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ON JULIAN EILMANN'S *J.R.R. TOLKIEN: ROMANTICIST AND POET*,
REVIEWED BY KRIS SWANK IN MYTHLORE #132

NANCY MARTSCH

WITH REGARD TO THE TYPOS IN JULIAN EILMANN'S *J.R.R. Tolkien: Romanticist and Poet*, as the person responsible for the "last minute proofreading" (see "Series Editors' Preface") I can shed some light on situation. These are probably the result of the English translation being done "in a very short amount of time" (p iii)—which, by the way, is a nice readable translation.

But first I must say that I consider *J.R.R. Tolkien: Romanticist and Poet* to be a very important contribution to Tolkien studies, on a par with Garth and Drout. Every serious Tolkien scholar should read this. It is not an easy read, in part because many English readers are not familiar with the core works of German Romanticism, and may require repeated study. But influence and scholarship does not—should not—stop at national borders. Eilmann demonstrates beyond any doubt (I am tempted to say "with German thoroughness") that Tolkien *was* influenced by German Romanticism, especially through the conduits of Coleridge and MacDonald, and especially in his early writing. I would also suggest, though Eilmann barely touches on it, that Tolkien may have encountered Romanticist ideas through the back door of his studies in philology and folklore, too, because the Germans were the leading scholars in these fields. (Tolkien read German, and his library held studies in German.)

I cannot recommend *J.R.R. Tolkien: Romanticist and Poet* highly enough to Mythopoeic Society members.

Now, as to the typos: Dr. Eilmann sent me a PDF copy of his manuscript in connection with a study which I was doing. As I read I noticed some typos, and after a time informed Eilmann about them, which he agreed to

correct. I did not realize how soon the manuscript was to go to press. I stopped to read MacDonald's *Phantastes* in the midst of Eilmann's book. As a result the corrections for the latter part of the book did not reach the editors before press time. But they will be corrected in the second edition.

Julian Eilmann and Friedehelm Schneidewind are the co-editors of Walking Tree's forthcoming *Music in Middle-earth and Beyond*.

NANCY MARTSCH is the editor of *Beyond Bree*, newsletter of the J.R.R. Tolkien Special Interest Group of American Mensa. A long-time Tolkien enthusiast, she has given talks and published articles on Tolkien, and co-edited *Tolkien in the New Century: Essays in Honor of Tom Shippey*.



BILINGUAL PUNS IN *THE LORD OF THE RINGS*

PIERRE H. BERUBE

AMONG MANY OTHER LITERARY DEVICES, Tolkien deploys a trope which must be unique to himself: the bilingual pun. An Elvish (Quenya or Sindarin) word evokes an English (or Old English) homonym.

In order for this to work, (1) the English word of the pair must resonate strongly with the reader, (2) the correspondence of sound must be close enough to be noticed by an ordinarily well-read person, and (3) the narrator must feign not to notice the resemblance. In addition, (4) the reader must be vain enough to suppose that he can detect resemblances where the author cannot. Finally, (5) the author must have on hand a proper etymology for the Elvish word, regularly deduced from its earliest root.

This technique can produce powerful effects, but it must be used sparingly. Each use detracts from the theory that the author is merely translating an existing text. Moreover, retrofitting such a pun into an existing text and language is a time-consuming job and can mean pages of rewriting.

Here are the cases that I have noticed; there must be others.

1. *Mordor/murder* and *Númenor/numinous*. These resemblances I take to be intentional. They are not very powerful, but they are not obtrusive either, and they help to set the atmosphere. Lewis approved of *Númenor*, or at least he borrowed it (misspelled) for his own use.