A Babel of Shadows: The Meaning and Function of Shadows in J.R.R. Tolkien’s 'The Lord of the Rings'

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Illustration: sketch for the dust jacket of *The Return of the King* by J. R. R. Tolkien (1892-1973).

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INTRODUCTION

In 1997, *The Encyclopedia of Fantasy* began its entry on J. R. R. Tolkien with a characterization of the British author as "a scholar in early forms of English."[1] In the same breath, it recognized him as "best known as the 20th-century's single most important author of fantasy," an accolade not without merit and not unexpected for a reference source which focusses solely on the fantastic in literature.[2] Indeed, the 'fantastic' has arguably been "[t[he dominant literary mode of the twentieth century,"[3] and Tolkien's fiction and some of his academic work (notably, his essay "On Fairy Stories") are considered by many to lie at the foundation of the modern (heroic) fantasy genre; many of his literary descendants are either writing in much the same vein as Tolkien or attempting to break free from his firm hold on the genre.[4]

His stature as a pioneering heavyweight in the world of fantasy literature is supported, among other things, by the popularity of his books among the general readership. At the end of the twentieth century, poll after poll organized by bookstores and societies like Waterstones and the Folio Society revealed *The Lord of the Rings*[5] (henceforth, *LOTR*) as the definite favourite, after their members (and, in some cases, the British public) had been asked about the century's best literary creation.[6] This unexpected result touched a sensitive nerve of many conservative literary critics, who voiced their chagrin in scathing critiques on the supposed weak literary merits of the winner and the bad taste of the average reader—a reaction not much

[1] John Clute, "Tolkien, J(ohn) R(onald) R(euel)," in *The Encyclopedia of Fantasy*, eds. John Clute and John Grant (London: Orbit, 1997), 950-951.
[2] *Ibid.*, 950-951.
[3] T. A. Shippey, *J. R. R. Tolkien: Author of the Century* (London: HarperCollins*Publishers*, 2001), vii.
[4] Edward James, "Tolkien, Lewis and the Explosion of Genre Fantasy," in *The Cambridge Companion to Fantasy Literature*, eds. Edward James and Farah Mendlesohn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 62; T. A. Shippey, "Tolkien and the West Midlands: The Roots of Romance," in *Roots and Branches: Selected Papers on Tolkien by Tom Shippey*, ed. Thomas Honegger (Zollikofen: Walking Trees Publishers, 2007), 39-41; Shippey, *Author*, xviii-xix. With respect to Tolkien's impact on children's fantasy literature in particular, see Michael Levy and Farah Mendlesohn, "Middle Earth, Medievalism and Mythopoeic Fantasy," in *Children's Fantasy Literature: An Introduction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 133-159 (especially, 134-141). Tolkien's essay "On Fairy-Stories" (included in J. R. R. Tolkien, *Tree and Leaf* (London: HarperCollins*Publishers*, 1988), 1-90), introduced many structural and thematic concepts now part and parcel of (scholarship on) fantasy literature, as evidenced from standalone entries like "Secondary World" (Clute, 847) and "Eucatastrophe" (Brian Stableford, 323) in *The Encyclopedia of Fantasy*, eds. Clute and Grant. For a critical note on the essay's importance, see P. E. Thomas, "'On Fairy-Stories'," in *J. R. R. Tolkien Encyclopedia: Scholarship and Critical Assessment*, ed. M. D. C. Drout (London: Routledge, 2007), 481-482.
[5] Quotations from *LOTR* in the analyses below are always taken from the 2007 HarperCollins paperback edition. When quoting *The Hobbit* and *The Silmarillion*, the revised and expanded edition of *The Annotated Hobbit* and the 1999 HarperCollins paperback edition of *The Silmarillion* are used.
[6] Joseph Pearce, *Tolkien: Man and Myth* (London: HarperCollins*Publishers*, 1998), 1-10; Shippey, *Author*, xx-xxiv.

different from the initial responses when the trilogy first appeared on the market.[7] Regardless of these dismissive remarks, it seems clear that *LOTR*, as well as Tolkien's other creative works, possess a unique literary quality which accounts for both their immense influence and wide popularity.[8]

One aspect of Tolkien's writing which might account for its unexpected influence is its tightly-wrought plot structure, which brings together various narrative strands in a way reminiscent of the interlacing style found in medieval romance.[9] Some scholars have looked, instead, at the use and adaptation of mythology, recognizing in Tolkien's fiction the hand of a modern mythmaker trying to evoke deep (religious) truths about human existence and morality through an essentially mythical mode of writing.[10] Others have approached Tolkien from an environmentalist perspective and interpreted his work as being fundamentally concerned with discovering humanity's proper place within (and relationship with) nature.[11] Notwithstanding the usefulness of the above and other critical lenses,[12] there is one field in particular which stands at the heart of both Tolkien's creative process and his professional career at Oxford, and which could, therefore, lead most successfully to a thorough understanding of his books: philology.[13] Tolkien was an accomplished philologist, specialized in the historical development of Germanic languages, and spent a great deal of time and energy on studying ancient texts recorded in these languages.[14] The high esteem in which he held these languages and texts would suggest that they left a definite mark on, or rather, functioned as a central cog in, the growth of his own fiction.[15] It should be no surprise, then, that philological evaluations of

[7] Pearce, *Tolkien: Man and Myth*, 1-10; Shippey, *Author*, xx-xxiv. For early reviews of *The Lord of the Rings*, see T. A. Shippey, *The Road to Middle-Earth*, rev. ed. (London: HarperCollins*Publishers*, 2005), 1-6.
[8] Shippey, *Author*, xxvi-xxvii.
[9] A. H. Sturgis, "Lord of the Rings, The," in *Tolkien Encyclopedia*, ed. Drout, 389; D. S. Brewer, "*The Lord of the Rings* as Romance," in *J. R. R. Tolkien, Scholar and Storyteller: Essays in Memoriam*, eds. Mary Salu and R. T. Farrell (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1979), 256; R. C. West, "The Interlace Structure of The Lord of the Rings," in *A Tolkien Compass*, ed. Jared Lobdell (New York: Ballantine Books, 1975), 85; Shippey, *Author*, 102-111.
[10] R. L. Purtill, *J. R. R. Tolkien: Myth, Morality and Religion* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2003), 7; B. J. Birzer, *J. R. R. Tolkien's Sanctifying Myth: Understanding Middle-earth* (Wilmington, DE: ISI Books, 2002), 23-44; R. C. Wood, *The Gospel According to Tolkien: Visions of the Kingdom in Middle-earth* (London: Westminster John Knox Press, 2003), 2.
[11] Matthew Dickerson and Jonathan Evans, *Ents, Elves, and Eriador: The Environmental Vision of J. R. R. Tolkien* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 2006), xvi-xix.
[12] For additional ways of critically reading Tolkien, see the 'Critical Approaches' section in *A Companion to J. R. R. Tolkien*, ed. S. D. Lee (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2014), which includes extended essays on topics such as 'Evil', 'War' and 'Music'.
[13] Shippey, *Road to Middle-earth*, 8-9.
[14] Humphrey Carpenter, *J. R. R. Tolkien: A Biography* (London: HarperCollins*Publishers*, 2016), 177-191.
[15] Verlyn Flieger, *Splintered Light: Logos and Language in Tolkien's World* (Kent, OH: The Kent State University Press, 2002), 29; Stuart Lee and Elizabeth Solopova, *The Keys of Middle-earth: Discovering Medieval Literature through the Fiction of J. R. R. Tolkien*, 2nd ed. (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 10-14; E. L. Risden, "Source

Tolkien's language and source criticisms centred on medieval texts have garnered as much, if not more, attention in Tolkien studies as the approaches mentioned above.[16]

This thesis, likewise, places Tolkien's philological and medieval interests centre-stage. It operates largely in the same spirit as T. A. Shippey's *The Road to Middle-earth*, that is, as an extended argument constructed in a bottom-up manner by taking a specific word or 'crux' of high salience in Tolkien's fiction as the starting point on which subsequent literary analyses stake their claims.[17] This is a line of reasoning not unlike that found in many of Tolkien's own scholarly publications, and it would arguably not have been far from his mind when writing his fictional stories.[18] In this thesis, the crux to be discussed in-depth is 'shadow(s)', used not only in its nominal form but also in its various verbal and adjectival derivations such as 'overshadow' and 'shadowy'. By comparing Tolkien's application of shadow words to the handling of them in historical (mainly Old English) literary contexts, it becomes feasible to determine whether or not he was influenced to some extent by older views on and conceptualizations of shadows when writing his stories.[19] If such a link can be credibly established, it would further enrich our understanding of shadows as a potential leitmotif in his work, as well as its place within the larger interplay of themes.

Certainly, shadow vocabulary takes up an important position within Tolkien's literary

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Criticism: Background and Applications," in *Tolkien and the Study of his Sources: Critical Essays*, ed. Jason Fisher (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2011), 19.

[16] Jason Fisher, "Preface," in *Tolkien and the Study of his Sources*, ed. Fisher, 1-2; Risden, "Source Criticism," 24-25. See, also, Fisher's article, "Tolkien and Source Criticism: Remarking and Remaking," in the same volume, in which he describes Tolkien as one of the writers most apt to source criticism (31-32).

[17] Shippey, *Road to Middle-earth*, 71. A striking example is the image of a 'wraith' used by Tolkien, which Shippey has explored in great detail, connecting it with Old English *wrīþan* 'to writhe' and, subsequently, to "the ambiguity of evil" (*Road to Middle-earth*, 168). In this section on the ambiguity of evil, Shippey also discusses Tolkien's use of the word 'shadow': he lays bare its etymology and sees it as a natural counterpart to 'wraith' (166-168). Unfortunately, his discussion remains rather brief and does not delve very deeply into the Old English antecedents. See, also, Shippey, "Orcs, Wraiths, Wights: Tolkien's Images of Evil," in *Roots and Branches*, ed. Honegger, 253-260.

[18] See, for instance, two of his essays published in *Medium Ævum* on the obscure Old English word *sigelhearwa(n)*, in which he reconstructs its original, pre-Christian meaning on the basis of etymology (J. R. R. Tolkien, "Sigelwara Land." *Medium Ævum* 1, no. 3 (1932), 183-196; J. R. R. Tolkien, "Sigelwara Land. (Continued)." *Medium Ævum* 3, no. 2 (1934), 95-111). As for his fiction, it is well-documented, notably in his posthumously published letters, that he considered his work being "*fundamentally linguistic* in inspiration" (italics in original), since to him "a name comes first and the story follows" (J. R. R. Tolkien, "165 To the Houghton Mifflin Co.," in *The Letters of J. R. R. Tolkien*, ed. Humphrey Carpenter (London: HarperCollins*Publishers*, 2006), 219). Indeed, Flieger has argued that "[i]t is no exaggeration to say that his [Tolkien's] scholarship combined with his imagination is the matrix of his fiction" (*Splintered Light*, 33).

[19] Note, especially, Shippey's discussion on the relevance of 'shadow' to the nature of evil in Tolkien's fiction (*Road to Middle-earth*, 166-168).

language and conceptual framework, as it plays into the theme of light versus dark.[20] The latter dynamic is quite possibly the main thematic superstructure governing Tolkien's legendarium, bearing as it does, among other things, upon the evolution of Tolkien's created languages, the histories of the races, the psychologies of his characters and the nature of evil.[21] Within this dichotomy, Tolkien's abundant use of the word shadow is often, and understandably, ascribed to the realm of 'darkness', the side of evil and tyranny.[22] While this is no doubt true to a large extent, it does sideline this crucial word to a subsidiary position, not to mention that it reduces the otherwise strange and elusive concept that 'shadow' evokes to being part of one camp of a more or less rigid dualism.[23] Granted, there have been numerous psycho-analytical studies on Tolkien which have considered 'shadow' in the Jungian sense and interpreted, for instance, characters like Frodo as having darker, shadow-like doubles—thereby fleshing out the significance of shadows and giving them the attention they deserve.[24] But these studies, understandably, tend to place disproportionate weight on the psychological side to shadows, while devaluing their status as separate phenomena not necessarily connected to the psyches of main characters.[25] A study of Tolkien's dominant themes would benefit, therefore, from a more nuanced and philologically-oriented look at shadows as entities in their own right.[26]

Interestingly, the issues of 'shadow' and the light-dark contrast in Tolkien's fiction

[20] Shippey, *Author*, 123. A quick way of establishing the significance of shadows to Tolkien's legendarium is by looking up the word in Robert Foster's *The Complete Guide to Middle-Earth: From The Hobbit to The Silmarillion* (London: Grafton, 1992), which yields 21 entries ranging from the hobbit poem 'Shadow-bride' to 'Shadowmere', a lake in Eldamar.

[21] Verlyn Flieger, "Light," in *Tolkien Encyclopedia*, ed. Drout, 362-363; Joseph Pearce, "Darkness," in *Tolkien Encyclopedia*, ed. Drout, 118-119. The most authoritative study on the Tolkienian theme of light vs. dark to date remains Verlyn Flieger's *Splintered Light*, which shows that the recurrent image of 'splintered light' in Tolkien's mythological narrative has many correspondences with Owen Barfield's philosophy on the fragmentation of meaning and the gradual separation of language and myth throughout time (23-24).

[22] Pearce, "Darkness," 118; C. D. Dockery's *The Myth of the Shadow in the Fantasies of Williams, Lewis, and Tolkien*, PhD diss. (Auburn University, 1975), 293.

[23] Flieger's theory on the fragmentation of light, however, enables a much richer array of potential meanings, for although the general opposition between darkness and light remains in force, she demonstrates that "there is more than one kind of darkness in this cosmos" (*Splintered Light*, 136).

[24] Flieger, *Splintered Light*, 177-180; Thomas Honegger, "More Light than Shadow?: Jungian Approaches to Tolkien and the Archetypeal Image of the Shadow," in *Tolkien: Light and Shadow*, ed. Giovanni Agnoloni (Torriglia: Kipple Officina Libraria, 2019), 142; Natasa Tucev, "The Knife, the Sting and the Tooth: Manifestations of Shadow in *The Lord of the Rings*," in *Reconsidering Tolkien*, ed. Thomas Honegger (Zollikofen: Walking Trees Publishers, 2005), 97-98; U. K. Le Guin, "The Child and the Shadow," *The Quarterly Journal of the Library of Congress* 32, no. 2 (1975), 145-147.

[25] A notable exception, though, is Dockery's *The Myth of the Shadow*, which takes the Jungian notion of shadow as a tool to examine *LOTR*'s structure. He interprets the continual clashes of "the rising shadow…[with] the positive image" in *LOTR* as constituting "the cyclic pattern of history" (287-288). These clashes ultimately lead, according to Dockery, to "a cultural renewal through a kind of cultural-historical eucatastrophe" (321).

[26] See, for instance, Michaël Devaux's article "'The Shadow of Death' in Tolkien," in *Tolkien: Light and Shadow*, ed. Agnoloni. Here, he traces the phrase 'shadow of death' found sporadically in Tolkien's work back to nearly identical phrasings in the Bible and *Beowulf*, coming to the conclusion that when Tolkien relates it, for example, to humans who have lost faith in the goodness of death, 'shadow' essentially carries the meaning of "fear of death" (129).

correspond, by and large, to similar discussions in scholarship on Old English literature. Light and darkness are no less weighty in Tolkien than in Old English; they frequently occur in poetry, where they carry not only metaphysical significance but are also "woven by virtue of formulaic techniques so skilfully into the flow of narrative that they are integral to both the action and the theme of the poem in which they occur."[27] Darkness, especially, regularly functioned as a metaphor for the unknown, as "an intimation of the world as lived experience," and as a signifier for that which is not "contained and controlled."[28] Yet, scholarship on darkness and light has neglected to consider shadows as a separate topic of study.[29] This is an unfortunate state of affairs, since shadow words tend to be more ambiguous and strange than the strict division between light and dark would suggest.[30] Recent studies by Filip Missuno have done much to remedy this gap in research. In his dissertation on shadows in Old English and Old Norse poetry, for example, Missuno employs a useful, though rather fluid, definition of 'shadow'[31] and looks at this shadow-vocabulary in specific "interpretative cruces."[32] The Old English words and phrases which fall under this concept of 'shadow' are highly complex and "escape monolithic codification."[33] It would be interesting to apply a similar approach to modern works by Tolkien, an approach which analyses occurrences of the word 'shadow' within their immediate textual context, while at the same time casting a wide net by looking at how shadows function within the larger narrative structure and how they relate to other instances of darkness-affiliated language.

Accordingly, this thesis attempts to avoid 'monolithic codifications' and categorical dark-versus-light distinctions by considering Tolkien's use of shadows within a number of particularly evocative passages. Rather than emphasizing one aspect such as psychology, a broader constellation of meanings and uses of shadow will be covered, including, for instance, its role as a plot device and whether its associations are solely negative when a character or the

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[27] Jean Ritzke-Rutherford, *Light and Darkness in Anglo-Saxon Thought and Writing* (Frankfurt-am-Main: Peter Lang, 1979), 15.
[28] Ruth Wehlau and Fabienne L. Michelet, "Introduction: Darkness in the Universe, Darkness in the Mind in Anglo-Saxon Literature," in *Darkness, Depression, and Descent in Anglo-Saxon England*, ed. Ruth Wehlau (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2019), 1.
[29] Filip Missuno, "The Sinister Sound of Shadows in the Old English Poetics of the Dark," in *Darkness, Depression, and Descent*, ed. Wehlau, 62.
[30] Filip Missuno, *'Shadow' and Paradoxes of Darkness in Old English and Old Norse Poetic Language*, PhD diss. (University of York, 2012), 30; Missuno, "The Sinister Sound of Shadows," 62.
[31] While literal shadows are featured prominently, other darkness-related words not specifically connected to shadows are also included under this umbrella term. The modern word 'shadow' has a wide range of meanings that appropriately fits "the complexity, oddness, and indeterminacy of dark-related verbal structure in Old English and Old Norse," yet it remains an "arbitrary" imposition of the term within an Anglo-Saxon/medieval Scandinavian context (Missuno, *'Shadow' and Paradoxes of Darkness*, 23).
[32] *Ibid.*, 34.
[33] *Ibid.*, 23.

narrator makes use of it. Moreover, using Missuno's conceptualization of Old English 'shadow' discussed above, the question can be asked as to whether Tolkien specifically drew on his deep knowledge of Old English poetic diction for his stark image of the shadow. The main work by Tolkien under consideration is his *LOTR* trilogy, largely on account of it being the largest and the longest in the making of the literary output published during his lifetime.[34] In the end, it will become apparent that Tolkienian shadows are not only very reminiscent of Old English shadows in their various shades of conflicting meanings and associations, incorporating both potentially good and bad qualities, but also essential to the intricacy and proper functioning of the plot in *LOTR*.

In order to arrive at this conclusion, the discussion below is divided up into three chapters, the first and second of which go back to some of the issues alluded to above in more detail, as a necessary prelude to the main analysis of *LOTR* in chapter 3. The theme of light and darkness is dealt with in chapter 1, which mainly draws on research done by Jean Ritzke-Rutherford for the Old English material. Chapter 2, meanwhile, is indebted mostly to the work of Filip Mussino, in the sense that it focusses on the problem of shadows in Old English poetry and highlights their strangeness and resistance to unambiguous categorization. These two chapters provide the necessary backbone to the third and last chapter, in which the conclusions reached in chapters 1 and 2 are compared and contrasted to Tolkien's handling of shadow vocabulary in *LOTR*. So as to bolster the philology-styled close reading in this chapter, shadow's centrality to *LOTR* will be further indicated by dint of a statistical analysis of shadow words, using language processing software known as *WordSmith Tools*. At the end, a conclusion bundles the findings of all three chapters and passes final judgement on the question of Tolkien's borrowing from Old English material about shadows. Tolkien has been called the 'author of the century' by some, and his fictional works have continued to score high in the popularity rankings among the general public, acquiring a new boost upon the arrival of Peter Jackson's film adaptations.[35] Given the fact that Tolkien's work has been such an important source of comfort, meaning and entertainment for so many people, it seems warranted to try to

[34] This is, of course, not taking into account the vast mythological backdrop which had slowly congealed since Tolkien's deployment in the trenches of WWI and which remained yet unfinished at the moment of his death. In view of the scope of this thesis, however, the rich material contained in the mythology is used only occasionally when comparison with *LOTR* proved fruitful. For detailed information on the genesis of *LOTR* and Tolkien's legendarium, see the 12-volume *The History of Middle-earth*, as well as the prologue and appendices to *LOTR*. A briefer account is found in Birzer, *Tolkien's Sanctifying Myth*, 1-22; John Garth, "A Brief Biography," in *A Companion to J. R. R. Tolkien*, ed. Lee, 7-23.

[35] Shippey, *Author*, xvii.

discover some of the possible themes, concepts and motifs lying at the root of this reputation, in particular those which bear great relevance to his professional (and personal) interests.

CHAPTER 1 – LIGHT AND DARKNESS IN OLD ENGLISH LITERATURE AND TOLKIEN

> God sceal wið yfele, geogoð sceal wið yldo,
> lif sceal wið deaþe, *leoht sceal wið þystrum*,
> fyrd wið fyrde, feond wið oðrum,
> lað wið laþe ymb land sacan,
> synne stælan.[36]
>
> [Good must be against evil, youth against age, life against death, *light must be against darkness*, army against army, one enemy against another, foe against foe fighting for land, entering a conflict.]
>
> ...so this time he [Gollum] tried something a bit more difficult and more unpleasant:
>
> > *It cannot be seen, cannot be felt,*
> > *Cannot be heard, cannot be smelt.*
> > *It lies behind stars and under hills,*
> > *And empty holes it fills.*
> > *It comes first and follows after,*
> > *Ends life, kills laughter.*
>
> ...and the answer was all round him any way. 'Dark!' he [Bilbo] said without even scratching his head or putting on his thinking cap.[37]

These two passages from the Old English *Maxims II* and *The Hobbit*, respectively, bear testimony to the great value attached to the concepts of light and darkness in both Old English literature and Tolkien's writings.[38] They also highlight the evocative nature of these concepts. The quote from *Maxims II*, for instance, presents *leoht* 'light' and *þystre* 'darkness' as diametrically opposed entities destined ("sceal") to fight each other. But there is more to them than mere opposition. The symmetry of the poetic half-lines and the connections established through alliteration invite the reader to associate 'light' with 'life' (an alliterating pair) and with 'goodness' and 'youth' in the other lines.[39] 'Darkness', meanwhile, is easily paired up with 'evil', '(old) age' and 'death'.[40] Fairly vague and neutral phrases such as 'army against army'

[36] *Maxims II*, ed. and trans. R. E. Bjork, in *Old English Shorter Poems, Volume II: Wisdom and Lyric* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014), ll. 50-54a. Italics added.
[37] J. R. R. Tolkien, *The Annotated Hobbit*, ed. D. A. Anderson (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2002), 122-123. Italics in original. This is one of the riddles Gollum demands Bilbo to solve during the riddle-contest.
[38] Ritzke-Rutherford, *Light and Darkness*, 1; Verlyn Flieger, "Light," in *Tolkien Encyclopedia*, ed. Drout, 362-363; Joseph Pearce, "Darkness," in *Tolkien Encyclopedia*, ed. Drout, 118-119.
[39] Ritzke-Rutherford, *Light and Darkness*, 175-176.
[40] On old age, specifically, and its coupling with darkness, see Thijs Porck, *Old Age in Early Medieval England: A Cultural History* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2019), 81. The nature of these oppositions is quite

and ‘foe against foe’, where one side is almost interchangeable with the other, further suggest that the dichotomies might not be all that sharp-cut. Perhaps, light and darkness are not so different from each other and should be interpreted rather as antagonists operating on a level playing field, having certain things in common. Maxims like these are suggestive in their cultural significance,[41] possibly illustrating a fondness among Anglo-Saxons for aphoristic categorization as a way of relishing the ‘wholeness’ or ‘rightness’ of Creation.[42] All the same, suggestiveness remains suggestiveness, and one must be careful not to read too much into a single passage.[43]

In this regard, the passage from *The Hobbit*, where the indistinctness of darkness really comes to the fore, provides an interesting point of comparison. Although it mostly concentrates on the nature of darkness, the situation in which Bilbo finds himself in (i.e. a dark, damp underground cave) and the place he wants to get to (i.e. out of the goblin warren and into the protecting light of day) do invite the reader to contrast darkness with its natural counterpart. Still, emphasis lies on darkness’ paradoxicality. Connotations familiar from *Maxims II* are close kinship of the dark with mortality (“*Ends life*”) and, possibly, evil (“*kills laughter*”). Another association is the combination of intangibility (“*It cannot be seen...felt...heard...smelt*”) and clear physical presence (“*It lies behind stars and under hills, And empty holes it fills*”), which makes for a puzzling and somewhat unsettling ambiguity. The clause “*It comes first and follows after*,” moreover, implies not only that light is opposed to darkness but is also in some way dependent on it, having been borne out of it. In both the Old English literary tradition and Tolkien’s literary imagination, therefore, there is more to darkness and light than meets the eye at first, and it is these nuances which this chapter seeks to explore and expand upon.

