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A Sense of the Magical: Names in Lord Dunsany's *The King of Elfland's Daughter*

Christopher L. Robinson

University of Paris-Saclay, France

Contributing to the enchantment of the author's celebrated prose, the names in Lord Dunsany's best-known novel evoke a world of fairytale, myth, and song; ring true to the characters and places they designate; and fashion themselves into a constellation of correspondences in sound, form, and sense.

KEYWORDS Lord Dunsany, *The King of Elfland's Daughter*, literary onomastics, fantasy, magic in literature

Lord Dunsany is widely acknowledged as one of the most influential writers of modern fantasy and *The King of Elfland's Daughter* as one of the most enduring works in the genre.[1] The novel tells how the land of Erl comes to be ruled by a magic sovereign. At the request of parliament the lord of the land dispatches his son Alveric to seek the hand of the elvish princess, Lirazel. With the help of a witch named Ziroonderel, Alveric sets off on his quest "beyond the fields we know" (3), crosses into the enchanted realm, and then steals away with his bride. Shortly after the couple arrive in Erl, Lirazel gives birth to their son, Orion, who will one day grow up to become a hunter of unicorns with the aid of a troll named Lurulu. Though at first amazed by the mundane world and the passage of time, Lirazel eventually grows homesick. The King of Elfland, sensing his daughter's unhappiness, calls the princess back to his timeless realm with the help of a powerful rune. Contented, yet desirous to be with her son and husband, Lirazel pleads with her father to reunite the family. With his last remaining rune, the Elf King sends forth a tide of enchantment that engulfs the land of Erl within Elfland. The parliament's wish for a magic lord thus comes true.

Drawing upon a tradition of fairy literature, Dunsany's novel elaborates a tale full of beauty, nostalgia, and above all magic. Author Neil Gaiman observes that *KED*

> is a book about magic; about the perils of inviting magic into your life; about the magic that can be found in the mundane world, and the distant, fearful, changeless magic of Elfland. It is not a comforting book, neither is it an entirely comfortable one, and one

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> comes away, at the end, unconvinced of the wisdom of the men of Erl, who wished to be ruled by a magic lord. (1999: xii)

Much of the book's beauty and magic lies in its musical language. Dunsany's words sing, writes Gaiman, "like those of a poet who got drunk on the prose of the King James Bible, and who has still not yet become sober" (xii). In a similar vein, critic Michael Dirda insists that *KED* "relies on neither plot nor characterization nor action to keep the reader's interest, but on lyrical description." (2000: 124). The names in the novel contribute to the lyricism and enchantment of the author's prose. The ensemble of names associated with the land of Erl evokes Germanic folklore and myth by way of its overall style, along with allusions in the main personal and place names. More eclectic in its construction, the ensemble associated with characters who hold magical powers or come from Elfland draws upon multiple correspondences in sound, form, and sense to bind the names together. Thanks to the semantic ties between *Erl* and *Elfland*, both ensembles join into a constellation of names that is fitting in more ways than one for Dunsany's magical narrative.

Evocations and allusions

Though it designates a mundane land, the place name *Erl* is derived from the German word for 'elf' (Joshi, 1995: 96). This choice is fitting for several reasons. In terms of the diegesis, the source word establishes both an affinity with, but also a distinction from Elfland. In terms of discourse, it evokes a wealth of cultural allusions, notably to a body of Germanic folklore and literature that had a major impact on British fantasy from the Victorians to J. R. R. Tolkien.[2] One work in particular springs to mind, the lyrical ballad "*Erlkönigs Tochter*" ["The Erl-King's Daughter"] by Johann Gottfried von Herder, a poem that may have influenced the title of Dunsany's novel, if not its characters or plot.[3] Many readers will also be familiar with Franz Schubert's famous lied "*Der Erlkönig*" ["The Erlking"]. Even if the tale told in Goethe's lyrics has little in common with the narrative of *KED*, this association with a well-known song is not altogether irrelevant since music plays a significant role throughout the novel. The Elf King's palace is described as one "that is only told of in song" (2). Later, when he pronounces the rune that will envelop the land of Erl in enchantment, the king's words are "like the notes of violins, all played by masters chosen from many ages" (223). In terms of aesthetics, the German source word assimilates easily into English orthography and phonetics, and thus requires no alteration in spelling or sound for English speakers to read and pronounce. This is an important feature of Dunsany's namecraft, which strives for an ease of legibility and pronunciation, since the introduction of names that are cumbersome to decipher and/or to articulate would interrupt the mellifluous flow of his words and break the enchantment of his style (Robinson, 2012: 30). Moreover, the toponym fits into the pattern of mono- and disyllabic structures found in the names of the ordinary country folk of Erl: *Narl*, *Oth*, *Vlel*, *Threl*, *Vand*, *Niv*, *Zend*, *Thyl*, *Guhic*, *Nehic*, *Gazic*, and *Rannok*. *Vyria*, the name of Rannok's lover, is the only one to break this pattern with its three syllables.

