An Inklings Bibliography (30)

Joe R. Christopher

Follow this and additional works at: https://dc.swosu.edu/mythlore
Part of the Children's and Young Adult Literature Commons

Recommended Citation

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Mythopoeic Society at SWOSU Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Mythlore: A Journal of J.R.R. Tolkien, C.S. Lewis, Charles Williams, and Mythopoeic Literature by an authorized editor of SWOSU Digital Commons. An ADA compliant document is available upon request. For more information, please contact phillip.fitzsimmons@swosu.edu.

To join the Mythopoeic Society go to: http://www.mythsoc.org/join.htm
Mythcon 51: The Mythic, the Fantastic, and the Alien
Albuquerque, New Mexico • Postponed to: July 30 – August 2, 2021

Abstract
Resuming after a hiatus, a series of bibliographies of primary and secondary works concerning the Inklings.

Aldiss's history of science fiction (recently issued in a revised version as Trillion Year Spree) both cites Lewis as critic or a reader (on William Morris, 3, 88; on E.A. Abbott, 106; on H.G. Wells, 119; on Olaf Stapledon and hypothetically on Hugo Gernsback, 210; generally, 305, 320n) and as a writer of the Ransom Trilogy (196-201, 205, 213n, 236, 289n, 307). Aldiss's conversation in Chapter 20 of the book; Aldiss calls the volume, "one of the most delightful space voyages in literature" (198). Perelandra receives a summary (198-199), a general paragraph on its Miltonic derivation, and such comments as this: "it is undeniable that [Lewis] can sometimes make [non-Christians] squirm with embarrassment, as in the psalm-singing ending" (199). That Hideous Strength is given a brief summary (199-200) and called "remarkable rather than successful" (200). "Jules in That Hideous Strength is a spiteful and personal caricature of H.G. Wells." It was hardly Wells' fault that he was a Cockney, or that his legs were short" (213n). (Aldiss, in his defense of Wells, forgets that satire is not a polite debate.) "What remains vital about... the trilogy... is that it tries to answer the Wellsian position in vaguely Wellsian terms. It is not dystopian; it is against the idea of utopia. As such, it represents a genuine minority viewpoint" (200).

Tolkien and Williams are mentioned for their influence on That Hideous Strength (201), but Tolkien of the Rings gets an extended later discussion (265-269), including the quotation of night passages from Tolkien and Mervyn Peake to contrast their styles. Aldiss sees Middle-earth as a projection of the social order and scenery of Tolkien's youth, and compares it to the equally artificial world of P.G. Wodehouse: "The counterfeit gold of an Edwardian sunset lights the oeuvre of both men" (266).
dwarves (138-139); and he offers a number of interesting suggestions, such as the derivation of Bilbo's name from the Middle English words bil + boie, "sword-boy" (133).

Despite Green's very limited acknowledgment of Tolkien scholarship, the essay is a respectable contribution to Tolkien studies, particularly to the growing consensus about the maturation theme and to the lack of consensus about structure.


Martin's novel is a detective story-cum-supernatural possession fantasy set in the world of rock-'n'-roll; specifically, in a revival of a late 1960s and very early 1970s rock group, the Nazgul. The use of Tolkien by such a group is made more realistic if one remembers, for example, "Rivendell" on Rush's Flying High (1975) and several Tolkienian songs, especially "The Necromancer," on Rush's Careless of Steel (also 1975). Martin uses his material and plot framework partly for a nostalgic remembrance of the hardrock and often idealistic youth culture of the 1960s partly for a depiction of what, typically or not so typically, has happened to the idealists, and partly for vivid descriptions of rock concerts. (Among those things which have happened to the one-time rebels seems to be neither hearing loss nor venereal diseases; but, then, this is a fantasy.) The last chapter is sentimental.

Briefly, the Nazgul in this story is an extremely popular rock group which disbanded in 1971 when their lead singer, Patrick Henry Hobbins, nicknamed Hobbit, was gunned down in a concert. This novel begins with the killing of the promoter, nicknamed Sauron bitterly, who owned the rights to the group's name (he is killed stretched out on a Nazgul poster with one of the group's records playing loudly). With his death, his rights seem to dissolve rather than be passed on to his heir. If any new promoter gathers the group together with a young look-alike singer - the new singer has a dog named Balrog. The song writer of the original group living in New Mexico, has a hot-air balloon with the Eye of Sauron painted on it. A few other Tolkienian touches occur, but these give the essentials.

"Which side [of the final battle, of Armageddon] are we?" Sandy [the male protagonist] demanded. "Which side are we?"

"That's one you got to work out yourself, friend. This ain't like in Tolkien, is it?" (343)
something like the Jungian Shadow here.) Tolkien has been influenced by Dunsany, Moorcock suggests, having his weaknesses of an "archaic style" and "a nostalgic, highly-colored mood," although Tolkien has some (unnamed) strengths beyond Dunsany (29). (This derivation from Dunsany seems absurd.)

