



Mythopoeic Society

mythLORE

A Journal of J.R.R. Tolkien, C.S. Lewis,
Charles Williams, and Mythopoeic Literature

Volume 33
Number 2

Article 15

4-15-2015

Reviews

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Recommended Citation

Melody G. E. Croft, Janet Brennan; Foster, Mike, et al. (2015) "Reviews," Mythlore: A Journal of J.R.R. Tolkien, C.S. Lewis, Charles Williams, and Mythopoeic Literature: Vol. 33 : No. 2 , Article 15. Available at: <http://dc.swosu.edu/mythlore/vol33/iss2/15>
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Reviews

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Brennan Croft.

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REVIEWS

CHRISTIANITY AND THE DETECTIVE STORY. Ed. Anya Morlan and Walter Raubicheck. Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2013. 226 pp. ISBN: 9781443842099. \$75.99.

WHILE AT FIRST GLANCE AN ESSAY COLLECTION focusing on Christianity and detective fiction may seem outside of the scope of a journal about fantasy and the Inklings, this book actually has quite a bit to offer. This collection of scholarly essays focuses on mystery writers who have self-identified as Christians, and thus includes Charles Williams as well as G.K. Chesterton and Dorothy L. Sayers. This book also works from the premise that Christianity and detective stories have quite a bit in common. Both accept the fact that evil exists. Both present a high view of justice. And both shape a world in which truth can be discovered and will ultimately be revealed.

The Preface, “The Art of Murder: G.K. Chesterton and the Detective Story” by Dale Alquist explains the importance of Chesterton’s writings to the history of the genre. Alquist argues that Chesterton invented three things that are now common in mystery stories. The first is what Alquist terms the “cosy mystery,” a story that focuses on a limited number of people confined in a small place with clues presented for the reader to solve. Chesterton’s second innovation, Alquist claims, is the detective who, so far from being a super genius like Sherlock Holmes, is too easily ignored or taken for granted. The third Chestertonian addition is presenting clues in such a way that the reader is allowed to solve the problem instead of leaving her to sit in awe while the great detective does all the work.

The Introduction by Anya Morlan and Walter Raubicheck also discusses the importance of G.K. Chesterton to the genre of mystery. After explaining why *The Man Who was Thursday* can be considered a detective story—the main character has been, after all, hired as a detective—they make their most interesting claim: this novel is the fictional counterpart of *Orthodoxy* because the same ideas are explored in both. The nonfiction book does this through working out the ideas directly, while *The Man Who was Thursday* presents different characters who represent the same concepts.

The use of the mystery genre to explore ideas is also addressed in two essays that discuss Charles Williams’s *War in Heaven*. Both essays argue that,

by beginning with a corpse, this book follows the basic form and structure of a mystery story, but quickly shifts the meaning of "mystery." Where Chesterton's Father Brown mysteries are "Christian" primarily because their main character is a Catholic Priest who explores ideas as much as events, Williams's mystery is one because it engages not only the elements of the mystery story, but also the mysteries of Christianity. Sorina Higgins' "Is a 'Christian' Mystery Story Possible?: Charles Williams' *War in Heaven* as a Generic Case Study," originally published in *Mythlore*, explains which aspects of the novel fit the mystery genre, establishes Williams's credibility as a reviewer of 290 mystery novels, then explains how this particular story engages belief in the presence of the supernatural in the Christian communion service. In a similar vein, Charles Franklyn Beach's "Murder Mystery and Holy Mysteries in Charles Williams' *War in Heaven*" also discusses the supernatural element of the Eucharist and what role this plays in the novel, but when read after Higgins, it feels more as though it is filling gaps instead of repeating what her essay had to say. For example, it examines the role of the grail quest in this novel, explaining why it is relevant to the idea of "mystery." These two articles complement each other very well.

For those who are interested in friends of the Inklings, this book also offers a complete section on the mysteries of Dorothy L. Sayers. Chris Willerton's "Dorothy L. Sayers, the Trinity, and Readers' Response" and Christine A. Colon's "Dorothy L. Sayers and the Theology of Gender" both use Sayers's nonfiction as a basis for interpreting her fiction while playing out specific aspects of Christian theology. "Convention and Innovation in the Work of Dorothy L. Sayers" deftly argues that Sayers's novels combine elements of mystery with elements of modernist novels. Finally, Edmund Miller examines "Justice in the War Years: The Posthumous Lord Peter Wimsey Novels Completed by Jill Paton Walsh" in light of what Sayers herself said regarding solutions to mysteries and the importance of justice.

It appears, then, that while at first glance this book may not have much to offer readers interested in fantasy and the Inklings, it may be quite interesting for those interested in the writers G.K. Chesterton, Charles Williams, and their friend Dorothy L. Sayers.

—Melody Green



THE SHAMANIC ODYSSEY: HOMER, TOLKIEN, AND THE VISIONARY EXPERIENCE. Robert Tindall with Susana Bustos. Foreword by John Perkins. Rochester, VT: Park Street Press, 2012. 224 pp. including notes, bibliography, index. ISBN 9781594773969 (pbk), 9781594775017 (e-book). \$16.95.

ROBERT TINDALL AND HIS WIFE SUSANA, a psychotherapist and researcher, lead groups of people interested in healing traditions on trips into the Amazonian rain forest. Tindall is also the author of *The Jaguar that Roams the Mind: An Amazonian Plant Spirit Odyssey* (Park Street Press, 2008), a book about his personal exploration of the three basic aspects of Amazonian shamanism: purging disease, the ritual use of psychoactive plants, and teacher plants. *The Shamanic Odyssey* demonstrates the presence of shamanistic motifs, beliefs, and practices in literary works, specifically Homer's *Odyssey* and Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* and *Smith of Wootton Major*. Both *The Jaguar that Roams the Mind* and *The Shamanic Odyssey* are published by Inner Traditions Bear & Company, which publishes "books for the mind, body, and spirit"; their Park Street Press imprint is dedicated to "travel, psychology, entheogens, consumer and environmental issues, archeology, women's and men's studies, and fine art."

The first few chapters of *The Shamanic Odyssey* introduce the sources for the comparative Native American material. In chapter one, readers meet Juan Flores Salazar, the founder of a center for traditional medicine in Peru and specialist in the curative properties of Amazonian plants; David Monongue, a Hopi knowledgeable about the Hopi prophecy of the Eagle and Condor; and Bob Boyll, a roadman of the Native American Church, and his wife Ann Rosencranz. The Eagle and Condor prophecy, which is detailed in the book's Appendix B, tells of a period of chaos followed by a reunification of those who have taken one of the two paths. The path of the Eagle, that of the mind and materialism, is represented by the industrial world. The path of the Condor, that of the spiritual and the heart, is represented by the indigenous world. In chapter two this prophecy is discussed as a homecoming and is linked to the *Odyssey* by way of the narrative's Greek name *Nostos*, which means homecoming, and by the association of this homecoming with a return to consciousness or return from the dead (15). Tindall interprets this return or awakening as healing, which is threatened by forgetting, and equates this forgetting with the disharmony that causes illness in the Native universe. Proof that this universe is much more than a fairytale is offered in an account of "Nick's" long battle against the degenerative effects of a venomous snakebite with Boyll's guidance and support, and his eventual cure with the help of Juan Flores's expertise in plant medicine. In chapter three, Tindall brings Homer—the *Odyssey* is summarized in Appendix A—and Tolkien into the discussion as writers who understood the universe as indigenous peoples do and wove that

understanding into their works, some of which are then discussed in chapters four through ten.

Chapter four elaborates on the idea that the universe itself is the source of inspired music, and includes references to the Celts, Christian Celts, Caedmon, Hesiod, Barbara Tedlock, the Amazonian peoples, and Shakespeare's *Henry VIII*, before coming to the significance of Elvish singing to Frodo (58), and another digression to the Cyclades, then considering the importance of music in the *Odyssey* (61-65). The related theme of plant medicine is developed primarily with reference to Circe, who used drugs to make Odysseus's men forget about going home (67). Odysseus is able to rescue them because Hermes shows him a plant that protects him from Circe's potion. In this and the next chapter, Tindall further discusses Circe as representative of the mistress of both plants and animals and the use of drugs in ritual initiations in relation to the *Odyssey*, again with numerous references to other works and cultural traditions.

