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Reviews

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Reviews

Abstract

The Book of Lost Tales. J.R.R. Tolkien. Reviewed by Jessica Yates.

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Splintered Light: Logos and Language in Tolkien's World. Verlyn Flieger. Reviewed by Nancy-Lou Patterson.

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REVIEWS

The Search Continues

J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Book of Lost Tales, Part I*, edited by Christopher Tolkien (London: Allen and Unwin, 1983); 297 pp.

Tolkien's posthumous works edited by his son Christopher have become less and less accessible to the general market. The *Silmarillion* sold in its hundreds of thousands, but disappointed many who simply sought a recreation of the world of *The Lord of the Rings*. *Unfinished Tales* presented the very best of the unpublished and alternative texts, and received much less critical attention (in England, anyway) than *The Silmarillion*. *Unfinished Tales* was much more of a source-book, with the son's editing much more apparent. We could see that to include the unfinished, longer versions of *Tuor and Turin* in the 1977 *Silmarillion* would have unbalanced the whole and directed the reader away from reading the book as a continuous story, and towards examining the author's development of his theme. But this latter method is now the way we are directed to read *The Book of Lost Tales*. Thus the low-key publishing, and the absence of reviews--in England, anyway.

Christopher Tolkien now aims his editions at Tolkien-fans and scholars. He answers several critics of *The Silmarillion* in his Foreword. He could not simultaneously have produced the book in two ways. A continuous story like *Lord of the Rings* answered the expectations of those who awaited the book impatiently. But he had not described how the text had been compiled in real life, nor how it purported to have been collected together in the Fourth Age (presumably by Bilbo). Should he have "pretended" that the work was Bilbo's, just as his father "pretended" that *LotR* was a translation from the Red Book? But if Christopher Tolkien had given us a scholarly *Silmarillion*, dating each section, providing alternative readings, and indicating his own interpolations, it would not have been the powerful epic narrative which has given Tolkien's readers so much pleasure (despite inconsistencies such as the death of Glorfindel without explanation of his resurrection in *LotR*).

Now Christopher Tolkien (henceforth C.T.), almost apologetic to various Tolkien scholars who have actually complained because they could not approach *The Silmarillion* critically, has begun to edit the earliest First Age texts. *The Book of Lost Tales* was begun in 1916, and left incomplete a few years later. Volume I takes the story up to the Awakening of Mankind. It is not a complete transcription of Tolkien's notebooks. C.T. has selected the best version of each tale (they were not written in chronological order), added extracts from other drafts and listed the name-changes in the various versions of each Tale.

The Tales are told by several Elves of Kortirion, a city in Tol Eressea, to a traveller called Eriol who comes to the "Cottage of Lost Play." This framework was dropped later. Not only was it an attempt to identify Tol Eressea with England, it was an attempt to link the Middle-earth saga with Tolkien's life. Kortirion was identified with Warwick, where Tolkien courted Edith Bratt; and the "Cottage" is the home of children who have come from Middle-earth--and stayed to live with the Elves. With this story goes two versions of a sentimental poem about Earth-children who visit Valinor in sleep, alluding in the phrase "a little pair," presumably, to Tolkien and his wife, portrayed as children meeting in dreams in Valinor, long before they met in real life.

This reminds me of Kipling's story 'The Brushwood Boy,' in his collection *The Day's Work*; but the concept of blessed children is common in Victorian and Edwardian fiction: *The Water-Babies*, *Lilith*, *Peter Pan* spring to mind, and more recently Elizabeth Goudge's *The Valley of Song*.

I will take each chapter from now on in order, summarizing the points which interest me. I take it we are interested both in elements of *The Silmarillion* that remain consistent throughout the development of the mythology, and in those that differ significantly. Between most of the Tales is a link passage or interlude, in which Eriol may comment on the previous Tale, and then goes to seek a narrator for the next one. There is a good deal of interesting material about the geography of Valinor and Middle-earth, which I will leave to experts in that branch of Tolkien studies to analyze.

The first chapter which corresponds to part of *The Silmarillion* is the second one, entitled *The Music of the Ainur*, and it is the chapter closest to the final text. C.T. notes that each draft of this Tale was rewritten from the previous one; unlike most other sections where Tolkien rewrote "from scratch," without close reference to an earlier version.

The Coming of the Valar. We may note more dissension among the Valar than in later versions. Osse (not a Maia, there are no Maiar) dislikes his inferiority to Ulmo; and there are two quarrelsome spirits, Makar and Measse, who maintain a kind of Valhalla in Valinor where their vassals wage unending battle. There is an elaborate description of how the Two Trees were created, which was later cut. Finally, Tolkien provides more detail about the fate of Men after death, which vanished from the later versions. There are parallels to Heaven, Hell and Purgatory, as a few are taken to Valinor, some go to Melko (later Melkor, of course) or Mandos, and most go to wander on the side plains by Valinor until the Great End. C.T. points out that in *The Silmarillion* Tolkien

established that Men leave the world altogether after they die.

