme.

⁵ Sauron would definitely have played Global Thermonuclear War if he could.

flame springing up from the tower and from the encircling hills into the sullen clouds. The earth groaned” (LOTR, p.690).

Could that rumbling and red flash have been a nuclear weapons test? Perhaps Sauron exploded a bomb underground and/or tried to launch a missile, both things the North Koreans have done recently? The red flash suggests, if there was a missile launch, that the missile exploded on take-off. If the test had been successful, might Sauron have just launched a few nuclear missiles at his enemies, rather than trying to invade and besiege them? We’ll never know, but it seems like Minas Tirith came unwittingly close to being the Hiroshima of Middle-earth.

In conclusion, the descriptions in the text of the Morgul Vale and events surrounding it certainly lend themselves to the idea that Sauron was developing nuclear weapons. Obviously, there would have been technical challenges to overcome, but Sauron was originally a Maia of Aulë so could have had the knowledge and insight to do so. He also had an effectively endless supply of free labour and no real qualms if some of them occasionally got hideously maimed/killed/mutated/irradiated. And if Saruman was effectively a sort of Sauron-lite and was able to independently come up with explosives, why could Sauron not have come up with a larger, bigger and better explosive? I’m not seriously asserting he actually did, but it is an intriguing possibility suggested by the text. Perhaps we need to rethink our perceptions of Middle-earth as technologically medieval.

Next time: Hobbits: the result of the Edain’s secret genetic experiments?

**The Middle-earth Expanded Film Universe:
Some suggestions for further projects for PJ
now he's run out of licensed material
A Tar-Palantír-Nanofilos production**

Samuel Cook & James Baillie

Thor-in

Everyone's favourite hammer-wielding Dwarf¹ (played by Billy Connolly, because he was a much better stereotypical Dwarf than Richard Armitage) suddenly gains the ability to fly and control the weather, using his newfound powers to smite frost giants and dark elves² whilst having to deal with the machinations of his morally-dubious-but-oh-so-much-more-interesting half-brother Lokin (played by Brad Dourif as Wormtongue, but with a beard and chainmail. And shorter).

Fëanor Pitch

Following his invention of writing, the Silmarils and all sorts of other epochal gizmos; for an encore, Fëanor goes on to invent football and makes a killing in the Valinorean property market by making sure Formenos is right next to his first football stadium and, consequently, seeing its value rocket as football fever sweeps the continent.³ His sons are subsequently arrested for aggravated hooliganism in a match between Noldor Disunited and Alqualondë City and the whole thing falls apart when Fëanor refuses to let the footballs out of his sight and Morgoth steals all the trophies (one of which is found a few months later by Huan⁴).

Die Another Dain or Dain Another Day or Dior Another Dain or Dain Another Dain

It all depends how you pronounce "Dain". Everyone's other favourite hammer-wielding, Orc-nutting Dwarf (still played by Billy Connolly, but with a different nose and wig) goes on an undercover mission to the Icebay of Forochel⁵ to destroy a new Orcish weapon that

¹ I know Thorin uses a sword in the movies. He's now got a hammer that occasionally glows blue in an entirely inconsistent and random manner.

² They're at least as plausible as all the random creatures in TBOTFA.

³ Tulkas Athletic subsequently win the first-ever instance of the Valinorean Premier League because Tulkas just tackles everyone so hard they have to retire injured. Manwë Academics come a close second, helped by the fact that all the refereeing decisions seem to mysteriously go their way. Lórien Gardens come a distant last, as they spend all day asleep and, when they can be made to play, are just so spaced they stand in their starting positions and give the opposition some dribbling practice. Occasionally, they fall over too.

⁴ Assuming CTS are perhaps not the most sports-history-literate body in the world, a famous incident in footballing history was the theft of the Jules Rimet trophy before the 1966 World Cup and its subsequent recovery a few months later by Pickles the dog (and his owner. But Pickles found it first).

⁵ He paints all his armour white to blend in. That's about as undercover as Dwarves get. He also paints his War-Pig white, because that is basically adaptive camouflage in the Icebay of Forochel. And sticks some rockets, machine guns and ejector seats on, because you can never have too many (anachronistic) gadgets.

concentrates the beam from the Eye of Sauron into a destructive megadeath laser.⁶ On the way, he casually beats up hordes of generic-Eastern-European-henchmen-sounding Orcs and sleeps with several stunningly-attractive Dwarf women,⁷ before being captured by Sauron, having the whole plan painstakingly explained to him,⁸ and then being left to die in such a way that he can easily escape and save the world. Again. Possibly with sponsoring from a major brand of perfumes.