The name given to the hero of Erl likewise stands out, and not just because of its syllable count. J. Michael Stitt observes that *Alveric* resembles the names of two

figures from German folklore and myth. The first, *Alfric*, means "elf ruler." Just as the source-word of *Erl* establishes both a similarity to and distinction from Elfland, the association of *Alveric* with *Alfric* reflects a connection to and rivalry with the King of Elfland. Both men love and long to be with Lirazel, one as husband, the other as father. A second related name is *Alberich*, the greedy dwarf of Scandinavian myth who placed a curse upon the treasure of the Nibelungen. This association, Stitt asserts, casts Lirazel into the role of a coveted but cursed treasure (2004: 1).[4] Yet, there is nothing particularly greedy about the lovelorn Alveric, and "cursed" is too strong an adjective to describe his marriage with Lirazel, which suffers a moment of estrangement but finds resolution in the end. The echo of *Alberich* in *Alveric* remains significant nonetheless, for it evokes Germanic myth and legendry by way of a connotation in sound. Stitt himself suggests that *Guhic*, *Oth*, *Rannok*, and the other names associated with the common folk of Erl likewise have Germanic sonorities (2). *Oth* actually recalls the word "Goth," just as *Vand* echoes "Vandal." Nothing in the text, however, suggests that these names allude to any historical tribes or peoples of Teutonic origin. Rather, it is the style of the ensemble that is most important. As described by Tolkien, style in linguistic invention refers both to the phonological and morphological features that govern the construction of an ensemble of names, and also to the social, cultural, and historical connotations these sounds and forms carry (2006: 193–194). Their style explains how the names of the folk of Erl, without making any allusions to specific people or characters in Germanic history or mythology, nonetheless evoke by way of sound the same cultural connotations as *Alveric* and *Erl*, and resonate within that mythopoetic encyclopedia of Germanic folklore and myth that serves as a major intertext of Dunsany's novel.[5]

Correspondences

In contrast to the unified style of the names associated with Erl, those of the characters associated with Elfland are more eclectic. They nonetheless form an ensemble thanks to the multiple and varied correspondences between the individual names. In other words, no shared stylistic traits govern the construction of the whole. Rather, the individual names are bound together by internominal relationships that group them into overlapping subsets of twos and threes. These relationships in sound, form, and sense operate in a manner similar to what Ferdinand de Saussure variously refers to as anagrams, hypograms, or paragrams. Convinced that the poets of antiquity dispersed the names of divinities throughout their verse, Saussure attempted to uncover the phonetic fragments of these names disseminated beneath the words of the texts. In the lack of any historical references or other concrete evidence of such a practice, he eventually abandoned his theory. His notes were posthumously published, however, and the idea that names might serve as matrices that generate whole lines or even entire strophes of a poem went on to have a major impact in literary theory.[6] One of the most ambitious applications of Saussure's paragrammatics to a work of modern literature is Michel Murat's study of Julien Gracq's *Le Rivage des Syrtes*. Murat demonstrates how a handful of names in Gracq's novel form an "onomastic constellation" that serves as a matrix for the entire narrative (1983: 12). This constellation is bound together by similarities and correlated differences in the sounds and forms

of the individual names. The phonetic and graphic materials that make up the names additionally hold lexical associations that introduce content and meaning, and these associations in meaning generate further relationships. The ensemble of names thus works at the level of both the signifier and the signified.