Tindall also discusses transformations in chapter six, and specifically plants as having the potential to foster "animal becoming" and as conducive to the development of an "intensified trajectory of consciousness"—Tindall uses Lewis-Williams's diagrams and terminology here—which represents a leap beyond ordinary consciousness. Chapter seven, descriptively titled "J.R.R. Tolkien and the Intensified Trajectory of Consciousness," considers both Tolkien himself as a visionary and the impact of his worldview on his literary works. Of special interest are the sentience of Tom Bombadil and the Ents, the healing powers exercised by Aragorn when he uses music and plants to save Frodo from the poison delivered by a Morgul-blade in *The Lord of the Rings*, and the effects of the fay star on the boy who ingests it in *Smith of Wooton Major*. The second half of the chapter returns to the *Odyssey* and the use of animal transformation in contemporary healing rituals.

Chapter eight is a discussion of Odysseus's journey as a descent into Hades with numerous comparative references to events and authors, including Eliade, who is well known for emphasizing the shamanic initiation in relation to flight. Chapter nine studies addiction as the shadow of ritual initiation, again with many and diverse references to Western and indigenous authorities. In chapter ten, Odysseus's blinding of the Cyclops is interpreted as a part of a shamanic ritual that may date to Paleolithic times.

Skeptics may find the actual argument presented in *The Shamanic Odyssey* less convincing that the basic thesis that the *Odyssey* and Tolkien's writings are replete with shamanistic motifs and events. Indeed, some books from the Park Street Press imprint are too easily written off as commodity literature for those with a personal commitment to native-based communion with nature, naturopathic medicine, and the "mythicoreligious perspective"

(39) and for lacking the formalized scholarly presentation deemed essential for respectable academic source material. This book is best appreciated, not as a reference work, but as a narrative to be read and read again for the life and relevance contemporary belief systems and related practices bring to the analysis of the “merely” literary. Students of Homer and Tolkien alike will most certainly find sifting through Tindall’s numerous digressions, anecdotes, and interpretive anthropology well worth the effort.

— Emily E. Auger



GAINING A FACE: THE ROMANTICISM OF C.S. LEWIS. James Prothero and Donald T. Williams. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Press. 2013. ISBN 97843852357. \$60.00.

THERE IS GENERALLY NO QUESTION that C.S. Lewis was influenced by the Romantic poets. His literary essays contain generous references to Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Keats. But in what ways did the Romantic giants influence Lewis? What concepts were gleaned from their arguably “pantheistic” worldview that could safely be adopted by one of the most celebrated Christian apologists of the age?

These are the inquiries explored in the newest book by James Prothero and Donald T. Williams, *Gaining a Face: The Romanticism of C.S. Lewis*. Such a philosophical undertaking is an ambitious task, but one that Prothero and Williams tackle with alacrity and insight. In the preface, the aims of the text, along with the perceived issues, are plainly expressed. These concepts include the intrinsic value of the imagination, the intrinsic value of nature, the special character of children, the intrinsic value of the common man, the sense of balance in the concept of good and evil, and the Romantic fascination with utopias—finding them, building them, and exploring the vision of the perfect world.

The reigning thesis of this work is to ultimately illustrate how Wordsworth and Coleridge influenced Lewis’s perspective on Beauty and Truth as evidenced in nature, and also how nature, a product of God’s handiwork, can assist in revealing our identities in the greater body of Christ. The title alludes to Lewis’s final work of fiction, *Till We Have Faces*, a retelling of Cupid and Psyche’s romance. In the work, Orual, Psyche’s sister, disdains her own ugliness and wears a veil to conceal her face (in contrast to Psyche who is very beautiful). She becomes a great warrior and ruler, but when she

comes before the judge, she must remove the veil and speak the words she has been nurturing but never expressing. The idea is that humans move into a much richer dialogue when we view God with new understanding, one gained after removing hindrances.

Prothero and Williams make many interesting points about Lewis maintaining the Romantic mindset in a modern setting. The authors return continually to Lewis's words: "Reason as the organ of truth, imagination as the organ of meaning." Therefore, both are needed to effectively analyze and comprehend culture. They write, "To divorce oneself from reason as much twentieth century thought does, is to descend into nonsense and madness. But to leave all to reason, to divorce oneself from the imagination, is to lose meaning. Both are necessary. For Lewis, as a Christian, both are metaphorically speaking, languages by which the Creator communicates to His creatures" (32). Modern writers tended to contrast themselves to their predecessors, criticizing the Romantics for belief that was, presumably, dispelled by scientific advancements. Romantics are often characterized as mystics, and patronized for being irrational and sentimental. Yet Lewis was continually influenced by the Romantics, and is lauded as a substantial voice of his generation.

Perhaps the most notable aspect of this book is the exploration of *sehnsucht* as delivered through nature, and establishing nature as a vicarious holy experience. For early Wordsworth, nature was a deity; for a more mature Wordsworth, as with Lewis, nature is essentially a conduit. This echoes the argument of Burke's renowned Beautiful versus Sublime distinction, which Lewis himself uses as an example at the beginning of *The Abolition of Man*, citing Coleridge's correction that "beautiful" is not the appropriate description of how a waterfall looks; rather it describes the feelings aroused in the individual.

Indeed, this pattern of indirect encounters with holiness is revisited throughout the text. Lewis learned that the joy experienced through nature (or literature or art such as Arthur Rackham's illustrations) only hints at a mystical force much larger, much deeper. Therefore, its inherent power lies in *association only*. This is where the pantheistic notion "fails," according to Prothero and Williams. The scene is only a seed of thought: "Thus a moment of desire in seeing an Arthur Rackham illustration of Norse mythology led Lewis to become an expert in Norse mythology. But as he says, 'Finally I woke from building the temple to find that the God had flown'" (35).

Additionally, the authors pull various quotes from Wordsworth and Coleridge, noting that both men exalt nature, yet find hints of God evident in pastoral images. Wordsworth writes that God rebukes him for his pantheistic tendencies. He specifically recalls a moment in *The Prelude* of being moved by

the view of a windy hillside near Hawkshead. His father was sending horses for Wordsworth and his brother to return home, but instead of horses, word arrives that his father is dead and the boys are now orphans. Wordsworth writes, "That day so lately passed, when from the crag / I looked in such anxiety and hope, / With trite reflections of mortality, / Yet with deepest passion, I bowed low / To God who thus corrected my desires" (qtd. 15).

Nature, then, is the metaphorical "lifting of the veil." It essentially invites us to explore, even frolic, in God's creation (think of Lewis's episodes of Joy as told in his autobiography *Surprised by Joy*). However, it hearkens back to the source, which Lewis insists, demands our worship. These symbols can be confused as "second things" which obscure our understanding of the "first thing."

My only criticism of the text is that the authors, on small and insubstantial points, rely on conjecture. In the section detailing Lewis's reaction to *The Prelude*, the authors mention that Lewis crafted a list of most influential literary works, which included *The Prelude* as second to George Herbert's *The Temple*. However, Lewis never mentions whose style impacted him the most: "In fact, it is rather doubtful that Lewis ever analyzed who most influenced his writing style. The question would have had no interest for him" (33). This is mere speculation. Perhaps Lewis had considered the question, but chose not to write about it. Lewis was one of the most self-reflective writers of his time. *Surprised by Joy* is rife with examples of literature which Lewis admits freely influenced him, George MacDonald and Beatrix Potter (a native of the Lake District, where Wordsworth resided) among them. Lewis admits MacDonald had a substantial influence on his writing. Such speculation seems displaced in a work that, in all other facets, excels easily at rhetorical and critical analysis.

Prothero and Williams suggest that Lewis borrowed from the prodigious insight of poets such as Coleridge and Wordsworth, and then expanded the vision. Lewis argues that nature is not inherently holy but rather becomes an avenue to greater experience, comprehension, and appreciation. *Gaining a Face* provides us with examples of the art of influence, as well as the poetic, philosophical, and spiritual aspects which reveal the true power of the literature.

—Crystal Hurd



THE A-Z OF C.S. LEWIS: AN ENCYCLOPEDIA OF HIS LIFE, THOUGHT AND WRITINGS. Colin Duriez. Oxford: Lion Hudson, 2013. 352 p. ISBN 9780745955865. \$24.95.

COLIN DURIEZ'S CAREER AS A RESEARCHER AND WRITER has largely been based on his effectiveness as a guide to the life and work of C.S. Lewis and the Inklings. *The A-Z of C.S. Lewis* is his most recent offering in this vein (though more are on the way). This is a new version of a book that originally appeared in 1990 as *The C.S. Lewis Handbook* and again in 2000 as *The C.S. Lewis Encyclopedia*. The release of this new version coincided with the fiftieth anniversary of Lewis's death, and it has been thoroughly updated to reflect the most important developments in Lewis scholarship in the intervening years. Duriez's book gives an overview of Lewis's life, career, writings, and friendships. In this respect, it offers not only information about Lewis but context for and analysis of his tremendous literary output. In the updated preface, Duriez characterizes his task as suggesting "links to the deeper intellectual and literary currents of his day for those who wish to explore further" (9). The book presents Lewis as the complex and multifaceted scholar, writer, reader, teacher, critic, and human being that he was.