The Return of the King's Speech

In a Middle-earth spin-off to the hit film, we see exactly the same film with exactly the same actors, just that Bertie is now Aragorn (with extra sword and travel-stained clothing) and Lionel is the maverick speech therapist from Far Harad, Xhor'flazhk the Surprisingly-not-Evil-Despite-Having-an-Unpronounceable-Name-with-Xs-and-Zs-and-Ks-and-Gratuitous-Hs-and-Apostrophes, who helps him overcome his speech problems through unorthodox methods.⁹ Aragorn is then able to triumphantly declare war on everyone east of the Ephel Dúath.

The Theory of Every Ring

Saruman (still played by Christopher Lee and still doing all his own stunts), ably assisted by the lovely ~~Igor~~ Gríma, presents a 2-hour lecture on Ring lore, falling visibly into decrepitude as it progresses, positing that the Ring's temporal-warping power comes from having very small black holes trapped inside them. Using one he'd made earlier, he then demonstrates his powers by turning the entire audience into Orcs, single-handedly fighting off the Ringwraiths,¹⁰ and causing a blizzard, before striding off, declaring "Leave Science to Me!".

Westfold Story

Set in the metropolis that is Helm's Deep, the musical story¹¹ of the forbidden love of a Rohirric man (Roheo, played by Channing Tatum. Or Tanning Chatum. Or Channel Taters. Or whatever his stupid name is) for a Dunlending woman (Dunliet, played by Mila Kunis), that ends up healing the rift between their two peoples. Featuring a cast of tens, nearly all of whom are peasants.¹² The rest are horses. Some of them are more intelligent than the peasants. And better actors. Definitely better singers. Frankly, this is not a high-quality

⁶ I don't know why it's in Forochel either. It just is. Let's say, in a totally unsubstantiated and anti-canonical way, that it's where Sauron's Dark Towerlet (made from ice!) was, and where he removed to briefly after being forced from Dol Guldur.

⁷ Because they're *slightly* less bearded than a male Dwarf.

⁸ With numbered diagrams showing weak points and everything.

⁹ Involving scorpions, serpents, Mûmakil and poisoned arrows.

¹⁰ They're still useless.

¹¹ Featuring lots of fiddles. In fact, it's all fiddles. Who needs any other instruments in portraying Rohan?

¹² Definitely not in any form of anarcho-syndicalist commune. Devout supporters of the monarchy to a (wo)man. This is Middle-earth, after all.

musical or filmic experience. What do you expect from uneducated, oppressed Rohirric peasants? You just can't get the staff these days.¹³

The Ring

This one doesn't even need any adaptation. Except it's the ghost of Gollum that comes out of your TV¹⁴ when you acquire the titular object. Creepy.

Die Harad

One maverick soldier of Gondor's (Bruce Willis) genocidal quest to wipe Harad off the map for repeatedly ruining his Christmas and threatening his family. Features: acres of shattered glass! More ventilation ducts¹⁵ than you can shake a spear at! Incompetent baddies of the first order! Gratuitous explosions! More gratuitous explosions! Escaping an eagle while driving a Mûmak! Even more explosions! Yippee-ka-yay, people-who-sodomise-Mûmakil!

Merry Poppins

Merry (Dick van Dyke) sets up as a nanny in the Shire. He achieves obedience by scaring all the kids with his height, outlandish garb, and stash of armour and weapons, as well as his horrible faux-Cockney accent and tendency to break into song at the drop of a hat. Aided by his trusty sidekick, Pippin (Julie Andrews¹⁶), he breaks a family¹⁷ to give him some work, and then brings it back together again, spreading a message about the importance of love, family unity, and doing what bigger, better-armed people tell you.

The King and the Steward

¹³ Maybe it's because you've made all the above really silly films, PJ.

¹⁴ Given this is Middle-earth, Gollum's ghost first has to build the TV. Slight inconvenience there and rather detrimental to the whole horror vibe.

¹⁵ Well, the Middle-earth equivalent. Possibly sewers/latrines.

¹⁶ In a shocking role reversal.

¹⁷ There wouldn't be any actual broken families in the Shire, surely?

Two Wanderers

James Baillie

The star-lit heavens flicker bright,
We venture on, we onward range
To lands of strangers, day and night,
We wander where the stars are strange.

To wander forth,
All clad in blue,
To keep our long-tried
Friendship true.

We pilgrims in the desert sands,
The two who never stop to rest,
Two friends who dream of far-off lands,
Together roaming, we are blessed.

Hey There Lord Sauron

James Baillie

(Sung by Aragorn to Sauron via palantír)

VERSE 1

Hey there Lord Sauron, What's it like in Barad-dûr?
I'm a thousand miles away, but now it seems like rather fewer,
Here am I, no need to hide, no need to spy,
Prepared to die.

Hey there Lord Sauron, time to worry about the distance,
Because soon it will start closing, we'll be marching in the morning,
Look and see, the peoples of the West who still are free,
They're led by me.

CHORUS

Oh it's down to you and me, Oh prepare to turn and flee,
Oh from Umbar up to Bree, All of Arda shall be free,
Arda shall be free.