Similar semiotic relationships are at work in the names given to the characters associated with Elfland and its magic. The pair *Lirazel* and *Ziroonderel* presents an overlaying of several similarities in sound and form. Both names possess a 'Z' and also share patterns of rhyme and apophony in their initial and final two syllables:

LIR ___ **AZEL**
ZIR ___ D**EREL**

On closer inspection, the witch's name turns out to contain an anagram of another:

ORION
z**IROON**derel

Lirazel and *Ziroonderel* both hold similarities with *Lurulu*. The pair zir**OO**nderel and l**U**r**U**l**U** share the same vowel sound /u:/, even if the spelling is different. **L**i**R**aze**L** and **L**u**R**u**L**u share the same consonant frame, consisting of a middle "R" framed by two "L"s. The consonant "Z" in lira**Z**el introduces a slight perturbation here, but this does not detract from the shared overall pattern.[7] Differences also play a role, as illustrated by the rhyme and apophony in *Ziroonderel* and *Lirazel*. In *Lirazel* and *Lurulu* difference is found in the correlated oppositions between the vowels. The unique vowel in the name of the troll is posterior. In contrast, the three vowels in the name of the princess are all anterior, yet varied: /ɪ/ or /aɪ/ is the highest, the /ə/ is in the middle, and the /e/ towards the upper end of the tone scale in English.[8] Examinations of the individual names will reveal how further correspondences are generated by way of lexical association, sound symbolism, and phonetic metaphor. These combined elements of the onomastic signifiers and signifieds reflect aspects in the construction of the characters, places, and events in the diegesis, as well as figures and symbols in the discourse, to create a sense of fitness between the names and their designees.

Stitt observes that *Orion* has an "outsider quality" (2004: 2). This is quite fitting. By virtue not only of his mixed birth, but also his vocation as a hunter of a legendary creature, Orion is a liminal figure whose family heritage blends the mundane and enchanted realms. People in the valley of Erl "set much store by hunting" (54), yet "by half his lineage" Orion is "akin to the things of myth and of one race with the monsters of Elfland" (216). His name additionally stands out as the object of a narrative device known as *omen nomen*. The child goes unnamed for the first three years of his life, since his mother refuses to name her son, "lest some jealous spirit of Earth or air should hear the name" (50). Though she dares not say what it is she fears exactly, her dread evokes the ancient belief in true names.[9] Alveric's patience with the situation grows thin, and eventually Lirazel gives in to her husband's demand and suggests a name. It turns out, however, to be "one that no one in these fields could pronounce, an elvish name full of wonder, and made of syllables of birds' cries at night." (53) Her whimsical choice irritates Alveric even further. Lirazel returns to her tower and from her window contemplates the stars, which of all objects in the mundane world she loves most. When her eyes alight upon a familiar constellation,

"she defie[s] all jealous spirits of air, and, looking toward Orion, whom she must never worship, she offer[s] her baby's days to that belted hunter, naming her baby after those splendid stars" (54). Constellations play more roles than one in the onomastics of Dunsany's novel. In this particular instance, the mother's choice of name seals her son's destiny. Orion's later discovery of his vocation actually follows from the couple's quarrel over the naming of their child. Some years after Lirazel has been swept back to Elfland, Orion inquires into his mother's whereabouts. Ziroonderel tells him she has gone to the woods, only to immediately regret her lie. For Orion then ventures into the forest in search of his mother and there meets two hunters, Oth and Threl. The tales of the latter, together with the forest itself, inspire in Orion a love for all things related to hunting, and there soon grows within him a spirit that is "well-matched with the name he bore" (77).