As one might expect from a reference work on Lewis, the entries provide summaries of many of his books (fictional, scholarly, and popular), descriptions of characters and places from the novels, discussions of major themes in his work, and basic biographical information about the important events and locations in his life. Most of Lewis's major books are represented in entries which summarize their arguments or plots. Entries on the Pevensie children or on Elwin Ransom give readers a quick orientation to these characters and their places within Lewis's created worlds. The entries are extensively cross-referenced and many are followed by lists of suggested reading.

However, Duriez does more than offer basic data on Lewis and his work. His overarching goal is an interpretive one. As he puts it in the preface, "Behind all the exploration that my guide hopes to encourage is the quest for an answer to the puzzle of Lewis's continuing and growing relevance to today's world, where there is place both for wild hope and a distressing sense of the dangers we face" (9). The charge of escapism is a common one to the kind of fantasy literature that made Lewis so popular. However, any amount of first-hand knowledge of Lewis's fiction should dispel that charge, and Duriez, in entries like "meaning and imagination," articulates Lewis's understanding of imagination as an organ of meaning and a condition of truth. Duriez understands just how ambitious Lewis's work really is. He equips readers to approach the Chronicles of Narnia or the Ransom Trilogy or *Till We*

Have Faces with a sense of how the mythic character of these stories orient us to our everyday world in a fresh way. Entries like “romanticism” serve to situate Lewis within the broader tradition of English literature while also highlighting his unique contribution to that tradition.

Another major strength of this volume is the focus on the philosophical and theological context that Lewis worked within, along with the specific contributions he made to these disciplines. Entries on “God” and “naturalism and supernaturalism” offer sketches of Lewis’s understanding of the nature of reason, metaphysics, and ontology. An entry like “idealism” traces the specifics of Lewis’s intellectual development by identifying and summarizing specific philosophical movements and thinkers that shaped the intellectual climate of twentieth-century English universities. Duriez has a good handle on the history of philosophy, and he effectively brings Lewis into conversation with broader currents of thought. Lewis’s contributions to theology are examined in entries like “myth become fact,” “theology, C.S. Lewis and,” “theology of romance,” and “transposition.” Not only do these entries summarize Lewis’s works of popular theology like *Miracles*, *The Problem of Pain*, *Mere Christianity*, and *Letters to Malcom: Chiefly on Prayer*, but they draw out the implicit literary theology of the fiction as well. As Lewis’s status as an original theologian (not simply a popularizer) grows, Duriez contributes significantly to a theological reading of Lewis’ work.

Probably the single most distinctive feature of Duriez’s work on Lewis and the Inklings is his focus on literary friendships. In *Tolkien and C.S. Lewis: The Gift of Friendship* (Paulist Press, 2003), the more recent *C.S. Lewis: A Biography of Friendship* (Lion Hudson, 2013), and the forthcoming *The Oxford Inklings: Lewis, Tolkien and Their Circle* (Lion Hudson, 2015), Duriez shows how some of the key relationships in Lewis’s life influenced the trajectory of his writing. The emphasis on friendship is also characteristic of this volume, as evidenced by an entry like “friendship of J.R.R. Tolkien and C.S. Lewis, the.” There are separate entries dedicated to the major Inklings, Tolkien and Charles Williams, but the inclusion of lesser known yet influential academics, like Lord David Cecil and Adam Fox, demonstrate something of the extent of Lewis’s literary circle. These entries give a glimpse into the types of personalities and ideas that Lewis was in regular conversation with and that helped to shape his thinking and writing. There is one minor exception to the book’s strength in this area. The entry on Austin Farrer—Lewis’s close friend and an important theologian in his own right—is comprised of a mere two sentences and excludes any information about the important details of their friendship. This seems like a missed opportunity.

Duriez draws on the scholarship of Michael Ward’s *Planet Narnia: The Seven Heavens in the Imagination of C.S. Lewis* (Oxford University Press, 2008),

Don King's *C.S. Lewis, Poet: The Legacy of His Poetic Impulse* (Kent State University Press, 2001), and *Out of My Bone: The Letters of Joy Davidman* (Eerdmans, 2009), among much else. Ward's scholarship in particular does much to support Duriez's judgment that "[t]he rich variety of Lewis's writings is part of an integrated whole" (7). Ward suggests, rather ambitiously, that the *Narniad* is organized thematically by the underlying imagery of the seven planets of the medieval cosmos. This reveals a level of intention, coherence, and unity in the *Narniad* that is reflected in Duriez's treatment of Lewis's corpus as an integrated whole. Ward's research vindicates Duriez's encyclopedic approach to Lewis, and Duriez effectively summarizes and integrates that research. Ultimately, this volume is not simply a reference work that offers discreet bits of information. Rather, it successfully makes the case that Lewis's diverse body of work is unified by key themes like myth, romanticism, and imagination.

The A-Z of C.S. Lewis can be both a destination and a starting point. For those looking for information about characters or events in Lewis' novels, it is the first place to go. Alternatively, the entries that cover various parts of Lewis's thought or intellectual context equip readers with fresh insight and incentive to return to his works with greater appreciation and understanding. Duriez also helps readers to deal critically with Lewis. He cites A.N. Wilson's 1990 biography—which paints a far from flattering portrait—at several points. In some ways, the willingness to engage seriously with Wilson is a kind of dividing line between those who simply fawn over Lewis and those who approach him with an appreciative discernment—Duriez is in the later camp. The number of books about Lewis is seemingly endless. However, I know of no other book that provides so much information on Lewis and his work while so effectively contextualizing that information. Duriez has proven himself to be the most *useful* scholar writing on Lewis today.

— Andrew Stout



UNDER THE MERCY: CHARLES WILLIAMS & THE HOLY GRAIL. Robert Peirano. Berkeley, CA: The Apocryphile Press, 2014. 128 pages \$14.95 ISBN

IN HIS PREFACE, PEIRANO STATES THAT CHARLES WILLIAMS “is comparatively obscure [...]”. This volume intends to prove he does not deserve such obscurity” (v). This is a worthy goal. Peirano approaches this by studying the role of the Grail in a novel by Williams, *War in Heaven*, and his cycle of Arthurian poems.

In chapter one Peirano says his first encounter with Williams was reading *War in Heaven*. It was in this book that he first encountered Williams’s use of the Grail and co-inherence (Williams’s idea of the Unity of the Christian body, each person in some ways a part of each other in Christ through substitution and exchange). He comments that the book opened dimensions of time and space for him to a degree he had never experienced before, a common feeling for those who read Williams. He also says “Five years later, my understanding is still incomplete” (7). To demonstrate his points about the book he tends to quote long passages from it. (Interestingly enough, in a letter to his wife, Williams said that when asked to do a commentary on the book of John he would have just repeated the book.) I do not find his long quotes troublesome, just interesting. Peirano finishes off the intro by making the point that Williams chose the Grail, rather than the more familiar love triangle between Arthur, Guinevere, and Lancelot, to be the central theme of his Arthurian poems.

Chapter two is a short study of *War in Heaven*. Peirano explores how the Grail as the central object in the book plays out its role in the battle between good and evil. He continues to quote long passages from the book to make his points. He discusses the idea of co-inherence among the protagonists as opposed to the greed and despair of the characters attempting to use or destroy the Grail. He concludes by stating “Charles Williams demonstrates the dramatic differences between our unimaginative vision of the world and his transcendental vision of the same world” (27).