Light and darkness in religion and myth

reminiscent of ‘The Seven Joys of Heaven’ *topos*, where youth, life and light and their negative counterparts are phrased in similarly gnomic dichotomies (Porck, *Old Age*, 106; T. D. Hill, “The Seven Joys of Heaven in ‘Christ III’ and Old English Homiletic Texts,” *Notes and Queries* 16, no. 5 (1969), 165-166).

[41] T. A. Shippey, “Maxims in Old English Narrative: Literary Art or Traditional Wisdom?” in *Oral Tradition, Literary Tradition: A Symposium*, ed. H. Bekker-Nielsen (Odense: Odense University Press, 1977), 40; R. D. Fulk and C. M. Cain, *A History of Old English Literature* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), 164-165; Robert Dinapoli, “Gnomic poetry,” in *The Wiley Blackwell Encyclopedia of Anglo-Saxon England*, eds. Michael Lapidge, John Blair, Simon Keynes and Donald Scragg, 2nd ed. (Chichester: Wiley Blackwell, 2014), 215-216; Porck, *Old Age*, 53-54.

[42] Fulk and Cain, *A History of Old English Literature*, 172; Shippey, *Poems of Wisdom and Learning*, 15.

[43] In his introduction to *Maxims II*, Shippey cautions that “[t]he modern critic’s temptation is to press that suggestiveness into certainty, to derive a structure from what may be just single *things*” (*Poems of Wisdom and Learning in Old English* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1976), 15; italics in original).

Before dealing with these specific contexts, however, it is helpful to first look at light and darkness from a broader perspective. The interaction of light and dark is a phenomenon which has fascinated humans for millennia, going as far back as prehistoric cave art at the tail end of the Paleolithic. The intricate cave drawings in reddish and black dyes testify to the fact that light and darkness have always been prone to accruing various ritualistic and/or religious connotations, and that some of the eerie effects which their interplay produces, such as chiaroscuro,[44] were quickly put to use by ancient artists for aesthetic and symbolic purposes.[45] According to Jean Clottes and David Lewis-Williams, it is these "shadowy images [i.e. the cave art reliant on flickering torchlight]" which "are the earliest evidence for a major symbolic opposition, light : darkness, that runs through so many religions."[46] Thinking along lines of darkness and light thus touches at the very heart of human (spiritual) worldviews.

Indeed, later mythologies and religions certainly got the message and cemented the dynamic polarity of light and dark firmly within their respective myths and founding legends.[47] Mircea Eliade, in his *Patterns in Comparative Religion*, calls attention to the propensity in many world religions to base their dualist beliefs on "[t]he phases of the moon," which allows modern researchers to gain access to "[,] if not the historical origin, at least the mythological and symbolic illustration of all dualisms." [48] The waxing and waning of the moon brings about a cycle of periods of greater darkness following periods of lesser darkness, and it is this back-and-forth movement which is reflected in the "cosmic historic cycles" found in numerous mythological traditions.[49] Incidentally, one does not have to view these darker times as utterly evil, for another possible avenue of interpretation is to see these "periods of shadow" as a necessary step towards a time of renewed light:

> It is in this sense that we can talk of the positive value of periods of shadow, times of large-scale decadence and disintegration...for then the balance of things is precarious, human conditions infinitely varied, new developments are encouraged by the disintegration of the laws and of all the old framework. Such dark periods are a sort of darkness, of universal night. And as such, just as death represents a positive value in

[44] Meaning 'light-dark' in Italian. Chiaroscuro is an art technique used mainly in Renaissance paintings characterised by their stark contrasts of dark and light colours (e.g. Rembrandt). See Michael Clarke, *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Art Terms*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), s.v. 'chiaroscuro'.
[45] Jean Clottes and David Lewis-Williams, "Palaeolithic Art and Religion," in *The Penguin Handbook of Ancient Religions*, ed. J. R. Hinnells (London: Penguin Books, 2007), 36-38; Ronald Hutton, *Pagan Britain* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013), 17.
[46] Clottes and Lewis-Williams, "Palaeolithic Art and Religion," 38.
[47] Jean Chevalier and Alain Gheerbrant, *The Penguin Dictionary of Symbols*, trans. John Buchanan-Brown (London: Penguin Books, 1996), s.v. 'light'.
[48] Mircea Eliade, *Patterns in Comparative Religion*, trans. Rosemary Sheed (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1958), 183.
[49] *Ibid.*, 184.

> itself, so do they; it is the same symbolism as that of larvae in the dark, of hibernation, of seeds bursting apart in the earth so that a new form can appear.[50]

Hence, light and darkness, despite being clearly antithetical, are intimately involved with each other, the one depending on the other for their individual ascendance.[51] One potential consequence of this is to take the radical step of viewing both as having sprung from the same essence.[52] In so doing, radical dualism—which stipulates the existence of two opposing forces of absolutely equal weight and independence[53]—is resolved, although one could say that there still remains an essential opposition between the two forces within their shared superstructure. This question of whether or not to maintain or dissolve the dualism of light and darkness has played a particularly crucial role within the history of Christian theology.

Dualism, including the opposition between darkness and light, has had a long history in Christian theological thinking. Already in the Jewish tradition which preceded it, a general trend towards greater differentiation between God and Satan—turning the latter into an agent of evil partially working independently from God—entailed an intensification of the dualist element in religious thought, even though it never went as far as the Gnostic or Manichaeistic conception of total separation.[54] This dualist trend is particularly noticeable in the Dead Sea Scrolls, where "the world is divided into the 'sons of light' (members of the Qumran [location where the scrolls were found] community) and the 'sons of darkness' (the rest of the world) who are ruled respectively by the Prince of Light and the Angel of Darkness."[55] Such strands of "ethical dualism," in turn, left indelible marks on the New Testament, especially the Gospel of John, which mentions the eventual expulsion of the *princeps huius mundi* [prince of this world].[56] The core texts of the Christian faith thus contained a strong dualist component from their inception, something which long remained (and arguably still is) an important matter of debate and contention.[57]

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[50] Eliade, *Patterns in Comparative Religion*, 184.
[51] Cf. Dockery's views on the clash of light and shadow in *LOTR*, which ushers in a period of renewal (*The Myth of the Shadow*, 321).
[52] Eliade, *Patterns in Comparative Religion*, 184-185.
[53] P. F. M. Fontaine, *The Light and the Dark: A Cultural History of Dualism*, vol. 21 (Utrecht: Gopher Publishing, 2005), xxi.
[54] John Rogerson, "Ancient Israel to the Fall of the Second Temple," in *The Penguin Handbook of Ancient Religions*, ed. Hinnells, 241-242; W. R. F. Browning, *A Dictionary of the Bible*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), s.v. 'dualism'.
[55] Rogerson, "Ancient Israel," 241; Browning, *Dictionary of the Bible*, s.v. 'light' and 'darkness'.
[56] *Ibid.*, 241; *Ibid.*, s.v. 'light' and 'darkness'. The phrase 'prince of this world' occurs in John 12:31. Note also the part of Jesus' speech which says that he has arrived as a *lux in mundum...ut omnis qui credit in me in tenebris non maneat* [a light into the world, that whosoever believeth in me may not remain in darkness] (John 12:46). All citations and translations from the Old and New Testaments are taken from the Vulgate Bible and the Douay-Rheims translation published by Harvard University Press as part of the Dumbarton Oaks Medieval Library series.
[57] See the discussion below on Manichaeism and Gnosticism.

Mainstream (western) Christianity has always been rather uneasy about strict dualisms like good and evil, light and darkness, God and Satan; and much ink has been spent by theologians to find solutions to the worrying corollaries which they give rise to. Why, for one, do evil things happen to virtuous people if God and his Creation are nothing but goodness?[58] To this question many sects and offshoots of Christianity attempted to find an answer during the late antique period, when mainstream, orthodox Christianity had not yet fully coalesced and still had to take a definitive position in this debate.[59] The solution reached by the Gnostics—who by no means all considered themselves Christian or operated within an exclusively Christian frame[60]—was a form of "Christian dualism."[61] In certain Gnostic mythologies, such as that of Mandaeism, there was a very stark distinction between light and darkness: they were believed to make up separate realms which nonetheless worked together on occasion—the central moment of collaboration being the time when they created the earth and humanity.[62] As a result, humans have a trace of light within themselves in the form of their souls/spirits.[63] This dualist attitude was later taken up and adapted by the prophet Mani and his followers (Manichaeism), whose tight organization and Gnostic-like cosmogony centred around the avoidance of Darkness' depraved materiality were a great source of concern to orthodox Christians,[64] so much so that 'Manichee' became a common epithet with which to brand heretics of various persuasions.[65] Much later, in the twelfth century AD, a debased conception of Manichaeism was still being used by Church officials to denounce similarly dualist heresies like that of the Cathars in southern France.[66] Clearly, dualism has never been on good terms with mainstream Church doctrine.

The 'official' view on oppositions like good and evil held by the Catholic Church was

[58] Steven Runciman, *The Medieval Manichee: A Study of the Christian Dualist Heresy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1947), 5; Roelof van den Broek, *Gnostic Religion in Antiquity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 168; Diarmaid MacCulloch, *A History of Christianity: The First Three Thousand Years* (London: Penguin Books, 2010), 122.
[59] Runciman, *Medieval Manichee*, 2-5.
[60] Broek, *Gnostic Religion*, 9-10; MacCulloch, *Christianity*, 122.
[61] Runciman, *Medieval Manichee*, 5. 'Gnosticism' was a very broad phenomenon, however, and not all of branches were purely dualist; many should even be classified as monistic (Broek, *Gnostic Religion*, 169-171).
[62] Broek, *Gnostic Religion*, 168.
[63] *Ibid.*, 168.
[64] Runciman, *Medieval Manichee*, 12-16; MacCulloch, *Christianity*, 170-171; S. N. C. Lieu, "Christianity and Manichaeism," in *The Cambridge History of Christianity, Volume 2: Constantine to c. 600*, eds. Augustine Casiday and F. W. Norris (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 282-284.
[65] Runciman, *Medieval Manichee*, 17-18; Lieu, "Christianity and Manichaeism," 293-294.
[66] Lieu, "Christianity and Manichaeism," 294; MacCulloch, *Christianity*, 387-388; J. H. Lynch, *The Medieval Church: A Brief History* (London: Longman, 1994), 222-223.

decidedly softer on the dualism front, tending to relegate evil to something like a non-category, a drastically watered down version of the goodness originally created by God.[67] Here, one may detect the influence of Neoplatonic thought, as exemplified by Plotinus (204/5–270 AD), which stipulated that matter and evil are the formless and chaotic dregs left over after the gradual diminution of the goodness emanated from 'the One' (which is still preserved in the soul).[68] One of the first Christian proponents of this *privatio boni* ('privation of the good') principle was Augustine of Hippo (354-430 AD), who countered the tenets of Manichaeism by arguing that evil is not a substantial force but simply an absence of good.[69] As such, humans, enabled by their free will and burdened by a propensity towards evil on account of hereditary Original Sin, could fall into folly and lose some of their goodness, even though they were not created evil in the first place, for all of Creation was perfect in the beginning.[70] In this sense, evil differs markedly from darkness, which *was* an immediate result of God's shaping hand.[71] Augustine understood light and darkness as collectively having their origin in Creation, unlike good and evil.[72] By way of illustration, consider this passage from book XIII, chapter 2 of Augustine's *Confessions*:

> Had the spiritual creation, in its incipient state, deserved of you even the fluidity and darkness which was all that it then was? It was like the depths of the ocean and it would have remained in that state, estranged from your likeness, unless that same Word had turned it towards its Creator and made it light by casting his own brightness upon it, not in equal degree with yourself, but allowing it to take form in your likeness.[73]

Here, yet void and formless Creation (actually 'spiritual Creation', i.e. the Heaven of Heavens) is described as not deserving the 'fluidity and darkness' which have nonetheless been bestowed upon it as a gift. Darkness, then, was in fact created and not evil initially, though it is inferior

[67] This reduction in dualism is also seen in the comprehensiveness of the medieval educational curriculum (i.e. the *trivium* and the *quadrivium*) developed at the Carolingian court, which Fontaine believed is one of the reasons why "[m]edieval culture" should be seen as "essentially non-dualistic" (*The Light and the Dark*, 9).
[68] E. M. Hanson, "Augustine," in *The History of Evil in the Medieval Age, 450-1450 CE, Volume II*, ed. Andrew Pinsent (London: Routledge, 2018), Manichaean and Neoplatonic Influences, paragraph 4, e-book; Pauliina Remes, *Neoplatonism* (London: Routledge, 2008), 94-95.
[69] Hanson, "Augustine," Manichaean and Neoplatonic Influences, paragraph 6, e-book. The fact that Augustine fervently opposed Manichaeism and went on to take up such a dominant place within the Catholic Church has a smattering of irony to it, considering that Augustine himself used to be a Manichee (Broek, *Gnostic Religion*, 5).
[70] Hanson, "Augustine," Original Sin, paragraph 1, e-book; Paul van Geest, "God," in *The Cambridge Companion to Augustine's 'Confessions'*, ed. Tarmo Toom (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), 127. This is where orthodox Christianity deviates substantially from Neoplatonism, for the latter considered all matter as debased and lacking goodness (Hanson, "Augustine," Manichaean and Neoplatonic Influences, paragraph 4, e-book).
[71] See Genesis 1:1-5.
[72] Geest, "God," 126-127.
[73] Saint Augustine, *Confessions*, trans. R. S. Pine-Coffin (London: Penguin Classics, 2015), 479.

to the light of the 'Word'. It is only by actively turning away from the light that darkness gets equated with sin and willful ignorance:

> The good of the spirit is to *cling to you* for ever, so that it may not, by turning away from you, lose the light which it gained by turning towards you and relapse into that existence which resembles the dark depths of the sea.[74]

So, in spite of the closeness between darkness and evil, it is impossible to equate the two in orthodox opinion. Christianity's shared ancestry with other faiths in much older Paleolithic traditions, as well as its later contact with dualist religious currents, have evidently made dichotomies of the evil-good and light-darkness kind into a major catalyst for theological debate, but explanations of their exact nature and origin provided by Church authorities have always remained slightly inconclusive at best.[75] Nevertheless, they left a lasting legacy, and it is in the discussion below that the voices of two inheritors in particular are allowed to speak: the collective voice of the Anglo-Saxons (as expressed through their literature) and a more modern voice (though quite traditional) in the person of J. R. R. Tolkien.

Light and darkness in Old English literature

Given the widespread currency of Christian subject matter and themes,[76] it is not surprising that "light and dark imagery is a contrast that runs deep in Old English literature,"[77] although there is no doubt a whole variety of sources underlying this fascination, not all of which are Christian.[78] After all, while steeped in the works of their Latinate predecessors, the Anglo-Saxons were not afraid to inject learned knowledge with aspects of their own native worldview.[79] Yet, for all that high salience, it was only from the last quarter of the previous century onwards that these opposing images really started catching the attention of researchers in the field. The first scholar to have explored the Anglo-Saxon preoccupation with light/dark

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[74] Augustine, *Confessions*, 480. Italics in original.
[75] MacCulloch, *Christianity*, 125.
[76] Malcolm Godden, "Biblical Literature: The Old Testament," in *The Cambridge Companion to Old English Literature*, ed. Malcolm Godden and Michael Lapidge, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 214-215; Richard Marsden, "Biblical Literature: The New Testament," in *The Cambridge Companion to Old English Literature*, eds. Godden and Lapidge, 234-250; Fulk and Cain, *A History of Old English Literature*, 27.
[77] Wehlau and Michelet, "Introduction: Darkness in the Universe, Darkness in the Mind in Anglo-Saxon Literature," 1.
[78] Cf. the pervasive theme of 'transience' in Old English elegiac verse, which has clear analogues in Old Norse mythological texts like the *Hávamál* (Christine Fell, "Perceptions of Transience," in *The Cambridge Companion to Old English Literature*, eds. Godden and Lapidge, 183).
[79] Daniel Anlezark, "The Anglo-Saxon World View," in *The Cambridge Companion to Old English Literature*, eds. Godden and Lapidge, 66.

imagery in a detailed and systematic way was Jean Ritzke-Rutherford. Her doctoral dissertation *Light and Darkness in Anglo-Saxon Thought and Writing*, published in 1979, attempted to remedy the unfortunate state of affairs in scholarship of her day, which suffered from a lack of studies "on the conventional treatment of light...in Old English literature as a whole."[80] Nor had anyone before "been able to offer a credible explanation for the marked prevalence of the motif of light and darkness."[81] A proper overview of Old English literary dealings with light and darkness would thus do well to consider her pioneering work.

Concerning genealogical, legal and medical texts, Ritzke-Rutherford's examination of the light-dark motif mainly yields evidence pointing towards the increased importance of the sun and moon as objects of worship and superstition in the late Anglo-Saxon period.[82] Historiographical and 'scientific' texts attest to a keen interest among scholars and historiographers in the portentous and allegorical characteristics of light, heavenly bodies (especially the sun and moon, and the morning and evening stars) and other astronomical phenomena like comets and eclipses.[83] Extraordinary astronomical events were often described by historiographers as omens signaling the deaths of high-placed individuals and as the onset of disasters such as plague, famine and even the approaching Apocalypse—although, from the end of the ninth century onwards, mentions of such portents get sparser and sparser, probably on account of the proliferation of scientific compendia and the slow fizzling out of belief in the year 1000 as the year of reckoning.[84] Meanwhile, authors of scientific treatises, such as Ælfric and Bede, did not hesitate to lather their complicated computistics with allegorical interpretations drawn from theology (e.g. viewing the sun as an allegory for Christ).[85]

Within the genre of theology, which includes Old English hymnology, hagiographic and homiletic writings and patristic writings, light/dark imagery is especially rich:

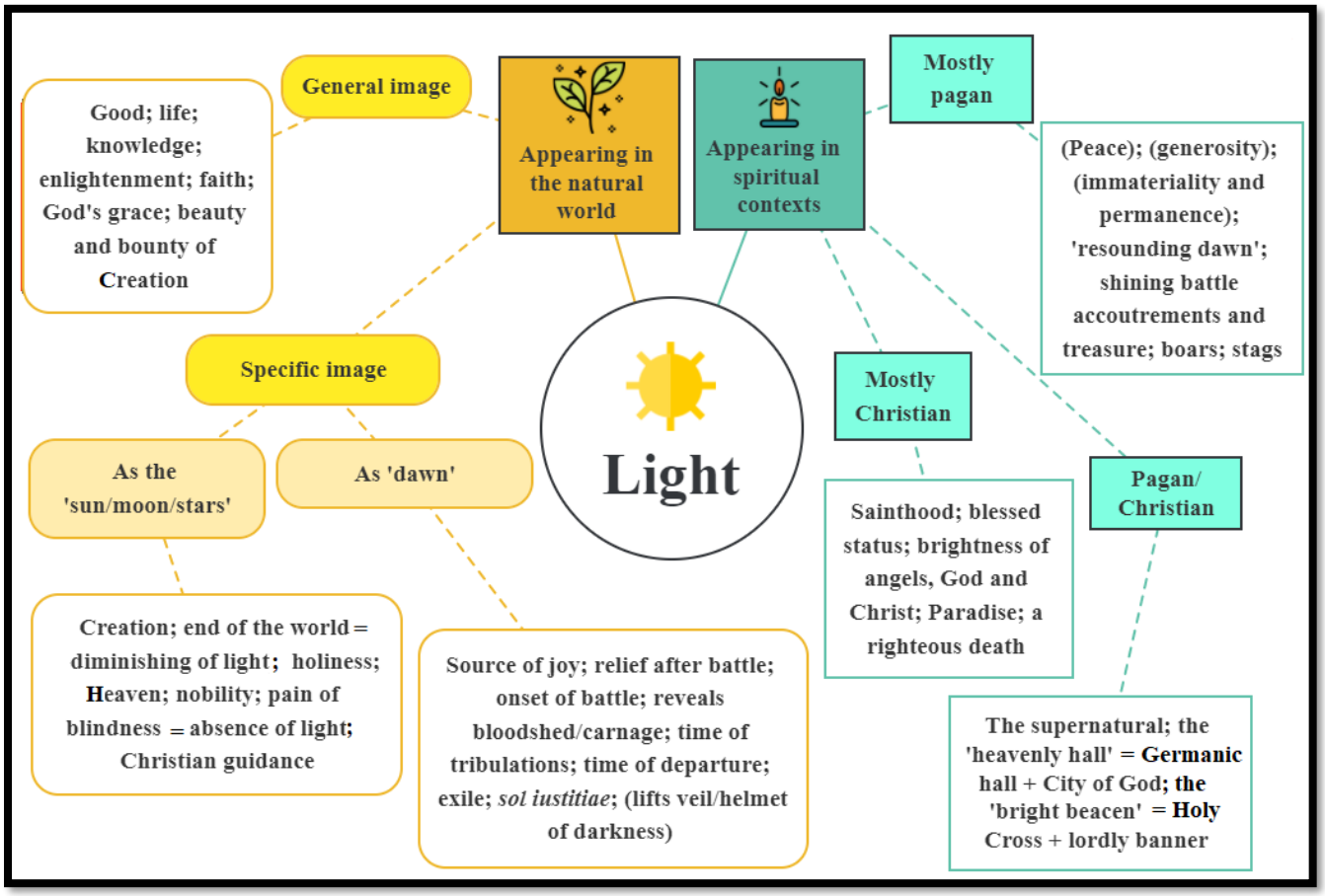
> Christ and God are continually invoked as the Light and Creator of Light, asked to send down the Faith, which is at once both light and enlightenment, to dispel the terrors of darkness and sin, to heal the blindness of ignorance and unbelief, and to lead mortal man along the Way of Light. Light is life, and transcendentally, Eternal Light and Divine; darkness is sin, death, and transcendentally the death of the soul and damnation.[86]