The witch Ziroonderel is like Orion liminal in character and an outsider. Though a native of Erl, she is a practitioner of magic and the only character in the novel to possess the ability to pass with ease across the boundaries of Erl and Elfland, flying (51) "by broom on starry nights" (240). Accordingly her name is outlandish, due in part to being the longest in the novel. Otto Jespersen once noted there is a "natural tendency" to lengthen certain words "under the influence of strong feeling and in order to intensify the effect of the spoken word" (1964: 404). This observation fits the name of the witch, a character whose magic inspires terror and awe amongst the simple folk of Erl. Zi**ROON**derel actually contains the homophonic spelling of a word for magical spells, *rune*. Dunsany's use of this word, which is unfamiliar in the context of modern English, conflates several meanings that have their sources in Old and Middle English. In O.E., *rūn* or *rūne* could refer to a secret or a mystery, a runic letter of the ancient Teutonic alphabet, and a counsel or consultation. Further meanings accrued in M.E., in which *rune* or *roune* could additionally refer to a message, song or poem (Barnhart, 1988: 945). In Dunsany's magical universe runes may be written, shouted, or chanted. Invested with great power and cast with great care, they typically inspire a sense of awe, as in the scene where Ziroonderel forges a magical sword for Alveric. After burying seventeen thunderbolts beneath the logs and embers in her fireplace, the witch blasts the hearth with "a frightful rune," causing the flames to leap up. And thus, "what had been but a lonely fire in the night, with no more mystery than pertains to all such fires, flared suddenly into a thing that wanderers feared" (5). While Ziroonderel's powers are lesser than those of her rival in magic, the Elf King, her sword manages to defeat the arms of the guards whom he has set to watch over Lirazel, thus enabling Alveric to steal away with his bride. This fortune is attributed less to the strength of the sword than to the weakness of the palace's magical defenses, which have waned with age. The king himself, however, retains his vigor and might, as do his last three runes. In a passage that plays upon the etymological meaning of "message," the king writes the first of these, a rune that will call Lirazel back to Elfland, upon a parchment. He then dispatches Lurulu to deliver it. Though she would rather protect the princess from its terrible potency, the witch admits "there was no means nor power she had by which to hinder a rune from the King of Elfland" (52).

As the "whip" of Orion's hunting party,[10] the troll Lurulu proves to be a real "lulu." This American slang word actually appears in his name: **LU**ru**LU**. Popular

in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, "lulu" denotes a remarkable, outstanding, or wonderful person, thing, or feat.[11] The term is typically used with irony (Barnhart, 1988: 614), and there is a good deal of that in the construction of the troll's character. A good example is when he comically attempts to explain the ways of time to his fellow creatures, among whom "none goes in higher repute than one that is able to astound the others, or even to show them any whimsical thing, or to trick or perplex them humorously" (164). He is also shown to be outstanding when, "fastening his small sharp intelligence," he ponders the problem of how to go about hunting unicorns at night (200), and then goes on to dupe the will-o'-the-wisps of a nearby marsh into providing light for Orion's hunting party (202–206). His acrobatics, meanwhile, associate the troll with outstanding physical feats, as in the nursery scene when Lurulu comes to deliver the Elf King's rune to Lirazel. Upon seeing the creature, the infant Orion asks him who he is, where he is from, and what he can do. In response, Lurulu jumps up and skips about the room "like a moth on a lamp-lit ceiling," going from floor to shelves with "leaps like flying." (51) Even after the witch-nurse attempts to still the impudent troll, he continues leaping, bouncing, and bounding to the utter delight of the child (51). In his dupery and meditations on time, as in his physical antics, Lurulu thus stands out among the creatures of Elfland. While the others are changeless and static, he is nimble and dynamic in both body and mind.

Like the name of her son, the name of Orion's stargazing mother alludes to a constellation. An association between Lyra, named after the mythical lyre of Orpheus, and the character of Lirazel makes sense, given the elf-princess is linked throughout the narrative with the motifs of stars and song. If her name is pronounced with the same diphthong as in the name of the constellation, there is a change in spelling from the 'Y' in *Lyra* to the 'I' in *Lirazel*. Paragrammatism, which treats sounds and letters indifferently, permits this kind of substitution. If the personal name is pronounced with the short vowel, there is a change not only in spelling, but also in sound, from the /aɪ/ in *Lyra* to the /ɪ/ in *Lirazel*. Even with this pronunciation, the two vocables are linked together by way of an intermediate word that is related to song, *lyrical*. This adjective is pronounced with the same short vowel, and it shares both the same number of letters and the same overall consonant frame as the name of the princess:

L-Y-**R**-i-c-a-**L**
L-I-**R**-a-z-e-**L**

At the same time, its initial three letters are the same as in *Lyra*, and it contains the full name of the constellation:

LYR i c A l
LYR — A -

Hence, even if the reader pronounces the princess's name with a short vowel, the name of the constellation remains relevant thanks to a chain of associations that runs from *Lirazel* to *lyrical* to *Lyra*. This chain is strengthened by the meanings of the two words. *Lyrical* denotes a melodious vocal quality, *Lyra* a stringed instrument played in accompaniment to poetry that, as was the habit in ancient Greece, would have been sung or chanted. The motif of stars is thus woven into not only the construction of the princess's character, but also her name.

Song is likewise woven into her name and character. Noting the musical sonorities of *Lirazel*, Stitt ties the name to heavenly beings, for just "as angels are organized into choirs and sing graces to God […] Lirazel, as a denizen of Elfland, seems inseparable from the idea of song" (2004: 2). While the association with music is convincing, there is a problem in the analogy with angels. This is illustrated by the only two mentions of angels in the novel, both of which contribute to an opposition that runs throughout the narrative between the enchanted realm and Christendom.[12] The first reference appears in the scene where Lurulu, explaining the passage of time outside Elfland to his fellow trolls, speaks in defense first of Earth and then of Heaven. To this an elder replies there are angels above who would "catch a troll and smack him forever and ever." Upon hearing this all the other trolls begin to weep (166). Later, in the passage when the Elf King attempts to assuage his daughter's melancholy with music, the notes of his melody ascend "like rare strange moths through all the fields of Heaven," but the angels are forbidden to listen to them (175). Music here and elsewhere in the narrative is clearly linked more to the enchanted realm of faërie than to the celestial realm with its angelic choirs.

A similar problem occurs when, to support his claim, Stitt suggests that the "syllabic composition" of *Lirazel* echoes the names of angels in Judeo-Christian mythology, especially with its final syllable *–el* (2004: 2). Though he offers no concrete examples as illustration, the great majority of angels' names in Biblical and Kabbalist traditions do end with the theophoric suffix *–el* (Trachtenberg, 2004: 98). In and of itself, however, the suffix holds no meaning in Dunsany's onomastic inventions. Not only *Lirazel*, but also *Ziroonderel*, *Vlel and Threl* likewise end in *–el*, yet there is nothing particularly angelic in the sound of these names, nor anything divine or reverent about the designees, a witch, master ploughman, and woodland hunter respectively. It is rather the overall "syllabic composition" of angelic names that counts. In magical traditions from antiquity to the early modern period, hundreds of these names were constructed with a template of two syllables preceding the *-el* suffix.[13] *Lirazel* fits this template, whereas *Ziroonderel* has too many syllables, *Vlel* and *Threl* too few. Moreover, certain angel names do resemble *Lirazel*, such as *Ariel*, *Azrael*, *Azazel*, and *Leliel*. The letters in these names, in fact, all appear in the name of the princess:

ARIEL	**AZRAEL**	**AZAZEL**	**LELIEL**
LIRAzEL	**LiRAZEL**	**lirAZEL**	**LIrazEL**

Given that *Lirazel* fits the syllabic template of angel names and resembles specific examples of such names, it is a natural temptation to conclude that the elvish princess is herself an angelic being. Yet, unlike the anagrammatical relationship between *Orion* and *Ziroonderel*, which finds an echo in the relationship between the two characters, there is nothing in the text to suggest any connections between angels and the character or behavior of Lirazel. To the contrary, the elvish princess is several times compared, not to an angel, but rather to a mermaid. When Alveric takes Lirazel to be married, for example, the Freer is unable to find a Christian service for elf-folk. Reasoning that both elf-folk and mermaids dwell equally "beyond thought of salvation," he adopts instead a service once written "for the wedding of a mermaid that has forsaken the sea" (28).[14]

More convincing than his analogy with figures of Judeo-Christian mythology is Stitt's assertion that the very sound of the princess's name is melodious. "Lirazel has a lyrical quality to it, flows off the tongue, and is pleasant to the ear," he writes. "[T]he mere sound of it conjures the assumption that it has a place in a poem or song" (2004: 1–2). This observation finds support in the narrative when it is said of the elvish princess,