The next chapter, *Charles Williams’ Arthuriad*, introduces the rest of the book which is a study of Williams’s cycle of poems. He argues that the Grail is the central image/force of Arthurian literature. Malory has set the framework for most modern Arthurian literature, but Peirano points out that Malory gives the Grail only one chapter, and mentions a group of Cistercian monks in the thirteenth century who wrote a text known today as the Vulgate Cycle in which Galahad was the central figure. For them Galahad and the Grail were most important. Next he claims that Taliessin is Williams’s gift to Arthurian literature, in that he takes a minor Welsh poet and turns him into the major figure in the poems. He introduces a structure for studying the poems, of

which he will limit himself to seventeen rather than all thirty-two. He also limits himself to only those poems published in *Taliessin through Logres* and *The Region of the Summer Stars*. (He lists *Arthurian Poets: Charles Willaims* by David Dodds in his Works Cited, but doesn't use any of the additional poems collected there.) His selection is divided into four groupings: *The Empire Ascendant: Revealing Possibilities*, *Auroral Logres: Possibilities of Brilliant Splendor*, *The Uncoupling of Empire: The Seeds of Destruction*, and *The Galahadian Ideal: Redemption Triumphant*. He implies that he takes these four categories from Williams, but doesn't explain from where. He also describes a hierarchy he will use based on Paul J. Spathe's *Charles Williams (1886-1945) Taliessin Terms*. The hierarchy is based upon a mixture e.g., objects (the Grail), places (Byzantium and Sarras), or people (Taliessin and Galahad), ranked in order of perceived importance in Williams's cosmology. Although this hierarchy is interesting, he doesn't really use it as strongly as he could have in his analysis.

Rather than discussing in detail Peirano's extensive examination of the seventeen poems let me say that I found his grouping of the poems into the four categories allowed for a lucid and cohesive study. C.S. Lewis wanted to re-order the poems into a chronological order for study, but Pierano's ordering into thematic groups makes very good sense. The dense nature of Williams's poetry does not allow for easy study, but a thematic approach lends structure to an otherwise seemingly chaotic organization. When the poems are examined in groups sorted by theme, they serve to illuminate each other.

In many ways this book reminds me of the writings of Williams. Pierano uses the term "Garden of Opportunity" (73) instead of Garden of Eden, a very Williamsesque turn of phrase. He also displays literary and theological knowledge congruent to Williams. Another interesting thing about this book is his enthusiasm for Williams. He begins the book by stating that Williams does not deserve the obscurity he has. But he also makes almost cosmic statements such as "Williams is co-inherent with the divine. He has joined the Pantheon of the Saints" (60), or "His vision perceives what many others cannot even imagine, much less articulate in words, an important characteristic of his particular creativity and capacity for developing works containing a singular Alchemy" (96).

One thing I would have wanted to see in this book was an author biography. It would have been nice to know Robert Pierano's credentials without resorting to Google. Exploring the Internet suggests that Robert Pierano received his Doctor of Letters in 2012 from Drew University, after a B.A. and M.A. from Montclair State College. His dissertation was titled *Charles Williams: Master in the Literary Expression of Transcendental Reality*.

His final chapter is titled *Charles Williams' Literary Achievement*. He states "In conclusion, one may justifiably ask, 'What does this study contribute

to understanding Charles Williams' place within recent literary history?" (119). I would answer that this is a useful contribution to the study of Williams. As I mentioned earlier, his analysis of the selected poems is insightful. Supplying a theme-based framework upon which to study the poems offers many avenues of approach. Do I think his is the only correct view? Of course not. Williams is too wide for any one view. As to whether this book deals with relieving Williams's obscurity, only time will tell.

—Eric Rauscher



TOLKIEN AND THE MODERNISTS: LITERARY RESPONSES TO THE DARK NEW DAYS OF THE 20TH CENTURY. Theresa Freda Nicolay. Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2014. 204 pp. 978-0-7864-7898-9. \$40.00 (paperback)

J.R.R. TOLKIEN IS UNDERSTANDABLY BELOVED by medievalists and others interested in the languages, literatures, and history of the European Middle Ages. Tolkien's famous essay on *Beowulf* remains influential, and his translation of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* is widely used in college classrooms (as will be his now-available translation of *Beowulf*, undoubtedly). As not only a scholar but a champion of these old songs and tales, Tolkien sometimes seems to belong to this period. Yet Tolkien—born in 1895, a veteran of the Great War, survivor of the Second World War, and an astute observer of the radical transformations of twentieth-century social relations—is a prominent member of a generation of writers best known for their ambivalent relationship to, as well as their struggles to represent, the modern world. Tolkien himself is not usually thought of *as* a modernist, although such scholars as Jane Chance, Brian Rosebury, and Michael T. Saler, to name but a few, have certainly made the case for viewing him as such. Verlyn Flieger, for example, has suggested that, if Pound and Picasso represent artists who were “avowed modernists,” at least Tolkien and his fellow Inklings may be viewed as “reluctant modernists.” Given his life and times, as well as his innovative use of diverse mythic, cultural, and historical traditions, I might argue that Tolkien is indeed a modernist, but in any case, Tolkien's work resonates with much of the literature associated with modernism.

In *Tolkien and the Modernists: Literary Responses to the Dark New Days of the 20th Century*, Theresa Freda Nicolay does not really examine such possible resonances, unless one counts direct opposition as a means of resonating. Indeed, this study probably should have been titled “Tolkien *versus* the

Modernists,” as Nicolay takes Tolkien’s ostensible divergence from his contemporaries as her point of departure. Nicolay argues that, beginning in the mid-nineteenth-century and culminating in the aftermath of World War I, writers struggled with the devastating effects of modernization, which she understands to involve the rise of industrial capitalism, the breakdown of community, personal alienation, and a loss of religious faith. She asserts that “[t]here are two prevalent literary responses to the increasing feelings of alienation, fragmentation, and dislocation brought about by industrialism, secularism, and the Great War” (3). The first, which presumably includes Tolkien’s, involves an attempt to restore a sense of community—with the values of sympathy, compassion, selflessness, and stewardship toward both nature and one’s fellow man—through works of the imagination. The second, which Nicolay (inexplicably and without scholarly evidence) names the peculiarly *modernist* response, “underscore[s] the failure of communication and community in the post-war world-as-wasteland” (3). As a student of modern literature, I find this division simplistic and dubious, but even were it acceptable for heuristic purposes, one wonders why the first response could not also be called a “modernist” strategy. As Nicolay concludes, “while the modernist response to the crisis of modernity typically emphasizes a sense of fragmentation, despair, and alienation, Tolkien’s literary response to modernity emphasizes hope, selflessness, and fellowship in the quest to rekindle an old light in the world and restore the human community within it” (185). Nicolay’s faith in her own characterization is strong enough that she does not feel the need to argue the point, nor does she seem to consult any scholarship on modernism or modernist studies, not even the existing (and growing) body of work on the subject within Tolkien Studies.

In order to make her argument, Nicolay is forced to sketch a crude caricature of modernism, which is imagined strictly in terms of a perverse celebration of the fragmentary, isolated, and ultimately meaningless existence of mankind in the modern world. One can find references to such themes in modernist literature (in ancient literature too, in fact), but one also finds utopian visions, resurgent forms of spirituality, and the expressions of hope for the potential for social and political justice, presumably made possible by modern advances. Even the rejection of technological or industrial utopianism, as in William Morris’s *News from Nowhere*, can be understood as a modernist tactic, and Morris’s utopia, like Edward Bellamy’s and others’, is imagined as a realistic future social organization, even if Nicolay associates this with a “morbid clinging to the past” (119). By assuming, for example, that modernism is typified by secularism or atheism, Nicolay is able to position Tolkien in opposition to modernism almost entirely by reference to his own Roman Catholic, or more generally religious, beliefs. Hence, such lines as “[m]odernist

thinking rejects traditional morality, and so we find in its literature a number of amoral characters" (21). In her assumption that the modernists are secular, Nicolay conveniently ignores T.S. Eliot's embrace of the Church of England and his expressly embraced "Anglo-Catholic" religion.

Nicolay's argument proceeds accordingly, with Tolkien's Christian beliefs trumping "the" modernist's secular or anti-Christian (i.e., Nietzschean [13]) philosophy, which is the ultimately the source of their anguish over the alienated, fragmented, and meaningless wasteland that is the modern world. I believe that part of the confusion in *Tolkien and the Modernists* lies in Nicolay's paradoxically vague use of the definite article. Throughout the book, Nicolay refers to "the modernists," although she rarely names anyone in particular as she does so. To be sure, a number of modernist writers are discussed, but it is not clear why they should be seen as representative of this tribe. Rather than defining modernism—a vast field of scholarly research with which Nicolay seems, at best, only glancingly familiar—Nicolay makes wild assumptions about "the" modernists that are hardly credible, all the less so with the paucity of secondary sources or citation of authority. Another problem arising from Nicolay's apparent lack of familiarity with scholarship on modernism involves periodization. World War I is for Nicolay the monumental event, in reaction to which Tolkien's and the modernists' writings represent distinct and opposed trajectories. Truly, the experience of the war was profoundly influential on Tolkien and on others in his generation, including many who we now associate with literary modernism. However, it ought to be noted that in English, the term *modernism* has been generally applied to post-Victorian literature, including works published before the Great War. On the continent, in French, Italian, or German literary studies, for instance, modernism is frequently discussed in relation to, and as a rejection of, nineteenth-century realism. Nicolay herself discusses a number of pre-World War I texts and authors—for example, Herman Melville ("Bartleby, the Scrivener," published in 1853), William Morris (*News from Nowhere*, 1890), E. M. Forster (*Howards End*, 1910), and T. S. Eliot ("The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock," 1915)—along with Yeats ("The Second Coming," 1920), Woolf (*To the Lighthouse*, 1927), Lawrence (*Lady Chatterley's Lover*, 1928), Fitzgerald (*The Great Gatsby*, 1925), and John Gardner (*Grendel*, 1971). *The Lord of the Rings* (1954–55) came later than all but Gardner's novel, and Nicolay never explains why it is that Tolkien ought to be directly compared to the others she discusses.