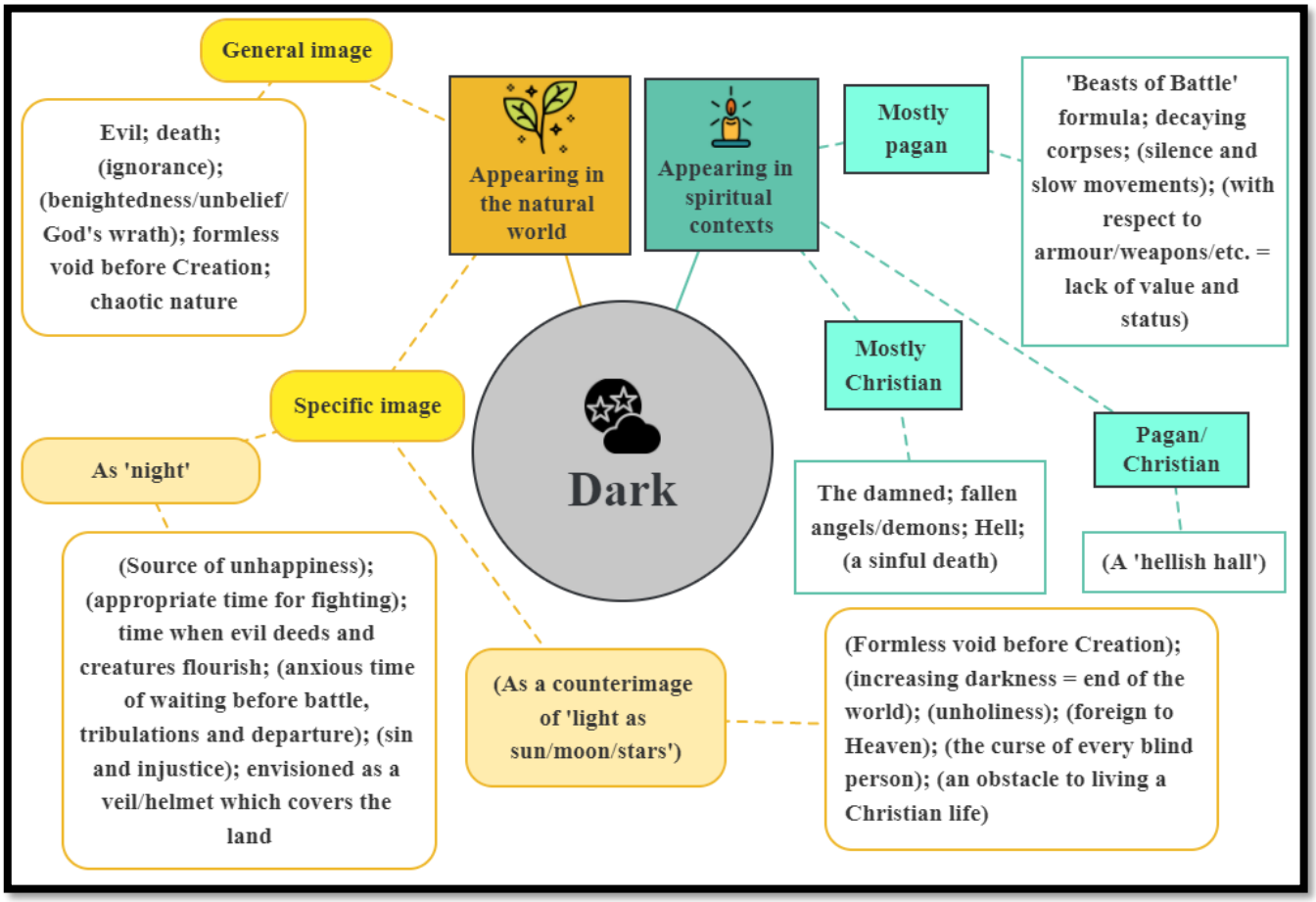
[80] Ritzke-Rutherford, *Light and Darkness*, 1.
[81] *Ibid.*, 1.
[82] *Ibid.*, 72-84.
[83] *Ibid.*, 85-110.
[84] *Ibid.*, 85-90.
[85] *Ibid.*, 108-110.
[86] *Ibid.*, 112.

Many of these associations, such as the connection of darkness with sin and ignorance of God, have already been mentioned in relation to the topic of dualism above. Indeed, the whole emphasis on God = 'light' and mortal man's yearning for that light lead Ritzke-Rutherford to trace back its potential lineage to Neoplatonic philosophy, filtered down through the writings of Pseudo-Dionysius, John Scotus Eriugena and Saint Augustine.[87] Evidently, Anglo-Saxon views on light and darkness were much indebted to their Christian heritage.

Old English poetry, which constitutes the second major area of research in Ritzke-Rutherford's study, contains the bulk of Anglo-Saxon associations with light and darkness. For the sake of clarity, the information presented in this chapter has been simplified and cast in the form of two diagrams, a fuller version of which can be found in appendix A (see table A1). These diagrams cover the first four sections titled: 'light in the natural world', 'predominantly pagan contexts', 'predominantly Christian contexts' and 'syncretistic images of light'.[88] Connotations put within parentheses are not mentioned explicitly by Ritzke-Rutherford but are derived indirectly from her conclusions about either light or darkness. This made it possible to broaden the total scope of associations slightly further, although these additions must nonetheless remain conjectural.

[87] Ritzke-Rutherford, *Light and Darkness*, 141-142.
[88] Ritzke-Rutherford labels the last context 'syncretistic', because "a number of motifs or stereotyped images in which pagan heroic and Christian meanings overlap and fuse, imbuing the narrative with a double significance" (*Ibid.*, 205).


Light
General image
Good; life; knowledge; enlightenment; faith; God's grace; beauty and bounty of Creation
Appearing in the natural world
Appearing in spiritual contexts
Mostly pagan
(Peace); (generosity); (immateriality and permanence); 'resounding dawn'; shining battle accoutrements and treasure; boars; stags
Mostly Christian
Sainthood; blessed status; brightness of angels, God and Christ; Paradise; a righteous death
Pagan/ Christian
The supernatural; the 'heavenly hall' = Germanic hall + City of God; the 'bright beacen' = Holy Cross + lordly banner
Specific image
As the 'sun/moon/stars'
Creation; end of the world = diminishing of light; holiness; Heaven; nobility; pain of blindness = absence of light; Christian guidance
As 'dawn'
Source of joy; relief after battle; onset of battle; reveals bloodshed/carnage; time of tribulations; time of departure; exile; *sol iustitiae*; (lifts veil/helmet of darkness)


Dark
General image
Evil; death; (ignorance); (benightedness/unbelief/ God's wrath); formless void before Creation; chaotic nature
Appearing in the natural world
Appearing in spiritual contexts
Mostly pagan
'Beasts of Battle' formula; decaying corpses; (silence and slow movements); (with respect to armour/weapons/etc. = lack of value and status)
Mostly Christian
The damned; fallen angels/demons; Hell; (a sinful death)
Pagan/ Christian
(A 'hellish hall')
Specific image
As 'night'
(Source of unhappiness); (appropriate time for fighting); time when evil deeds and creatures flourish; (anxious time of waiting before battle, tribulations and departure); (sin and injustice); envisioned as a veil/helmet which covers the land
(As a counterimage of 'light as sun/moon/stars')
(Formless void before Creation); (increasing darkness = end of the world); (unholiness); (foreign to Heaven); (the curse of every blind person); (an obstacle to living a Christian life)

Ritzke-Rutherford's last section on Old English poetry is quite different from the other sections, since it provides close readings of a narrow selection of poems (*Christ, Phoenix, The Dream of the Rood* and *Elene*). Her main claim with regard to these poems is that their thematic structure is consistent with the theological image of Christ as *Sol iustitiae*/*Sol invictus* and the Holy Cross as *Crux invicta*, which descend out of the heavens to banish the shadows of death on earth.[89] This is especially the case with the poem *Christ*, since its troublesome tripartite structure receives an overarching principle when seen through the lens of this new theme.[90] Thus, it turns out that a focus on light-dark imagery is not only a valuable tool in bringing to light Anglo-Saxon worldviews but also in discovering some of the deeper layers of meaning in individual poems.

To return to the issue at large, Ritzke-Rutherford's findings make abundantly clear that light and darkness in the imagination of Anglo-Saxons were anything but one-sided and devoid of real significance. Still, a great many nuances could be added to the schemas sketched out above.[91] One key drawback of Ritzke-Rutherford's approach, pointed out subsequently by scholars working on the same topic, is her privileging of light over darkness, the former receiving much greater attention in her analysis (see, for example, the subheadings 'light in the natural world' and 'syncretic images of light' in table A1).[92] Darkness is often portrayed, if at all, as merely that which light is not.[93] The relationship between darkness and nature, especially the latter's violent and imposing characteristics, is seldom discussed in her chapter on poetry,[94] even though there are multiple instances to be found which hint at such a connection, such as the "dena dimme"[95] [valleys...dark] in the *Wife's Lament* or this passage from *Beowulf*:[96]

> Þonon yð-geblond up astigeð
> won to wolcnum þonne wind styreþ
> lað gewidru, oð þæt lyft ðrysmaþ,

[89] Ritzke-Rutherford, *Light and Darkness*, 227-228.
[90] *Ibid.*, 228-229.
[91] For night-time as a time of action and bloodshed, see T. M. Andersson, "The Discovery of Darkness in Northern Literature," in *Old English Studies in Honour of John C. Pope*, eds. R. B. Burlin and E. B. Irving, Jr. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974), 3; Sarah Harlan-Haughey, "The Burning Sun: Landscape and Knowledge in Exodus," in *Secular Learning in Anglo-Saxon England: Exploring the Vernacular*, eds. L. S. Chardonnens and Bryan Carella (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2012), 109-111. For the image of a 'hellish hall', see the treatment of Hell as an 'anti-hall' (Kathryn Hume, "The Concept of the Hall in Old English Poetry," *Anglo-Saxon England* 3 (1974), 74).
[92] Missuno, *'Shadow' and Paradoxes of Darkness*, 27.
[93] *Ibid.*, 27.
[94] Ritzke-Rutherford, *Light and Darkness*, 14.
[95] *The Wife's Lament*, ed. and trans. R. E. Bjork, in *Old English Shorter Poems*, l. 30a.
[96] Jennifer Neville, *Representations of the Natural World in Old English Poetry* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 38. See, also, Harlan-Haughey, "The Burning Sun: Landscape and Knowledge in Exodus," 103-104.

roderas reotað.[97]

[There the tossing waves mount up dark to the clouds when the wind stirs up ugly storms, until they choke the air and the heavens weep.]

This gloomy depiction of the forces of nature is part of Hrothgar's description of the Grendelkin and their lair, based on eye-witness accounts from his "lond-buend, leode...sele-rædende"[98] [countrymen...people, hall-councilors], which grants this collocation of darkness and (wild) nature a currency across the whole class spectrum of Anglo-Saxon society.

Moreover, the recent publication of a collection of essays under the title of *Darkness, Depression, and Descent in Anglo-Saxon England*, edited by Ruth Wehlau, has fleshed out the Anglo-Saxon conception of darkness in novel directions. Among the many contributions to this anthology, A. W. Clark has argued that the Old English colour term *sweart* 'black' carried a mostly negative baggage of connotations like sin and damnation, so much so that it had the strength to 'stain' otherwise quite neutral contexts and words.[99] Pigs and rainclouds, for instance, were respectively turned into "devils in disguise" and metaphors for "sin and suspicion block[ing] the light of the soul" when collocated with the word *sweart*.[100] Meanwhile, both Ruth Wehlau and Carl Kears link darkness to a state of mental obfuscation. Wehlau's article reveals how Beowulf's *þeostrum geþoncum* 'dark thoughts' represent the hero's complete loss of wisdom and hope at his first hearing of the dragon's attack.[101] Carl Kears, taking a manuscript-oriented approach, sees the religious poems in the Junius Manuscript as fundamentally concerned with the bodily and psychological consequences of Lucifer's banishment from the light of Heaven, which has robbed him of his formerly angelic being and has left him wandering in the darkness of Hell in utter confusion.[102] All these other nuances aside, however, the fact remains that light is habitually coupled with positive traits like 'life', 'enlightenment', 'God' and 'treasure',[103] whereas darkness has such things as 'death', 'evil'

[97] *Beowulf*, ed. and trans. R. D. Fulk, in *The Beowulf Manuscript: Complete Texts and The Fight at Finnsburg* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010), ll. 1373-1376a. All quotations and translations from *Beowulf* are taken from this edition.
[98] *Beowulf*, ll. 1345-1346a.
[99] A. W. Clark, "*Sweart* as Sin: Color Connotation and Morality in Anglo-Saxon England," in *Darkness, Depression, and Descent in Anglo-Saxon England*, ed. Wehlau, 24.
[100] *Ibid.*, 25.
[101] Ruth Wehlau, "Beowulf's Dark Thoughts: Heremod, Hrethel, and Exempla of the Mind," in *Darkness, Depression, and Descent in Anglo-Saxon England*, ed. Wehlau, 145-146.
[102] Carl Kears, "Darkness and Light in Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Junius 11," in *Darkness, Depression, and Descent in Anglo-Saxon England*, ed. Wehlau, 227-228.
[103] Note, though, the at best ambiguous associations with 'light as dawn'.

and ‘the Beasts of Battle’ to keep it company. This proves that Anglo-Saxons, on the whole, looked much more favourably on light than its dark counterpart.[104]

Light and darkness in Tolkien

Judging from the excerpt from *The Hobbit* given at the start of this chapter, as well as Tolkien’s deep knowledge of both Christian and Anglo-Saxon tradition, it should be no surprise that the imagery of light and darkness plays an important role in his fiction. In fact, it is a common sight even in writings which preceded (and followed) the publications of *The Hobbit* and *LOTR*.[105] Tolkien’s undergraduate years at university were the time when his poetic inclinations came to full fruition.[106] Several poems which came out of this burst of creativity contain early glimpses of the roles which light and darkness were to play in his later work. A love poem, for instance, preserves Tolkien’s analogy of Edith and himself “as two fair trees / in woodland or in open dale / stand utterly entwined, and breathe / the airs, and suck the very light / together.”[107] By imagining light as capable of being ‘sucked’, just as air can be ‘breathed’, it attains a measure of solidity, a feature which, as John Garth notes, “was to become a recurrent feature of Tolkien’s mythology.” With Europe in the throes of World War One, Tolkien had sent this intimate poem (alongside many others) to his friends H. T. Wade-Gery and G. B. Smith, who were stationed in Oxford.[108] Surely, his artful interweaving of the immaterial with the material—creating a scene where light (as a ‘substance’) becomes one with the landscape—was part of the reason why Wade-Gery and Smith were full of praise in their reactions.[109] Light and darkness imagery would contribute greatly to the painting-like and sensory qualities of his later descriptions of landscape and natural scenery (e.g. in *LOTR*).[110] As the example above shows, Tolkien already tinkered with this evocative polarity from an early age.

A similar picture emerges when looking at the more mythological narratives which formed the backcloth material for *The Hobbit* and *LOTR* (i.e. those collated in *The Silmarillion* in particular). Verlyn Flieger, the main authority on the subject, elevates the polarity of light and dark evidenced in Tolkien’s mythology and published fiction to “the essence both of

[104] Ritzke-Rutherford, *Light and Darkness*, 15.
[105] Flieger, *Splintered Light*, 73.
[106] John Garth, *Tolkien and the Great War: The Threshold of Middle-earth* (London: HarperCollins*Publishers*, 2003), 58-59.
[107] These are lines 4-7 from the 9-line poem, quoted in Garth, *Tolkien and the Great War*, 65. See, also, Carpenter, *Biography*, 106.
[108] Garth, *Tolkien and the Great War*, 64-65.
[109] *Ibid.*, 64-65.
[110] Brian Rosebury, *Tolkien: A Cultural Phenomenon* (Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 84.

Tolkien and of his work."[111] Indeed, it functions as a thematic superstructure which incorporates many other important themes and oppositions:

> The light-dark polarity operates on all levels—literal, metaphoric, symbolic. It is active in Creation and Fall, it engenders languages and imbues it; its interplay becomes the interplay of good and evil, belief and doubt, free will and fate...Opposite points on the circle, they are held in tension by simultaneous attraction and repulsion. Their interdependence embodies all the polarities in Tolkien's theme, for, as light cannot be known without darkness, so hope needs the contrast of despair to give it meaning, and free will opposes, yet is defined by, the concept of fate.[112]

Whereas in his student years Tolkien still fiddled with light and dark motifs in a fairly naive and innocent way (as one would expect), they begin to amass larger, mythical proportions in his later writings, perhaps hastened by his wartime experience.[113]

Such expansion of scale is clearly present in Tolkien's treatment of elvish history, for light and darkness lie at the heart of its mythic ramifications.[114] Prior to their separation into distinct tribes, the elves were simply called *Quendi* 'those who speak with voices', having acquired the gift of speech after seeing the fragmented light of the stars.[115] Their subsequent division into *Calaquendi* 'Elves of the Light' and *Moriquendi* 'Elves of Darkness' (i.e. elves who did (not) experience the light of the Two Trees) reflects the steady drift away from enlightenment and paradisiacal bliss and towards a diminished existence.[116] Here, Tolkien can be seen imaginatively expanding on the confusion surrounding the nature of the 'elf' in Germanic philology.[117] Neither Old English *ælf* 'elf', or its cognates in other old Germanic languages, were easy concepts to define—a situation ideal for scholarly speculation.[118] Especially troublesome has been the statement made by Snorri Sturluson in his 13th-century *Prose Edda*, in which he appears to make quite a lucid distinction between *ljósálfar* 'light-elves' and *dökkálfar* 'dark-elves'.[119] The real trouble springs from the extra information which Snorri appends to *dökkálfar*: they are *svartari en bik* 'blacker than pitch', a qualification elsewhere only used to signify dwarves (or *svartálfar* 'black-elves').[120] Tolkien solved this

[111] Flieger, *Splintered Light*, 28.
[112] *Ibid.*, 28-29.
[113] Garth, *Tolkien and the Great War*, 254-260.
[114] Flieger, *Splintered Light*, 84.
[115] *Ibid.*, 106.
[116] *Ibid.*, 106.
[117] *Ibid.*, 107; Shippey, "Light-elves, Dark-elves, and Others: Tolkien's Elvish Problem," in *Roots and Branches*, ed. Honegger, 217.
[118] Shippey, "Light-elves, Dark-elves, and Others," 217-218.
[119] *Ibid.*, 219-220.
[120] *Ibid.*, 220-221.

apparent contradiction through the figure of Eöl, who "was named the Dark Elf"[121] and who might have been mistaken for a 'black' elf, because of his habit of wearing *galvorn*, a metal "black and shining like jet"[122] which he invented with the help of the dwarves.[123] Light and darkness were thus central factors in plotting the history of the elves and in characterizing their diverging identities.

A preoccupation with light and darkness also issues from his less well-known writings and creative works. In the 1960s, Tolkien tried to expand upon the astronomical theories of the elves. On scraps of paper which preserve some of his final forays, he discusses elvish conceptions of light and darkness. Apparently, the elves conceived of light as "a 'substance', ever the most tenuous and ethereal of all things, an emanation from *self-luminous*, light-giving things…that continued, or could continue, in existence after issuing from its source."[124] Darkness could 'quench', or 'swallow', this emanation and was also viewed as "a substance, only less tenuous than Light," being "incalculably more abundant and prevalent than Light."[125]A less scientific rendering of light and darkness, stressing rather their psychological effects, occurs in another relatively early work: *The Lay of Aotrou and Itroun*, first published in *The Welsh Review* in December 1945. At the beginning of this Celtic lay, the childless lord Aotrou languishes in doom-laden visions of his future loneliness and the usurpation of his legacy. The only solution which he feels is left to him is to seek out 'cold counsel':

> Thus pondering oft at night awake
> his darkened mind would visions make
> of lonely age and death; his tomb
> unkept, while strangers in his room
> with other names and other shields
> were masters of his halls and fields.
> Thus counsel cold he took at last;
> His hope from light to darkness passed.[126]

[121] *The Silmarillion*, 153.
[122] *Ibid.*, 153.
[123] Shippey, "Light-elves, Dark-elves, and Others," 230.
[124] J. R. R. Tolkien, *The Nature of Middle-earth: Late Writings on the Lands, Inhabitants, and Metaphysics of Middle-earth*, ed. C. F. Hostetter (London: HarperCollins*Publishers*, 2021), 280. Cf. the Silmarils as embodiment of light (Flieger, *Splintered Light*, 130).
[125] *Ibid.*, 280. These late remarks (Tolkien died in 1973) on the materiality of light and darkness agree well with certain conceptions of shadow (i.e. shadow as an embodied entity) in Old English literature and *LOTR*, for which see chapters 2 and 3 below. *LOTR* had long since been published by the time he wrote down these statements on elvish astronomy, but evidence from his earliest poems proves that these ideas were already occupying him many years before (see beginning of this section).
[126] J. R. R. Tolkien, *The Lay of Aotrou and Itroun*, in *The Lay of Aotrou and Itroun, together with The Corrigan Poems*, ed. Verlyn Flieger (London: HarperCollins*Publishers*, 2019), ll. 19-26.

The person who will give him that cold counsel is a witch, a strange being with eyes "dark and piercing"[127] capable of "sp[inning] dark spells with spider-craft"[128] for those who visit her "darkening cave."[129] Again and again, images of darkness are used to attach deeper layers to the mental and geographical background of this scene: night is the time for both sleep and troubled thoughts, hope can be both light and dark, and dark caves and magic are better avoided because of their untrustworthiness and moral ambiguity.[130] Caves fascinated Tolkien, and no doubt their seemingly contradictory association with both stifling darkness and mesmerizing reflection of light (cf. Gimli's paean of the Glittering Caves of Aglarond in *LOTR*) was a large factor in this.[131] Applied well, light and darkness were powerful tools of expression in Tolkien's stories, strong enough to take on deeply psychological, even astronomical, significance.

In this chapter, the theme of light and darkness, as antithetical yet interdependent forces, has been traced across religious and mythic history, confirming its fundamental place within the cosmic order and the human condition. It is embraced by artists, writers and theologians alike (both ancient and modern), who are quick to draw in other basic oppositions, such as good-evil, spiritual-earthly, virtue-sin and order-chaos. Anglo-Saxon poets eagerly seized on this age-old theme and imbued it with their own native idiosyncrasies, thereby creating a complex web of secondary meanings and poetic expressions. Tolkien, in many ways, did the same in his mythology for the twentieth century. Nonetheless, a direct line of borrowing from either Anglo-Saxon literature or Christian/Catholic tradition cannot rightly be drawn. Most plausibly, he distilled material from both to kindle his imagination. For more palpable evidence of borrowing, it is necessary to analyze a family member of darkness: the shadow.

[127] *The Lay of Aotrou and Itroun*, l. 60.
[128] *Ibid.*, l. 29.
[129] *Ibid.*, l. 67.
[130] Cf. the Anglo-Saxon associations of darkness with ignorance, night-time, mental confusion and evil.
[131] John Garth, *The Worlds of J. R. R. Tolkien: The Places that Inspired Middle-earth* (London: Frances Lincoln, 2020), 98-99.

