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## Editorial

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August 5-6, 2023: Fantasy Goes to Hell: Depictions of Hell in Modern Fantasy Texts

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## Editorial



IT IS WITH GREAT SADNESS THAT WE MUST BEGIN THIS ISSUE OF *MYTHLORE* by announcing the death of our Society's founder, Glen GoodKnight, in November 2010. Our sister publication *Mythprint* devoted its November issue to personal reminiscences of Glen, and I will not try to duplicate what *Mythprint* did here; instead, we lead off this issue with an appreciation of Glen's services to Inklings scholarship and a bibliography of his writings in *Mythlore*. On a personal note, I was glad Glen lived to see this latest incarnation of the journal he founded, and I was pleased he saw fit to praise it so highly at the banquet at Mythcon 40 in 2009. May we continue to do his memory proud.

We begin the issue proper with two articles on Lewis's Space Trilogy. Sadie H. Bullard introduces the concept of "narrative dualism" as a means for understanding both Lewis's technique and his authorial purpose in creating opposing but parallel experiences, motifs, and motivations for Jane and Mark Studdock in *That Hideous Strength*. Jonathan B. Himes then explores Lewis's writing process in the unfinished *The Dark Tower*, leading us through his examination of the manuscript and explaining his conclusions about the order of composition and Lewis's writing methods.

The central papers of this issue all have to do, more or less, with the influence of their varied sources on Lewis and Tolkien. I have arranged them chronologically by date of source, which I think provides an interesting framework for considering the question of influence.

Like Bullard, Peter Grybauskas also deals with the technique of narrative dualism—in this case, Tolkien's ability to hold two conflicting ways of thinking in creative tension, representing them through equally sympathetic characters each fairly having their own say, as he does in "The Homecoming of Beorhtnoth Beorhthelm's Son." Grybauskas finds a parallel to this in the way *The Battle of Maldon* balances its praise of Northern courage with its censure of the Earl of Maldon's *ofermod*.

Next, three papers deal more or less with Dante. Michael Milburn's paper, which won the Alexei Kondratiev Award at Mythcon 41, provides a grounding in Charles Williams's romantic theology, which was heavily indebted to his reading of Dante, and the application of romantic theology to art, which Milburn demonstrates by examining Tolkien's "Leaf by Niggle" through this lens.

Joe R. Christopher then turns our attention to Lewis's *The Great Divorce*, teasing out the underlying structure and its mirroring of the *Purgatorio*. Sarah Downey then adds *Pearl* to the mix to give us a fresh look at Tolkien's Galadriel. We move on to another paper considering *Pearl* alone; Noah Koubenec shows that source study on *Pearl* has been sadly neglected by examining some roots of Tolkien's One Ring in *Pearl*'s themes and motifs.

For the final paper in this section, we continue to consider the Ring and what it means but move forward in time to Wagner. Jamie McGregor's close comparison of Wagner's Ring Cycle and the history of the One Ring in Tolkien's legendarium goes far beyond the usual shallow or dismissive comparison between the two. Here we see Tolkien, as he frequently did, absorbing the influence of an earlier author and responding in the form of a correction based on his sense that Wagner had, as Shippey put it, "got something very important not quite right" (*Road* 344).

From the contrast of how fate and doom are handled in Tolkien and Wagner we conclude with a final paper on this duality within Tolkien's own work, considering the characters of Aragorn and Turin and how, at the level of motif, their name changes throughout the legendarium reflect their own relationships with their *wyrd* and the fate of the universe.

This issue we feature reviews of *A Sword Between the Sexes? C.S. Lewis and the Gender Debates* by Mary Stewart Van Leeuwen; *The Cambridge Companion to C.S. Lewis*, edited by Robert MacSwain and Michael Ward; *The Law and Harry Potter*, edited by Jeffrey E. Thomas and Franklin G. Snyder; *Merlin: Knowledge and Power Through the Ages* by Stephen Knight; *Tolkien's The Lord of the Rings: Sources of Inspiration*, edited by Stratford Caldecott and Thomas Honegger; *One Earth, One People* by Marek Oziewicz; and *War of the Fantasy Worlds: C.S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien on Art and Imagination* by Martha C. Sammons. If you would like to be a reviewer or suggest a book to review, please contact the editor. I am also interested in adding new referees to the list of scholars who review *Mythlore*'s submissions; if you feel you are qualified to evaluate submissions and have time to read two to four papers a year, please contact me. Both reviewing and refereeing are excellent additions to any scholar's resume.

In addition to the referees on the *Mythlore* Editorial Advisory Board, I would also like to thank David Oberhelman, David Bratman, Gwyneth Hood, Tim Miller, and Merlin DeTardo for their assistance with this issue. I could not continue to edit *Mythlore* without their support and that of the Society's Board of Stewards. Thank you all!

—Janet Brennan Croft