Along those lines, Nicolay's omissions are particularly striking. For example, James Joyce does not appear at all in *Tolkien and the Modernists*. Neither does Joseph Conrad, nor Djuna Barnes, Hart Crane, Ford Maddox Ford, Wyndham Lewis, H.D., e. e. cummings, William Faulkner, Ernest Hemingway, or Katherine Mansfield. Pound is mentioned once, and then, only

as Eliot's editor, not as one of the world's most famous modernist poets. Gertrude Stein also appears only once, cited merely as the coiner of the phrase "Lost Generation" (91). Considering just how selective Nicolay seems to be, it is surprising that she offers no rationale for her choices, which do not seem to be limited by nationality, period, or genre. Moreover, writers outside of the Anglophone tradition are not considered at all. Whatever Nicolay's conception of "the" modernists might be, their numbers apparently would not include Proust, Kafka, Sartre, Mann, Pirandello, Borges, Beckett, Pessoa, or Neruda. Of course, the author need not be expected to cover all of these writers, but Nicolay really ought to be more circumspect in speaking for "the" modernists when the actual number of modernists she takes into consideration is so very small.

Even granting Nicolay her limited focus, I find her arguments unconvincing and even wrongheaded. Take, for example, this representative assertion: "In contrast to the modernists, who very purposefully sought to create something new in art, literature, and music, Tolkien turned to ancient stories" (71). Anyone even fleetingly familiar with modernism—in literature, painting, or music, for example—knows that such work has frequently been typified by its turn to "ancient" sources, as with Yeats's use of Celtic myth, Picasso's use of "primitive" forms, or Stravinsky's return to pagan themes. (And, again, the total absence of Joyce's *Ulysses* is here all too noticeable.) Even worse than Nicolay's mischaracterization of modernism is her bold claim that Tolkien did not create something new in his writings. It is as if Tolkien were merely retelling tales from *Snorri's Edda* or the *Kalevala*, although one could argue that even such retellings would be novel, but Tolkien's use of pre-modern tales, like Joyce's, produced profoundly innovative and influential works. *The Lord of the Rings* may not often be considered a modernist novel, but as T.A. Shippey has argued forcefully, it is every bit as striking in its use of ancient sources as is a *Ulysses*. Tolkien's legacy cannot be limited to the putative revival of long-extant materials, but rather his writings constitute major contributions to modern literature in its own right.

The Lord of the Rings was named the "Book of the Century" in a now famous 1997 Waterstone's poll of UK readers. Rounding out the top five, in order, were Orwell's *Nineteen-Eighty-Four* and *Animal Farm*, Joyce's *Ulysses*, and Heller's *Catch-22*, works not infrequently associated with modernism or, in Heller's case, even postmodernism. Tolkien's presence on the list—*The Hobbit* came in at number 19, just ahead of Camus's *L'Étranger*—is not accidental, but nor is the company in which he finds himself. All of these works engage with aesthetic, moral, psychological, social, and political matters crucial to our understanding of modernity. Modernism was never the uncritical embrace of all things modern; neither was it a simple rejection of, or a nostalgic longing

for, the past. Anyone even remotely familiar with such modernist standards as *The Waste Land*, *Ulysses*, the *Cantos* would realize that. Similarly, fantasy has never been a mere escape from reality, and the sort of heroic fantasy that Tolkien produced for his twentieth-century audience is arguably a profoundly modernist response to a world seemingly bereft of heroic ideals in the aftermath of two world wars. Unfortunately, *Tolkien and the Modernists* misses these points entirely, and as a result, it does not offer a very clear picture of either Tolkien's work or that of "the" modernists.

—Robert T. Tally Jr.



TOLKIEN AT EXETER COLLEGE: HOW AN OXFORD UNDERGRADUATE CREATED MIDDLE-EARTH. John Garth. Oxford: Exeter College, 2014. 64 p. Softcover; £10 in the UK, £12.60 in the EU, and £13.65 elsewhere (including shipping and handling). Order from the author at www.johngarth.co.uk/php/tolkien_at_exeter_college.php.

GOOD THINGS OFTEN COME IN SMALL PACKAGES, and John Garth's newest chronicle on the early life of J.R.R. Tolkien is a very good thing indeed. Enriched by over three dozen rare photographs, holographs, and illustrations, *Tolkien at Exeter College* reveals that Tolkien's life in university from 1911 to 1915 was a time of innocence, a time of confidences.

Exeter is a prequel of sorts to Garth's first biographical masterpiece, the award-winning *Tolkien and the Great War* published in 2003. Tolkien came down to in Oxford at nineteen, arriving at the Mitre in the realm of the dreaming spires in a motor-car driven by his erstwhile schoolmaster R.W. Reynolds. He had spent the summer "tramping over a large part of Switzerland (with a heavy pack)" in a trek "(w)hich in many ways resembled Bilbo's adventure of the mountains from Rivendell" (5).

Divided into fifteen chapters and two sections, "Peace" and "War," this biography is enhanced by one-page interludes. The first, "An Older Fellowship," tells the tale of another King Edward's School alumnus and Exonian, the painter Edward Burne-Jones, who matriculated at Exeter, Oxford's fourth oldest college, in 1852 along with polymath William Morris.

Exeter's Anglo-Catholic flavor encouraged those two to engender the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood opposing "the heartless coldness of the times" (4). Tolkien had once compared his King Edward's circle of like-minded friends, the T.C.B.S (Tea Club and Barrovian Society), to the Pre-Raphaelites. It seems likely that the college chapel's tapestry *The Adoration of the Magi*, designed by

Burne-Jones and realized by Morris & Co. in 1890, appealed to the Catholic Tolkien.

Missing the sort of fellowship he shared with the T.C.B.S., Tolkien created the Apolausticks, a group of a dozen or so undergraduates, in January 1912, just after his twentieth birthday. Living up to the OED “apolaustic” definition “devoted to seeking enjoyment; self-indulgent,” the group savored lively talk, good books, splendid food, and fine wine. Their discussions included works by G.K. Chesterton, George Bernard Shaw, H. Rider Haggard, Lewis Carroll, and Maurice Maeterlinck. Tolkien was, of course, president. Not a creative writing group, the Apolausticks staged at least one debate on the topic that “a belief in ghosts is essential to the welfare of a people.” Tolkien won by a single vote (15).

Garth includes two Tolkien sketches of Turl Street drawn from his view from the window of room 9 in staircase 7. He partook in Oxford life to the fullest, both its intellectual—the Stapeldon Society, the revitalized Essay Club, where Tolkien spoke on poet Francis Thompson, author of “The Hound Of Heaven”—and physical—rugby, tennis, the Officer Training Corps— aspects.

His jinks were often high enough to warrant police action. Christopher Tolkien shared a story his father told the family where a policeman said “‘Let’s take this little one,’ before officers grabbed him from behind” (19). His usually scrupulous practice of religion waned. He confessed in a letter that “I fell back into folly and slackness and misspent a good deal of my first year at College” (18). When he should have been studying for his Classics examinations, Tolkien was instead immersing himself in Sir Charles Eliot’s *Finnish Grammar* and a “wild assault on the stronghold of the original language [of *The Kalevala* which] was repulsed at first with heavy losses” (21). Garth includes one Tolkien penciled annotation on the nominative plural of the participle present in Eliot’s book.

Two fateful events occurred in 1913. First, on his twenty-first birthday on January 3, Tolkien

became an adult. This meant he was freed from all the strictures of his guardian Father Francis [Morgan]—free to follow his heart, which still belonged to Edith Bratt despite three years’ enforced non-communication. He wrote to her immediately. A less single-minded man would have been deterred by her reply that she was engaged to someone else. But Tolkien travelled to see her in Cheltenham and quickly won her back with an impassioned marriage proposal. (23)

His slacker sluggard life he put behind him. He began tallying hours spent on his studies. On Feb. 2, he wrote that “I have been so busy all day that I have

not had time to write [...]. Went to H[oly] Comm[union] this morning and am going again tomorrow" (23).