CHAPTER 2 – SHADOW IN OLD ENGLISH LITERATURE

As noted in the previous chapter, the theme of light versus darkness in Old English literature resists categorization into two neatly encapsulated, opposing camps. This complexity arguably bears most heavily on darkness, since one of its close affiliates, the shadow, is notoriously ambiguous both from a linguistic and a phenomenological perspective.[132] The Old English poetic imagination seems to have had a special interest in shadow as a powerful force of darkness, noted for its bewildering fluidity and its fittingness to a native poetic tradition with a predilection for gloom and doom.[133] On account of this salience, as well as shadow's relevance to Tolkien's fiction (see chapter 3), the use and conceptualization of shadow in Old English literature is considered in-depth below. Much of the information in this chapter relies on research done by Filip Missuno, an expert on themes of shadow and darkness in Germanic literatures, but on occasion additional insights and examples from primary material have been supplied.

Shadow and the human imagination

Shadows are strange and ephemeral, characteristics which make them ideal for broad elaboration in language.[134] Common parlance, for example, allows a depressed man to say he feels like a 'shadow of his former self', a worried mother to warn her overworked daughter that she is 'wearing herself to a shadow' and an overly timid boy to be 'afraid of his own shadow'.[135] Outside language, too, shadows are furtive. Unlike the all-encompassing, relatively static darkness of night,[136] shadows tend to hug the sheltered sides of objects, the insides of pits and crevices, and the secluded mountain valleys, as if afraid of the sun's light. Even more puzzling is their habit (in the natural world, that is) to always be 'on the move'.[137] They mimic the movements of living beings, following them wherever they go, and change in size according to the passage of the sun. All this moving, lengthening, shortening and hiding might predispose a

[132] Missuno, "The Sinister Sound of Shadows," 61.
[133] *Ibid.*, 84-85.
[134] Roberto Casati, *Shadows: Unlocking Their Secrets, from Plato to Our Time*, trans. Abigail Asher (New York: Vintage Books, 2004), 27-28.
[135] *Ibid.*, 27-28. See the idioms listed in the *Oxford Dictionary of English Idioms*, ed. John Ayto, 3rd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), s.v. 'shadow'.
[136] Note, however, that the darkness of night is in reality also a shadow: it is the shadow of the earth.
[137] With the advent of electrical street lighting, shadows in urbanized areas became nearly immobilized, due to the stable glare given off by the lamps. Shadows are still dynamic in natural surroundings, and they would always have been like this in pre-modern times. See Casati, *Shadows: Unlocking Their Secrets*, 13-15.

curious, but perhaps not so very scientifically-minded, individual to recognize some kind of 'embodied' agency in this odd behaviour.[138] Closer inspection would quickly uncover their two-dimensional lifelessness and lack of intrinsic motivation. What cannot be removed, though, is their category-defying potential in language and the natural world.[139]

Shadows cross the boundaries separating the living from the inert, the material from the immaterial and the conscious from the unconscious.[140] The curious person perturbed by their existence would find themselves in abundant accompany. In fact, nearly every human being starts out life with a deep interest in the doings of shadows. For about the first nine years of their lives, children struggle with shadow phenomena, believing them to be substantial productions of their own bodies which continue to exist somewhere after they have disappeared.[141] Roy Sorenson, a philosopher interested in the 'philosophy of shadows', has dubbed shadows as "the irregular verbs of object perception," comparing the child's acquisition of an adult view of shadows (i.e. the result of an object obstructing light coming from behind) with the counterintuitive task of learning irregular elements of grammar.[142] This shadowy irregularity has also been frequent food for thought in poetry and philosophical speculations on the monstrous. In the Middle Ages, monstrous beings were, in the main, noted for violating what was considered reassuringly normal, and liminal creatures who balanced precariously on the dividing line between established categories were likewise considered troublesome, if not disturbing.[143] Shadow imagery was a more than fitting medium for tackling such fence-straddling entities.

In like manner, poets throughout history have seized upon the image of the shadow when casting their ideas into words.[144] John Hollander looked at poetry written in English from the Renaissance to modern times; he showed that the shadow is a significant poetic image for channeling thought and emotion, taking on such varying connotations as "companion, comforter, creator, questioner, stalker, playmate, spy, king, ghost, dancer, demon, and

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[138] John Hollander, "A Lecture upon the Shadow," in *The Substance of Shadow: A Darkening Trope in Poetic History*, ed. Kenneth Gross (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2016), 23-25.
[139] Missuno, "The Sinister Sound of Shadows," 61.
[140] Hollander, "A Lecture upon the Shadow," 23-25.
[141] Roy Sorenson, *Seeing Dark Things: The Philosophy of Shadows* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 9-10.
[142] Sorenson, *Seeing Dark Things*, 9-10.
[143] For shadow and monsters, see the section on *Beowulf* below. On the category-hopping qualities of monsters and liminal creatures in general, see J. L. Lionarons, "From Monster to Martyr: The Old English Legend of Saint Christopher," in *Marvels, Monsters, and Miracles: Studies in the Medieval and Early Modern Imaginations*, eds. T. S. Jones and D. A. Sprunger (Kalamazoo: Western Michigan University, 2002), 181-182; J. E. Salisbury, *The Beast Within: Animals in the Middle Ages*, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 2011), 122-132.
[144] Missuno, "The Sinister Sound of Shadows," 61.

destroyer."[145] A thought-provoking exercise in shadow imagery occurs in Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, in the scene when Malcolm gives the order to camouflage the army with branches from Birnam Wood (thus fulfilling the prophecy):

> *Siward* What wood is this before us?
> *Menteith* The Wood of Birnam.
> *Malcolm* Let every soldier hew him down a bough
> And bear't before him. Thereby shall we **shadow**
> The numbers of our host and make discovery
> Err in report of us.
> *Soldiers* It shall be done.[146]

Shadow, used as a verb in this context, functions as a protecting force, enabling the host of soldiers to remain hidden, but it does so through *deceiving* the vision of their enemies. Another complicating factor is introduced by Macbeth in his short lament on the transience of life, after hearing that his wife has died:

> ...Out, out, brief candle.
> Life's but **a walking shadow**, a poor player
> That struts and frets his hour upon the stage
> And then is heard no more.[147]

Here, in clear contradiction to the previous passage, shadow gets personified as life, its fleetingness symbolizing the short shelf life of human deeds. Shakespeare evidently made eager use of the flexibility of the concept 'shadow', and in doing so he was participating in a poetic tradition much older than the 16th and 17th centuries, having roots trailing into early medieval England.

Methodological approaches to shadow in Old English literature

Akin to the literature produced in the (early) modern period, Old English poetry and prose can be characterized by a preoccupation with shadows.[148] Missuno has observed that Anglo-Saxon writers and readers/listeners alike were "haunted by the idea of shadow" and (un)consciously suffused their literary landscape with it, turning shadow's strangeness into "a strong

[145] Kenneth Gross, "Preface," in *The Substance of Shadow*, ed. Gross, 9.
[146] William Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, ed. Burton Raffel (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), 5.4.3-7. Emphasis added. In the annotations to this edition, the verb 'shadow' is glossed as 'screen, obscure, conceal'.
[147] Shakespeare, *Macbeth,* 5.5.23-26. Emphasis added. Raffel glosses 'walking shadow' as 'wandering/vagrant delusive/unreal image/phantom'.
[148] Missuno, "The Sinister Sound of Shadows," 61.

undercurrent that runs through the themes of light and darkness, wonder and monstrosity, danger, death, and damnation" and often even transcending these themes.[149] Naturally, Old English shadow vocabulary is quite ambiguous, as Filip Missuno has thoroughly explored in his dissertation and subsequent articles.[150] Missuno's work on the subject has been groundbreaking, and any discussion on the topic of shadow in Old English literature would, therefore, do well to retrace some of his thought process.

Quite atypical for an Indo-European language, Present-day English has two distinct words for describing shadow phenomena: 'shadow' and 'shade', both deriving from the same Old English word *sceadu* 'shadow'.[151] While two words for roughly the same concept is already unusual, Old English leads the way in terms of linguistic oddities by having three of them: (strong feminine) *sceadu*, (strong neuter) *scead* and (weak masculine) *scu(w)a*, all approximately translatable to 'shadow'.[152] Such variety in synonyms for shadow is unparalleled in other Germanic languages. Dutch *schaduw* resembles English 'shadow' in stemming from the oblique form of the ancestor word (Old Dutch *skado*).[153] Similarly, Old Norse only has (masculine) *skuggi*, but it belongs to the same Proto-Germanic root as Old English *scu(w)a* (not as *sceadu/scead*).[154] Gothic, meanwhile, has two words representing two separate Proto-Germanic roots—just as *sceadu/scead* and *scu(w)a* in Old English—except that one of them, *skuggwa* 'mirror' (related to *scu(w)a*), still carries the sense of the original Proto-Germanic word (the other Gothic word being *skadus* 'shadow', akin to *sceadu/scead*).[155] As this brief foray into Germanic etymology highlights, the linguistic history of Old English shadow words is complicated and rather exceptional, a qualification which also suits these words' semantic character when met in contemporary texts.

Within the field of semantics, one school of thought has it that language, in particular

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[149] Missuno, "The Sinister Sound of Shadows," 62.
[150] See, especially, chapters 2 and 4 of his dissertation, *'Shadow' and Paradoxes of Darkness*. Old English *scead*, *sceadu* and *scua* are also looked at specifically in his article on "The Sinister Sound of Shadows," 61-92.
[151] *Oxford English Dictionary Online*, s.vv. 'shadow' and 'shade', http://www.oed.com/. More specifically, the semivowel in 'shadow' comes from the oblique form *sceadwe*, while 'shade' probably takes after nominative *sceadu*, where /w/ got dropped through the influence of final /u/ (Alistair Campbell, *Old English Grammar* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1959), §594-597; Missuno, "The Sinister Sound of Shadows," 64). See, too, Casati, *Shadows: Unlocking Their Secrets*, 43-44.
[152] J. R. Clark-Hall, *A Concise Anglo-Saxon Dictionary*, 4th ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1962), s.vv. 'sceadu', 'scead' and 'scua'; Missuno, "The Sinister Sound of Shadows," 63.
[153] *Etymologisch Woordenboek van het Nederlands*, s.v. 'schaduw', https://etymologie.nl/.
[154] Guus Kroonen, *Etymological Dictionary of Proto-Germanic* (Leiden: Brill, 2013), s.v. '*skuwwan-'; Missuno, "The Sinister Sound of Shadows," 63.
[155] Kroonen, *Etymological Dictionary*, s.vv. '*skuwwan-' and '*skadu-', respectively. On account of the older meaning 'mirror', as well as related non-Germanic senses of 'to cover', Missuno suggests that Old English *scua* might have held "underlying meanings to do with 'seeing' or 'covering'" ("The Sinister Sound of Shadows," 64; for the other Indo-European roots, see Vladimir Orel, *A Handbook of Germanic Etymology* (Leiden: Brill, 2003), s.v. '*skuwwòn').

its vocabulary, is an effective lens through which scholars can analyze and discover salient features of the overarching cultural background.[156] A concept which has a rich array of words available to express it, or a word noted for its unusually high frequency of use (and *vice versa*), could very well contain important clues about the culture surrounding the language in question. Likewise, so-called 'key-words'—i.e. words of high cultural value which might take up, for instance, central positions within specific contexts or "phraseological cluster[s]"—"can be studied as focal points around which entire cultural domains are organized."[157] Missuno's doctoral dissertation on Old English shadow words partially operates within this same scholarly current. His methodology is a word-based and bottom-up approach, which refrains from imposing arbitrary, *ad hoc* categories onto the textual evidence, privileging instead a focus on "interpretative cruces" and narrow, immediately relevant contexts which might help clarify those cruces.[158] In so doing, it is possible to establish a more authentic semantic range of shadow in Old English.

Indeed, even a study centred around single words would have to be joined by a consideration of context, however narrow, in order to fully determine a word's proper meaning.[159] Here, Missuno draws on the theories of E. D. Hirsch about basing interpretations of literary texts on the immediate textual context in which words and sentences are used, instead of relying on shakier extra-textual evidence, such as an author's social background.[160] Such an internal, linguistically oriented approach lends itself ideally for the character of Old English literature, especially that of verse texts. Well-executed Old English poems, although quite free to a certain extent (e.g. in the number of syllables per line), have an intricately-wrought inner structure marked by the linking of words, phrases and even clauses through alliteration, caesurae and appositional constructions (variation).[161] More often than not, this proves a fertile breeding ground for the amplification, juxtaposition and comparison of ideas and themes.[162] By taking into account both the nature of vernacular poetics and Hirsch's model, Missuno is able

[156] Edward Sapir, "Language," in *Culture, Language and Personality: Selected Essays*, ed. D. G. Mandelbaum (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1962), 36.
[157] Anna Wierzbicka, *Understanding Cultures Through Their Key Words: English, Russian, Polish, German, and Japanese* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 10-16.
[158] Missuno, *'Shadow' and Paradoxes of Darkness*, 34.
[159] *Ibid.*, 34.
[160] E. D. Hirsch, *Validity in Interpretation* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1967), 81-88; Missuno, *'Shadow' and Paradoxes of Darkness*, 34-6.
[161] J. M. Foley, *Immanent Art: From Structure to Meaning in Traditional Oral Epic* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991), 29-31.
[162] F. C. Robinson, *Beowulf and the Appositive Style* (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1985), 3-28; A. G. Brodeur, *The Art of 'Beowulf'* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1959), 39; Fulk and Cain, *A History of Old English Literature*, 31-32; D. G. Scragg, "The Nature of Old English Verse," in *The Cambridge Companion to Old English Literature*, eds. Godden and Lapidge, 59-64.

to build up a constellation of words, meanings and associations which he collectively calls 'shadow',[163] as summarized in the following table:[164]

'Shadow'	Scead(u)	Scu(w)a	Genip & (ge)nīpan	Wann	Blæc/blāc	Hār	Fāh
Main sense	Literal shadow	Literal shadow	Cloud; mist	Dark; dusky; black; pale	Black; dark	Grey; white; aged; hoary	Hostile; variegated; stained; marked; shining; discoloured; black; pale; dusky
Associations	Transience; positive obscuring of light (i.e. protection); negative obscuring of light (i.e. hides enemies); physical, prowling menace/death -shadow; light and brightness	Transience; God's protection; threats to the soul; vision of afterlife; hellish oppression; damnation; death; wintry weather; physical, prowling menace/death -shadow	Unknown and dangerous darkness of night/hell/ depths/sea; harshness of night/winter/ time; (un)natural physical and looming menace	Deformity; disease; sin; advancing darkness; waves; fire; ravens; ominous, elusive things; oppressive/tragic hopelessness; death; evil/deadly black; brightness	Gloom; mourning; misery; evil; wickedness ; devils; sin; monsters; shining brightness/ paleness; fire/flames; emotions	Old warriors; rocks; armour; wolves; hair; frost; cunning; experience; battle; surface coverings/growths ; eerie boundaries/ thresholds; physical, prowling menace	Blood; evil; sin; (gleaming) splendour; gold; treasure; ornamentation; staining with blood/sin; swords; doom; serpents; untrustworthiness

Within this constellation, the three literal words for shadow (*sceadu*, *scead*, *scu(w)a*) constitute a central axis, but they are working in close collaboration with other darkness-related words, such as *genip*, *(ge)nīpan*, *wann*, *blæc/blāc*, *hār* and, notably, *fāh*.[165] In view of the length of this thesis, only Missuno's findings pertaining to *sceadu*, *scead* and *scu(w)a* will be mulled over below, although the occasional passing reference to the other shadow words is not ruled out, since they do form a meaningful and cross-fertilizing matrix.[166] For the same reason, illustrative quotations from primary sources are restricted to vernacular poetry, despite the fact that shadow material is also in evidence in prose texts.[167]

Shadow in 'Beowulf' and 'Exodus'

[163] Missuno, *'Shadow' and Paradoxes of Darkness*, 34-37.
[164] For the sake of economy, information has only been gleaned from the chapter on the semantics and stylistics of shadow words. A more elaborate discussion of associations can be found in tables A2-A4 in appendix A.
[165] Missuno, *'Shadow' and Paradoxes of Darkness*, 43-47.
[166] In light of the influence of Old English literature on Tolkien's fiction, *sceadu*, *scead* and *scu(w)a* should receive a thorough treatment, since one of their modern English reflexes, 'shadow', is by far the most commonly used shadow word in *The Lord of the Rings* (see chapter 3).
[167] Missuno, *'Shadow' and Paradoxes of Darkness*, 37-38.

If it is true, as C. L. Wrenn claims, that "it is in their poems that men develop most fully and naturally the inner and individual qualities of their language,"[168] one may perhaps be excused for beginning a textual evaluation of shadow words with one of the most haunting passages in one of the finest examples of Old English poetry: *Beowulf*.[169] The steady, doom-laden advance of Grendel towards Heorot in lines 702b-724a has been celebrated by many scholars for its effective stacking of suspense and its beautifully crafted sound patterning:[170]

> **Com on wanre niht**
> **scriðan sceadu-genga.** Sceotend swæfon,
> þa þæt horn-reced healdan scoldon,
> ealle buton anum —þæt wæs yldum cuþ
> þæt hie ne moste, þa Metod nolde,
> **se scyn-scaþa under sceadu bregdan**—
> ac he wæccende wraþum on andan
> bad bolgen-mod beadwa geþinges.
> **Ða com of more under mist-hleoþum**
> **Grendel gongan, Godes yrre bær**;
> mynte **se man-scaða** manna cynnes
> sumne besyrwan in sele þam hean.
> **Wod under wolcnum** to þæs þe he win-reced,
> gold-sele gumena gearwost wisse
> fætum fahne; ne wæs þæt forma sið
> þæt he Hroþgares ham gesohte;
> næfre he on aldor-dagum ær ne siþðan
> heardran hæle, heal-ðegnas fand.
> **Com þa to recede rinc siðian**
> **dreamum bedæled.** Duru sona onarn
> fyr-bendum fæst, syþðan he hire folmum æthran;
> onbræd þa bealo-hydig, ða he gebolgen wæs,
> recedes muþan.[171]

> [**Then came in the gloomy night a shadow-walker creeping.** The shooters slept who were to guard that horned hall, all but one—that was plain to all that **the phantom marauder could not drag them under the shadows** when Providence refused—but he, keeping vigil in enmity to the angry one, awaited enraged the settlement of the conflict. **Then under misty bluffs came Grendel walking from the moor, bearing God's wrath**; **the villainous raider** meant to entrap a certain human being in the tall building. **He came forward under the clouds** to where he well knew the winehouse was, the golden hall of men, garnished with trim—that was not the first time he had come looking for Hrothgar's home. Never before or after in the days of his life did he encounter harder luck, hardier hall-thanes. **The warrior came roving to the building, cut off from contentment.** The door opened at once, reinforced by forged bands, when

[168] C. L. Wrenn, *A Study of Old English Literature* (London: Harrap, 1967), 35.
[169] Brodeur, *The Art of 'Beowulf'*, 2.
[170] Andy Orchard, *A Critical Companion to Beowulf* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2003), 78; Brodeur, *The Art of 'Beowulf'*, 90-91.
[171] *Beowulf*, ll. 702b-724a. Emphasis added.

he touched it with his hands; then, intent on harm, now that he was enraged, he swung open the hall's entryway.]

In this scene of impending destruction, the thrice repeated *com*-clause is not mere poetic ornamentation but serves as an indicator of "an advance in time, in forward movement, in emotional force," whereby each reiteration "shows an increase over the preceding in the use of horrific detail."[172] Another contributing factor to the incremental increase of terror in this description is the haziness surrounding Grendel's nature.[173] "[S]ceadu-genga," "scyn-scaþa*"* and "rinc," among others, are not exactly precise descriptors which narrow down his physical appearance. Nor are Grendel's previous appellations of much help, being of similar vagueness (e.g. "wiht unhælo, / grim ond grædig"[174] [The creature of malignity, unyielding and rapacious]); it is only after Grendel's dramatic entrance into the hall that the audience gets to know more specific details about his person (e.g. the fact that he has a "glof...orðoncum eall gegyrwed / deofles cræftum ond dracan fellum"[175] [glove...all ingeniously constructed with the devil's devices and dragon skins]).[176] Further confusion is sown by a series of epithets which might as well describe Beowulf or other virtuous heroes (see, e.g., "rinc...dreamum bedæled" in the above quote), thereby creating a somewhat sympathetic picture of Grendel, while also blurring the boundaries between the human and the monstrous.[177] At the same time, descriptive phrases like "feond on helle"[178] [a hellish foe] and "helle gast"[179] [creature of hell] bring up images of some sort of denizen of Hell come to terrorise non-Christians.[180] All this dread-inducing uncertainty as to what Grendel *is* leaves substantial room for interpretation: he is a liminal hero-monster bordering on the human and the demonic,[181] a nightmarish antagonist,[182]

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[172] Brodeur, *The Art of 'Beowulf'*, 91.
[173] Michael Lapidge, "*Beowulf* and Perception," *Proceedings of the British Academy* 111 (2001), 82-83; Wrenn, *A Study of Old English Literature*, 113; Michael Lapidge, "*Beowulf* and the Psychology of Terror," in *Heroic Poetry in the Anglo-Saxon Period: Studies in Honor of Jess B. Bessinger, Jr.*, eds. Helen Damico and John Leyerle (Kalamazoo: Western Michigan University, 1993), 383-384.
[174] *Beowulf*, ll. 120b-121a.
[175] *Ibid.*, ll. 2085b-2088.
[176] Lapidge, "*Beowulf* and Perception," 82; Lapidge, "*Beowulf* and the Psychology of Terror," 380-382.
[177] J. R. R. Tolkien, "Beowulf: The Monsters and the Critics," in *The Monsters and the Critics and Other Essays*, ed. Christopher Tolkien (London: HarperCollins*Publishers*, 2006), 34; Andy Orchard, *Pride and Prodigies: Studies in the Monsters of the 'Beowulf'-Manuscript* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003), 30-33 and 36-37.
[178] *Beowulf*, l. 101b.
[179] *Ibid.*, l. 1274a.
[180] Orchard, *Pride and Prodigies*, 39. Tolkien sees Grendel as being something in-between a true medieval devil and "an ogre, a physical monster, whose main function is hostility to humanity (and its frail efforts at order and art upon earth)" (Tolkien, "The Monsters and the Critics," 35).
[181] Philip Cardew, "Grendel: Bordering the Human," in *The Shadow-Walkers: Jacob Grimm's Mythology of the Monstrous*, ed. T. A. Shippey (Tempe: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2005), 189-192. See also sources in the footnote above.
[182] Lapidge, "*Beowulf* and the Psychology of Terror," 392.

a personification of darkness and chaos[183] or even "a hair-raising depiction of death on the march."[184]

The *Beowulf*-poet's technique of creating suspense through Grendel's shifting mystique mirrors closely the ways in which he employs shadow vocabulary. Indeed, Missuno believes that the gradual intensification of terror "largely depends on [the poet's] blurring the distinction between these framing 'shadow' components and the evil-minded enemy being."[185] Announcements such as "Com on wanre niht / scriðan sceadu-genga"[186] [Then came in the gloomy night a shadow-walker creeping] and "se scyn-scaþa under sceadu bregdan"[187] [the phantom marauder could not drag them under the shadows] give the impression that shadows and Grendel share many of the same qualities: encroachment ("com"), eerie movement ("scriðan," *-genga*), darkness ("wanre niht") and predation ("se scyn-scaþa," "bregdan").[188] Two earlier accounts of Grendel, prior to his arrival at Heorot, are similarly couched in shadow imagery:

> ...ac se æglæca ehtende wæs,
> deorc deaþ-scua, duguþe ond geogoþe,
> seomade ond syrede; sin-nihte heold,
> mistige moras; men ne cunnon
> hwyder hel-runan hwyrftum sciþað.[189]
>
> [but the troublemaker, that dark death-shadow, persisted in persecuting veterans as well as new recruits, lurked and plotted, ruled the foggy heath in continual night; men do not know where hell's intimates pass in their rambles.]
>
> ...oþ ðe nipende niht ofer ealle,
> scadu-helma gesceapu scriðan cwoman
> wan under wolcnum.[190]
>
> [until deepening night, shapes of covering shadows, came creeping dark under the clouds.]