The Chaining of Melko. This is done by a trick, and a wondrous chain is forged, perhaps recalling the chaining of Fenris Wolf in Scandinavian mythology? The event takes place well before the Elves awaken; it is not, as in The Silmarillion, a consequence.

The Coming of the Elves and the Making of Kor. Manwe sees them awaken; then Varda makes the stars; finally Orome reports the awakening. Melko is freed. The Elves send three leaders to Valinor. Some Valar object to their coming. Much is made of the problems of ferrying them over the Sea, and Osse objects to Ulmo using "his" island. When the third group, or Solosimpi (awful name, to be replaced by Teleri), are sailing across, Osse halts the island and causes their separation from the first two tribes of Elves. Eventually they reach Valinor via swan-ships. The Noldoli make jewels, not just by mining, but by magic, and Feanor makes the Silmarils. Feanor has no special lineage, and the whole matter of the half-brothers' rivalry is not yet invented.

The Theft of Melko and the Darkening of Valinor. As the Noldoli have given jewels to the other Valar, Melko is jealous. He desires all the jewels--not the Silmarils especially. He makes the Noldoli jealous of the Valar, but does not cite the future coming of Men. When everyone is at a festival, Melko steals the jewels and murders Feanor's father--this before the Trees are poisoned. Fleeing, he comes upon Ungwe Lianti, the spider, for the first time, and persuades her to poison the Trees, in exchange for all the jewels except the Silmarils. Melko escapes to the world, Ungwe returns to her home, not to Middle-earth, and there is no quarrel over the spoils. In The Silmarillion, the Trees are slain before the jewels are stolen, thus giving Feanor a chance to revive the Trees with the Silmarils--but he refuses.

The Flight of the Noldoli. Feanor incites the Noldoli to follow him back to the world to regain the

jewels. The Noldoli slay the Solosimpi for their ships. A servant of Mandos, not Mandos himself, warns them of Melko and Gondolin--this is not a curse or doom.

The Tale of the Sun and Moon. Sorontur King of Eagles reports to Manwe that Melko is building a new fortress, and the Noldoli have crossed the ice (there was no division into two forces, one sailing across the sea, the other crossing the ice, because there was no half-brother rivalry). The Valar attempt to revive the Trees, and there is a long, elaborate description of how the Sun and Moon were fashioned and how their courses were fixed, which was to be very much compressed later. There is even a reference to the Man in the Moon!

The Hiding of Valinor. The Valar make their home almost inaccessible. There are a few links with the world: a path of dreams open to children; the rainbow, by which the Valar may come to the world; and the Road of Death.

Gilfanon's Tale: the travail of the Noldoli and the Coming of Mankind. This is unfinished, and the last Tale Tolkien wrote for the Book. However, he had already anticipated himself and written the major tales for the latter part of the First Age, and these will appear in the second volume of The Book of Lost Tales.

Reading The Book of Lost Tales is on a par with the posthumous juvenilia and note-books of other great writers which have been published for the interest of scholars; such as the early work of Jane Austen, Coleridge's note-books, and the Gondal and Agria romances of the Brontes. Although intended for academics it may bring general readers to more scholarly perceptions. However, it was published with such a lack of publicity over here that I doubt many Tolkien fans outside the fantasy societies will have heard of it. I have only one published review, and this is my own, for British Book News, the magazine of the British Council, not strictly a commercial publication.

I believe that I will enjoy Volume II much more. Volume I lacks the human interest and romance which were the core of the whole saga. But there are some specialties one remembers with pleasure. There are luxurious set-pieces, such as the jewelry-making description, which Tolkien ruthlessly pruned later on. There is the poetry: some reprints from obscure magazines but others never before published, this includes three versions of 'Kortirion among the Trees,' a kind of Keatsian Ode (with suggestions of Oscar Wilde's poetry), which nearly got into The Adventures of Tom Bombadil. We learn that Tuna was originally Kor, and though C.T. doesn't admit it, I assume Tolkien altered it because Haggard used the name in She.

I look forward to reading articles in Mythlore exploring various aspects of The Book of Lost Tales. But as for the search for "something like Lord of the Rings"--it still continues!

Jessica Yates

Something from the Attic

J.R.R. Tolkien, The Book of Lost Tales Part I ("The History of Middle-earth"), Edited by Christopher Tolkien. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1984), 297 pp.



Like many famous literary authors J.R.R. Tolkien carried a vast storehouse of "attic," of rejected and unpublished items, of verse and stories, in his home records -- all handwritten in pen and pencil. His desire to capture the spirit of a "faerie" mythology for England led him to delve into his imagination for themes and to pour into this the ever-continuing studies of ancient and medieval folklore and philology. The result was the posthumous *Silmarillion* in 1977 -- the reshifting of tales and characters of the earliest Ages of Middle-earth, always being revised by Tolkien till the end of his days. As Executor of his father's estate Christopher Tolkien used his considerable literary abilities and educational background to select and join together a number of pieces belonging to his parent's more mature reflective phase (the 1937 manuscripts, we learn in this foreword.)