Secondly, after narrowly scraping by with a Second in Honors Mods examinations, Tolkien left Classics and Agamemnon behind for English and Beowulf. An interest in Welsh that had begun in his Birmingham boyhood joined his new fascination with Finnish in his linguistic love affairs.

Then came war.

On June 28, just as Trinity Term ended, Archduke Franz Ferdinand was assassinated in Sarajevo. Britain declared war on Germany on Aug. 4, while Tolkien and Edith were in Warwick. Tolkien chose to complete his course of study, "a daunting choice when able-bodied men out of uniform faced public abuse" (33).

But before the dawning doom of that horror of horrors, the legendarium was born. "As he slogged through the work of the Anglo-Saxon poet Cynewulf, in a volume from Exeter College library, he came to a line calling the Evening Star 'Earendel.' [...] The hint of a lost tale fired Tolkien's imagination and inspired a September 1914 poem beginning,

Éarendel sprang from the Ocean's cup
 In the gloom of the mid-world's rim;
 From the door of Night as a ray of light
 Leapt over the twilight brim . . ." (33)

Garth notes the fledgling poem's similarities to the final voyage of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's *Hiawatha* "to the portals of the Sunset" and to the meter and rhyme scheme of Shelley's "Arethusa." "But that was just the beginning of a project which lasted the rest of Tolkien's life. Bilbo Baggins sings a song telling a much-developed story of the mariner Eärendil in *The Lord of the Rings*, but the poem Tolkien wrote in September 1914 must be counted as the very first beginning of the matter of Middle-earth" (33).

Part two, "War," begins on the next page with chapter eight, "Troops on the Turl." Exeter had housed 180 undergraduates; now there were seventy-five. Tolkien began living with another Exonian, Colin Cullis, at 59 St. John Street. Cullis was excused from living in due to a heart problem. Along with twenty-four other men delaying enlistment, Tolkien joined Officer Training Corps, Class II, which meant one lecture and about six and a half hours of drill weekly.

"Drill is a godsend," he wrote Edith. "I have been up a fortnight nearly, and have not yet got a touch even of the real Oxford 'sleepies'" (36). The horrors of the European war—houses and libraries burned, civilians murdered by German soldiers—were, however, impossible to ignore.

Nonetheless, with his new energy, Tolkien turned to the *Kalevala*, transforming the tale of its doomed orphan hero Kullervo in the style of William Morris' medievaesque romances. His Catholic anti-suicide beliefs, perhaps sharpened by the death of his Exonian colleague Sidney Cohen, who shot himself on February 17, 1913, shaped the story. Kullervo begat the tale of Túrin Turambar, first drafted then and finally published in Christopher Tolkien's 2007 edition of *The Children of Húrin*. "He also kept up his idiosyncratic enthusiasms" (39). He lost a 1914 debate arguing that the cinema "is an engine of social corruption" (37) to T.W. Earp, who is recognized as the original "twerp" by the OED, but carried one in favor of English spelling reform.

"The sudden flowering of Tolkien's creativity from late 1914 to mid-1915," Garth writes,

doubtless had much to do with the absence of friends, the adrenaline and urge for distraction as final exams approached, and a wartime need to seize the day. Tolkien continued to develop his mythology in a string of poems, some of them highly accomplished, in the months before Finals. His T.C.B.S. friends read and commented on his poetry, but Exeter's Essay Club provided an immediate audience. (42)

After reading rigorously in preparation, Tolkien finally sat for his last undergraduate examinations from June 10-17, 1915; he was one of four to earn First Class Honours. Then, as his letters say, he "bolted" into the army.

"Tolkien seems to have returned to Oxford only once" after the war began, Garth writes, "for his long-delayed graduation on 16 March 1916. That day he started a personal poem, 'The Wanderer's Allegiance,' in which wartime Oxford is a shadow of the joyous, carefree, scholarly, youthful university had known up to 1914, its fellowship now broken:

along thy paths no laughter runs
While war untimely takes thy many sons [...]" (44)

On March 22, he and Edith married in Warwick. Four months later, he was an officer specializing in signals in the battle of the Somme. Of the 57 men who had matriculated with him in 1911, 23 were slain.

Nearly a third of the undergraduates who signed his Sexcentary menu just before the war were dead by 1920. In all, 141 died of the 771 Exonians who served, mostly in France and Belgium. [...] They are recorded on the chapel war memorial provided by Sir Reginald Blomfield (who also built the Menin Gate at Ypres and also designed

war cemeteries such as the one at the edge of Thiepval Wood, where Tolkien saw action in September, 1916). [...] Half of the dozen Apolausticks who had posed for the club photograph in May 1912 were now dead. (47)

Those cold quotations omit the names of men the reader has come to know well in the course of this book.

Paul Fussell's superb literary history *The Great War and Modern Memory* reinforces the bizarre fact that the England of home was so near to the horrors of the front. Lorries with the familiar names of English department stores brought supplies and ammunition to the front, along with newspapers with their cheering but false accounts of how well the war was going. Nothing conveyed the stench.

But Tolkien survived, invalidated out with parasite-borne "trench fever." He lived to tell the tale, apotheosized in his legendarium. His ties to Exeter remained strong even after he became a fellow of Pembroke College subsequent to his 1925 appointment as Rawlinson and Bosworth professor of Anglo-Saxon. "[H]e remained an Exonian at heart, cheering his old college in a boat race against Pembroke even as he took tea on the Pembroke barge. [...] His eldest son John [...] completed an English BA at Exeter in 1939. [...] Tolkien dined at Exeter College with Middle-earth fans in 1968" (49).

Garth concludes this superb seminal study thus:

Yet it is difficult to read the names in 'The Fall of Gondolin', or from the Battle of the Pelennor Fields in *The Lord of the Rings*, without thinking of the carefree young men who lined up for photographs at Exeter College but died so soon afterwards. Tolkien could hardly have become the writer he did without the experiences of war as a civilian and then soldier, including his final year at Exeter College—the first year of the Great War, when Middle-earth was born. (51)

As a coda, Garth includes holograph reproductions of three pages from the Essay Club minutes on Tolkien's presentation of "The Fall of Gondolin" on March 10, 1920, and four pages of Tolkien's own minutes of the Stapledon Society meeting of December 1, 1913.

Readers may wish (not for the first nor final time) that Tolkien had autobiographized his Oxford years, as occasional Inkling John Wain did in *Sprightly Running* in 1963. But although he kept private diaries, no doubt he was too busy living his life to write it down for public consumption.

Perhaps the last two page-spread sums up the *jeu d'esprit* of Garth's book best: a 1914 photograph of a group of Oxford lads running down a rugby field in hot pursuit of the man with the ball, joyful and jubilant, unaware of the

horrors they would be seeing in the Great War all too soon. One wonders which of them besides Tolkien, who is third from the left, survived to play the game again.

Garth begins this study thus:

In his first years at Oxford, Tolkien showed little sign of being anything more than a bright young man pursuing a degree in Classics, with no great enthusiasm, through a thicket of sociable distractions.

By the time he left in summer 1915, the world had gone to war. Tolkien had reached full and independent adulthood, was engaged to be married, and had switched to English, his true academic vocation. He had also started a sequence of visionary artworks and a flood of poetry, varied and vivid. And leaving the creative pursuits of others far behind, he had begun inventing both a language and a world for it to describe: the world he later called Middle-earth. (3)

Slender as it is, *Tolkien at Exeter College* is not slight. Like its predecessor, *Tolkien and The Great War*, it belongs on the bookshelf of every Tolkien scholar.

—Mike Foster



FASTITOCALON: STUDIES IN FANTASTICISM ANCIENT TO MODERN. 4.1/2 (2014). Editors in Chief Thomas Honegger and Fanfan Chen. ISBN 9783868215588; ISSN 1869-960X. €18.50.

TOLKIEN STUDIES XI (2014). Editors: Michael D.C. Drout, Verlyn Flieger, and David Bratman. ISBN 9781949425337; ISSN 1547-3155. \$60.00.

