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An Inklings Bibliography (57)

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AN INKLINGS BIBLIOGRAPHY (57)

Authors and readers are encouraged to send copies and bibliographic references on: *J.R.R. Tolkien* — Wayne G. Hammond, 30 Talcott Road, Williamstown, MA 01267; *C.S. Lewis and Charles Williams* — Dr. J.R. Christopher, English Department, Tarleton State University, Stephenville, TX 76402.

Barnfield, Marie. "The Roots of Rivendell, or Elrond's House Now Open as a Museum." *De Lyfe ant þe Auncestrye* 3 (Spring 1996): 4-18. [Tolkien]

Barnfield puts forth the intriguing suggestion that the valley of Rivendell as it appears in *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* was based (in terms of its physical aspects) on the Lauterbrunnen valley in Switzerland, which Tolkien visited at the age of nineteen. Indeed there are notable similarities between the two, which Barnfield illustrates both with quotations from Tolkien's writings and letters and with drawings and a recent photograph of Lauterbrunnen, the latter remarkably like Tolkien's painting of Rivendell for *The Hobbit*. [WGH]

Bratman, David. "J.R.R. Tolkien: An Introduction to His Work." *Adventures of Sword & Sorcery* 2 (Spring 1996): 18-21.

This is the best general, brief introduction to Tolkien that has ever been produced. It is an intelligent assessment of Tolkien's works and of their place in modern fantasy literature; and although to readers of *Mythlore* Bratman (the former editor of *Mythprint*) would be preaching to the converted, even the older student of Tolkien will find in this essay gems of insight that make it well worth the reading. To give but one example, Bratman points out that "Tolkien's central work is a trilogy" (p. 19), by which he means *The Silmarillion*, *The Hobbit*, and *The Lord of the Rings*. This should be obvious to every devotee of Tolkien, but the fact is often overlooked. Another moment of insight is Bratman's remark that "Tolkien is often thought to have been a slow writer, because he published so few books. In fact he was a very fast writer who took infinite care reconsidering and polishing his work" (p. 20). [WGH]

Cornwall, Patricia. *Cause of Death*. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1996.

At one point in this murder mystery, Dr. Kay Scarpetta, the protagonist, is visiting her niece, an FBI agent. The niece is staying in another person's room for the summer; the paragraph describing the room reads in part:

The space was small with bed and sink, and crowded bookcases. Heart of pine floors were bare, with no art on white-washed walls except a single poster of Anthony Hopkins in *Shadowlands*. (234)

Given the niece's technological interests, the poster is

probably due to the room's winter-time occupant; but the point here is simply the wide-spread knowledge of Lewis's life through the movie—even if this poster suggests more enthusiasm for the star than the person portrayed. (The poster is simply a cultural-background detail; it has no significance in the mystery.) [JRC]

Filmer-Davies, Cath. "It All Began with the Aurochs': Metafiction and Metaphysics in Stephen Lawhead's Song of Albion Trilogy." *Amazing Questions: The Journey into Growth: A Festschrift in Honour of David Lake and John Stugnell, Co-Founders of the [Mythopoeic Literature] Society [of Australia]*. A special (and last) issue of *The Journal of Myth, Fantasy, and Romanticism* 4:1-2 (April/October 1996). Ed. Cath Filmer-Davies. Forest Lake, Queensland: Red Dragon Publishing, 1996. 93-100.