This collection represents the original plan (never truly finished) of *The Silmarillion*, and indeed, the first attempt of Tolkien to put down his ideas for a mythic cosmology in print. Created between late 1916 and 1920 it has many faults and a crudeness in style that can often irritate the unwary reader, even the hard-core fans of Middle-earth (that term is not used by Tolkien till the early 1930s, for there were at least four separate attempts to rewrite and rethink the true nature of the cosmology and its tales). The quasi-Biblical narration of the tales does give a sense of strangeness and antiquity that myth demands, but its use in the "convolution" of sentence structure and the large chunks of dialogue for characters mars the mood of tragedy and solemn mystery so well captured in the later published version. Surprisingly, though, unlike the latter there is a far greater sense of unity of plot structure and continuity of adventures -- despite the enormous number of characters and places to remember (an excellent appendix and index are included in this book to remedy this). For the would-be scholar there are some very fine commentary-essays and notes by Christopher Tolkien after each of the ten stories/chapters in PART I.

The vastness of the material has meant that a number of important tales will be put off until next year for PART II. This first volume covers "Tales of Valinor" where the center of plot-conflict lies in the tensions and struggles of the two orders of being in Arda -- the ruling angelic order of the Valar and the proud but foolish Eldar. Some fine maps drawn in Tolkien's hand at this time have been included, and the world seen as a Viking ship shows the acute enthusiasm he exhibits (p. 84).

Tolkien fans will be intrigued, and sometimes exasperated, by the frequent name changes Tolkien essays here. They range from the minor like "Melko" for Melkor and "Noldoli" for the Noldor elves, to radically different ideas of how the Eldar prepared their lives at Kor in Valinor and the use of things like "pixies," "brownies," "leprechauns," and "gnomes." In this regard, the use of an end-appendix of names and a short glossary of obsolete and rare words both clarifies and tempts us to add our own dreams as to how his proto-world of a future Middle-earth might elaborate in different ways. Tolkien's own joy in creating poetry is shown by the reproduction in the essays of vast fragments of epics of great heroes, elegies of disaster and tragedy and simple "fun" pieces like the delightful versions of "The Man in the Moon." The mood of the tales shifts



rapidly from wonder to tragedy -- and despite the oft' inappropriate wording, we too are "caught."

The tales are linked together by the journey quest of an unknown mariner soon named Eriol (later Aelfwine) who seeks to know the secrets of his world. Dates are never given. In the first chapter, "The Cottage of Lost Play" we get a flavor of William Morris, the late 19th century fantasist. There is charm and childish figures here at Tol Eressea, the center of Elvish culture in Eriol's time. The mariner has no developed character; he is an excuse for the Eldar couple, Lindo and Vaire, to narrate the legends of their people and the role of the Valar in their destiny and the world's.

Action-adventure in unusual settings combined with a sense of wonder suffuse the ten chapters. The Christian metaphysics of Natural Law that are found interwoven with the folklore/legend elements of the later published version are very muted here. These Valar are constantly called gods throughout the book and the pagan element is stressed by the turbulence of these earth-bound spirits (not just Melko as the spirit of evil), by their begetting of lesser spirits from their marriages to fellow Valar, and by the constant identification in great descriptive detail of Nature's secrets and functions with their character. It's true the chapter, "The Music of the Ainur," is closer to the later *Silmarillion* with its monotheistic assumptions about Ilúvatar and His Providence for the cosmos and its future. Yet the later history shows the multi-varied Valar causing a good deal of mischief with their petty jealousies and intrigues.

These very earthy angels are traced from Creation through their fumbling but magnificent efforts to shape the developing Earth and stars. In this primitive versions there is no Numenor, no great Flood, the Dwarves are an evil race, Sauron is missing while Beren (an Elf) and his link to Luthien is handled quite differently in PART II. Even the figures we know from *The Silmarillion* have all a variety of changes of character. We thus see the

expanded descriptions of the struggles and wars Melko unleashes with his rivals, the Valar. He acts more like the Norse Loki than the Hebraic Satan. We see, too, the lush descriptions of the Valar in their everyday life at Valinor and on the battlefield with demons and monsters like the balrogs (the tale of Glaurung and Turin Turambar will be in PART II). Tolkien is trying to keep a balance in their character between Nature spirits and agents of the proto-Christian Iluvatar -- they thus lack the majesty and awe of the final *Silmariillion*.