FOR THIS SPECIAL ISSUE OF *FASTITOCALON* on Crime and the Fantastic, guest editors Marek Oziewicz (winner of the Mythopoeic Society Award in General Myth and Fantasy Studies, 2010) and Daniel Hade have collected an absorbing group of essays. They note the fantastic's engagement with the criminal in sources like Shelley's *Frankenstein* and back through Arthurian romances and beyond, tracing a central concern with "justice issues: desert and punishment, social inequality and class oppression, poverty, abuse, and violence, exclusion and power over others" and "questions about right and wrong asked on an individual and societal level" (3). Fantasy, they claim, is a place for experimental thinking, fulfilling "the need to imagine a more just world before one can even begin to bring it about" (6).

On *Adventure Time*, the animated TV series, there is a central tension between the laws promulgated by the ruling monarch Princess Bubblegum and Finn's role as hero and champion. Katarzyna Wasylak notes that *Adventure Time* "exposes the weakness of laws created on the basis of the ideal transcendental theory of justice" (11)—that is, the rift between idealized laws and actual behavior. Several episodes are analyzed in the light of a "Capabilities Approach" to justice, where the greatest good is supporting "what each individual is able to do and become" (15). This is especially interesting when applied to the episodes "All the Little People" and "Belly of the Beast" (16-17). Wasylak praises the show for "placing the protagonists in ethically complex situations, in which systems based on pre-established codes of values fail to offer a satisfying solution" (20), requiring sophisticated thinking about justice in opposition to simply reinforcing idealized laws.

In "Burning Bridges: How Dragons Challenge the Justifications of Humanity," Emily Midkiff identifies ways in which stories featuring dragons "explore the assumption of human righteousness" (23), challenging the human/monster divide. She examines Fafnir and the dragon in *Beowulf*, where a doubling of the dragon and the dragon-slayer underlines the ambiguity of the hero's morality, in some ways making "the hero and the dragon indistinguishable" (29). Kenneth Grahame's reluctant dragon and J.R.R. Tolkien's Smaug also exhibit this doubling structure; more lightheartedly in Grahame's case, and with many of the dragonish qualities distributed through the societies of Middle-earth rather than concentrated in Bilbo or Bard in Tolkien. Ursula K. Le Guin and Anne McCaffrey, in their more contemporary interpretations, tie dragons directly to humans, challenging human rationales of "animal othering" as justifications for their actions (33); in the Earthsea books, they are kin to humans, and in the Pern books, partners in a symbiotic relationship.

Fantasy can be a tool for education in social justice and character development, according to Nicholas Emmanuele's "Questing for Justice in Multicultural Secondary World Fantasy for Young Readers," and can be particularly useful for developing critical thinking about issues of race and multiculturalism. Using classificatory theories about fantasy, particularly those of Farah Mendlesohn and Marek Oziewicz, Emmanuele finds that the stories he is interested in are usually portal or immersive fantasies that take place in a world not connected to the primary world of the reader. These stories may be "culturally-specific touchstone fantasies" (44), dealing with a single non-white ethnic group or culture; "culturally and racially inclusive fantasies" (47), in which the fantasy world is inhabited by multiple races living more or less in harmony; or "critical race fantasies" (49), where tensions and conflicts like prejudice and colonialism among multiple races are major drivers of the story.

This final category in particular encourages young readers to engage with questions of multiculturalism relevant to our world.

Editor Oziewicz's essay "Going Biospheric: Advocating Environmental Justice" begins with an interesting review of two concepts: models of environmental awareness and human responsibility that lead to the development of biospheric ethics, a value system concerned with our responsibilities to "other humans, the ecosystem, and the totality of life" (55), and a cognitive model of how humans are hard-wired to learn through story. Oziewicz provides examples of three different "tracks" of biospheric ethics embodied in young adult literature: the endangered species story in Susan Fletcher's *Ancient, Strange and Lovely* (2010), the preservationist plot in Isabel Allende's *City of the Beasts* (2002), and the sustainability track, seen in Terry Pratchett's *The Amazing Maurice and His Educated Rodents* (2001). Literature concerned with biospheric ethics is thus useful in inculcating these values in younger readers through story.

Patricia R. Cardazo examines one of the lesser-studied characters in *The Twilight Saga*, Rosalie Hale, and how she fits into the series theme of perpetuating patriarchy, romanticizing rape culture, and controlling female sexual agency. In general within classic vampire tales, women must be "either safe as mothers or damned as whores, [and] in either capacity, then cannot claim justice" (73). Rosalie, gang-raped by her fiancé and his friends, left for dead, and sired by a vampire, perpetuates a blame-the-victim mentality by stating that her beauty was the cause of the rape. However, as a vampire enacting her revenge on her attackers, she does not fit neatly into either the mother or the whore category and has more agency and power than the typical female character in the series.

The *Artemis Fowl* series combines tropes from the genres of fantasy and crime fiction in a way that undermines gender stereotypes; the fact that it is written for younger readers means that it is also concerned with the "personal growth of the characters" (88). In "Fantasy Crime Fiction as a Site for Deconstructing Traditional Male Power Structures: Eoin Colfer's *Artemis Fowl* Series," Rose Miller states that the premise of the series requires the main characters to "[question] the power structures that disseminate and reinforce" stereotypes (89) and realize that "identity is not a fixed quality" (95). The young male protagonist, who starts the series as a villain, teams with a female elf who is a captain in the law enforcement agency of the underworld, and finds himself increasingly on the right side of the law. In the end, "[i]n his pursuit of the Other, he is now becoming Other" (98).

As usual, this is a fine issue of a consistently interesting journal which chooses intriguing special issue themes. The editors indicate that they will be increasingly working with guest editors in the future.

JOHN GARTH LEADS OFF THIS ELEVENTH ISSUE of *Tolkien Studies* with a long essay on some of Tolkien's earliest work, "'The road from adaptation to invention,'" exploring not just what some of his sources might have been but how he used them. His earliest version of the Eärendil poem is an excellent example; it shares a rhyme scheme and structure with Shelley's "Arethusa," and even begins by paralleling the action of the older poem, but it is no slavish copy of the poem or the mythical material of the Earendel-complex (see Tibor Tarcsey's article in this issue of *Mythlore*); Tolkien also incorporates much material of his own invention. Similarly, while Tolkien's Kullervo poem owes great debts to both the *Kalevala* and Longfellow's "Hiawatha" for names, incidents, and feel, it also teems with his own inventions and typical plot concerns. Looking back at even earlier creative work by Tolkien—the humorous verse, debates, reporting, and plays of his school-days—Garth observes that they are not merely easily-dismissed ephemera:

On the contrary, they are vital first steps, in which he assayed his skill as a stylist, handling the rhythms of poetry and prose, the build up and release of tension, the sweep of the narrative eye across a field of action. Their parodic nature should not mean we can simply dismiss these pieces as lightweight and worthless throwaways by a tyro writer. By thus limbering up in his early exercises as a writer, he was later able to apply the same skills—more finely tuned, of course—to the most serious topics and with the utmost gravity. (11)

The "iconic moment of Christian literary history" when Lewis took a late-night stroll with Tolkien and Dyson around Addison's Walk that led to his conversion has been examined from a number of angles, but "'A Particular Cast of Fancy'" by Sister Maria Frassati Jakupcak takes a new one: what of the Joseph Addison for whom the walk was named? Jakupcak finds an interesting clue to the later estrangement between Lewis and Tolkien in the fact that Tolkien's work has a certain sympathy with the views Addison expressed on "the Fairie way of writing" in *The Spectator* in the early eighteenth century, while Lewis's work displays an approach to composition and audience more in tune with writers of the nineteenth century.

Tolkien's languages are not my strong point, but I found illuminating Nelson Goering's explanation of a statement Tolkien made indicating that Sindarin is to the British Celtic languages as Quenya is to Latin. In "*Lýg and Leuca: 'Elven-Latin,' Archaic Languages, and the Philology of Britain,*" he examines this statement not just from a linguistic angle but also looks at the social and cultural relationships between the languages; they represent contrasts between "ancient/medieval" and "bright/twilight" (71), for example.

In "After the 'end of all things': The Long Return Home to the Shire," Bernhard Hirsh takes us through a careful consideration of three critically neglected chapters of *The Lord of the Rings*: "Many Partings," "Homeward Bound," and "The Scouring of the Shire," which fall between the end of the "great world" events and the departure of the elves and Ring-bearers. Like a coda to a musical composition, these chapters bring the piece back to its beginning and resolve the major themes, balancing quests, beauty, and Elf-longing with "breathing, eating, working, begetting" (qtd. 78). Hirsch makes good use of Frye's theory of modes and shows how important these chapters are to the structure, stylistic arc, narratology, and themes of the book.