The most extended passage on Tolkien is a comparison of The Lord of the Rings and Mervyn Peake's Titus Groan books (3 paragraphs, 28), which grows out of the assumption that two of the major types of modern fantasy are the Sword and Sorcery tale, developing from the Gothic historical romance, and the Haunted Palace of the Mind story, developing from the Gothic haunted castle story (27). Moorcock's later comment on Tolkien's "picaresque theme" (30) -- meaning a quest, derivatively from Dunsany seems absurd.

The Lord of the Rings and Mervyn Peake's Titus Groan books (3 paragraphs, 28), which grows out of the assumption that two of the major types of modern fantasy are the Sword and Sorcery tale, developing from the Gothic historical romance, and the Haunted Palace of the Mind story, developing from the Gothic haunted castle story (27). Moorcock's later comment on Tolkien's "picaresque theme" (30) -- meaning a quest theme -- explains what he intends here, as does his description of the Gothic historical romance as "boundless, horizonless, depending on adventure and supernatural marvels for its basic plot ingredients" (27). In his actual comparison of Tolkien and Peake, Moorcock notes their use of "innocents" as central characters" -- the hobbits in Tolkien; he finds Peake's work superior in its characterization -- specifically in that the characters develop, while Tolkien's do not -- and in its memorable images (28). Despite calling The Lord of the Rings the "outstanding modern" example of the Sword and Sorcery story (28), Moorcock later lists Fritz Leiber's Two Sought Adventure (a Fafhrd and Gray Mouser book) as "the best current" development of the type (31). Whatever the inconsistencies and errors, Moorcock notes them as a major modern fantasy writer is significant, and influential, in his opinions. Note: Moorcock has not changed his opinions in the last twenty years; he writes in a letter in NIEKAS, No. 34 (no date: 1986), 44, "... I find C S Lewis morally disgusting and a lousy writer.... I suppose my views on all those horrid Inklings are fairly well known.... I have always felt that there was an unpleasantly rightist undercurrent in [Tolkien's] (and Lewis') books which make them impossible for me to enjoy."

(b) Darrell Schweitzer, "Frithee, Sirrah, What Dost Thou Mean by Archaic Style in Fantasy?" 43-51 (Tolkien, 50). This essay originally appeared in Science Fantasy Review, No. 21, in 1977. Schweitzer writes an interesting essay, using specific passages from various authors -- William Morris, Lord Dunsany, Clark Ashton Smith, William Hope Hodgson -- to illustrate differences in the "archaic" style. Tolkien is mentioned only as a contrast: "The all-time best-seller, The Lord of the Rings, isn't written in a noticeably archaic style" (50).

(c) Paul Spencer, "Cabell: Fantasist of Reality," pp. 97-106 (Tolkien, 98). This essay was not previously printed. Spencer surveys Cabell's fantasies, and Tolkien appears only in two sentences, suggesting, first, that the Cabell revival is due in part to Tolkien's popularity stimulating "interest in literate fantasy," and, second, that "Even more than The Lord of the Rings, Cabell's books demonstrate the power not of the scope of fantasy as a medium both of entertainment and of profound artistic expression" (98). Spencer stresses the pleasing, not the teaching, side of the traditional formula throughout his discussion of Cabell.


Stableford, in an excellent and valuable book, traces the British tradition of the scientific romance, which he contrasts with American science fiction in the period. He writes: The origin of the scientific romance was not merely a consolidation of quasi-realistic imaginary voyages, futuristic Utopian fantasies, evolutionary fantasies, and future war stories, with a delicate spice of secular eschatology; it was also a process of discrimination which isolated the speculative fiction which owed its inspiration to the scientific imagination from that which employed a 'supernatural' framework. It also needs to be emphasized that despite a certain amount of protestation to the contrary, this separation was only partially achieved. (38)

Although Stableford does not apply these traditions directly to Lewis, it is obvious that the voyages to Mars and Venus fit the first type, with the Martian society a non-futuristic Utopia; That Hideous Strength has, in its imagery, much of a not-quite-secular eschatology. Lewis also illustrates the failure to separate the scientific romance from a supernatural framework. (The American writers, note: Stableford is not thoroughly investigated, is that of pulp fiction, whether in magazines or paperbacks, aimed at a less educated audience. Essentially, American SF began to become better about 1940, the start of John W. Campbell's Golden Age, near the end of the separate British tradition [324-325].)