The chapters trace the Chaining of Melko and his deceit with Manwe and Mandos, the Coming of the Elves and their differences, the rise of Fearon and his fateful crimes. The description of the creation of the Sun and Moon is similar to the later versions, yet its differences enhance its charms. The section on the character of early man will be certainly the most controversial -- we have both a first couple, Ermon and Elmir and their temptation to evil and a poly-genetic view of the human species' Origin. The last chapter is the most fragmentary ("Gilfanon's Tale: The Travail of the Noldoli and the Coming of Mankind") with Christopher explaining very concisely the scattered notes and drafts his father left on the period of The War of the Silmarils.

The editor hopes to bring forth eventually all the unpublished drafts of his father on Middle-earth

showing its constant developments and changes. Given the care he has shown in PART I to portray his father's exact words and to avoid extended speculation by his own opinions, we shall over the next few years have a true "History of Middle-earth" to argue over and enjoy. With all its stylistic defects *The Book of Lost Tales* is good reading for Tolkien fans and newcomers alike. Hear the Gong of Tombo -- it calls for stories to be told!

Thomas M. Egan

All About Light

Verlyn Flieger, *Splintered Light: Logos and Language in Tolkien's World* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1983), 167 pp.

"You can see a stone, if it is a fit distance from you . . . But if one throws the stone at your eye, what then is the appearance?"

"I should feel pain and perhaps see splintered light," said Ransom. "But I don't know that I should call that an appearance of the stone."

C.S. Lewis, *Perelandra*

In a poem which has become a proof-text for interpreting his concept of Sub-creation, Tolkien writes of "Man, Sub-creator, the refracted Light / through whom is splintered from a single white / to many hues." (p. 44) Verlyn Flieger has found this metaphor to be central to Tolkien's *oeuvre*. She states her thesis thus:

The *Silmariillion* is all about light, light treated in just the manner which Barfield postulates: something which begins as "a definite spiritual reality," becomes divided into "pure human thinking" and "physical light," and ultimately splinters, both as percept and as word, into myriad fragments. . . ." (p. 67)

In her elegantly argued and curiously disquieting study of Tolkien, light and language are used as figures of one another: it is by light that sighted people know the world, and it is by language that the meaning of what we know is mediated. So far, so good. The metaphorical usages of these phenomena, however, are another matter. The idea of "splintered light" comes from the fact that a prism (a faceted structure of glass) can cause to appear, through refraction, the visible spectrum of that narrow band of radiation which we call light. The medium of glass inevitably suggests splintering and fragmentation, and a metaphorical structure is developed which equates the shattering (and hence destruction) of glass with the refraction (and hence visible display) of light, suggesting that the latter is a negative phenomenon, like the former. It may be that as an artist, I am unable to perceive the rainbow as a form of disintegration, but no matter. The metaphorical implications of this phenomenon has not gone unnoticed in mystical thought. According to the Kabbalah, "God contemplates himself in *binah*, the universal 'mother,' as the One in the multiple, and sees at the same time all the 'shattered fragments' of his mirror, all his innumerable aspects, joined together again in the undifferentiated unity of *hokhmah*, the transcendent 'father'." Or again, "The spirits are particularizations of the radiation of *metatron*: their 'colorless' suprafornal light is broken, on entering creation, into myriads of rays and sparks; all these

REASON AND IMAGINATION IN C. S. LEWIS

A Study of *Till We Have Faces*
by Peter J. Schakel

"Schakel gently but incisively probes the split between 'the rational man and the imaginative man' in C. S. Lewis through a sustained analysis of *Till We Have Faces* and Lewis' other works on similar themes, demonstrating the gradual healing of that division. *Reason and Imagination* is a remarkable achievement, literary criticism that is both wise and moving."

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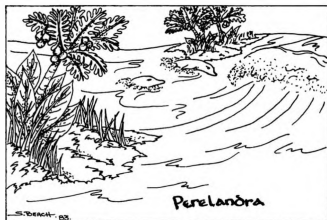
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spiritual lights take on the 'color' . . . of some Sefirotic 'shade'.² And so on! Tolkien is drawing upon a deep tradition, here, one known alike to Jewish esotericism and Christian gnosticism.

But Tolkien, following St. John's Gospel, goes on to the double metaphor of Light and Logos. Here another image of division comes into play, and here we are much in Flieger's debt as she guides us through the intricate thought of Owen Barfield, showing us how he has influenced Tolkien in regard to Language. It is at this point that one grows uneasy. For what is the grand phenomenon from which this metaphor is derived? Flieger says "The idea of a 'family tree' of languages, much like the family of Indo-European languages in our world, clearly suggests related languages differentiated by varying circumstances of geography and culture . . . just as ancient and modern European languages can lead back to the hypothetical, reconstructed Indo-European, our putative earliest language . . ." (p. 79) Here one's hackles begin, ever so delicately, to rise. Flieger states, "Barfield's theory postulates that language, in its beginnings, made no distinction between the literal and the metaphorical meaning of a word." (p. 39) And again, "Man in his beginnings had a vision of the cosmos as a whole, and of himself as part of it," whereas today "Our consciousness and the language with which we express it have changed and splintered." This division of consciousness is expressed as a diminution of light, in Tolkien's grand myth, where, Flieger shows us, the invented languages of his Middle-earth parallel the gradual loss of the separation from the light. As a metaphor of enormous power this is surely nonpareil. But it is still a metaphor. And as the concept of "splintered light" emerges from the physical traits of glass, so the concept of splintered language arises from the historical phenomena of linguistics.