VERSE 2

Hey there Lord Sauron, I just ruined Isengard,
I'll be at the Morannon soon, I'll be knocking pretty hard,
So come and fight, for a final struggle of the light,
'gainst endless night.
Hey there Lord Sauron, I've got so much left to say,
And even though I'm still not king yet, I've been waiting for this day,
Right from my birth, time to see who's lord of Middle-earth,
And judge our worth.

CHORUS

Oh it's down to you and me, Oh prepare to turn and flee,
Oh from Umbar up to Bree, All of Arda shall be free,
Arda shall be free.

BRIDGE

I've hobbits, dwarves and elves and men, set to march through Ithilien,
We'll march along and clear your orcs away
Minas Tirith behind us, And we shall struggle on because,
Our last chance is to keep your stare this way,
But Sauron I can promise you, regardless, when this thing is through,
The world will never ever be the same, and you're to blame.

VERSE 3

Hey there Lord Sauron look right here, you cannot miss me,
Since I even burned your Ringwraiths, and my family has a history,
To renew, But first I've got to deal with you,
I've even summoned dead men too,
My once broken sword is just like new; you see it's true.

FINAL CHORUS

Oh it's down to you and me, Oh prepare to turn and flee,
Oh from Umbar up to Bree, All of Arda shall be free,
Arda shall be free.
Ohhh

Eye of Lord Sauron

Samuel Cook

(To the tune of "Eye of the Tiger")

Risin' up, back in old Mordor,
Did my stuff, darkened Mirkwood.
Led them a merry dance in Dol Guldur.
Just my Ring and my will to survive.
So many times, it happens too fast:
You get stabbed by Elf or by Man
Don't lose your finger with your Ring
attached.
I'll wear much better gauntlets next time.

(Chorus)

It's the Eye of Lord Sauron,
It's the thrill of power,
Rising up to cover all in darkness.
And the last known survivor,
The heir of Isildur,
Will be found and destroyed
By the Eye of Lord Sauron.

Just a wraith, out in the East,
Hangin' tough, stayin' angry.
They will learn to fear me again, at least
For I kill all who dare defy me.

(Repeat Chorus)

Risin' up straight to the top
Had the will, got the glory.
Went the distance, now I'm not gonna
stop.
Just my Ring and my will to survive.

(Repeat Chorus)

The Eye of Lord Sauron
The Eye of Lord Sauron
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The Final Durin

Samuel Cook

(To the tune of "The Final Countdown")

Final judgement arrives,
And so it's foretold
That still he'll come back
With glittering gold.

There are none known so fabulous:
Mithril shining (mithril shining)!
Will things ever be the same again?
It's the final Durin.
The final Durin.

Oh, final doom has arrived (arrived).
And still we stand proud.
Our great king has arrived
To command us all, yeah.
With so many Orcs yet to hew,
And gems left to mine (left to mine),
He'll lead us on to glory new.
It's the final Durin.

The final Durin.
The final Durin (final Durin).

Oh...oh
The final Durin.

Oh...oh
It's the final Durin.

The final Durin.
The final Durin (final Durin).

It's the final Durin.
Kheled-zâram awaits!

The final Durin.
His crown will return.

It's the final Durin (final Durin).
Oh, it's the final Durin.

Letters to Daeron

Dear Daeron,

Please allow me to correct some of the misapprehensions about my third “Dwarven Economy and Society” article expressed by your correspondent in the last issue. Clearly your correspondent is right that initially unmarried dwarves could marry; indeed it would have been somewhat of a catastrophe demographically if they did not! The issue seems to be a misunderstanding of the 40% and 60% numbers – your correspondent seems to be taking these as a snapshot of a hold, when in fact they are better expressed as probabilities of marriage within a lifetime. Were some unmarried dwarves attempting to gain partners? Undoubtedly. The point I am trying to make is that 60% of the population *never* married; the unmarried, socially mobile dwarves who eventually succeed in winning the partner of their dreams are already in my 40%.

The second issue, which I fully accept may be down to my rather poor phrasing of a crucial few sentences, is that I am not suggesting a causal link from finding a bride to gaining “social status”. I am, it is true, suggesting that those with political power tended to be married at a vastly higher rate than average, and that we should therefore imagine a correlation between chieftainship and marriage. Political power and social status may not be precisely the same thing, however, with a highly valued craftsman having exceptionally high status despite little decision making force. My discussion is in any case not circular because it is not, in this case, attempting to draw a firm causal line, being rather a description of the correlation. A great deal clearly here rests on the office of chieftain and how it may have worked – a matter I discuss a little further in this issue’s *Dwarven Economy and Society IV*.

I hope that your correspondent’s concerns have been adequately addressed; I will be happy to write further clarifications if necessary.

Sincerely,

James Baillie

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