Stableford discusses twelve major writers of the scientific romance, divided into three periods: The Pre-war Period -- George Griffith, H.G. Wells, M.P. Shiel, Arthur Conan Doyle, William Hope Hodgson, J.D. Beresford; Between the Wars -- S. Fowler Wright, Olaf Stapledon, Neil Bell, John Boag; After the Holocaust -- C.S. Lewis, Gerald Heard. As has been known in Lewis studies for a long time, H.G. Wells and Olaf Stapledon provided a background for Lewis to react against; Stableford's survey shows all three in the same tradition. Two figures of importance in the influence on Lewis' fiction also fit into Stapledon's pattern as minor figures -- G.K. Chesterton's fiction is mentioned as a reply to Wells (124-126) and J.B.S. Haldane's essays are discussed (especially 156-159). Although Stableford is very general about the essays' influence on Lewis (292). David Lindsay, despite Voyage to Arcturus, receives no real discussion, although he is mentioned twice as an influence on Lewis (291, 298), the second time being described, with John Cowper Powys, as being in the genre of metaphysical fantasy. The basic discussion of Lewis (288-299) contains a survey of his life and major works, and includes his three short stories that can be considered scientific romances. The only factual error seems to be that Lewis' second marriage ceremony was held in a Church (298) -- it was celebrated by a priest in a hospital. Stableford offers five parallels to Olaf Stapledon's development in his account of Lewis' early beliefs and writings. In general, it is an excellent survey; a comment elsewhere shows that Stapledon does not think Christianity can be intellectually acceptable (309), but he is not attacking Christianity in his book. Six of his twelve major authors had fathers who were clerics; the six obviously turned in more secular directions, but Lewis is interesting for his opposite turn. (Stableford lectures in a department of sociology in a British university; his approach, in sections not mentioned here, is sociological, and his attitude is also more of observation than non-analytic judgement. Stableford does not mention that Mark Studdock, in That Hideous Strength, is a sociologist.)

Among the excellencies of the discussion of Lewis is an explanation of why Out of the Silent Planet cannot be regarded as an allegory (292) and an indication of how widespread in the scientific romance
were the ideas of "emergent evolution" which Weston espouses early in Perelandra (294). The following section, on Gerald Heard, contains several comparisons with Lewis (309, 312). Elsewhere in the book, Lewis is quoted on the eschatological aspects of the scientific romance (37), is pointed to, with Gerald Heard, for attempting the synthesis of "the scientific and religious view-worlds" (43), and is mentioned, along with others, for being influenced by the speculative essays of the period between the wars and for producing "spectral appraisals of the state of contemporary civilization, and... its prospects" (165). That is, Lewis belongs to his period.

Lewis' friendships with Barfield, Tolkien, and Williams are noted in the section on Lewis, but little is made of their works; Stableford does indicate that an analogous situation exists between the scientific romance and the metaphysical fantasy in his period of consideration as exists today between science fiction and the heroic fantasy, the latter flourishing in the wake of Tolkien (299).


Williams' poem was included in Lord David Cecil's The Oxford Book of Christian Verse (1940); and in An Inklings Bibliography (29), "a stress on the lack of copyright for the poem in that volume may have implied that it was original there. But Davie, in reprinting the poem, credits Divorce (1920) as the origin (p. 305), although he also does not give a copyright notice — presumably the volume was uncopyrighted. In his notes, Davie prints the relevant portion of The Book of Common Prayer to illustrate this poem (p. 311).

### Early Review of Books by J.R.R. Tolkien

**Compiled by George H. Thompson**

#### Part VI

**Tree and Leaf**

_T&L '64 London: A&U, 1964_  
_T&L '65 Boston: HM, 1965_

Anthony, Mother Mary, S.H.C.J. Best Sellers 24 (15 March 1965), 488. [Tolkien's essay on the fairy-story as art form (a 1938 lecture, enlarged) may well be the most important analysis of the function of the poetic imagination since Coleridge.]

_Brincip, Adrian. "Tree and Leaf: J R R Tolkien". Granata (Cambridge), 5 June 1966, pp. 35-37. [A sympathetic, well-informed summary and review. "So Tolkien presents his case and it is a consistent case. Whether it is credible or not is another matter all together, for its author does not ask for rational belief or disbelief. His philosophy is more a way of looking at the world than of thinking of it." LBN is not one of his best works.] +

_T&L '64_

Bingham, Mary. "From the Perilous Realms". Courier Journal (Louisville, Ky.), 7 March 1965, Section IV, p. S. [A descriptive appreciation with judicious quotations from OFS. She gives the name "katharsis" to the "piercing glimpse of joy, and hearts desire" that Tolkien finds at the close of the successful fairy tale.]


_T&L '64_

Briggs, K.M. Folklore 75 (Winter 1964), 293-294. [Approaching the book from the point of view of folklore, he argues that classification is a necessity, though Tolkien does not much approve of it. However, stories have been "handed down for the sake of delight and enlargement of spirit," and Tolkien's essay is a timely reminder of this.]

_Daigleish, Alice. "An April Shower to Share". Saturday Review 48 (24 April 1965), 44. [Though not a Hobbit fan, she is favorably impressed by both parts of T&L. "It is required reading for the many who are busily engaged in writing so-called modern fairy tales."]

_T&L '64_

Davenport, Guy. "The Persistence of Light". National Review 17 (20 April 1963), 332-334. [This review of T&L is in fact a wide-ranging rhetorical article in praise of Tolkien. The divine vision has often been lost in modern literature but "in Tolkien has been reborn. He has escaped satire and irony on the one side and realism on the other." The theme of the essay on fairy stories is "that the imagination is a metamorphosis of reality rather than an evasion of it." Tolkien's stories are timeless because his creatures represent moral states. The statement that the writing of LOTR was finished before World War II is incorrect. Concerning Tolkien's next work "It is, I was told this summer in England, 'not a romance but a history'."]

_T&L '65_