But can we really project backwards from proto-Indo-European to proto-language? For I somehow suspect that for Tolkien this was more than a charming motif, like Old Solar in the Ransom Trilogy of C.S. Lewis (where of course it also has a Barfieldian source but is not the central metaphor). Let us examine this "Putative" language which by "geography and culture" flowered into the multiplicity of the Indo-European family of languages. Whatever form this may have taken, it only carries us back to the fourth millennium before Christ and to a people of copper or bronze age technology who were agriculturalists and herders. In the long terms of human existence this is not very far. When we speak of "language in its beginnings," we must look back considerably further, and that we cannot do. Certainly Upper Paleolithic people were not innocent of metaphor, to judge by their sophisticated arts with their references to shamanic power, hunting magic, fertility, and sexual symbolism. Even Neanderthal people made a metaphor for blood and life out of red ochre by smearing the bodies of their dead with its warming color. If Barfield (and Tolkien) are talking about anything in the life of actual humans, they are talking in a way as innocent of anthropology as they imagine "primal language" to be of metaphor.

In Tolkien's works, light and language are themselves metaphors. His vast mythology is itself a metaphor. Indeed, one might almost suggest that to express oneself in metaphor is to be human! Whether or not one is convinced by Tolkien's (or Barfield's) ideas on these matters, however, one is totally



convinced by Flieger's presentation of their presence in Tolkien's thought and art. She carries us over the deep seas of his oceanic vision almost dryshod, in the elegant little barque of her book.

Nancy-Lou Patterson

1 Leo Schaya, *The Universal Meaning of the Kabbalah* (Baltimore: Penguin, 1973), p. 43.

2 *Ibid.*, p. 83.

Layered and Subtle

Peter J. Schakel, *Reason and Imagination in C.S. Lewis -- A Study of Till We Have Faces* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans, 1984), 208 pp.

Readers should be warned that the title of this excellent book means exactly what it says. This is a study of *Till We Have Faces*, not only the best on this subject but the only one to offer book-length treatment to what Schakel regards as Lewis' masterpiece. The first half of his study examines the work in detail, following the admirable plan of beginning each section with an abbreviated paraphrase in small type, and offering a series of layered and subtle analyses of Lewis' most layered and subtle book.

The second half of the study arranges the story of Lewis' spiritual life and literary career into a series of neatly characterized decades. The gradual drawing together of the two originally warring facets of Lewis' personality and inclination--the "Reason and Imagination" of Schakel's title--is described in terms revealed by the chapter titles of this section: "The Struggling Imagination," "Imagination as Servant," "Reason as Master," "Reason and Imagination Reconciled," and "Reason and Imagination United." It is essential for the reader to remember that this analysis is directed toward treating *Till We Have Faces* "in context." This is not a study of the development of Lewis' spiritual life and literary oeuvre as they existed in toto. If it were, it would be, despite its abundant merits, defective. A study of Lewis which devotes a few paragraphs to the Interplanetary Trilogy on a few lines to the Narnian Chronicles is leaving out the heart and soul of his life's-work, it seems to me. Schakel attempts to defend himself against such an objection by reminding us of his study, *Reading With the Heart: The Way Into Narnia*. Well and good. But why does he find it



necessary to describe them here as "partially successful"? (p. 150). Surely it is not necessary to belittle Lewis' other masterpieces in order to extol Till We Have Faces.

In any event, this is a study of the works of Lewis which point toward or show the development of elements which are resolved and perfected in Till We Have Faces. Thus we are given useful and discerning readings of Spirits in Bondage, Dymore, The Pilgrim's Regress, The Great Divorce, Surprised by Joy, A Grief Observed, and Letters to Malcolm. In addition there is careful analysis of the crucial roleplayed in Lewis' conceptual development by his encounter with Anson over Miracles.

In Reason and Imagination in C.S. Lewis we have what may well be the definitive work on Till We Have Faces, and an acute analysis of a number of other related, highly selected works, which offer new, striking, even revolutionary interpretations of their meaning and their role in Lewis' life and thought. The argument is fully developed and based upon an awesome familiarity with the writing of Lewis. In this work Schakel truly establishes himself as a major commentator on Lewis, and his book will surely become a standard text, despite the elision I mention above. In its own terms, as a self-declared study of Till We Have Faces, it is a splendid achievement. And it certainly has the most beautiful cover design ever printed by this press. Nice going, Berney Knox!