Filmer-Davies, in her opening paragraph, says that she will not trace the uses of Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* and Lewis's Ransom Trilogy and Chronicles of Narnia in Lawhead's *The Paradise War*, *The Silver Hand*, and *The Endless Knot*, but will, instead, discuss "the way in which Lawhead subverts some of the current theories of writing and reading. . . ." (93). Actually, she continues to make references to Lewis and Tolkien—and to Williams—while not doing a source-hunting essay. She mentions Lewis and Tolkien in connection with the Oxford setting of the opening and close of Lawhead's fiction (94). She suggests a connection between the American Celtic scholar, Lewis, of Lawhead's series and (besides Lieu) C. S. Lewis (94). She mentions that Lawhead has won "a C. S. Lewis Award for fantasy literature" and cites his essay "J. R. R. Tolkien: Master of Middle-Earth [sic]" on his indebtedness to Tolkien and Lewis (94, 100). She writes that Lawhead's villain, Simon, "has resonances with William Butler Yeats and Charles Williams, both of whom were members of the Order of the Golden Dawn" (96). (Actually, Williams was a member of "The Fellowship of the Rosy Cross," not The Order of the Golden Dawn; they were separate, if somewhat similar, organizations.) Filmer-Davies calls Professor Nettleton, a character, "on some kind of extended leave from Lewis's Narnian Chronicles" (96). She compares Lawhead's Albion to Narnia (96-97). She compares Lawhead's pre-Christian setting to Tolkien's Middle-earth and Lewis's Glome (97). And she compares the fictional Lewis in *Out of the Silent Planet* writing a fiction in order to present people with "fact" to Lawhead's Lewis doing much the same thing at the end of his trilogy (99). C. S. Lewis is also quoted from *An Experiment in Criticism* twice (99). [JRC]

Goldthwaite, John. *The Natural History of Make-Believe: A Guide to the Principal Works of Britain, Europe, and America*. New York: Oxford University Press,



1996. x + 386 pp. [Lewis 10, 16, 92, 171, 175, 220-44, 338; Tolkien 10, 45, 167, 175, 215-20, 222, 223, 224, 237, 243-44, 353-54, 358]

The Natural History of Make-Believe is a "history of the world's imaginative literature for children." Its author prefers "make-believe" to "fantasy" or "whimsy" as a way of "naming a certain kind of magic in story that acknowledges its diverse expression while at the same time suggesting its true audience to be children" (p. [vii]), and he has strong opinions about his subject. He rather casually describes Tolkien's *Hobbit* as a version of Grahame's *Wind in the Willows*: "For the animal fellowship that liberated Toad Hall from usurping stoats Tolkien substitutes a hobbit and a band of dwarfs liberating a usurped treasure trove from a dragon. Peaceable, pursy Bilbo Baggins of The Shire, with his homely digger feet [!], is quite like the self-effacing Mole, who in the right company also discovers in himself a talent for derring-do" (p. 216)—and so forth, with small elements of truth but on the whole begging to be disputed. He continues in the same unfortunate vein about *The Hobbit* ("Tolkien had neither Grahame's quickening way with a story nor his love of nature working for him . . .") and follows up by dismissing *The Lord of the Rings* as a teenager's delight but which "unless one is nostalgic by disposition and tolerant to a fault . . . will pall rather rapidly" to adult readers (p. 217). Here Goldthwaite evokes the shade of Edmund Wilson, whose 1956 review of *The Lord of the Rings* is notorious for its wrongheadedness and lack of vision, but with which Goldthwaite agrees. He describes Tolkien's masterpiece as a derivation of Wagner's *Ring*, filled with fraudulent emotion and terrible writing, and he refers with even greater ignorance to Tolkien's posthumously published writings (i.e. *The History of Middle-earth*) as "more appendices to *The Lord of the Rings*" (p. 219).

This, however, is merely prelude to a long and savage attack on C.S. Lewis and his *Chronicles of Narnia*. That these books are not "quite as inspired as one would hope of a parable written by the most famous Christian apologist of the day" (p. 223) is Goldthwaite's mildest comment on Lewis. He is sometimes on the mark—for example, Narnia is indeed put together from bits and pieces according to Lewis's fancy: "medieval lords and ladies, talking horses and beavers, Greek fauns," etc. (p. 223)—though it is debatable whether this is so because Disney's eclectic animated film *Fantasia* pointed the way. Otherwise Lewis is characterized as bullying and biased;

he made *The Chronicles* serve every petty prejudice and every theological revision that could be fitted into the general scheme. And it is here—and not, as he told it, with the White Witch of the North—that evil entered Narnia. It is Lewis's own original sin of pride that infects this new world and brings about its fall" (p. 224).