Richard Z. Gallant examines Fëanor as the best example of the conflict in Tolkien's works between his admiration for Germanic heroism, the "Northern theory of courage" he praises in his *Beowulf* essay, and his criticism of *ofermod*, of overweening and rebellious pride, in "Original Sin in Heorot and Valinor." This conflict makes the character an excellent "catalyst of narrative function" (117) for the author, his great oath about the stolen Silmarils in particular serving as a fulcrum and driver of story.

In "*Visibílium Ómniú et Invisibílium: Looking Out, On, and In Tolkien's World*," Michael Wodzak and Victoria Holtz Wodzak closely examine incidents of vision, invisibility, rainbows, reflections, and "extramissionary" sight or glowing eyes (through which a being might dominate or read other minds) in Tolkien's legendarium, to discover that he employed both modern optical theory and medieval and classical theories of light and sight in his works. The techniques Tolkien used bore out, at the deepest level, his themes of the blessings and dangers of sub-creation—the ambivalence of splintering light.

Verlyn Flieger's "But What Did He Really Mean?" argues that Tolkien's ambiguities—his contradictory statements in letters to different people, equivocations, reversals and turnarounds, and unresolved paradoxes—are the essential mark of an artist who sought "a creative tension in his work" (162). She examines three particular ambiguities in support of this observation: "the question of intentional Christianity in his fiction, [...] the ancillary reality (or not) of elves and Faërie, and [...] the meaning of his term *Faërian Drama*" (150).

The development of Michael D.C. Drout's lexomic analysis techniques have been fascinating to watch. Here Drout has teamed up with Namiko Hitotsubashi and Rachel Scavera, in "Tolkien's Creation of the Impression of Depth," to discuss several of the devices by which Tolkien created the impression of "vast backcloths of story." This is followed by an examination of how these devices are used in the *Túrin*-story and its variations over the forty years Tolkien worked on it. Interestingly, though, these devices, which may

have been used as conscious trick by earlier writers or in imitation of Tolkien by later writers, were in his hands not tricks—the offhand mentions and broken references to material never explained in *The Lord of the Rings*, for example, generally referred to stories and histories already at least sketched elsewhere. The Túrin texts are then subjected to lexomic analysis to trace Tolkien’s reuse of earlier materials and styles in later versions. Some very useful charts lay out the history and inter-relation of the various Túrin texts.

The issue closes with the usual book reviews, the Year’s Work in Tolkien Studies for 2011, and the Bibliography for 2012. Particularly notable is a lengthy review of Tolkien’s *The Fall of Arthur* by Verlyn Flieger.

—Janet Brennan Croft



BRIEFLY NOTED

TRUE MYTH: C.S. LEWIS AND JOSEPH CAMPBELL ON THE VERACITY OF CHRISTIANITY. James W. Menzies. Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications. 2014. 258 pp. ISBN 978-0718893767. \$30.00. Begun as a doctoral dissertation, this book argues that while Joseph Campbell and C.S. Lewis started their academic careers believing the same things about both myth and Christianity, over time Lewis’s view changed while Campbell’s did not. Since this book provides detailed analysis of both Lewis’s and Campbell’s perspectives on the two topics presented, it is quite intriguing for readers interested in either of these writers. —Melody Green

THE C.S. LEWIS PHENOMENON: CHRISTIANITY AND THE PUBLIC SPHERE. Samuel Joeckel. Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2013. 444 pp. ISBN 9780881464375. \$30.00. This book is an intriguing attempt to answer a question that has perplexed many people: why does C.S. Lewis have such a large following? Joeckel answers this question in multiple ways, first addressing the idea of a “public intellectual,” then engaging in a fascinating study of texts written about Lewis. Scholars interested in *Till We Have Faces* and *A Grief Observed* will find two sections of particular interest, as they focus on these works as detailed examples of the quality of his writing. —Melody Green

NOT GOD’S TYPE: AN ATHEIST ACADEMIC LAYS DOWN HER ARMS. Holly Ordway. San Francisco: Ignatius, 2014. 186 pp. ISBN 9781586179991. \$19.95. Apologetics are not something we normally review in *Mythlore*; this one may be of interest to some of our readers because Ordway, a regular reviewer for this journal, gives a large part of the credit for her journey from atheism to Catholicism to her reading in Tolkien and Lewis in particular, saying that her “imagination had been

[...] baptized in Middle-earth" (25) and that she felt she could "breathe easily in Narnia" (26). —Janet Brennan Croft

THE HERO'S JOURNEY: JOSEPH CAMPBELL ON HIS LIFE AND WORK. Joseph Campbell, edited and with an introduction by Phil Cousineau; Foreword by Stuart L. Brown. 1990. Novato CA: New World Library, 2014. 304 p. ISBN 9781608681891. \$19.95. New World Library has been reissuing Joseph Campbell's works in a new uniform paperback edition. This title was first published in 1990 and is primarily a transcript of the interviews filmed in 1982-1985 for the 1988 PBS special "The Hero's Journey: The World of Joseph Campbell." —Janet Brennan Croft



ABOUT THE REVIEWERS

EMILY E. AUGER (Ph.D.) is the author of *Tech-Noir Film A Theory of the Development of Popular Genres* (Intellect 2011), *The Way of Inuit Art In and Beyond the Arctic* (McFarland 2005, 2011), *Tarot and Other Meditation Decks* (McFarland 2004, 2011), and numerous articles and book reviews. She is also the editor of the multi-author anthology *Tarot in Culture* Vols. I and II (Valleyhome Books, 2014).

JANET BRENNAN CROFT is Head of Access Services at Rutgers University libraries. She is the author of *War in the Works of J.R.R. Tolkien* (2004; winner of the Mythopoeic Society Award for Inklings Studies), has published articles on Tolkien and other topics in *Mythlore*, *Mallorn*, *Tolkien Studies*, and *Seven*, and is editor or co-editor of several collections of essays, including *Tolkien on Film: Essays on Peter Jackson's Lord of the Rings* (2004), *Tolkien in the New Century: Essays in Honor of Tom Shippey* (2014), and the forthcoming *Baptism of Fire: The Birth of the British Fantastic in World War I* (2015).

MIKE FOSTER was a member of the English faculty at Illinois Central College in East Peoria from 1971 until his retirement in 2005. His first specialty is English fantasy literature, especially J.R.R. Tolkien, C.S. Lewis, G.K. Chesterton, and J.M. Barrie, and he has published widely in this area. He taught courses in both fantasy literature (1974-2005) and in Special Studies, J.R.R. Tolkien (1978 and continued at Bradley University in Peoria in 2006 and 2008). He was a founding member of the Far Westfarthing smial, a fantasy book discussion group whose special meeting guests have included Tom Shippey, Douglas A. Anderson, Jan and Jeff Long, and David Emerson. Foster's second specialty is popular music, especially of the era of the Beatles, but reaching back into the blues, folk, and jazz traditions, especially music with a link to Illinois. He explores this interest weekly with A Fine Kettle of

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MELODY GREEN currently serves as the Dean of Urbana Theological Seminary, a small graduate school located near the campus of the University of Illinois. She has published several articles on Tolkien, Lewis, and George MacDonald. Her most recent publication is “Story: ‘The Doctor’s Daughter,’” an essay in the collection *Bigger on the Inside: Christianity and Doctor Who* published by Square Halo Press.

DR. CRYSTAL HURD is an educator, writer, poet, and scholar in Virginia. She holds a B.A. in English Literature from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, with a Master’s in English and Doctorate in Educational Leadership from East Tennessee State University. She enjoys exploring aspects of Lewis, Tolkien, and Dorothy L. Sayers, while also examining the role of artists as leaders and the rhetoric of power. Along with her recent book *Thirty Days with C.S. Lewis: A Women’s Devotional*, she has published articles and reviews in *VII: An Anglo-American Literary Review*, *Inklings Forever*, *Englewood Review of Books*, *Mythlore*, and *Sehnsucht: the C.S. Lewis Journal*, with poetry published in *Neon Ink*, a literary magazine. She has also been featured on the “All about Jack” podcast hosted on www.essentialcslewis.com. A self-described book nerd, her interests include reading, writing, and photography. She and her husband Aaron have four dogs. www.crystalhurd.com.

ERIC RAUSCHER is a General Contractor living in Berkeley, California. He is a long-time member of the Mythopoeic Society and fell under the Good Spell of Charles Williams long ago.

ANDREW STOUT is a member of the library staff at St. Charles Community College in St. Louis, Missouri, and has written on Charles Williams, Marilynne Robinson, and the poetry of George Herbert.

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