Nancy-Lou Patterson

Tang of the Teacher

Stephen Schofield, ed., In Search of C.S. Lewis (South Plainfield, NJ: Bridge Publishing, Inc., 1983), 220 pp.

Since its inception, I have subscribed to a publication called the Canadian C.S. Lewis Journal; my most recent copy as I write is No. 46 (Spring, 1984). Everything that could be said about the typographical and illustrative eccentricities and inadvertencies of In Search of C.S. Lewis has been covered in that issue. I can't resist adding that 1) this is a perfect example of Schofield's method, for his Journal has unabashedly published every bouquet and brickbat

ever aimed at him, and 2) the frontispiece of In Search of C.S. Lewis, which shows the Peace Tower of the Canadian Parliament Buildings over a caption identifying it as "Magdalen Tower" strikes me as one of the most whimsical publishing errors imaginable. If you've seen one tower, apparently you've seen 'em all! Schofield is innocent, of course; the error is some exquisite oversight of his publisher's.

In sum, Schofield's Journal, which I enjoy enormously, is totally individual and more than a little quirky. So is the book he has edited. And this combination of qualities may be seen not only in the portions he contributed himself, but equally, perhaps even more, in the well-selected articles by many other writers, some eminent, who have felt moved to publish their memories of C.S. Lewis in Schofield's Journal. Each has, in a sense, depicted a different Lewis. It is possible that he really did turn these exceedingly variant faces to those who encountered him: cold to some, warm to others; severe to one, tender to another. In his letters one sees him showing endless patience to an ailing, elderly American woman, while sending to a gifted young disciple one of the sternest rebukes ever delivered to a bereaved husband. Lewis seems to have been unflinching kind to those he perceived as his inferiors. But one also suspects that every student, at least, got the Lewis he or she deserved. This may not have been deliberate. The bracing technique that so distressed Norman Bradshaw had delighted Lewis when Kirkpatrick used it on him! The endless patience Lewis used in trying to teach the alphabet to a retarded boy (described by one of his wartime evacuees) was not shown to students Lewis meant to challenge and stimulate into surpassing themselves.

Maybe, like his Lord, he chastened those he especially loved. Apparently people never got over the experience of meeting Lewis, however they fared in his presence. Among the many revealing memories collected here it is hard to choose the most enlightening: the writers range from very obscure to very well-known, but the most interesting contributions are not necessarily those of the most famous contributors. I think I will choose the essay by E.L. Edmonds, who is, like the inadvertent view of Ottawa's Peace Tower, one of the Canadian elements in the book. He is a Professor of Education at the University of Prince Edward Island, Charlottetown PEI (which is a complete Province on one small island), and what he says about Lewis' teaching is balanced, detailed, intelligent and convincing. In summarizing, he writes:

In all this talk today about the teacher being a facilitator, a counsellor, a resource person, etc., I think we are in great danger of forgetting one other important attribute, probably more important than all the rest put together, namely, the tang of the teacher . . . Important as the modern affective approach may be . . . I think we neglect at our peril the refining influence of sustained disciplining of the mind. This applies especially to the teacher. "No lamp can light another unless it burns its own flame:" a comment by Rabindranath Tagore, perfectly exemplified by Lewis throughout a lifetime. (p. 49)

Nancy-Lou Patterson

A Pagan Lewis

C.S. Lewis, *Spirits in Bondage, a Cycle of Lyrics*, with a preface by Walter Hooper, (New York: Harcourt, Brace, Javonovich, 1984), 80 pp.

For those of us who have known C.S. Lewis only as a Christian writer this book is something of a shocker. Here is a pagan Lewis; a questioning, protesting, angry young man. Its only previous printing was in 1919. The book

...attracted almost no attention, and Lewis brought no reputation as a poet when he came up to Oxford. Indeed, tastes were already changing, and he discovered that many of his fellow undergraduates who were interested in poetry admired T.S. Eliot or other exponents of modern verse. 'I'm afraid I shall never be an orthodox modern,' Lewis wrote to Arthur Greeves in October 1918. 'I like lines that will scan and do not care for descriptions of seasickness.'¹

The poems are certainly worth our attention, whatever the 'moderns' of the 1920's may have thought. They show a well-educated adolescent, before and during the Great War, seriously examining the questions of existence and coming up with some bitterly negative answers. They exhibit deep feeling within a determined discipline of structure, something sadly lacking in the random strings of words found in our current literary magazines and poetry volumes.

Lewis is not predictable in his youthful rebellion. If "In Praise of Solid People" were the title of a poem by a twenty-two year old of our time we could be sure that the title would automatically be pronounced with a sneer. Yet this poem is a gentle tribute to the small pleasures of life that seems almost to anticipate Tolkien's *Hobbits*.

