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World of Fanzines

Bernie Zuber

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He wished he could renew the pagan practice of propitiating local gods, not in insult to Maleldil, but merely as an apology for trespass. (PERE, 176) After he came out of the cave Ransom went through a forest for dwarfs and saw mountain mice the size of bees, horses the size of mice, and singing beasts. (PERE, 189)

The mythic element is heightened in the final triumph of the novel. The rejoicing of Revelation is apparent in the cry "Today is the morning day." (PERE, 196) The Oyarsa reveal themselves in tornadoes of light, in the wheels of Ezekiel, and finally as huge white human-like forms, with colors pulsing through and around them. The Oyarsa of Mars was a "cold and morning color, a little metallic--pure, hard, bracing," while the Oyarsa of Venus "Glowed with a warm splendor, full of the suggestion of teeming vegetable life," (PERE 196) Their faces were primitive like "archaic statues from Aegina." They revealed the true meaning of gender of which sex is only an adaptation. The one was masculine, not male; the other feminine, not female. They were Mars and Venus, Ares and Aphrodite. Ransom asked how they were made known to the poets of Tellus: (this knowledge comes) a long way round and through many stages. There is an environment of minds as well as of space. The universe is one--a spider's web wherein each mind lives along every line, a vast whispering gallery where (save for the direct action of Maleldil) though no news is exchanged yet no secret can be rigorously kept. In the mind of the fallen Archon under whom our planet groans, the memory of Deep Heaven and the gods with whom he once consorted is still alive. Nay, in the very matter of our world, the traces of the celestial commonwealth are not quite lost. Memory passes through the womb and hovers in the air. The Muse is a real thing. A faint breath, as Virgil says, reaches even the late generation. Our mythology is based on a solid reality than we dream: but it is also at an almost infinite distance from that base.

And when they told him this, Ransom at last understood why mythology was what it was--gleams of celestial strength and beauty falling on a jungle of filth and imbecility, (PERE, 201-202)

This quotation is one of the most significant statements that Lewis made on mythology. The last phrase is often (and validly) quoted as a synopsis of his theory of mythology: it is "Gleams of celestial strength and beauty falling on a jungle of filth and imbecility."

Thus the novel ends with a combination of classical images. Lewis made reference to the fact that Ransom will not find it easy to die after living in Perelandra; for was it not true that earlier generations on earth, closer to Paradise, had lived for centuries? Ransom replied that "Most take it only for a Story or a Poetry"--but it was revealed as very Truth. There is a mention of Lur, the place where Maleldil taught Tor of good and evil, and the very mention of that name seemed "Not an observation but an enactment." (PERE, 210) This mention of Lur is preparation for the next volume, That Hideous Strength, which adds the Arthurian myth to Lewis' own cosmic myth. Out of the Silent Planet was the first stating of the cosmic myth, but only in Perelandra was it fully developed. In creating his mythic framework Lewis employed a wealth of Biblical and classical allusions--notably the Edenic, the Redeemer, and the Apocalyptic. In the world of Perelandra, myth has become fact.

Footnotes

¹ Clyde S. Kilby, The Christian World of C. S. Lewis (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1964), p. 154.

² Charles Moorman, "Spaceships and Grail: The Romances of Williams, Lewis, and Tolkien," College English, XVIII (May, 1957), 402.

³ John Brinini, "Perelandra," The Commonweal, XL (May, 1944), 90-91.

⁴ Genesis 3:15.

World of Fanzines

by Bernie Zuber

This review column is to acquaint readers of Mythlore with fanzines, the publications of science fiction and fantasy fans. I have placed some emphasis on Tolkien-oriented fantasy fanzines because I felt our readers' interest would obviously be in that direction. A review of the Tolkien Society of America's Tolkien Journal would have been most appropriate but I haven't read a new issue. #10 is out as I write this but I haven't received it yet and there's another reason I couldn't review it. This issue of Mythlore is also issue #12 of Tolkien Journal so it would be rather awkward for TJ #12 to review TJ #10, wouldn't it? Well, so much for that review.

Unicorn, Vol. 1, No. 4, Fall-Winter 1969, is published by Karen Rockow (1153 E. 26th St., Brooklyn, NY 11210). Its 26 pages are beautifully printed for only 50¢ a copy (plus 10¢ postage) or four issues for \$2.00. This issue, however, was limited to 300 copies and the one I read was numbered 287, so I don't know if any others are available. Future issues should be worthwhile though, so you should try to subscribe.

I had thought that Unicorn was strictly a fantasy fanzine, but I found out that it is exactly what the editor calls it, an independent miscellaneous journal. The highlight of this issue consists of excerpts from a speech given by I.F. Stone at Harvard for a Vietnam Moratorium. This speaker publishes a paper in Washington, D.C. called I.F. Stone's Weekly. It is usually quite critical of administration policies, particularly about the Vietnam war. Although I found these excerpts from his speech quite informative, I felt that Mr. Stone is another one of these people who are very good at criticism but somehow fail to explain in detail exactly what should be done. It isn't until the very end of his speech that he makes a broad statement asking the Harvard students to work toward uniting the people of the world.

The second most interesting piece in this issue is an article about the rise and fall of the Knights Templar. I found it fascinating to read that this order of knights originally sworn to protect pilgrims traveling through the Holy Land, gradually disintegrated, in a period of about 200 years, to a point where they were so unpopular that their extermination became easy. It occurred to me that this historical tale of an organization whose ideals become warped through a period of years would be a great model for a science fiction story about such an idealistic group in the future.

The issue also contains an article about Dorothy Sayer's detective stories, a review of modern art galleries, four poems, a review of rock music opera, an Idiotic Questions quiz, a letter column, and Karen's three-part editorial "The Unicorn." The second part, subtitled "Voice from the Barrow," reviews the Harvard Lampoon's Bored of the Rings. Lin Carter's book on Tolkien, and briefly mentions Tolkien and the Critics. Karen also promises to review Carandraith and Mythlore.

The most attractive thing about this issue of Unicorn is Tim Kirk's art. Tim, who is Karen's art editor by long distance, has done front and back covers featuring a very funny unicorn. His illustration for one of the poems far surpasses the poem itself. There are three other artists represented in this issue, but Tim is still my favorite.