> Songs were sung of her on wild hills where tiny strawberries grew, at dusk and by early starlight, and if one sought the singer no man was there. Sometimes only her name was sung softly over and over. Her name was Lirazel. (2)

These lines invite us to read the lyricism of the name *à la lettre*. The impression of melody in *Lirazel* is based on a phonetic metaphor that is articulated in contrast to the rhythmic qualities of *Lurulu*. This pairing is essential to the operation of the metaphor. As Gérard Genette demonstrates, sounds have no intrinsic meanings but rather signify in relation to one another, oftentimes in correlated oppositions (1976: 410–411). In the name of the troll the repeated /u:/ is low, while in the name of the princess the three vowels are all high. This contrast gives a sense of register to the two names: bass for *Lurulu*, soprano for *Lirazel*. It also underscores the lyricism of the princess's name, which is created by the movements between higher and lower vowel sounds. Ivan Fónagy points out that the perception of space and movement in melody is itself a metaphor, one "so profoundly rooted in our conscience that it requires an effort to realize that it involves a metaphor, and is not a physical quality inherent in sonorous phenomena" (1979: 106).[15] The metaphor in question is based on the point of articulation in the vocal apparatus combined with the movement of the vocal organs: the glottis tends to rise when articulating a high vowel and to descend when making a low one (108). This same metaphor creates the impression that *Lirazel* is melodious, with a *rise-fall-rise* sequence of vowels, from the highest tone /ɪ/, down to the lower /ə/, and back up again to the higher /e/. Fónagy insists that such phonetic metaphors cannot operate in isolation but must be brought out or supported by other elements of the text in which they appear (83). This occurs in *KED* with the multiple associations the narrative draws between song and the character of the princess, as well as the resemblance between the word "lyrical" and her name.

In contrast to, and underscoring the perception of a vertical, melodic movement in *Lirazel*, the unique /u:/ in *Lurulu* is horizontal and monotone, creating a sense of rhythmic movement. The name rolls off the tongue, rather like the French *rouler*, a verb that sounds to Jespersen like the movement it signifies:

> It is quite true that Fr. *rouler*, or *roll*, is derived from Lat. rota 'wheel' + a diminutive ending *–ul-*, but the word would never have gained its immense popularity, extending as it does through English, Dutch, German and the Scandinavian languages, if the sound had not been eminently suggestive of the sense, so suggestive that it seems to us now *the* natural expression for that idea, and we have difficulty in realizing that the word has not existed from the very dawn of speech. (1964: 408)

The last two syllables of *Lurulu*, in fact, are fairly close to an English speaker's pronunciation of the French word:

/lu:**ru**:**lu**:/
/**ru**:**le**ɪ/[16]

The impression of a rolling or repetitive motion, however, is even more pronounced in Dunsany's invention than in the French verb thanks to its repetitive structure, in which the syllable 'LU' is repeated twice with 'RU' in between.

A constellation of names

Writing of Ursula K. Le Guin's *A Wizard of Earthsea*, John Algeo argues that the meanings of the names in the book are products of their sounds. This type of meaning "is not cognitive sense at all, but incantational, mantric meaning. It has more in common with sound symbolism or the phonestheme than with semantic features" (1982: 63). As such, the names of Earthsea "are not susceptible to clever analysis," but are rather magical names that "can be appreciated only with *a sense of the magical*, the fitness of name to thing" (65; italics added). In *KED* a similar kind of meaning is found in the phonetic metaphor that binds together and imparts a sense of both musicality and magic to the pair *Lirazel* and *Lurulu*. It is also found in the syllabic template of Lirazel, which evokes the magical traditions of Kabbalah and Renaissance Hermeticism, and in the symbolism behind the length of *Ziroonderel*. Beyond their sound effects, there is a narrative device known as *omen nomen* and also lexical associations that likewise contribute to a sense of magical fitness. Name is destiny for Orion, while Ziroonderel is a formidable mistress of runes, and Lurulu a real lulu. Semantic elements further reflect relations between characters. Echoes of Germanic fairytales in *Alveric* hint at a rivalry between hero and king in their love of the princess, just as the camouflaged spelling of "rune" in *Ziroonderel* points to a rivalry between witch and king in the casting of spells. Linguistic motivation, however, is only part of the magic in the onomastics of Dunsany's novel. Paragrammatics knit the names of Orion, Ziroonderel, Lirazel, Lurulu, and the King of Elfland into an ensemble that not only reflects the varied relationships between the characters, but above all underscores their affinity with magic. Just as Erl and Elfland are joined in the end by the king's last rune, the two ensembles of names are joined in the final analysis thanks to the German source-word *erl*, which establishes a semantic relationship between the names of the two realms. Evoking the literature of myth and fairytale, and imitating the magic of true names and correspondences, the resulting constellation of names joins with Dunsany's lyrical and enchanting prose to conjure up a magical world in language.