Many of the poems give hints of ideas that Lewis would develop more fully later in his life. "Our Daily Bread" will be instantly familiar to anyone who has read *The Great Divorce*. Elsewhere there are the faeries, nymphs, and satyrs that would later populate Narnia. "Satan Speaks" could well be Satan's point-of-view of the events in *Out of the Silent Planet*.

The last poem of the cycle, "Death in Battle," is the melancholy brooding of a sensitive young man caught up in the noise, the horror, the crowding of war. War is not described, but its opposites are: flowery valleys, dewy uplands, dim woods and streams, and being alone. It is this dream, this idealized existence, which accentuates the undescribed loathing for life in the trenches.

Like all educated people of his time Lewis was intimately familiar with Mediterranean and Norse mythology, and these poems are full of allusions to them. The editor, Walter Hooper, has included some brief notes to help us with these. A good mythology dictionary is handy while reading this small volume.

Hooper has also included a valuable preface which gives a lot of good background material.

Spirits in Bondage is perhaps most important as an aid in understanding Lewis' spiritual development. The poems are more than that, though, and are worth

reading and enjoying for their own sake.

Lawrence Mack Hall

¹The *Inklings*, Humphrey Carpenter, Ballantine, 1981, p. 12

Hague in Narnia

C.S. Lewis, *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*, illustrated by Michael Hague (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1981), 183 pp.

I wouldn't presume to review the text of this book, which is one of the great masterworks of modern fantasy. It came into my life in the late 1950s when for seven wonderful months I used part of our graduate student's salary to buy one new *Chronicles of Narnia* each month. The joy of the moment when Lucy first crunches into the snowy landscape of Lantern Waste will remain with me all my life, and, if the essential meaning of this book is true, beyond.

I am one who thinks that Pauline Baynes—who illustrated the original edition of this book—is a world class illustrator, a superbly original artist whose breathtaking miniature works are unmistakable and unique. It is pleasant to be able to say that I enjoy Michael Hague's paintings very much too. He has used the classic illustrators of the late 19th and early 20th centuries as his sources, modelling his forests on Arthur Rackham and his figures on the Robinsons. His *White Witch* is frankly drawn from Baynes' distinctive vision. I wonder, sometimes, how she would look if she were made to be as beautiful as Lewis says she is, a true Snow Queen with "a beautiful face . . . but proud and cold and stern." His Aslan is magnificent, sublimely leonine, though the resurrection scene contains a hint of W.W. Denslow's Cowardly Lion from the first edition of *The Wizard of Oz*: something about his smiling muzzle and the up-lifted tuft of his orange mane. The Beavers are excellent, scaled perfectly, and their dwelling given a delightfully firelit interior full of the enchanting paraphernalia of the English cottage kitchen. Mr. Tumnus is larger and more feral than Baynes' more delicate, sweet-faced creation. And I wonder if the lantern which grows in the snowy forest would really have been lighted with a fat candle: the gaslit lamps of Lewis' boyhood burned with a pure still glow, and



this lamp, which grew from the iron lamp-bar flung by Jadis into the preternaturally fecund earth of Narnia's Creation, should gleam as if with some vegetable fire. Hague's Father Christmas is exactly right, perhaps because Baynes never depicted him. And the courtyard of Cair Paravel, with its stone figures, is splendidly mysterious.

There are twelve single pages and one double page of illustrations in the book, along with another on the dust jacket, all slightly cropped versions of the Calendar which Hague created for the year 1982. The typographic and binding design--by Ellen Weiss and Ben Birnbaum--are superb; the book is a joy to examine and to read. I'm told that no other of the Chronicles has been published to this point, though there are two more calendars in print as I write (and more to come, I hope). Perhaps if we all believe, like the audience of *Peter Pan* on behalf of Tinkerbell, they will appear in due course; it would be delightful to see the entire series printed in this very beautiful and suitable manner.

Nancy-Lou Patterson

Seven times Five

SEVEN: An Anglo-American Literary review, Volume 5 (Wheaton, Illinois: Wheaton College, 1984), 122 pp.

In what has become a series of continuing excellence, this volume of SEVEN contains seven essays, along with a memorial, a letter, a "Postscript," and reviews of seven books. As with Volume 4, there are no new or reprinted works by any of the seven authors to whom this publication is dedicated, but the essays deal with five of them: George MacDonald, Charles Williams, J.R.R. Tolkien, Dorothy L. Sayers, and C.S. Lewis.