Again, quite a few of the same elements recur. Grendel is a 'troublemaker' envisioned as a 'dark death-shadow' who 'comes creeping' towards the halls of men to 'persecute' young and old, as soon as 'night deepens' and the 'shapes of covering shadows' advance.[191] The epithet

[183] J. W. Earl, *Thinking about Beowulf* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994), 74.
[184] Brodeur, *The Art of 'Beowulf'*, 90.
[185] Missuno, *'Shadow' and Paradoxes of Darkness*, 178-179.
[186] *Beowulf*, ll. 702b-703a.
[187] *Ibid.*, l. 707.
[188] Missuno, *'Shadow' and Paradoxes of Darkness*, 180; Missuno, "The Sinister Sound of Shadows," 70-71.
[189] *Beowulf*, ll. 159-163.
[190] *Ibid.*, ll. 649-651a.
[191] Missuno, *'Shadow' and Paradoxes of Darkness*, 179-181; Foley, *Immanent Art*, 31-33.

'death-shadow', coupled with the phrase 'drag them under the shadows' in line 707b, recalls the biblical *umbra mortis* ('the shadow of death'), supporting Brodeur's characterization of Grendel as 'death on the march'.[192] It also indirectly typifies *sceadu/scu(w)a* as both an agent of death and a place where humans come to die a, probably hellish, death ('under the shadow').[193] What emerges collectively from these passages is a 'shadowy' cluster of repeated images and associations, in which the skulking movements of hostile entities, vaguely described as night/covering-shadow-shapes/shadow-walkers/Grendel, herald the impending destruction of humans.[194]

Comparable, though not identical, shadow clusters are found in a slew of other poems, including religious, Latinate-based ones like *Exodus*.[195] The Old English poem *Exodus* is a peculiar case, because, despite having its origin firmly within Scripture, it has been given a generous lick of Anglo-Saxon paint, suffusing the biblical story of the Israelites' flight out of Egypt and the crossing of the Red Sea with native poetic conventions and worldviews.[196] To illustrate, the source text has God appearing to the Hebrews *in columna nubis* ('in a pillar of a cloud'; Ex. 13:21) during the day—a portrayal of God which would have clashed with Anglo-Saxon preconceptions of (sun)light and darkness/night as respectively good and bad.[197] The Old English poet made this less 'troublesome' through a series of nautical metaphors (e.g. "hæfde witig God / sunnan sið-fæt segle ofertolden"[198] [the wise God had veiled the sun's course with a sail]) which 'colonize' "the foreign text, making it seem comfortingly Anglo-Saxon."[199] Not all uneasiness surrounding light and darkness imagery could be taken away, however, as the ambiguous cluster of shadow vocabulary below demonstrates:

> byrnende beam. Blace stodon
> ofer sceotendum scire leoman;
> scinon scyld-hreoðan, sceado swiðredon,
> neowle niht-scuwan neah ne mihton
> heolstor ahydan; heofon-candel barn.
> Niwe niht-weard nyde sceolde

[192] Missuno, *'Shadow' and Paradoxes of Darkness*, 60; Missuno, "The Sinister Sound of Shadows," 65. Gregory the Great gives three meanings to the Scriptural *umbra mortis* in his *Moralia*: *mors carnis* ('death of the flesh'), *imitatio diaboli* ('imitation of the Devil'), and *oblivio mentis* ('oblivion of the mind'; i.e. spiritual alienation from God), all three of which are apt descriptions of Grendel's state (Joyce Hill, "Figures of Evil in Old English Poetry," *Leeds Studies in English* ns 8 (1975), 12-16).
[193] Missuno, *'Shadow' and Paradoxes of Darkness*, 59-60; Missuno, "The Sinister Sound of Shadows," 66.
[194] *Ibid.*, 181-182; *ibid.*, 71-72; Foley, *Immanent Art*, 31-33.
[195] Missuno, "The Sinister Sound of Shadows," 62.
[196] Harlan-Haughey, "The Burning Sun," 100-101.
[197] *Ibid.*, 103. See chapter 1 for a fuller examination of Anglo-Saxon associations with darkness and light.
[198] *Exodus*, ed. and trans. Daniel Anlezark, in *Old Testament Narratives* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011), ll. 80b-81. All quotes and translations from the Old Testament poems are taken from this edition.
[199] Harlan-Haughey, "The Burning Sun," 113.

> Wician ofer weredum, þy læs him westen-gryre,
> har hæð-broga, holmegum wederum
> on fer-clamme ferhð getwæfde.[200]
>
> [the burning beam. The blinding rays stood radiant over the archers; the shield covers shone, shadows diminished, the deep night-shades could not hide in the darkness; the heaven-candle burned. A new night-watchman was needed to watch over the troops, so that the wasteland-fear, the hoary heath-terror, should not put an end to life with ocean storms' sudden grasp.]

While a joyous scene at first glance, celebrating the dissipation of 'shadows' by God's 'burning beam', one nevertheless gets the impression that these 'deep night-shades', which 'diminish' but do not go away entirely, are something more than merely colourful synonyms for darkness. The shadows in this passage are worryingly mobile and anthropomorphised: they retreat like an army facing an unbeatable enemy and, syntactically, they assume the role of subject in the clauses in which they occur.[201] An ominous, yet vague, title like 'the hoary heath-terror' brings to mind other such shadowy beings mentioned in *Exodus*, as, for instance, the "guðmyrce" in line 59a.[202] Moreover, metrical and alliterative parallels among "neowle niht-scuwan" and "niwe niht-weard," as well as "scire," "scinon" and "sceado," bundle light and shadow images into an envelope structure, showing that "even when light is said to prevail, the ominous shadow or the dramatised shadow-and-light image is centrally significant."[203] All in all, the semantic field of shadow developed in this extract from *Exodus* has a wide array of meanings, ranging from 'hostility', 'encroachment' and 'concealment' to a paradoxical relationship with light.

Yet, as varied as the associations with shadow described above are, they do not represent the entire semantic range of shadow in Old English literature. For instance, *Guthlac B*, a poem relating the death of Saint Guthlac of Crowland, unites the motif of "[d]arkness in motion, sneaking in and displacing light" with the saint's repeated bouts of illness and imminent death,[204] producing a paradoxical situation where illness can function as "both a deadly enemy and a divine sign connecting the saint to God."[205] Furthermore, shadows are occasionally depicted in a positive fashion—a rare sight in Old English literature—as in the poem *Genesis*

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[200] *Exodus*, ll. 111-119.
[201] Missuno, *'Shadow' and Paradoxes of Darkness*, 53.
[202] *Ibid.*, 61. The precise meaning of g*uðmyrce* is unclear. It has been variously defined as 'warlike frontier tribes' (Anlezark), 'warlike borderers' (J. R. R. Tolkien, *The Old English Exodus: Text, Translation, and Commentary*, ed. Joan Turville-Petre (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981), 40), 'war-dark ones'/'warlike border-dwellers' (Missuno) and, more abstractly, 'in the darkness of battle' (J. R. Hall, "Two Dark Old English Compounds: *ælmyrcan* (Andreas 432a) and *guðmyrce* (Exodus 59a)," *Journal of English Linguistics* 20, no. 1 (1987), 42-44).
[203] Missuno, *'Shadow' and Paradoxes of Darkness*, 53-54; Missuno, "The Sinister Sound of Shadows," 69.
[204] Missuno, *'Shadow' and Paradoxes of Darkness*, 236.
[205] *Ibid.*, 242.

where Abraham is shown to enjoy "sibbe gesælig"[206] [peace happily] and to live "his scippende under sceade...hleow-feðrum þeaht"[207] [under the shadow of his creator, protected by his wings], after he had accepted friendship with Abimelech.[208] This kindly rendition of shadow derives from the "psalmic metaphor of shadow as divine protection" and usually is not embedded in any artful complex of sound patterning and poetic ornamentation (as is the case with the more menacing shadows).[209] Still, its presence and that of shadow-as-illness add new layers of potential meaning on top of Anglo-Saxon poetic uses of shadow.

In sum, a preoccupation with ambiguous shadows has been a mainstay of English poetic tradition, extending back far into the early medieval period. Old English shadow words in particular are bewilderingly complex and meaning-saturated not only in their etymological history but also in the poetic vision of Anglo-Saxon poets and their audiences. Appearing in clusters consolidated through repetition, alliteration and parallelisms, shadows contained the potential to become incarnated as harmful, sentient forces of evil and evoked associations, to name but a few, of 'doom', 'encroachment', 'eerie light', 'sin' and 'hellish torment'. Unsurprisingly, this intricate web of connotations underlying the word 'shadow' was a crucial trump card in the deck of any Anglo-Saxon poet when crafting a poem's narrative and thematic structure.

[206] *Genesis*, l. 2739. Word order of translation has been slightly altered to suit context.
[207] *Ibid.*, ll. 2740-2741a.
[208] Missuno, "The Sinister Sound of Shadows," 67.
[209] *Ibid.*, 67.

CHAPTER 3 – SHADOW IN TOLKIEN'S *THE LORD OF THE RINGS*

In the previous two chapters, the theme of light-versus-dark and the poetic 'shadow' cluster were laid out in detail, and their relevance to Old English literature was confirmed based on secondary research and close readings of representative texts. What emerged was the conclusion that both theme and cluster—but the latter in particular—are highly diverse in their preferred textual contexts and nebulously complex in the associations to which they give rise. A comparative analysis of Tolkien's fiction already hinted at a possible indebtedness to—or, at least, a shared cultural heritage with—Anglo-Saxon attitudes towards light and darkness (e.g. night-time having overtones of mental turmoil and monstrous activity). But overlap between Tolkien and his Anglo-Saxon antecedents is arguably strongest when it comes to their depiction and employment of 'shadow', revealing a shared interest in the mobility and apparent 'sentience' of this optical phenomenon. Nonetheless, Tolkien's imaginative use of 'shadow' remains unique, however much he might have borrowed from Old English analogues. Hence, the full treatment given in this chapter to 'shadow' in *LOTR* focusses on both the differences and similarities with respect to Old English literature.

Shadows as leitmotif and narrative 'catalyst'

A tell-tale sign of Tolkien's 'niggling' fascination with shadows surfaces in the very first lines of the very first book, which contain two occurrences of the word in an enigmatic context:

> *Three Rings for the Elven-kings under the sky,*
> *Seven for the Dwarf-lords in their halls of stone,*
> *Nine for Mortal Men doomed to die,*
> *One for the Dark Lord on his dark throne*
> *In the Land of Mordor where the Shadows lie.*
> *One Ring to rule them all, One Ring to find them,*
> *One Ring to bring them all and in the darkness bind them*
> *In the Land of Mordor where the Shadows lie.*[210]

It is through this epigraph that all first-time readers of *LOTR* are introduced to the yawning, mythopoetic world unfolded in the succeeding chapters and books. One of the functions of these eight lines is to establish the essence of the One Ring:[211] it is the exclusive possession of the

[210] Tolkien, *The Fellowship of the Ring*, v. Italics in original. Titles of the three *LOTR* volumes are henceforth shortened to *Fellowship*, *Towers* and *King*.
[211] Shippey, *The Road to Middle-earth*, 126.

Dark Lord, and it rules and keeps track of, and attracts and fetters in darkness, the other rings (or their 'owners'?). Tolkien himself thought of this verse as "the leit-motif of *The Lord of the Rings*."[212] Most interesting with regard to shadows is the line occurring twice. According to Shippey, the mention of 'shadows' in this refrain is emblematic of a story-telling technique eagerly employed by Tolkien throughout *LOTR*: the art of not telling the full story, of "peripheral suggestion."[213] He notes that the refrain's wording is nearly repeated verbatim in the ending of Sam's song about Gil-galad:

> *But long ago he rode away*
> *and where he dwelleth none can say;*
> *for into darkness fell his star*
> *in Mordor where the Shadows are*.[214]

The frequent reappearance of shadow here contributes to the construction of "a kind of repeated pattern, allegedly historical, in which stars and shadows are always at strife, the latter near and more powerful, the former persisting in memory and in resistance."[215] This pattern grows more and more fleshed out as the story progresses, the reader's conception of the 'stars' and 'shadows' as players in an eternal battle becoming more concrete as new information about the world and its people gets disclosed. Still, for all that incremental expansion of historical knowledge, the pattern and its elements "remain unfocused but not unfelt."[216] The 'Shadows' are in Mordor—that much is known—but to find out what they *are* exactly, the reader has to rummage around in Tolkien's hazy historical allusions.

Perhaps, an initial attempt at lifting the veil around shadows in *LOTR* would benefit from combining these statements by Tolkien and Shippey: the Ring verse is a leitmotif, but so is shadow, and it is in its role as leitmotif that shadow contributes to the pattern of allusions. Before delving further into shadow as leitmotif, a definition of the latter term is in order. The *Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms* defines it as follows: "[a] frequently repeated phrase, image, symbol, or situation in a literary work, the recurrence of which usually indicates or supports a theme."[217] Shadow, either occurring as a single word or used in a phrase, certainly functions as a powerful image, symbol and situational set piece in *LOTR*, as will become clear in the section below. As for it bolstering a theme, it would not be too far of a stretch to import

[212] Tolkien, "131 To Milton Waldman," in *The Letters of J. R. R. Tolkien*, ed. Carpenter, 153.
[213] Shippey, *The Road to Middle-earth*, 125.
[214] *Fellowship*, 243. Italics in original.
[215] Shippey, *The Road to Middle-earth*, 128.
[216] *Ibid.*, 128.
[217] *Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms*, ed. Chris Baldick, 4th ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), s.v. 'leitmotif'.

Missuno's schema of shadow vocabulary to a *LOTR* context, linking shadow to such themes as 'death', 'transience' and 'approaching doom', all of which were also habitually dwelt on by Tolkien (more on which below).[218] Shippey has persuasively linked the ambiguous nature of the shadow to Tolkien's ambiguous view on the nature of evil, uniting Boethian (i.e. evil is a lack of goodness and plays out within a person's mind) and Manichaean (i.e. evil is an external force having substance) philosophies on humanity's struggle against evil.[219] These aspects of shadow alone should warrant its designation as a major leitmotif in *LOTR*.

The dictionary's requirement that a leitmotif be something which is 'repeated' and 'recurrent' is efficiently dealt with by subjecting shadow words in *LOTR* to a statistical analysis. The software programme known as *Wordsmith Tools* (version 7.0) allows one to do just that in an efficient and objective manner.[220] Letting the programme generate a 'wordlist' (i.e. a ranked list of words with frequencies) based on the three *LOTR* volumes (converted into plain text files)[221] yields a series of fifteen words containing the morph *(-)shad-*: 'shadow' (342x), 'shadows' (182x), 'shadowfax' (70x), 'shadowy' (26x), 'shade' (19x), 'shades' (9x), 'shadowed' (7x), 'overshadowed' (6x), 'shading' (5x), 'shadowless' (3x), 'shady' (2x) and 'foreshadow', 'overshadow' and 'shadowing' (1x each).[222] Of these, the two most significant ones are by far 'shadow' and 'shadows' with a collective count of 524. Their frequencies also award them a remarkably high spot in the rankings, respectively 201 and 357, out of a total of 12910 entries—'shadow' managing to outperform even 'Legolas' (204; 339x) and 'Bilbo' (202; 341x). These findings can be supplemented and made more substantial by compiling a list of 'keywords', that is, of words which are unusually prevalent (or scarce) in a particular text when compared with another corpus, and which might thus contain telling thematic/stylistic information.[223]

To do this, one must compare the wordlist generated previously with that of a similar-

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[218] Pearce, *Tolkien: Man and Myth*, 118-125; Wood, *The Gospel According to Tolkien*, 14-19; Shippey, *Author*, 247-249. In "186 From a letter to Joanna de Bortadano (drafts)," Tolkien states that *LOTR* is not so much about power, domination or war but "about something much more permanent and difficult: Death and Immortality: the mystery of the love of the world in the hearts of a race 'doomed' to leave and seemingly lose it; the anguish in the hearts of a race 'doomed' not to leave it, until its whole evil-aroused story is complete" (*The Letters of J. R. R. Tolkien*, ed. Carpenter, 246).

[219] Shippey, *The Road to Middle-earth*, 166-168.

[220] Mike Scott, *WordSmith Tools*, version 7.0 (Stroud: Lexical Analysis Software, 2016), computer software. For more information, see Scott's website, https://lexically.net/wordsmith/. Straightforward explanations of terms such 'wordlist', 'keyword', 'concordance plot' can be found in his "WordSmith Tools Manual," WordSmith Tools, last modified 2019, https://lexically.net/downloads/version7/HTML/index.html.

[221] N.B. the plain text does not include the appendices, only the main narrative and the prologue.

[222] See table Bf1 ('f' stands for 'frequency') in appendix B.

[223] Paul Baker, "Querying Keywords: Questions of Difference, Frequency, and Sense in Keywords Analysis," *Journal of English Linguistics* 32, no. 4 (2004), 347-348. See, also, Wierzbicka, *Understanding Cultures Through Their Key Words*, 11-17.

sized or (much) larger corpus, put together from texts spanning the generic spectrum or from narrowly relevant material.[224] For this thesis, the *British National Corpus*, or *BNC* (World Edition), has been used to set against the data from *LOTR*, mainly on account of its easy availability and large sample size (about 100 million words from a broad range of sources, both spoken and written, in the 1980s and 90s).[225] Limiting the keywords shown to those with a frequency of 150 or higher, the only shadow words with enough 'keyness' to make it to the list are, unsurprisingly, 'shadow' (ranked 42th out of 210 entries) and 'shadows' (76th).[226] Wedged between 'shall' (41) and 'riders' (43), 'shadow' comprises an impressive 0.07% of the entire *LOTR* corpus, while the *BNC*'s 2969 hits falls short of the 0.01% threshold. Other markers of keyness are similarly high in salience, such as its BIC score (1459,50), Log Likelihood (1477,92) and Log Ratio (4,57).[227] The results for 'shadows' are nearly as outstanding: 0.04% of *LOTR* corpus (*BNC* percentage unrecorded), 797,10 (BIC), 815,43 (Log_L) and 4,70 (Log_R). A list of collocations additionally hints at the ambiguous materiality of 'shadow(s)' (see section below) through prepositions of place, such as 'under', 'beyond' and 'behind', and other words indicating some kind of undefined creature: e.g. 'crept', 'felt' and 'shape'.[228] Lastly, a 'concordance plot' of 'shadow' and 'shadows' (shown below) shows that both words have an exceptionally stable frequency across all three volumes (respectively, *Fellowship* = 124 and 68; *Towers* = 106 and 60; *King* = 112 and 54) and a very even dispersion—although a minor lessening in density might be seen at the beginning of *Fellowship* and at the end of *King*:[229]

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[224] Baker, "Querying Keywords," 347.

[225] The *BNC World Edition* is downloadable from Scott's website, https://lexically.net/downloads/BNC_wordlists/downloading%20BNC.htm. For the ins and outs of its make-up and historical development, see Lou Burnard, "Where Did We Go Wrong? A Retrospective Look at the British National Corpus," in *Teaching and Learning by Doing Corpus Analysis*, eds. Bernhard Kettemann and Georg Marko (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 51-70. A potential downside of using the *BNC*—instead of a corpus of English more contemporary with *LOTR* such as the *Brown Corpus* (± one million words of 1960s American English)—might be the lateness (1990s) of its sampled material (*Ibid.*, 53). Yet, its great size and broad sampling of *British* English should make it a valid reference corpus for *LOTR* (*Ibid.*, 57-60).

[226] See tables Bk1 and Bk2 in appendix B ('k' stands for 'keyness').

[227] Scott explains these statistical tests in his "WordSmith Tools Manual." Apparently, a BIC score of anything above 10 can be classed as "very strong," and a Log Ratio of 4-5 means that a keyword is between 16 and 32 times more frequent (relatively) in the small corpus as compared with the reference corpus. N.B. the analysis above has used a stringent *p* value of 0,000001, but this is not ideal for calculating a BIC score, according to Scott. As such, the bare percentages should be considered most indicative of keyness.

[228] See tables Bc1-Bc4 in appendix B.

[229] Cf. the table of frequencies in note 288 of Devaux, "'The Shadow of Death' in Tolkien," 230. The counts for 'shadow' (*Fellowship* = 113; *Towers* = 97; *King* = 114) and 'shadows' (63; 52; 54) given by Devaux are different from the statistics borne out by *WordSmith Tools*, although the absence of significant dips and upshots is visible in both analyses.

N	File	Words	Hits per 1,000	Disp…ion		Plot
1	shadow (Overall)	477.931	342	0,72	0,953	
2	shadow LOTR Fellowship Text 2	187.960	124	0,66	0,887	
3	shadow LOTR Towers Text 2	154.571	106	0,69	0,853	
4	shadow LOTR King Text 2	135.400	112	0,83	0,840	

Concordance plot of 'shadow' across *LOTR* and separate volumes

1	shadows (Overall)	477.931	182	0,38	0,912	
2	shadows LOTR Fellowship Text 2	187.960	68	0,36	0,787	
3	shadows LOTR Towers Text 2	154.571	60	0,39	0,855	
4	shadows LOTR King Text 2	135.400	54	0,40	0,826	

Concordance plot of 'shadows' across *LOTR* and separate volumes

To sum up, shadow is clearly a leitmotif in *LOTR*.