Notes

[1] The title will henceforth be abbreviated as *KED*. All quotations are from the Del Rey reissue (1999).

[2] Chassagnol discusses the influence of German *Märchen* on British fairy art and literature (2010: 31–46).

[3] The elvish princess who attempts to seduce a young knight in Herder's poem has more in common with the treacherous fairy of Keats's "La Belle Dame sans Merci" than the gentle and loving Lirazel.

[4] Pages numbers here and throughout refer to a pdf printout of Stitt's commentary.

[5] What Eco means by the "encyclopedia" is a broad field of knowledge and intertextuality that appeals to the cultural treasury of a people or a person (1986: 46–86). For many European intellectuals and artists at the turn of the twentieth century, Dunsany among them, this would have included narratives of sacred texts, myths and legends from around the world, together with fairy tales and medieval romances.

[6] Saussure's notes were published in Starobinski (1971).

[7] According to Murat, paragrams play indifferently upon the sound and spelling of a name (10), and different types of "perturbations" may occur in their operation, including the inversion or substitution of letters (17).

[8] Most readers whom I have queried pronounce the name with the short vowel /ɪ/.

[9] Cassirer provides a brief but classic discussion of this belief in *Language and Myth* (1953: 48–55).

[10] This appears to be a "cynical" pun on Dunsany's part. Just as a British parliamentary whip keeps party members in line, Lurulu keep Orion's hounds in line with the lashes of his whip. Coming from a member of the House of Lords, the joke appears to suggest that fellow members of British parliament are like a pack of dogs in want of discipline, if not a good whipping. In *KED*, the members of Erl's parliament are characterized as rustic bumpkins and fools. For a discussion of Dunsany's conservative political views, see Maume (2013).

[11] Dunsany served with an American regiment during WWI and made several tours of the USA between 1919 and 1955 (Amory, 1972: 161, 163-168, 275-280). He thus had numerous occasions to learn American slang.

[12] Despite his love for the language of the Bible, Dunsany takes a critical view of Christian dogma in *KED* and other works (Joshi, 1995: 25–26, 99).

[13] In Kabbalistic texts this same template is also employed to construct names for God (Veenstra, 2012: 170).

[14] Dunsany is alluding here to Hans Christian Andersen's "The Little Mermaid." Contrary to a popular misconception, Andersen's story privileges, not so much a musical, but rather a soteriological theme.

[15] My translation.

[16] The correct French pronunciation is /Rule/. According to Amory, Dunsany "spoke confident inaccurate French" (1972: 83). It is thus reasonable to assume that, like most non-native speakers, the author would have Anglicized the pronunciation of French words.

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Notes on contributor

Christopher L. Robinson is Assistant Professor of English at the École polytechnique, University of Paris-Saclay. His studies of names in the fiction of Ursula K. Le Guin, Lord Dunsany, and H. P. Lovecraft have appeared in the journals *Extrapolation*, *Children's Literature*, and *Names*. His article "What Makes the Names of Middle-earth So Fitting? Elements of Style in the Namecraft of J. R. R. Tolkien" was recognized by the American Name Society as the best article to appear in the journal *Names* for the year 2013.

Correspondence to: Christopher L. Robinson, Department of Languages and Cultures, École polytechnique, University of Paris-Saclay, Route de Saclay, 91128 Palaiseau, France. Email: christopher.robinson@polytechnique.edu