Goldthwaite looks upon the Narnia books with a modern sense of "political correctness," especially with regard to Lewis's treatment of females and his love of things Northern, associated here with Wagner and Nazi Germany. [WGH]



Laurent, John. "C. S. Lewis on 'The Law of Human Nature.'" *Amazing Quests: The Journey into Growth: A Festschrift in Honour of David Lake and John Sturgnell, Co-Founders of the [Mythopoeic Literature] Society [of Australia]*. A special (and final) issue of *The Journal of Myth, Fantasy, and Romanticism* 4:1-2 (April/October 1996). Ed. Cath Filmer-Davies. Forest Lake, Queensland: Red Dragon Publishing, 1966. 28-36.

Laurent's essay, as one of a number on Lewis's understanding of Natural Law, is distinguished by two characteristics: he spreads his survey of Lewis's writings wider than most, and he compares what Lewis has to say to earlier philosophers and naturalists writing on mankind as a social animal. For example, he points to a passage in *That Hideous Strength* that says Jane Studdock discovers "a moral side to her nature 'risen from some unknown region of grace or heredity'" (Laurent's italics). He also cites discussions of hereditary morality from Darwin's writings, among others. In general, he broadens the background of Lewis's discussion. [JRC]

Lenz, Millicent. "Archetypal Images of Otherworlds in Singer's 'Menaseh's Dream' and Tolkien's 'Leaf by Niggle.'" *Children's Literature Association Quarterly* 19.1 (Spring 1994): [3]-7.

Both Singer and Tolkien have produced "fantasies of the afterlife or a possible otherworld" the contemplation of which is important to children. Lenz summarizes and compares the two stories. Niggle travels to the otherworld physically, while Menaseh in Singer's story does so psychologically, in a dream. "Whereas Niggle's voyage . . . is permanent and irreversible, reflecting the finality of his physical death, Menaseh's flight is temporary" (p. 5). Menaseh's otherworld, unlike Niggle's "Dantean purgatory," has no "hierarchy of spiritual beings nor underlying theological structure" (p. 5). Lenz feels that Singer's tale will be more appealing to children than Tolkien's, since its protagonist is also young and easier to identify with; but "both stories serve all readers, on different levels, by giving meaning and value to life in this world" (p. 6). [WGH]

Owens, Virginia Stem. *Assault on Eden: A Memoir of Communal Life in the Early '70s*. 1977 (under a



pseudonym). Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Books, 1995. Note: This second edition has a "Preface to the New Edition." [Lewis 150, 152, 156, 163, 165; Tolkien 23.]

Owens writes of her, her husband's, and their daughters' life in a New Mexico commune, after they fled a society they thought in its last stages; most of the description covers the problems of life in a commune, with the occasional pleasures. Tolkien is mentioned in the first chapter:

Those who glibly speak of "copping out" (called come-outism in the nineteenth century) little know the desperation of those driven into the wilderness. It is escape from certain danger into the unknown. But as Tolkien said, the only one whose despises escape is a jailer. (23)

Thus, a literary escape (in Tolkien) is applied to a literal withdrawal from society.

The references to Lewis appear in the last (eighth) chapter. Owens and her husband, after "five seasons" (the term she uses), have abandoned the communal life because they have to earn money to pay for an operation for one of their daughters. After the operation:

While she was recuperating at home, I read to her in the afternoons the whole series of the Narnia books of C. S. Lewis, stories of a marvelous kingdom beyond our grimy time and space where adventure and heroism were still possible. The children could not devour enough of these stories—Lewis says that youth has a natural appetite for heaven—and as for me, my own jaundiced palate began to tingle again with the longing for Something More. If only I too could somehow slip into a world where something mattered again. When we came to *The Silver Chair*, I recognized the sensation of living underground for so long that the sun itself seemed a myth. The torpor and cynicism that had bitten deep into Prince Rilian had settled into my bones too. (150)

She goes on,

Jack [her husband, not Lewis's nickname] and I had followed our dream into the desert and found it to be no more than a mirage. I couldn't stand a second disappointment like that" (151).

When she decides to go to a local Presbyterian Church one Sunday, she writes, "whether from desperation or the hunger sharpened by those children's stories, I decided to try this little church" (152). After they have become members, she writes: "We felt as if we were emerging from the underground and discovering, somewhat like Prince Rilian, that the Son was not a myth after all" (156).