Its leitmotif status aside, recurrent shadow words would have to carry a certain measure of predictability for them to justifiably be part of a 'pattern'. Here, it is useful to reflect on some comparable patterns from early medieval England, notably those which concern the concepts of 'feud' and 'literary digressions'. A keen interest in feuds and the diverse customs of settling them spanned the entirety of Old English history and literature.[230] In *Beowulf*, for example, feuds persist in the memories of both parties, and ordinary remedies fail to soothe hostilities and damaged reputations, generating a pernicious cycle of violence and retaliation without a clear end on the horizon (unless one side succeeds in completely obliterating its enemies).[231] Many of the feuds mentioned in *Beowulf* make their appearance in so-called 'digressions'—auxiliary stories not directly relevant to the main plot, as the Finnsburh Episode.[232] As Tolkien himself explained in his lecture on *Beowulf*, these digressions are not really digressions: they would have been wholly familiar to the audience and, as such, must have been meant as an integral element of the story, giving "that sense of perspective, of antiquity with a greater and yet darker antiquity behind."[233] Similar to feuding cycles, Beowulfian 'digressions' work within a circular timeframe comprising historical allusions, parallelisms and predictions, which evokes a world where heroes and ladies are all participating in the same tragic Story, treading in the footsteps of those who have gone before and paving the way for the generations after them.[234] Although by no means a digression, the build-up of tension prior to Grendel's attack

[230] P. R. Hyams, *Rancor and Reconciliation in Medieval England* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003), 109-110.
[231] Katherine O'Brien O'Keeffe, "Values and Ethics in Heroic Literature," in *The Cambridge Companion to Old English Literature*, eds. Godden and Lapidge, 105-106.
[232] Hyams, *Rancor and Reconciliation*, 74.
[233] Tolkien, "Beowulf: The Monsters and the Critics," 31.
[234] C. L. Wrenn and W. F. Bolton, introduction to *Beowulf, with the Finnesburg Fragment*, eds. C. L. Wrenn and W. F. Bolton, 5th ed. (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 1996), 67-74. See, also, Shippey's commentary on

on Heorot depends on an analogous strategy of allusion and foreshadowing.[235] In fact, 'foreshadow' should be taken literally here, for, as Missuno states in her dissertation, the *Beowulf*-poet's use of shadow 'clusters' in crucial scenes such as this has the "effect/function...of interlinking things and motifs and, thereby, correlating and harmonising themes, events, and structure in the entire poem."[236] The interlocking and cross-referencing of feuds, digressions and monster battles, buttressed by an underlying lacework of shadow imagery, thus gives a meaningful, though rather complex, structure to the narrative of *Beowulf*.

The same can, to a large extent, be said of the narrative of *LOTR*. Its meandering development has been compared before to the 'interlacement' technique of medieval romance, known for its converging and diverging of multiple story threads in such a way that "any one section of a work implies other sections both earlier and later."[237] Shadow words and images in particular seem to permeate this web of storylines rather like a 'flying shuttle' carrying the weft through the warp.[238] They serve not only as a leitmotif, reinforcing and beckoning towards the books' dominant themes, but also as a sort of 'narrative catalyst' which lends a sense of temporality and urgency to the events in a given story thread. Generally, when either a character or the narrator mentions shadows which are 'moving', 'falling', 'growing' or 'lengthening', the reader is made aware of two things: the immediate dangers converging upon the characters (e.g. approaching Nazgûl) and the all-embracing 'super-plot' (i.e. the battle between the Free Peoples and the expanding power in Mordor) governing all the other sub-plots.[239] An early example of this is found in the prologue. Tolkien informs the reader that the reason why the ancestors of the hobbits left their original homes "between the eaves of Greenwood the Great and the Misty Mountains" to cross into Eriador and eventually establish the Shire will never be known for certain. Still, hobbit tradition "speak[s] of the multiplying of Men...*and* of a shadow that fell on the forest, so that it became darkened and its new name was Mirkwood."[240] The corrupting powers of shadow will be discussed in the section below; what is relevant here is the sudden

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Wiglaf's digression (lines 2596-2660 of *Beowulf*) in his *Old English Verse* (London: Hutchinson University Library, 1972), 44-45.

[235] See chapter 2.

[236] Missuno, *'Shadow' and Paradoxes of Darkness*, 194.

[237] West, "The Interlace Structure of The Lord of the Rings," 91. See, also, Sturgis, "Lord of the Rings, The," 389; Brewer, "*The Lord of the Rings* as Romance," 256; Shippey, *Author*, 102-111.

[238] In his chapter on interlacement in *LOTR*, West makes a passing statement about shadows which is relevant to this discussion: "[a]nother cohesive element is the image of the shadow which reappears throughout the narrative" ("The Interlace Structure of The Lord of the Rings," 96). Shadow's 'cohesiveness' is indeed crucial to its role as both a leitmotiv and a goad to the narrative.

[239] Cf. Shippey's 'repeated pattern' concept "in which stars and shadows are always at strife, the latter near and more powerful, the former persisting in memory and in resistance" (*The Road to Middle-earth*, 128).

[240] *Fellowship*, 3-4. Italics added.

arrival of a 'shadow' which snaps the sedentary hobbits to attention and forces them to migrate to distant lands. Shadow is a spur to narrative action.

Additional examples of this catalyst function of shadow soon surface after this piece of legendary history. Shortly before the events of main story, the growing threat in the east had finally reached the outskirts of the Shire, for "[t]here were many reports and complaints of strange persons and *creatures prowling* about the *borders*, or *over* them."[241] Despite these clear portents that all was not well, "not even Bilbo *yet* had any notion of what it portended."[242] Like the Ents, hobbits are not easily roused into action. But tension nonetheless mounts in the succeeding chapters, deepening the need for immediate reaction. Rumours about the ancient evil of the "Dark Tower" gain currency.[243] Hobbits begin to recall their "legends of the dark past" which hover "like a shadow in the background of their memories.[244] News reaches the Shire of a "power...*spreading far and wide*" and of "wars and *growing* fear."[245] Orcs, like the humans who once lived in the hobbits' ancestral homeland, "were *multiplying again* in the mountains," and "there were *murmured hints* of creatures more terrible than all these, *but they had no name*."[246] Elsewhere in the chapter ominously dubbed 'The Shadow of the Past', Frodo is described as *feeling* "the dark shadow of the tidings that Gandalf had brought."[247] Later on, Gandalf tells Frodo the name 'Mordor' must still be vaguely meaningful even among hobbits, rather "like a shadow *on the borders* of old stories,"[248] and he restates multiple times (although phrased slightly differently) that, after defeating evil and a short time of peace, "the shadow takes another shape and grows again."[249] Shadows, then, are portrayed as a (somewhat tangible, animal-like) embodiment of evil encroaching on the territory of the Free Peoples, operating within a context which emphasizes a cyclical 'growing', 'spreading', 'prowling' and transcending of 'borders'.

These instances of portentous shadows necessitating action are by no means restricted to the first volume of the trilogy. Frequent mention is made of them in the other two instalments, albeit with a slightly different connotation. In *Towers* and *King*, shadows stress most of all the impending doom and destruction facing the characters, rather than a vague threat lingering in

[241] *Fellowship*, 13. Italics added.
[242] *Ibid.*, 14. Italics added.
[243] *Ibid.*, 57.
[244] *Ibid.*, 57.
[245] *Ibid.*, 57. Italics added.
[246] *Ibid.*, 57. Italics added.
[247] *Ibid.*, 61.
[248] *Ibid.*, 67. Italics added.
[249] *Ibid.*, 67. Others on pages 68 ("the shadow grows once more"), 69 ("his shadow took shape again in Mirkwood") and 77 ("all folk were whispering then of the new Shadow in the South").

the background which goads characters to take matters into their own hands. Instead of (correctly) predicting the *onset* of a conflict, shadows in the last two volumes—and the latter part of the first volume for that matter—(wrongly) predict the *outcome* of that conflict. For instance, after ridding Théoden's hall of Saruman's influence, Gandalf and the others begin to survey the surrounding landscape, their thoughts travelling "beyond dark mountains to the Land of Shadow."[250] They realize that, while not all is lost, "thin indeed was the thread upon which doom still hung!"[251] This realization is echoed shortly after, as the Rohirrim march towards Helm's Deep, which is soon to be besieged by Saruman's forces. Along the way, they are ominously chased by the dark atmosphere around them:

> Evening **came behind**...Night **closed about** them...They lit no fires, for they were **uncertain of events**; but they set **a ring of mounted guards about them**, and scouts rode out far ahead, **passing like shadows** in the folds of the land. **The slow night passed without tidings or alarm**...There were no clouds overhead **yet**, but **a heaviness was in the air**; it was hot for the season of the year. The rising sun was hazy, and behind it, **following it slowly** up the sky, there was **a growing darkness**, as of **a great storm moving out of the East**. And away in the North-west there seemed to be **another darkness brooding** about the feet of the Misty Mountains, **a shadow that crept down slowly** from the Wizard's Vale.[252]

Most of the elements highlighted in bold may sound familiar to someone well-versed in traditional Old English poetry, especially the emphasis on the encroaching movement of shadows (cf. the approach of Grendel) and the embattled community of humans (cf. Heorot). At any rate, the overall, doom-laden mood of this scene is clearly noticeable. Compare this with a conversation between Captain Beregond and Pippin in *King*:

> 'So near to Mordor?' said Beregond quietly. 'Yes, there it lies. We seldom name it; but **we have dwelt ever in sight of that shadow: sometimes it seems fainter and more distant; sometimes nearer and darker**. It is **growing** and **darkening now**; and therefore our fear and disquiet grow too. And the Fell Riders, **less than a year ago they won back** the crossings, and many of our best men were slain. Boromir it was that drove the enemy at last back from this western shore, and we hold still the near half of Osgiliath. **For a little while**. But we await now **a new onslaught** there. Maybe the chief onslaught of **the war that comes**.'[253]

[250] *Towers*, 674. Note that Saruman's spell over Théoden, which causes the king to languish in despair, is also described in terms of shadow imagery. The following statement by Gandalf is telling: "[t]oo long have you [Théoden] sat in shadows and trusted to twisted tales and crooked promptings" (672). This appears to be a different kind of shadow from the catalyst type, since it achieves the opposite effect (i.e. inaction). See the section below.
[251] *Towers*, 674.
[252] *Ibid.*, 686-687. Emphasis added.
[253] *King*, 1000-1001. Emphasis added.

The fact that doom is advancing fast for the Gondorians is there for anyone to see. They only have to look out of their windows. But this is nothing new. As Beregond says, the people of Gondor have always had to cope with the ebbs and flows of shadow. Far removed from the lazy comforts of the Shire, and the gears of war having long since been set in motion, the meanings of shadow seem to have shifted from merely 'growing' and 'prowling' to outright 'marching' in battle formation towards an appointed goal. Nevertheless, the impression that all this has happened many times before in a regular, cyclical pattern remains just as strong.[254]

To conclude this section, it should be noted that concepts like 'narrative catalyst' and 'cyclical pattern of extending and receding shadows' have been used before by Tolkien scholars to interpret *LOTR*. Shippey's notion of the 'repeated pattern' of shadows and stars locked in conflict has already been examined above. Likewise, D. M. Miller has recognized a spiral-like structure in the digressions of *Fellowship*. Each time the hobbits swerve off the straight path towards their destination—for example, their journey into the Old Forest or their climactic stay at Weathertop—a nearly identical sequence of events emerges: a brief 'conference in tranquility', followed by a 'blundering journey' into 'danger', from which they get released through 'unexpected aid'.[255] The repeated cycle gradually becomes more serious as the story progresses, and the "*catalytic* courage from those in danger" required for the arrival of unexpected aid mounts in intensity.[256] Unfortunately, Miller leaves unexplored the potential for shadow to act as a narrative catalyst.

This was taken up by C. D. Dockery, however, in his dissertation on 'The Myth of the Shadow' in the works of Williams, Lewis, and Tolkien, drawing, among other things, on the Jungian "concept of the shadow archetype."[257] Applying this framework derived from psychology to fantasy literature (including *LOTR*), Dockery detects a common pattern which reads as follows:

> The forces of darkness are **central to the structure** of the work; they **initiate conflict** by the threat they pose to the positive forces; and, out of the ensuing struggle against darkness, the positive forces **achieve renewal**. Therefore...**the shadow** is necessary as a **dynamic transformative agent**.[258]

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[254] This pattern would extend into the Fourth Age and beyond, as the title of the aborted sequel to *LOTR* shows: 'The New Shadow'. See J. R. R. Tolkien, "The New Shadow," in *The Peoples of Middle-earth*, ed. Christopher Tolkien (London: HarperCollins*Publishers*, 2002), 409-421.
[255] D. M. Miller, "Narrative Pattern in *The Fellowship of the Ring*," in *A Tolkien Compass*, ed. Lobdell, 110.
[256] *Ibid.*, 111. Italics added. Compare the sudden arrival of the elves after the hobbits' successful evasion of the Black Riders in Woody End with the retreat of the Ringwraiths after Frodo's heroic move against the Witch King on Weathertop.
[257] Dockery, *The Myth of the Shadow*, iv.
[258] *Ibid.*, iv-v. Emphasis added.

These claims—which put down shadow as a 'central structural element', an 'initiator of conflict' and an 'instigator of renewal'—tally with the abovementioned characterization of shadow as a 'narrative catalyst'. In the chapter devoted to *LOTR*, Dockery explores this pattern of shadow in greater detail. He writes that "the journey in [*LOTR*] is, among other things, a journey into the historical past"[259] which exposes how "[e]ach age is characterized by the same struggle between light and dark."[260] Indeed, the historical past has a definite cyclical rhythm to it.[261] And the motor powering this cycle, "the pivot around which all the action turns," is the shadow.[262] It is thus not wholly evil—at least, not in the effects which it produces—because it provides the necessary counterweight to the forces of good, engendering a mythical struggle out of which "a period of joyful light" will emerge.[263]

While Dockery's many insights into the workings of shadow in *LOTR* are certainly praiseworthy, it remains uncertain as to whether Tolkien would have thought in such Hegelian terms about history, with shadow acting as an 'antithesis' to the 'thesis' of radiant peace, eventually resulting in a 'synthesis' or renewal of light. A staunch Catholic, Tolkien believed Original Sin and the expulsion from Paradise to have created "a fallen world."[264] Doubtless, he would have viewed human history after these cataclysmic events as evidencing a similar downwards spiral, deteriorating further into sin until the one true renewal with the coming of Christ and the establishment of a new Eden.[265] The ending of *LOTR*, then, is not so much a 'renewal' as it is an avoidance of complete destruction.[266] Every struggle against the shadow goes hand in hand with irrecoverable loss of life, beauty and knowledge. Despite Gandalf's soothing words that "[a] great Shadow has departed," it has left lasting traces of its presence, for the elves are leaving Middle-earth for good, and the Gondorians of the Fourth Age are a far-cry from their Númenórean ancestors.[267] In that sense, the conceptualization of shadow in *LOTR* might be compared more fruitfully to analogues in Old English literature. As Missuno has shown, shadows in Old English traditional poetry serve as messengers of humanity's gathering doom through their visualization as ambiguous, encroaching entities, and they solicit courageous responses from heroes like Beowulf and Moses. This is not too different from the

[259] Dockery, *The Myth of the Shadow*, 275.
[260] *Ibid.*, 276.
[261] *Ibid.*, 287.
[262] *Ibid.*, 289.
[263] *Ibid.*, 319.
[264] J. R. R. Tolkien, "43 From a letter to Michael Tolkien 6-8 March 1941," in *The Letters of J. R. R. Tolkien*, ed. Carpenter, 48.
[265] Flieger, *Splintered Light*, 28.
[266] Alternatively, one could view it as renewal which is less spectacular than all the previous ones recorded in the history of Middle-earth (e.g. the defeat of Morgoth at the end of the First Age), but a renewal nonetheless.
[267] *King*, 1246.

image of shadow which can be gleaned, for instance, from the conversation between Pippin and Beregond quoted above.

Zooming in on shadows: associations and embodiments

Next to this narrative function of shadow, a closer look at the phenomenological side of shadow in *LOTR*—i.e. how shadows are experienced, described and interpreted by the characters in the story—uncovers numerous other parallels, as well as differences, with Anglo-Saxon conceptions of shadow. In general, shadow phenomena in *LOTR* seem to be differentiated into two separate groups: 'passive' and 'active' shadows. Each group is marked by a distinctive set of associations and typical behaviours. The most straightforward of the two, the passive group, consists mostly of common, everyday shadows which are simply the result of obstructing a light source and, hence, not particularly striking or threatening.[268] When the narrator describes the hobbits' first impression of the Prancing Pony's busy and smoke-filled common room, the observation that Bree-men, local hobbits, dwarves and "other vague figures" are "difficult to make out away in the shadows and corners" does not tell the reader much beyond the dimness of the room and an indefinite air of anonymity.[269] These passive shadows conform to people's expectations: they are found in the appropriate places (e.g. in the corners of a murky room with only one log fire) and do what shadows do best (i.e. obscuring visibility). Despite their ordinariness, passive shadows often contain nuggets of information suggestive of a larger context. When, having surveyed the common room, Frodo suddenly becomes aware of "a strange-looking weather-beaten man, sitting in the shadows near the wall" and wearing "a hood that overshadowed his face," the narrator effectively uses the shadowy atmosphere as a foil to hint at (as the hobbits and the reader will later find out) Strider/Aragorn's secret identity (heir to the throne of Gondor)—a suggestion reinforced by the odd "gleam of his eyes."[270] Yet, for all this scene's deep layers of meaning, the shadows which occur and participate in it are not that unusual.

The ordinary nature of passive shadows stands in stark contrast to the second group of

[268] Sometimes, passive shadows, such as the 'tree-shadows' dealt with below with regard to the Ringwraiths, can act as a form of protection, shielding the protagonists from evil eyes. Though tangential, it is possible to see a correspondence between this protective shadow and the nurturing shadow under God's wings discussed in chapter 2.
[269] *Fellowship*, 202.
[270] *Ibid.*, 204.

shadows, an analysis of which will take up the remainder of this section. 'Active' shadows are shadows which step beyond the confines of what is considered 'natural' and expected by taking on some kind of embodied form. In this, they resemble most closely the ominous, category-defying shadows of traditional Old English verse. Consider again the appearance of 'Shadow' (note the capital letter) in the Ring verse with which this chapter began. According to Shippey, the clause 'where the Shadows *lie*' is less ominous than its subsequent rehashing by Sam as 'where the Shadows *are*'.[271] But the opposite is more likely to be the case. 'Lying shadows' bring to mind the image of a predator 'lying in wait', waiting for the perfect moment to spring upon its prey. The verb 'are', meanwhile, simply designates a place of habitation (without any explicit association of movement, i.e. passive)—a rather ironic change of tone, given the fact that the shadows have indeed left their lairs and are about to descend upon Sam and his friends at Weathertop. It is only when shadows go beyond their appointed borders that they become threatening, like the "[s]hadows [rising] behind and reach[ing] out long arms from the East."[272] Interestingly, this embodiment of shadow as a hand also makes its appearance in some of the cover designs which Tolkien drew for the publication of *King*.[273] In a simplified version of the design, "the Shadow of Mordor [is] given gigantic human-like form" and "reaches out across red and black mountains, its clawed hand like the mouth of a hungry beast, sharp with teeth."[274] The animalistic side to shadows will be discussed shortly, but here it suffices to say that shadows only become frightening once they step outside of their bounds, not unlike the monsters of the Old English *Wonders of the East* who protrude threateningly beyond the illustration frames of the Tiberius manuscript.[275]

By far the most dramatic and intimately felt case of active shadows are the Nazgûl.[276] A revealing scene is the hobbits' second confrontation with the Ringwraiths in Woody End. Concealed safely in the passive "tree-shadows," the hobbits (but mostly Frodo) witness a Ringwraith, or "black shadow,"[277] nearing their hiding spot, seemingly "sway[ing] from side to side" and producing "the sound of snuffling" as it "ben[ds] to the ground" and starts "to crawl

[271] Shippey, *Road to Middle-earth*, 166.
[272] *Towers*, 552.
[273] W. G. Hammond and Christina Scull, *J. R. R. Tolkien: Artist & Illustrator* (London: HarperCollins*Publishers*, 1998), 183-184. See the frontispiece to this thesis.
[274] *Ibid.*, 184.
[275] Christopher Monk, "A Context for the Sexualization of Monsters in *The Wonders of the East*," *Anglo-Saxon England* 41 (2012), 84.
[276] For a similar investigation into the Nazgûl as wraith/shadow and their materiality/immateriality, as well as possible Old English parallels, see Shippey, *Road to Middle-earth*, 166-170, and *Author*, 119-128. In *Author*, he characterizes the Ringwraiths as "just like mist or smoke, both physical, even dangerous and choking, but at the same time effectively intangible" (124).
[277] *Fellowship*, 102.

towards him [Frodo]."[278] Upon hearing the singing of approaching elves, the shadow/Ringwraith "straighten[s] up and retreat[s]" back "into the darkness."[279] Described in such animalistic terms, the Ringwraith/shadow quite closely resembles Grendel the "sceadu-genga"[280] [shadow-walker], who comes "on wanre niht"[281] [in the gloomy night] and behaves like a "deorc deaþ-scua"[282] [dark death-shadow] which preys on the living and drags them "under sceadu"[283] [under the shadows]. The mention of the Ringwraith 'retreating' at the coming of the elves—who drive out the darkness with their singing and "the starlight glimmering"[284] on their hair—also echoes the situation in the Old English *Exodus* where "sceado swiðredon"[285] [shadows diminished] and the "neowle niht-scuwan"[286] [deep night-shades] could not hide in the presence of God's "byrnende beam"[287] [burning beam]. Further parallels abound, but the passage quoted below is especially noteworthy in this regard:

> The others looked up. Even as they did so, they saw on the top of the hill **something** small and dark...All **seemed** quiet and still...Frodo **felt a cold dread creeping** over his heart...'**I don't know what it is**,' he [Sam] said, 'but I suddenly **felt** afraid...I **felt something** was **creeping** up the slope.' 'Did you see **anything**?' asked Frodo...'No, sir. I saw **nothing**...' 'I saw **something**,' said Merry; 'or **I thought I did**...**beyond the shadow** of the hill-tops, **I thought** there were **two or three black shapes**. They **seemed** to be **moving** this way.'...For a breathless time they sat there...each gazing into the **shadows that encircled them**...they **felt rather than saw, a shadow rise, one shadow or more than one**...the shadows **seemed to grow**...So black were they that they **seemed** like **black holes in the deep shade** behind them. Frodo **thought** that he heard **a faint hiss of venomous breath** and **felt a thin piercing chill**. Then **the shapes slowly advanced**.[288]

The language in this scene is rife with confusion and indefiniteness to the extent that it becomes almost mind-boggling. The Ringwraiths (two or three?) 'seem' (or 'feel'?) to be 'something' having a 'shape', but they are also 'nothing' and even 'anything'. Their behaviour does not clarify things either. 'Creeping' is their preferred movement, but 'rising', 'encircling', 'growing' and 'advancing' is something they do too. Ambiguous identity and distressing

[278] *Fellowship*, 103.
[279] *Ibid.*, 103.
[280] *Beowulf*, l. 703a.
[281] *Ibid.*, l. 702b.
[282] *Ibid.*, l. 160a.
[283] *Ibid.*, l. 707b.
[284] *Fellowship*, 104.
[285] *Exodus*, l. 113b.
[286] *Ibid.*, l. 114a.
[287] *Ibid.*, l. 111a.
[288] *Fellowship*, 254-255. Emphasis added.

mobility, combined with associations of approaching death, should sound familiar to the ear of an Anglo-Saxonist attuned to shadow imagery.[289]

After their 'defeat' at the Ford of Bruinen, the Nazgûl tread further into the background, becoming less material and more like a terror-inducing plague passing through the air.[290] The malevolent effect which their presence has on people is anything but intangible, however. The following passage from *King* even employs the language of disease to explain their influence:

> ...there were many sick of **a malady** that would not be healed; and they called it the **Black Shadow**, for it came from the Nazgûl. And those who were stricken with it **fell slowly into an ever deeper dream**, and then passed to **silence** and a **deadly cold**, and so died...they [Éowyn and Merry] would speak, **murmuring in their dreams**; and the watchers listened to all that they said, hoping perhaps to learn something that would help them to understand their hurts. But soon they began **to fall down into the darkness**, and as the sun turned west **a grey shadow crept over their faces**.[291]

Such disease terminology recalls the shadows of despairs in which the yet ill king Théoden had been wasting away before the arrival of Gandalf the White.[292] Additionally, when viewed from an Old English perspective, it shares in the tradition of hagiographic literature, such as the Old English *Guthlac B,* in which illness could feature as "both a deadly enemy and a divine sign connecting the saint to God."[293] In *LOTR,* Aragorn assumes this role of the saint in lifting the shadow from his comrades, thereby proving his (God-given) status as the true king.[294] Shadows seem to have something disease-related about them, and *vice versa*, just as in the Anglo-Saxon poetic imagination.