The final reference to Lewis is one from his Christian writings (*The Problem of Pain*, Ch. 4):

... to admit the final humiliating truth, as long as I have my own family, I don't feel the need for anything more than those intermittent flashes of community. Hell, says Sartre, that preeminent existentialist, is other people. Heaven, replies C. S. Lewis, is an acquired taste. And some of us have to go through Hell to get there. (163)

Note: Two or three factual errors of a minor sort appear in the book. One of the epigraphs to the fourth chapter attrib-

utes "Men have died and worms have eaten them, but not for love" to Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* (64); it is from Shakespeare, but from his *As You Like It*. Rosalind comments to Orlando in Act IV, Scene 1, that "men have died from time to time, and worms have eaten them, but not for love." In Chapter 8, Owens writes about Utopian fantasies: "Voltaire had the idea of making chamberpots and fetters out of gold and silver to reduce their value" (146); Voltaire may say that somewhere (this bibliographer does not know), but certainly Sir/Saint Thomas More, in his *Utopia*, Book Two, the section titled "Their Gold and Silver," said it first. Finally, Owens refers to "the recently unearthed Tasaday tribe in the Philipppinhes, where gentle concern for the common welfare is put before all else" (148); if this bibliographer's memory is correct, that tribe was eventually found to be a fraud, invented and acted out for tourism purposes. [JRC]

Owens, Virginia Stem. *If You Do Love Old Men*.

Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1990. [Lewis 115]

In Owens' award-winning memoir of her grandfather appears this paragraph:

It is strange to think that along the same winding Western Front where my grandfather slept on the ground wrapped in an army blanket, men like Ernest Hemingway, John Dos Passos, Robert Graves, and C. S. Lewis were also deployed. Lewis had left Oxford as a student to join the war. . . . But though they were on the same side and spoke roughly the same language, they were from a different world than my grandfather, who had never even been out of the state of Texas before. They were men of books and a kind of learning that comes only with money and leisure and time for reflection. . . . And he [her grandfather] certainly never exercised his mind on hard, knobby questions about God like Lewis. God was the dark, brooding, unpredictable presence whose arbitrary hand wrote names on bullets. If you survived the war, it was because "they weren't ready for you over there yet." (115)

Admittedly Owens is a religious writer, but she is not a sentimental one: the listing of Hemingway, Dos Passos, Graves, and Lewis as equally significant literary men seems to be a mark of Lewis's gradual growth in repute. [JRC]

Roberts, Maureen. "The Fourth Table: The Inner Quest of the Holy Grail."

Amazing Quests: The Journey into Growth: A Festschrift in Honour of David Lake and John Stugnell, Co-Founders of the [Mythopoeic Literature] Society [of Australia]. A special (and final) issue of *The Journal of Myth, Fantasy, and Romanticism* 4:1-2 (April/October 1996). Ed. Cath Filmer-Davies. Forest Lake, Queensland: Red Dragon Publishing, 1996. 48-60.

Roberts discusses the Grail myth from a psychological, rather Jungian, approach. Her fullest treatments are of Chrétien de Troyes' *Perceval: The Story of the Grail* and Marion Zimmer Bradley's *The Mists of Avalon*, but she mentions more briefly several of the other early and modern versions. She spends one paragraph on Charles Williams' *Many Dimensions*, taking the Stone as equivalent to



the Grail (an assumption encouraged by Wolfram von Eschenbach's *Parzifal*, in which a Stone is called the Grail), and another paragraph on his *War in Heaven*, emphasizing that a woman is among those that the service of the Grail at the end of the book—the feminine element that always is present in Roberts' reading of the Grail mysteries (56). In addition to these paragraphs, Lewis is quoted about the internalization which is the history of the West (55), Lewis and Williams are mentioned among others as retellers of the Arthurian tales in a modern way (55), Williams' term *coinherence* is used in connection with the end of Chrétien's *Parceval* (54), and Williams' aphorism "This also is Thou; neither is this Thou" is used as "the principle of mystical knowledge" (59), without mention of Williams. [JRC]

Vander Elst, Philip. *C. S. Lewis.* Thinkers of Our Times series. London: The Claridge Press, 1996. [Barfield 9; Coghill 6; Dyson 7; W. H. Lewis 1-2, 4; Tolkien 6-7.]