Adding to the confusion, embodied 'active' shadows are never uniformly portrayed as working alongside the forces of evil, which the assessment above might imply. Though never truly good, some active shadows are viewed in a (at best) neutral or 'awesome' (with a sinister tinge) light, the clearest examples of which are Huorns, the Oathbreakers and notable geographical places like Fangorn. Huorns, for one, are frequently likened to a great collective mass of shadow moving at a daunting pace. They "seem able to wrap themselves in shadow," according to Pippin, and they "can move very quickly, if they are angry," being capable of

[289] See chapter 2. The 'hissing', 'venomous breath' and 'piercing chill' are also reminiscent of Old English links between shadow vocabulary and poisonous dragons and harsh wintry weather (see 'genip & (ge)nīpan' and 'fāh' in tables A3-A4 in appendix A).
[290] Shippey, *Author*, 124-125.
[291] *King*, 1126. Emphasis added.
[292] See footnote 250.
[293] Missuno, *'Shadow' and Paradoxes of Darkness*, 242.
[294] Paul Kocher, *Master of Middle-earth: The Achievement of J. R. R. Tolkien* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1974), 140.

"speak[ing] with the Ents," which is "why they are called Huorns."[295] At the same time, they are "wild and queer," even "dangerous."[296] Pippin believes that he should feel "terrified of meeting them, if there were no true Ents about to look after them."[297] Saruman, too, recognizes the latent shadowy power of Huorns. He warns the protagonists that they "may find the Shadow of the Wood at [their] own door next: it is wayward, and senseless, and has no love for Men."[298] Depicted as non-evil, yet untamed and perilous, shadow-beasts, Huorns nonetheless carry along with them the menacing ambiguity of Old English shadow words.[299]

Another telling description of Huorns is given by the narrator as the victors of the siege of Helm's Deep make their way towards Isengard:

> ...over the ground there **crept a darkness blacker than the night**. On both sides of the river it **rolled towards them**, going northward...**A mist gathered** about them...on either side there arose **walls of impenetrable gloom**; they were in a narrow lane between **moving towers of shadow**. **Voices** they heard, **whisperings** and **groanings** and an endless rustling sigh; **the earth shook under them**...at last the darkness and the rumour **passed**, and **vanished** between the mountain's arms. Away south upon the Hornburg...**the ground trembled**; and **all were afraid** and **no one ventured to go forth**. But in the morning...**the slain Orcs were gone**, and the trees also. Far down into the valley of the Deep **the grass was crushed and trampled brown**, as if giant herdsmen had pastured great droves of cattle there...[300]

Huorns 'creep' 'whisper', 'groan' and instill 'fear'. They are also associated with the 'night', 'gathering mist' and the 'slaying' of enemies—descriptors perfectly appropriate to a creature like Grendel (Huorns even leave behind a recognizable trail after their killing). Moreover, the 'moving towers of shadow' and the 'walls of impenetrable gloom', together with a 'rolling' motion, remind one of the "flod-egsa"[301] [flood-terror], the darkening "atol yða gewealc"[302] [terrible rolling of the waves] and the ascending "holm-weall"[303] [seawall] in the Old English

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[295] *Towers*, 737.
[296] *Ibid.*, 737.
[297] *Ibid.*, 737.
[298] *Ibid.*, 756.
[299] This shadow side to Huorns is also reflected in the etymology of their name. *Huorn* can be separated into two elements: Sindarin *hu* (Quenya *hó*), meaning 'spirit' or 'shadow', and *orn* (Quenya *orne*), meaning '(tall) tree' (R. S. Noel, *The Languages of Tolkien's Middle-earth* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1980), 156; W. G. Hammond and Christina Scull, *The Lord of the Rings: A Reader's Companion* (London: HarperCollins*Publishers*, 2014), 425; *Parma Eldalamberon 17: Sindarin Corpus*, version 1.2, ed. David Giraudeau, s.vv. 'huorn', 'hû' and 'orn', http://lambenore.free.fr/downloads/PE17_S.pdf). Using 'spirit' to translate *hu-* would produce the sense of a 'living, inspirited (tall) tree', or even a 'talking tree', as the Ents would have it (*Towers*, 737; C. F. Hostetter, "The 'Túrin Wrapper'," *Vinyar Tengwar* 50 (2013), 17). Yet, the translation 'shadow-tree' is just as valid and creates, in the opinion of the author, a much more vivid and sinister visualization of Huorns.
[300] *Towers*, 720-721. Emphasis added.
[301] *Exodus*, l. 447b.
[302] *Ibid.*, l. 456a.
[303] *Ibid.*, l. 468b.

Exodus, which bears down upon the evil Egyptians (cf. Saruman's orcs) chasing the Israelites (cf. Gandalf and company) and is similarly personified as some kind of living being, as a "nacud nyd-boda...fah feðe-gast" [naked messenger of distress...hostile wandering spirit].[304] Huorns, therefore, operate within the same disturbing liminal border zone of materiality/immateriality and evil/good as Old English shadows.

Moreover, the Oathbreakers and Fangorn are each visualized as active shadows in a somewhat neutral fashion. The Oathbreakers were cursed because, long ago in the Second Age, they reneged on their oath to aid Isildur in his fight against Sauron. In *King*, they are once more given the chance to fulfil their oath by Aragorn, Isildur's descendent, and thus are able to redeem themselves. Their ambivalent morality, coupled with their tormented existence as restless shades inside the Dwimorberg, makes their alternative name, the 'Shadow-men' (and other variations on 'shadow'),[305] a particularly apt one from an Old English perspective. So, too, are descriptions of Fangorn suffused with shadow imagery. As Aragorn, Gimli and Legolas are standing underneath the eaves of Fangorn forest, the narrator remarks that the elf looks "towards the profound shadow of the wood, leaning forward, as one who listens to voices calling from a distance."[306] Like the shadowy Huorns, "the dark and unknown forest" makes "itself felt as a great brooding presence, full of secret purpose."[307] Though appraised neutrally, Huorns, Oathbreakers and Fangorn are not wholly free from sinister overtones, due to their shadowy semblance.

In addition to evil and neutral depictions, active shadows are occasionally regarded as having admirable qualities, as is the case with the manifestation of shadow in two lakes of mythic proportions: Shadowmere and Mirrormere. The latter's relevance requires some explanation, since it does not immediately seem related to the shadow matrix. Mirrormere's "profound blue" only reflects the "plumes of white flame" of the mountains behind Frodo and Gimli, as well as the star-like "jewels sunk in the deep" in the sky above, while "[o]f their own stooping forms no shadow could be seen."[308] The lake thus seems directly antagonistic to anything shadow-related, but a closer look at the meaning of 'Mirrormere' reveals something else entirely. The clue lies in the 'mirror-' element of the name. In Gothic, the word for 'mirror'

[304] *Exodus*, ll. 475-476a.
[305] Viz. 'Shadow-men' (*King*, 1033), 'Shadow Host' (*King*, 1034), 'shadows of Men' (*King*, 1144) and 'Shadows' (*King*, 1034). The context in which the last epithet occurs is quite suggestive of Old English shadows: "[t]he Company camped beside the Stone, but they slept little, because of the dread of the Shadows that hedged them round."
[306] *Towers*, 574.
[307] *Ibid.*, 574-575.
[308] *Fellowship*, 435.

is *skuggwa*, which is etymologically related to Old English *scu(w)a* 'shadow' (see chapter 2). This strange linking up of shadows and mirrors is also expressed in Bilbo's Song of Eärendil, of which the following quote is only an excerpt:

> *A wanderer escaped from night*
> *to haven white he came at last,*
> *to Elvenhome the green and fair*
> *where keen the air,* ***where pale as glass***
> *beneath the Hill of Ilmarin*
> ***a-glimmer*** *in a valley sheer*
> *the lamplit towers of Tirion*
> ***are mirrored on the Shadowmere****.*[309]

Far away in Elvenhome, the mythological body of water called 'Shadowmere' is explicitly associated with shadows. In spite of this definite connection, the mere is still capable of mirroring the 'lamplit towers of Tirion'. Shadows, then, maintain close ties with the glassy, mirror-like property of lakes. When seen through an Anglo-Saxon lens, this confusion between drowning out light and reflecting radiant light does not seem all that surprising (see tables A2-A4 in appendix A for Anglo-Saxon associations of shadow with, for instance, gleaming swords, fire and treasure).

In conclusion, shadow vocabulary in *LOTR* is another example of what Shippey calls "the strong point of Tolkien's 're-creations'," that is, "they take in all available evidence, trying to explain both good and bad sides of popular story."[310] Shadows are a frequent visitor in all three volumes, assuming in many ways the role of a leitmotif which spurs on the action of the narrative. Besides this narrative function, shadows are a crucial element in Tolkien's poetic imagination, featuring heavily in foreboding settings or characterizations of particularly ambiguous phenomena. Depicted in an actively embodied manner, a shadow signals that something inexplicable is about to happen, something which defies any comfortable, common sense explanation. On the other hand, shadows help flesh out descriptions of intimidating, but morally neutral, entities like Huorns, and, when envisioned in the form of a 'mere', they can even take on quite positive connotations. Clearly, Tolkien drew on 'all available evidence' when creating this ambiguous shadow image, but one of his main sources most likely would have been the strange poetic visuals of his Anglo-Saxon forebears.

[309] *Fellowship*, 306. Emphasis added. Italics in original.
[310] Shippey, *Road to Middle-earth*, 68.

CONCLUSION

J. R. R. Tolkien has been considered by at least one critic to be the 'author of the (twentieth) century'.[311] His pioneering fiction largely made fantasy into the staple genre of literature which it is today, and the popularity of *LOTR* and *The Hobbit* helped fantasy branch out into other media, such as film and gaming. Tolkien's books clearly spoke to a generation disconnected through war and the vicissitudes of modern life from sureties and traditions once believed to be self-evident. Arguably, this modern audience was attracted to *LOTR* and *The Hobbit* precisely because they are not strictly modern books at all. They both borrow creatively from much earlier time periods and literary traditions, such as the Middle Ages and Old English literature, and cast the fragments gleaned from this older material into a novel form and language which would strike a chord with a modern readership. Much scholarship has surfaced since the publication of these two works on the sources which Tolkien would most likely have used to add colour and depth to his Middle-earth. This thesis has highlighted one such fragment potentially adapted by Tolkien in his epic fantasy trilogy: shadow phenomena.

The idiosyncratic portrayal of shadows in *LOTR* shows many correspondences with the poetic use of shadows in Old English literature, a link hitherto not commented on by Tolkien scholars. Tolkien was well-versed in Old English language and literature, and his imagination was often sparked after finding 'cruces' (i.e. difficult to interpret words and phrases) in Old English texts. Old English shadows could very well have been one of these cruces. Chapter 1 spelled out the theme of light and darkness, as a required preliminary to pinpointing similarities between Old English and Tolkienian shadows. Light and darkness have an established position within Tolkien criticism, which, coupled with the close relationship between shadows and darkness, merited a thorough discussion. This chapter demonstrated how Tolkien participated in a long history of artistic and philosophical obsessions with the polarity of light and darkness, together with but not necessarily *via* Old English literature. With this background information in mind, chapter 2 moved on to consider the role of shadows in the human imagination and Old English poetry in particular. A close reading of shadow vocabulary in *Beowulf* and *Exodus* uncovered a conception of shadows as ambiguous and threatening entities which can take on a guise of materiality and sentience. At the same time, shadows play a larger role in reinforcing and signaling the themes of these poems: e.g. 'transience', 'death', 'doom' and 'monsters'. Here, the pertinence of an Old English perspective in criticism on *LOTR* can clearly be seen.

[311] Shippey, *Author*, xvii.

As chapter 3 has argued, Tolkien's shadows parallel their Old English analogues in many ways: they prowl and encroach on the territory of the living; appear both material and immaterial; move furtively and animalistically; foretell doom and destruction. While direct derivation remains difficult to prove, it would not be too far of a stretch to say that Tolkien drew amply on Old English literature for his shadow imagery.

Still, Tolkien's conception of shadows cannot and should not be approached solely from a comparative standpoint. Tolkienan shadows are unique on many fronts. Their function as leitmotif and narrative catalyst, as forces driving the action of the story forward and enriching the whole with a sense of cyclical depth, is not present to such an extent in Old English sources. Neither can it be ruled out that Tolkien did not also draw inspiration from sources outside of the Old English corpus. Literature from early modern England, for instance, employs shadows in similarly striking ways, as the discussion at the beginning of chapter 2 has illustrated at the hand of examples from *Macbeth*. Future research into Tolkienian shadows might, therefore, benefit from a wider selection of comparative material to set against *LOTR* or, to avoid placing undue emphasis on *LOTR*, Tolkien's mythic tales assembled in *The Silmarillion*. Whatever the case may be, a focus on shadows has the potential to throw into relief the self-imposed mission of Tolkien and his childhood friends to kindle "'a new light' in the world at large."[312] Tolkien certainly carried the torch of his friends' legacy, but he did so by infusing his fiction with just as much, if not more, shadowy darkness as light.

[312] Garth, *Tolkien and the Great War*, 254.

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APPENDIX A – TABLES BASED ON SECONDARY LITERATURE

Table A1: Full summary of chapter 5 of Ritze-Rutherford's *Light and Darkness in Anglo-Saxon Thought and Writing*.

To increase ease of reference, page references to Ritzke-Rutherford's book and (selective) examples from Old English poetry have been added next to each aspect. Note that each row forms a meaningful unit and is part of a larger subdivision which closely follows Ritzke-Rutherford's analysis. The sentences in italics are equivalent to the bracketed parts in the simplified diagrams in chapter 1. The bold headers within single quotation marks are the names of the subsections in Ritze-Rutherford's fifth chapter. The titles and line references in this table are from G. P. Krapp and E. K. Dobbie's *The Anglo-Saxon Poetic Records* (1939-1954), which has the editions used by Ritzke-Rutherford.

Associations with light	Associations with darkness
'Light in the natural world'	
Good (p. 175; e.g. *Maxims II*, ll. 50-51)	Evil (p. 175; e.g. *Maxims II*, ll. 50-51)
Life (p. 175; e.g. *Christ*, ll. 589b-596)	Death (p. 175; e.g. *Christ*, ll. 589b-596)
Knowledge (p. 176; e.g. *Christ*, ll. 43-45)	*Ignorance*
Enlightenment/faith/God's grace (pp. 176-177; e.g. *Christ*, l. 483b))	*Benightedness/unbelief/God's wrath*
Creation, especially its bright beauty and life-giving properties (pp. 177-178; e.g. *Beowulf*, ll. 89b-95; *Genesis* 119b-130a)	*The dead and formless darkness preceding Creation, or nature in its most chaotic state (e.g. storms, earthquakes, etc.)*
Light as the sun, moon and stars: 1. Creation (p. 178; e.g. *Christ*, ll. 604-608) 2. Their destruction and the diminishing of their light signals the end of the world (pp. 178-179; e.g. *Christ*, ll. 930-1044a) 3. *æþelest tungla* 'noblest of stars' (*Christ*, l. 606a), *heofoncondelle* 'lamps of heaven' (*The Order of the World*, l. 54a) and *halge gimmas* (*Christ*, l. 692b) 'holy gems' (pp. 179-180) 4. The absence of their light "epitomizes the pain of blindness" (p. 180; see *Maxims I*, ll. 39b-42a) 5. Guides for "the Christian cast adrift in the sea of his life's voyage" (pp. 181; see *Rune Poem*, ll. 45-50, and *Solomon and Saturn*, ll. 111-112a)	*Indirect ramifications for perceptions of darkness* 1. *See row immediately above* 2. *Darkness is the immediate consequence of the lessening of light at the end of the world* 3. *Darkness is unholy and foreign to Heaven* 4. *Phrased differently, utter darkness is the curse of every blind person* 5. *Darkness confuses the Christian on his life's journey*
Light as dawn: 1. A source of joy for humans (pp. 182-183; e.g. *Rune Poem*, ll. 74-76; *Phoenix*, ll. 116b-121a and 90-96a) 2. Relief after battle (p. 186; *Beowulf*, ll. 2941b-45 and ll. 565-570) 3. Onset of battle (p. 184; e.g. *Exodus*, ll. 106ff.; *Elene*, ll. 79ff.; *Judith*, ll. 189b-195a) 4. Time when carnage/bloodshed is revealed (pp. 184-185; *Beowulf*, ll. 126-129a, 565-570 and 1076-1080) 5. Time of "trial and ordeal, punishment an torture" (pp. 185-186; e.g. *Juliana*, ll. 158-	Darkness as night: 1. *Night as a source of unhappiness* 2. *Night as the appropriate time for fighting* 3. *Night as the anxious moment before battle starts* 4. Night is when evil acts are committed and dangerous, supernatural creatures begin terrorizing humans (p. 188; e.g. *Maxims II*, l. 42; *Beowulf*, ll. 648-651a) 5. *Similar to number three above, night emerges as the anxious time of waiting before a climactic event*

162a; *Andreas*, ll. 1245-1250a, 1388-1390a and 1455-1462a) 6. Time of departure (p. 185; *Beowulf*, ll. 1963-1969; *Andreas*, ll. 220-223a and 241-244a) 7. Theme of exile (p. 186; e.g. *Genesis*, ll. 2576-2577a; *Wife's Lament*, ll. 35-36; *The Wanderer*, ll. 8-9a) 8. The arrival of *sol iustitiae* as an aid to humanity (p. 186; *Christ*, ll. 104-107a) *9. Dawn lifts the veil/helmet of darkness*	*6. Similar to numbers three and 5 above, night is portrayed as a time of waiting and nervous expectancy* *7. –* *8. Night as sin and injustice expelled by Christianity* 9. Night is often envisioned as some kind of veil or, more concretely, as a helmet which covers the land (pp. 187-188; e.g. *Andreas*, ll. 1303b-1307; *Juliana*, l. 241a)
'Predominantly pagan contexts'	
Light brings peace and generosity. It is also removed from the violent forces of nature	The so-called 'Beasts of Battle' (raven, eagle, wolf), whose association with the dark is shown through their appearance ("black, grey and dun, together with the startling combination of gleaming duskiness") and their greedy nature (pp. 190-191; e.g. *Beowulf*, ll. 3021-3027; *Exodus*, ll. 162-169)
Light is perhaps less associated with materiality and, hence, viewed as more permanent	Decaying dead bodies (p. 191; e.g. *Soul and Body I*, ll. 72-74a)
More dawn imagery --> "the idea of 'resounding dawn', a supposedly Germanic belief that the rising of the sun from the sea was accompanied by a hissing or rushing noise," traces of which are preserved in the words *uhtan-woma* and *dægræd-woma* (p. 193; e.g. *Exodus*, ll. 342-346)	*Darkness/night is marked by silence and slow movements*
Valuables (e.g. *Beowulf*, ll. 2756-2766), swords (e.g. *Beowulf*, l. 2492a), armour (e.g. *Beowulf*, l. 3140a), helmets and standards (e.g. *Exodus*, ll. 342b-344a) are noted for their (sun-like) brightness (pp. 193-197)	*Treasure which does not emanate brightness lacks value and status*
Through their connection with shining helmets, banners and the radiant hall of Heorot, boars and stags are part of the imagery of light (p. 197)	*Cf. the 'Beasts of Battle' above*
'Predominantly Christian contexts'	
Sainthood and blessed status (p. 199; e.g. *Judith*, l. 34a)	The damned, severed from the light of Paradise (p. 202; e.g. *Genesis*, l. 86a)
Dazzling brilliance of angels (p. 200; e.g. *Christ*, l. 554a)	Fallen angels/demons, "the servants of darkness" (p. 202; e.g. *Juliana*, l. 333a)
Incomparable brightness of God and Christ (p. 200; e.g. *Andreas*, l. 937b)	Idem
Heavenly (e.g. *Genesis*, ll. 1560-1561) and earthly (e.g. *Guthlac*, ll. 742-746) Paradise, the latter of which also has colour associations such as the green of grass and meadows (p. 201)	Hell, characterized by "dark fire, heat, and icy coldness" (p. 203; e.g. *Guthlac*, ll. 569-573)
Good death, or the journey to the brightness of Heaven, in particular with respect to the supernatural light which accompanies the relics and deaths of saints (pp. 203-204; e.g. *Guthlac*, 1289b-	*Evil death, or the journey from a lesser light to the eternal darkness of Hell --> Cf. Darkness as 'death' in the section on the natural world*

1314a) --> *Cf. Light as 'life' in the section on the natural world*	
'Syncretistic images of light' (Pagan/Christian)	
Light has supernatural qualities (p. 205; e.g. *Beowulf*, ll. 1512b-1517)	-
The heavenly hall, a combination of the Germanic hall of myth and legend and "the heavenly Jerusalem and the Augustinian City of God" (p. 206; *Christ*, l. 519a)	*A hellish hall*
The *beorht beacen* 'bright beacen', a combination of the lordly war-banner and the Holy Cross (p. 207; e.g. *Elene*, ll. 105-109)	-

Table A2: Associations of Old English *scead(u)* and *scu(w)a* (based on chapter 2 of Missuno's dissertation).

Scead(u)	Scu(w)a
Most often: literal, physical shadow (Diss., p. 48) **Overtly (Latin-based) religious verse:** ○ "fleetingness and insignificance of earthly life" (Diss., p. 48). ○ The mysterious half-physical/half-visualized darkness and nothingness of Creation (Diss., p. 49). **Positive meaning:** "one of secretive protection associated with purity" (Diss., p. 49). **Most often in traditional verse:** ○ "the darkness of night" (Diss., p. 50) ○ 'Shadow of death' = "the wordly place and condition of sinful mortals" (Diss., p. 51) ○ Shadow is both the darkness which conceals prowling enemies (*sceaðan*) and the prowling enemies themselves. (Diss., p. 56) ○ Paradoxically intertwined with light and brightness. (Diss., p. 56)	**Glosses and prose rooted in Latin texts:** "transience (life passing as a shadow), protection (in the shade of God's wings), and the soul's earthly journey beset by fears and evils (umbra mortis, 'shadow of death')." (Diss., p. 58) **Poetic associations:** ○ (Old English translation of Bede's account of the Vision of Dryhthelm) = visionary journey through the afterlife (Diss., pp. 58-59). ○ 'Shadow of death' (Diss., p. 59) ○ "confinement and oppression in Hell, or by hellish foes and/or death drawing near" (Diss., p. 60) ○ Ominous personification of death which approaches and retreats, yet lingers somewhere in the murky background (Diss., pp. 60-62) ○ "winter weather, without allusion to death or Hell" (Diss., p. 62) ○ "torment, death, and damnation" (Diss., pp. 63-64)

Table A3: Associations of Old English *wann* and *genip/(ge)nīpan* (based on chapter 2 of Missuno's dissertation).

Wann	Genip & (ge)nīpan
Glosses and prose: ○ "Latin *pallidus* ('pale, pallid, colourless'), *caerulus* ('blue, dark blue, dark, gloomy'), and *lividus* ('blue, black and blue, livid, deadly')." (Diss., p. 73) ○ "darkness and bleakness coalesce with deformity, thus making the adjective appropriate in religious contexts of moral-visual associations" (Diss., p. 74) **In poetry:** ○ "connotative system dark/crooked/formless/diseased/sinful does not prevail in verse (Diss., p. 74) ○ "More widespread and certainly more traditional in poetry are the patterned associations of *wann* with advancing darkness, waves, fire and the raven." (Diss., p. 74) ○ "Indeed *wann* seems to be preferred for things that are not firm (like the ground) but rather fluid, flickering or otherwise elusive (like night, waves, flame or a bird that is more omen than animal)." (Diss., p. 80) ○ "A contingent semantic value is that of 'want, lack, privation'...not so much lack of hue (dullness) but rather a more oppressive and tragic want of hope and ultimately of life. The connotation of lurking death is indeed strong in most instances." (Diss., p. 81) ○ "*wann* is weighted with more affective value (moral or other) than *sweart*,, and functions as the latter's 'darker' side, as it were, adding an abstract dimension: 'dismally and metaphysically black, deadly (evilly so, or not)'." (Diss., p. 82) ○ Poetic compound *brunwann* (*Andreas*, l. 1306a)→ "*brun* usually seems to convey brightness more than darkness, especially the gleaming of metallic weaponry" → "*Wann* is disquietingly elusive in its shifts from the dark to the bright and from form to the formless, just like shadows." (Diss., p. 83)	**Glosses and homilies:** cloud or mist (Diss., p. 65) **In poetry:** ○ "the darkness of night, or of hell, or of unfathomable depths" (Diss., p. 66) ○ The darkness, depth and dangerous inexplicableness of the sea (often next to a steep cliff) (Diss., pp. 66-67) ○ Active and often violent approach of night and winter, and the unforgiving passage of time → "winter, night, and time are all forces of nature that are just as dark and tangible and paradoxically insubstantial as shadow, forces that come *down* on people like a shadow, or like a crushing army" (Diss., pp. 67-69) ○ It conjures up the "larger concept of the shadow of night looming as an indeterminate yet physical menace, inseparable from the terror of natural and preternatural forces and of the unknown dark." (Diss., p. 72)

Table A4: Associations of Old English *blæc/blāc*, *hār* and *fāh* (based on chapter 2 of Missuno's dissertation).

Blæc/blāc	Hār	Fāh
In general: "The sense of *blæc* appears to be unproblematic: 'black', or sometimes 'dark'; secondary associations are thought to include 'gloom, mourning, or misery' (especially in verse, it seems) and 'evil or wickedness, referring to devils, the sinful, and other sinister creatures'." (Diss., p. 84) **But** → *blæc* is a near-homophone of *blāc*, which meant something along the lines of 'bright, shining (mainly in poetry)' or 'pale' (*Dictionary of Old English: A to I Online*, s.v. 'blāc') + in oblique cases, they would have been orthographically indistinguishable → "the similarity between the two words might well have transferred from the level of orthography and pronunciation into that of semantics" (Diss., p. 87) *Blāc* is often used to describe destructive fire/flames and sometimes to qualify evil and the Devil, all in contexts saturated with shadow imagery → merging of brilliance, paleness and darkness (Diss., pp. 87-89). **In *Exodus*** → phrases and compounds such as *in blacum reafum* ('in *blæc* clothes'; l. 212b), *wigblac* ('war-*blāc*'; l. 204a) and *flodblac* ('flood-*blāc*'; l. 498b) reflect "the emotional states" of the Israelites (the first phrase only) and the Egyptians (the latter two). (Diss., p. 90) → the repetition of *blæc/blāc* would suggest some kind of metaphorical link between the onset of powerful emotions and darkness 'clothing' or 'covering' a dark/shiny internal quality. (Diss., pp. 90-91)	**In glosses:** *hār* "translates *canus* ('white', 'grey (of hair)', 'aged', 'hoary') and *canescens* ('becoming *canus*')." (Diss., pp. 91-92) **In poetry:** ○ "applied to old warriors (11x), rocks (8x), coats of mail (3x), wolves (2x), hair, and frost (1x each)." (Diss., p. 92) ○ "In Old English the prevalent association with grey hair and hence experience and cunning in a heroic-military poetic environment links the word to representations of battle." (Diss., p. 92) ○ Associated with 'surface coverings' and 'surface growths' (Diss., p. 63) ○ Applied to stones and trees used as boundary markers and thresholds (Diss., p. 94) → "The *hār* rock, like the *hār* warrior, wolf, and ring-mail, are covered, wrapped, surrounded by something dark, old, venerable, fearsome and formidable that lends the object its unnatural weight." (Diss., p. 95) ○ The *har hæð-broga* ('*hār* heath-terror') in line 118a of *Exodus* → "the metaphorical shadow is always half way through physical materialization." (Diss., p. 95)	**Two etymologically unrelated *fāh* words:** "*fāh* meaning 'hostile'… *fāh* variously assumed to mean 'particoloured', 'variegated', 'stained', 'marked', 'shining', 'discoloured', 'black', 'pale', or 'dusky'." (Diss., p. 98) **But** → Context often suits the meanings of both words + they are phonetically identical → *fāh* 'hostile' had probably lost its status as a distinct word and become assimilated to the other *fāh* (Diss., pp. 98-101) **In poetry:** ○ Blood/evil/sin, while also carrying connotations of gleaming splendour → "Moral evil, through *fāh*, is seen to be, metaphorically, like blood that brands or marks in a strongly visual sense, with dark gleaming." (Diss., p. 105) ○ Gold, treasure and ornamentation, especially the literal (with blood) and moral (with sin) staining of these human creations → e.g. Grendel who inhabits the *sincfage sel* ('hall *fāh* with treasure'; *Beowulf*, l. 167a) and walks *on fagne flor* (Beowulf, l. 725a) → "the floor on that night is *fāh* with accumulated darkness and gloom: the dark of the night, of the shadowy creature creeping on this floor, of the blood of previous murders, and of the expectation of more carnage to be perpetrated on this same floor." (Diss., p. 106) ○ Swords/blood/doom → 'with *fāh* sword(s)' formula → "the poetic motif of the shining sword is superimposed with, or cancelled by, the grim image of the blades drenched in blood" (Diss., p. 107) → "suggesting a natural causation or equivalence between the swords' *fāh*-ness and the warriors' doom." (Diss., p. 108) ○ Serpents/evil → "the serpent's words are as shiny as the serpent's appearance (*fāh* = *fægir*), their truthfulness is as shifting and illusory as the serpent's hues and movements (*fāh* = 'variegated') and their profound significance is as dark as the serpent's cosmic/religious associations (*fāh* = 'hostile', 'accursed', 'doomed')." (Diss., p. 108) ○ Serpents/swords → "The fiery/biting serpent/sword connection works both ways; 'the image of fire as a ravenous devourer is joined with a metaphor of a sword's biting', and the image of the *fāh* serpent underlies both." (Diss., p. 109)

APPENDIX B – STATISTICS OF SHADOW WORDS IN 'LOTR'

Bare frequencies

N	Word	Freq.	%	Texts	%	Disp...ion	Lemmas	Set
201	SHADOW	342	0,07	3	100,00	0,90		
357	SHADOWS	182	0,04	3	100,00	0,89		
753	SHADOWFAX	70	0,01	3	100,00	0,63		
1.609	SHADOWY	26		3	100,00	0,80		
2.019	SHADE	19		3	100,00	0,79		
3.372	SHADES	9		2	66,67	0,61		
3.929	SHADOWED	7		3	100,00	0,60		
4.277	OVERSHADOWED	6		2	66,67	0,58		
4.863	SHADING	5		1	33,33	0,00		
6.471	SHADOWLESS	3		3	100,00	0,51		
8.092	SHADY	2		1	33,33	0,00		
9.936	FORESHADOW	1		1	33,33	0,00		
11.128	OVERSHADOW	1		1	33,33	0,00		
11.801	SHADED	1		1	33,33	0,00		
11.802	SHADOWING	1		1	33,33	0,00		
11.803	SHADOWMERE	1		1	33,33	0,00		
12.613	UNSHADOWED	1		1	33,33	0,00		

Table Bf1: Frequency of shadow words in *LOTR* (12910 entries in total).

'Shades' = 1x *Fellowship*, 1x *King*; 'overshadowed' = 1x *Fellowship*, 1x *Towers*; 'shading' = 1x *Towers*; 'shady' = 1x *Fellowship*; 'foreshadow' = 1x *Fellowship*; 'overshadow' = 1x *Towers*; 'shaded' = 1x *Fellowship*; 'shadowing' = 1x *King*; 'shadowmere' = 1x *Fellowship*; 'unshadowed' = 1x *King*.

Keyness of frequencies (p = 0,000001; min. frequency = 150; min. log ratio = 1,5; min. BIC score = 2,5) compared with BNC

N	Key word	Freq.	%	Texts	RC. Freq.	%	BIC	Log_L	Log_R	P	Lemmas	Set
39	MINAS	155	0,03	3	19		1.515,75	1.534,17	10,72	0,0000000000		
40	LL	182	0,04	2	148		1.471,14	1.489,56	7,99	0,0000000000		
41	SHALL	682	0,14	3	19.817	0,02	1.467,65	1.486,07	2,83	0,0000000000		
42	SHADOW	342	0,07	3	2.969		1.459,50	1.477,92	4,57	0,0000000000		
43	RIDERS	238	0,05	3	808		1.407,16	1.425,58	5,93	0,0000000000		
44	SEEMED	688	0,14	3	22.105	0,02	1.365,06	1.383,48	2,68	0,0000000000		
45	COME	1.174	0,24	3	66.693	0,07	1.299,66	1.318,08	1,86	0,0000000000		

Table Bk1: Keyness of 'shadow' in all of *LOTR* (210 entries in total) with respect to *BNC* (columns 6 and 7)

73	DON	199	0,04	2	1.790		828,76	847,18	4,52	0,0000000000		
74	HILLS	233	0,05	3	3.016		820,21	838,63	4,00	0,0000000000		
75	HEARD	488	0,10	3	18.994	0,02	810,32	828,74	2,41	0,0000000000		
76	SHADOWS	182	0,04	3	1.447		797,01	815,43	4,70	0,0000000000		
77	BEHIND	524	0,11	3	22.445	0,02	792,10	810,52	2,27	0,0000000000		
78	ROAD	566	0,12	3	26.586	0,03	776,44	794,86	2,14	0,0000000000		
79	FEAR	339	0,07	3	8.996		772,44	790,86	2,96	0,0000000000		

Table Bk2: Keyness of 'shadows' in all of *LOTR* (210 entries in total) with respect to *BNC* (columns 6 and 7)

N	Word	Set	Texts	Total	Total Left	Total Right	L5	L4	L3	L2	L1	Centre	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5
1	THE		3	372	227	145	27	16	22	36	126	n/a	4	87	18	14	22
2	SHADOW		3	348	3	3	n/a	1	1	1	n/a	342	n/a	1	1	1	n/a
3	AND		3	145	70	75	14	16	16	18	6	n/a	25	9	7	19	15
4	UNDER		3	53	46	7	1	n/a	10	34	1	n/a	3	1	n/a	1	2
5	THAT		3	38	18	20	1	3	4	5	5	n/a	9	3	1	4	3
6	WAS		3	27	16	11	6	5	2	3	n/a	n/a	2	n/a	1	3	5
7	LIKE		3	23	18	5	1	3	3	10	1	n/a	1	1	n/a	2	1
8	INTO		3	22	18	4	3	2	1	6	6	n/a	2	1	n/a	1	n/a
9	FROM		3	20	13	7	3	2	2	6	n/a	n/a	n/a	2	n/a	1	4
10	DARK		3	20	15	5	n/a	4	n/a	2	9	n/a	n/a	n/a	3	1	1
11	THEY		3	18	12	6	8	3	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	2	n/a	2	2	n/a
12	OVER		3	18	3	15	1	1	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	8	1	4	1
13	PASSED		3	17	5	12	1	2	2	n/a	n/a	n/a	7	2	1	2	n/a
14	BLACK		3	17	16	1	n/a	1	3	n/a	12	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	n/a	n/a
15	CAME		3	16	6	10	3	1	2	n/a	n/a	n/a	6	n/a	3	1	n/a
16	OUT		3	15	8	7	n/a	2	4	2	n/a	n/a	2	2	n/a	2	1
17	THERE		3	15	9	6	2	3	4	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	1	2	2	n/a
18	ITS		3	15	12	3	2	n/a	1	2	7	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	n/a	2
19	BUT		3	14	5	9	1	1	n/a	3	n/a	n/a	4	n/a	1	4	n/a
20	MOUNTAINS		3	14	11	3	1	n/a	n/a	10	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	2	n/a
21	HAD		3	14	4	10	2	2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	4	1	2	n/a	3
22	THEM		3	13	4	9	1	1	2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	3	4	1	1
23	HIS		3	13	5	8	1	n/a	n/a	1	3	n/a	1	2	3	1	1
24	LAND		3	12	11	1	2	2	1	6	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1
25	GREAT		3	12	7	5	2	n/a	n/a	n/a	5	n/a	n/a	1	1	n/a	3
26	FELL		3	12	5	7	n/a	1	2	2	n/a	n/a	4	1	1	1	n/a
27	GREY		3	10	9	1	2	n/a	1	1	5	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1
28	LAY		3	10	2	8	n/a	1	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	3	1	n/a	2	2
29	UPON		3	10	1	9	n/a	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	2	2	2	2
30	ALL		3	10	1	9	n/a	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	2	2	3	1

Table Bc1: 1-30 collocations with 'shadow' in all of *LOTR*. 'L(number)' and 'R(number)' indicate the position of the collocation word in the sentence to the left and right of 'shadow' (centre), respectively.

N	Word	Set	Texts	Total	Total Left	Total Right	L5	L4	L3	L2	L1	Centre	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5
31	THEIR		3	10	6	4	2	2	n/a	n/a	2	n/a	n/a	2	1	n/a	1
32	FOR		3	10	7	3	3	1	n/a	2	1	n/a	2	n/a	1	n/a	n/a
33	FEAR		3	9	1	8	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	4	3	n/a	1
34	HIM		3	9	4	5	1	n/a	3	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	3	1	n/a
35	SAW		3	9	7	2	2	1	2	2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	1
36	SAID		2	9	4	5	1	3	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	1	2	1	n/a
37	TREES		3	9	2	7	1	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	4	2	1
38	DOWN		3	9	2	7	2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	2	2	1	1
39	HILLS		3	9	3	6	n/a	n/a	2	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	5	1	n/a
40	ABOUT		3	9	3	6	1	1	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	n/a	1	1	3
41	BEFORE		3	8	3	5	1	1	n/a	1	n/a	n/a	2	2	n/a	n/a	1
42	NOW		3	8	4	4	2	1	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	n/a	1	1	1
43	DEEP		3	8	7	1	1	n/a	1	1	4	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	n/a
44	AGAIN		3	7	1	6	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	n/a	1	3	1
45	SHAPE		3	7	4	3	2	n/a	1	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	2	n/a	n/a
46	WHEN		3	7	5	2	2	n/a	2	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2
47	BETWEEN		2	7	4	3	n/a	2	n/a	2	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	1	n/a	1
48	BEHIND		2	7	3	4	n/a	2	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	2	1	n/a	n/a
49	THEN		3	7	4	3	1	2	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	n/a	2
50	HAS		3	7	1	6	n/a	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	4	n/a	n/a	1	1
51	SOME		3	7	4	3	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	4	n/a	n/a	1	n/a	2	n/a
52	LAST		3	7	6	1	1	2	2	1	n/a	n/a	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
53	WILL		3	6	2	4	1	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	n/a	n/a	3	n/a
54	THROUGH		3	6	4	2	1	n/a	n/a	3	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	n/a	n/a	1
55	SEE		3	6	3	3	1	1	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	2
56	VAST		2	6	4	2	n/a	n/a	1	2	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	1
57	STILL		3	6	3	3	n/a	2	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	n/a	n/a	2	n/a
58	HAVE		3	6	5	1	3	2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	n/a	n/a
59	GREW		2	6	4	2	1	2	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	n/a	n/a	1	n/a
60	LONG		3	6	6	0	n/a	2	1	1	2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Table Bc2: 31-60 collocations with 'shadow' in all of *LOTR*. 'L(number)' and 'R(number)' indicate the position of the collocation word in the sentence to the left and right of 'shadow' (centre), respectively.

N	Word	Set	Texts	Total	Total Left	Total Right	L5	L4	L3	L2	L1	Centre	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5
61	LIES		2	6	1	5	n/a	n/a	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	3	1	1	n/a	n/a
62	CREPT		3	6	2	4	n/a	1	n/a	1	n/a	n/a	1	3	n/a	n/a	n/a
63	AWAY		3	6	3	3	n/a	n/a	3	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	n/a	1	1
64	FAR		3	6	3	3	n/a	1	2	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	n/a	2	n/a	n/a
65	EVER		3	6	3	3	1	n/a	1	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	2	1	n/a	n/a
66	MORE		3	6	3	3	n/a	n/a	2	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	1	n/a	1
67	ONLY		2	6	2	4	n/a	n/a	n/a	2	n/a	n/a	n/a	2	n/a	n/a	2
68	NOT		2	6	5	1	2	1	1	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	n/a
69	ONE		2	6	2	4	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	1	n/a	n/a	1	1	1	1
70	UNTIL		3	5	4	1	n/a	2	n/a	2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	n/a
71	PAST		1	5	1	4	n/a	n/a	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	3	n/a	n/a
72	EAST		3	5	2	3	1	n/a	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2	n/a	1
73	PASS		2	5	0	5	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	n/a	3	n/a	1
74	WITH		3	5	2	3	n/a	1	n/a	n/a	1	n/a	1	n/a	n/a	1	1
75	YOU		2	5	3	2	1	1	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	1	n/a
76	AGAINST		3	5	3	2	n/a	n/a	n/a	3	n/a	n/a	1	1	n/a	n/a	n/a
77	CHAPTER		2	5	3	2	1	n/a	1	1	n/a	n/a	1	n/a	n/a	1	n/a
78	BACK		3	5	2	3	n/a	1	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	1	n/a	1
79	FELT		2	5	5	0	2	n/a	2	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
80	NIGHT		2	5	1	4	n/a	n/a	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	1	1	1
81	SUDDENLY		3	5	5	0	1	1	n/a	3	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
82	LIGHT		3	5	2	3	n/a	n/a	n/a	2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2	1
83	SEEMED		2	5	0	5	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	4	1	n/a	n/a	n/a
84	MORDOR		2	5	0	5	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	3	1	n/a	1
85	TALL		3	5	4	1	1	2	n/a	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	n/a	n/a	n/a
86	GATE		1	5	0	5	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	4	1	n/a
87	GANDALF		2	5	2	3	1	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	2
88	GLOOM		3	5	3	2	1	n/a	1	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	n/a	1
89	JUST		2	5	4	1	2	1	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	n/a	n/a
90	RODE		2	5	3	2	n/a	1	2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	n/a	1	n/a

Table Bc3: 61-90 collocations with 'shadow' in all of *LOTR*. 'L(number)' and 'R(number)' indicate the position of the collocation word in the sentence to the left and right of 'shadow' (centre), respectively.

N	Word	Set	Texts	Total	Total Left	Total Right	L5	L4	L3	L2	L1	Centre	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5
1	THE		3	231	152	79	6	13	9	27	97	n/a	4	44	7	12	12
2	SHADOWS		3	179	0	0	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	179	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
3	AND		3	89	47	42	13	10	7	15	2	n/a	13	2	8	9	10
4	INTO		3	27	27	0	3	1	5	18	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
5	OUT		3	23	19	4	2	1	16	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2	n/a	n/a	2
6	UNDER		3	17	8	9	n/a	n/a	4	3	1	n/a	9	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
7	THAT		3	15	4	11	3	n/a	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	7	n/a	2	n/a	2
8	WERE		3	14	4	10	1	2	n/a	1	n/a	n/a	5	n/a	2	3	n/a
9	FROM		3	14	11	3	1	n/a	3	7	n/a	n/a	1	1	1	n/a	n/a
10	LONG		3	12	9	3	1	1	2	2	3	n/a	n/a	1	n/a	1	1
11	THEIR		3	12	4	8	2	1	n/a	n/a	1	n/a	n/a	6	1	n/a	1
12	BUT		3	12	4	8	1	2	n/a	1	n/a	n/a	3	1	n/a	4	n/a
13	LIKE		3	11	8	3	n/a	1	n/a	3	4	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2	1
14	THEY		3	11	7	4	1	3	3	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	2	n/a	1
15	BLACK		3	10	6	4	n/a	n/a	1	n/a	5	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	1	2
16	WITH		3	9	6	3	1	1	1	2	1	n/a	2	n/a	n/a	n/a	1
17	AWAY		3	9	9	0	2	1	5	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
18	THEM		3	9	1	8	n/a	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	5	1	2
19	WAS		3	9	3	6	n/a	2	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	3	1	2
20	HIM		3	8	3	5	n/a	1	2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2	1	n/a	2
21	DEEP		3	8	5	3	n/a	n/a	1	3	1	n/a	n/a	2	1	n/a	n/a
22	DOWN		3	8	2	6	n/a	n/a	2	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	3	1	n/a	1
23	ALL		3	8	6	2	1	2	n/a	n/a	3	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	n/a	1
24	BEYOND		2	8	5	3	1	1	n/a	3	n/a	n/a	1	n/a	n/a	1	1
25	TREES		3	8	0	8	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	6	1	1
26	GREAT		3	8	5	3	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	4	n/a	n/a	n/a	3	n/a	n/a
27	FELL		3	8	3	5	1	1	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	2	n/a	2	n/a	1
28	WHERE		3	7	3	4	n/a	n/a	n/a	3	n/a	n/a	1	n/a	1	1	1
29	GREY		3	7	4	3	n/a	1	1	n/a	2	n/a	n/a	1	1	1	n/a
30	NIGHT		3	7	2	5	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2	n/a	n/a	2	1	1	1
31	PASSED		3	7	7	0	1	1	3	2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
32	DARK		3	7	5	2	1	n/a	1	1	2	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	1	n/a
33	AGAIN		1	6	1	5	n/a	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2	3	n/a
34	EYES		2	6	4	2	1	n/a	3	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	1	n/a
35	ABOUT		3	6	2	4	1	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	1	1	n/a	1
36	ABOVE		3	6	3	3	n/a	n/a	1	2	n/a	n/a	2	1	n/a	n/a	n/a
37	HIS		2	6	3	3	n/a	1	2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	n/a	1	1
38	FOR		3	6	1	5	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	1	1	2
39	WHICH		2	5	3	2	n/a	1	n/a	1	1	n/a	n/a	1	n/a	1	n/a
40	SKY		3	5	3	2	n/a	2	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	1	n/a
41	BEHIND		3	5	3	2	1	2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	1	n/a	n/a	n/a
42	NOT		2	5	3	2	n/a	2	n/a	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	1	n/a	n/a

Table Bc4: Collocations with 'shadows' in all of *LOTR*. 'L(number)' and 'R(number)' indicate the position of the collocation word in the sentence to the left and right of 'shadows' (centre), respectively.