Philip Vander Elst, author of *Resisting Leviathan: The Case Against a European State* (1991), presents a Christian-oriented survey of C. S. Lewis's life and writings, calling it an "introductory study" (14). The first chapter is biographical; the next two survey Lewis's Christian positions; the fourth discusses Lewis's social and political positions; and the fifth, Christian aspects of his fiction. Except for a modern definition of *humanism* applied to Lewis's discussion of the sixteenth century (24-25), the book is accurate and (within its limits) useful. Vander Elst at one point answers Elizabeth Anscombe, presumably because Lewis was not able to answer her (24-25) — although Vander Elst does not cite the published version of Anscombe's argument. At another point, Vander Elst faults Lewis's failure to make some political distinctions (90). Both of these cases show the author going beyond merely summarizing Lewis's positions, which suggests some (though limited) scholarly utility to the book for those who already have read Lewis.

It should be noted that the book is very selective in its scholarship, and the bibliography omits many secondary works on the author's topics.

Vander Elst does not mention George Sayer's *Jack: C. S. Lewis and his Times* (1988), one of the two best biographies on Lewis, while listing (even though with seriously reservations) A. N. Wilson's biased and unreliable *C. S. Lewis: A Biography*; Vander Elst does not cite Gilbert Meilaender's *Taste for the Other: The Social and Ethical Thought of C. S. Lewis* (1978), the best book on its topic; he omits all of the five or so earlier Christian surveys, such as Richard B. Cunningham's *C. S. Lewis: Defender of the Faith* (1967) and William Luther White's *The Image of Man in C. S. Lewis* (1969), and all books on Lewis's fiction. Further, Vander Elst's focus is so exclusively Christian that he does not mention the large amount of Platonism in Lewis's thought and imagination—cf. the chapter on Plato in Robert Houston Smith's *Patches of Godlight: The Pattern of Thought in C. S. Lewis* (1981). But it may be said that Vander Elst achieves his limited goal of a Christian introduction to Lewis. [The



foregoing annotation is an expansion and slight modification of a review appearing in *Choice* 34:4 (Dec. 1996). Reprinted with permission from CHOICE, copyright by the American Library Association. [JRC]

Wullschläger, Jackie. *Inventing Wonderland: The Lives and Fantasies of Lewis Carroll, Edward Lear, J.M. Barrie, Kenneth Grahame and A.A. Milne.* London: Methuen, 1995. xii + 228 pp. [Lewis 4, 169, 207, 208; Tolkien 206-7]

Ms. Wullschläger argues that the writers which whom her book is concerned wrote "the great children's fantasies" whose "vision of childhood . . . still holds sway over us today" (p. 3). None could dispute this conclusion (which is by no means original with Wullschläger); but in her profuse admiration of these five authors she disparages much of the literature that followed in the tradition of Carroll et al. Incredibly, she finds the works of Arthur Ransome, Hugh Lofting, Alison Uttley, and P.J. Travers "predictable and plodding," without the same literary quality or element of myth as their predecessors. Only Tolkien in *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* "attempted a work which was original in spirit. He follows the great fantasies in the creation of a tangible, alternative reality, but there is something forced and self-conscious and intellectual about it, like an exercise in updating Anglo-Saxon chronicles (which Tolkien taught at Oxford), and it is perhaps for this reason that it has not entered English culture at the level of myth in the way that Toad and Badger or Pooh and Eeyore have" (p. 206). This is demonstrably not the case—leaving aside the question of whether *The Lord of the Rings*, which Ms. Wullschläger admits (in so many words) is a work for adults, should be criticized for not following the same path as works created specifically for children.

Lewis's Narnia chronicles are rightly said here to have been influenced by the "fantasy tradition"; but they are "derivative . . . a highly self-conscious attempt to recreate an Arcadian idyll in didactic, Christian terms. Wonderland and Neverland are [Lewis'] models, but his own images and inventions are too unsubtle and intellectually controlled to work as symbol or myth" (p. 208). [WGH]