The two essays on MacDonald--"The Psychology of the Self in MacDonald's *Phantastes*" by Max Keith Sutton, and "Worlds Apart: The Importance of Double Vision for MacDonald Criticism," by Kathy Triggs--mark a significant advance in the criticism for this author. Both begin from a reactive stance: Sutton uses Robert L. Wolff's Freudian approach as a springboard, proceeds to a newer psychological commentator--Heinz Kohut--and concludes where he ought, with C.S. Jung. Each of these authorities gives a different definition of the Self, and Sutton succeeds in illuminating

Phantastes by using them. In particular he explores MacDonald's interpolated tale of Cosmo and his mirror to excellent effect. Triggs, for her part, addresses the psychological reading which David Holbrook gave in SEVEN, Volume 4; she draws her own conclusions about the effect of MacDonald's early weaning and mother's death on his art, and in her turn illuminates another tale, "The Gifts of the Christ Child."

James G. Dixon's essay on "Charles Williams and Thomas Cranmer at Canterbury" is superb. It contains that really rare thing, essentially new information. The whole production process that brought Williams' major work into performance is described in compelling detail. How I wish I could have been there to see it! And John Cox, a writer who elsewhere has contributed a brilliant essay on C.S. Lewis' *The Silver Chair*, turns his attention here to "Tolkien's Platonic Fantasy." In a deft reading he finds the source of the Ring in *The Republic*, and of the Ainulindale and the *Valaquenta* in the *Timaeus*, which accounts for the very peculiar sense of a delegated Creation, a creation through divine surrogates, which (to me, anyway) gives a faintly unorthodox ring to *The Silmarillion*. I was taught, you see, that when St. John wrote of Jesus that all things were made by him and without him was not anything made that was made, he meant it! Tolkien, of course, maintained that *The Silmarillion* was really about art. In any event, Cox has produced another really rare thing, an essentially new idea.

In company with these blockbusters of the intellect, P.L. Scowcroft's catalogue of motifs in "The Detective Fiction of Dorothy L. Sayers: A Source for the Social Historian" may seem somewhat slight, but it is an informative and useful selection from the series, *Sidelights on Sayers*, which has been published for the edification and delight of members of the British Dorothy L. Sayers Society, and will introduce North American readers to a charming and industrious writer whose interest in minutiae does honor to Sayer's own meticulous research.

The essays on Lewis are of two quite different types. The first, A. D. Nuttall's "Jack the Giant Killer," lays on with the flat of his sword to the point where we wonder what will become of Lewis' greatest essay, *The Abolition of Man*, and then--hey-presto!--withdraws the veil to reveal the Master unscathed. Quite a trick, and a very robust entertainment indeed. In contrast, Martin Moynihan describes the relations of "C.S. Lewis and T.D. Weldon" in a sweetly eirenic tone, arguing from his knowledge of the latter that Weldon was a Freemason and that one "should not suppose it usual to be a Member of the Craft and not believe in the Architect of the Universe." This article, in a very gentle rebuttal to several commentators on Lewis, notes that "Lewis records in one of his letters having spent a sociable evening drinking with Weldon--which suggests that not everything was enmity." It is pleasant to imagine Aslan welcoming the surprised philosopher for having unwittingly served him--and to imagine Lewis and his old antagonist sharing an evening communion in that place where enmity cannot come.

Nancy-Lou Patterson

Fragmetary Glimpses

J.R.R. Tolkien, Finn and Hengest: *The Fragment and the Episode*, edited by Alan Bliss, Houghton Mifflin Co., May 1983, \$15.95, ISBN: 0-395-33193-5.



Professor Tolkien's professional studies as a medievalist are little known to his fandom of the Ring Trilogy and Middle-earth works but they played a strong influence in the characterization of the mythic culture he created. regrettably, whether it was his translation/editing of the Ancrene Wisse or his views of 14th century Middle English literature, his writing tends to be turgid, over-stuffy, and hard to grasp in its importance to later writings. This will prove no exception.

Scholars acknowledge his contribution to the field of Anglo-Saxon studies (language and literature) and here we have his views on the fifth century A.D. northern heroes, Finn and Hengest, about whom little is reliably known. For more than a century researchers in the field have argued interminably over the story of these two warrior heroes as found in the Old English epics, Beowulf and The Flight at Finnesburg. (8th century A.D.) The problem is that the story is told in an highly obscure and allusive manner, little direct information being given.

In his last years Tolkien desired that his work on Finn and Hengest be prepared for publication by Alan Bliss, a good scholar, who studied under him from 1946-48 at Oxford. Professor Bliss does quite a thorough and competent job here, bringing together in Tolkien's own words three separate sets of lecture notes, dating from c. 1930 - c. 1960, and even after. Really designed for scholars and teachers of Old English and the history of Nordic Europe (northern Germany by the North Sea, the Scandinavian areas and Anglo-Saxon England), ordinary students and fans will only marginally benefit.

Tolkien was always fascinated by the "Northern thing" -- Germanic culture and its heritage of honor and tragedy. Tolkien looks at this dawn of the medieval era in the 400s and sees not the decaying Roman Empire, but the division of Celt and Teuton with rival loyalties and increasing bitterness of blood-feud and murder -- followed by the never-ending curse of vengeance. Honor is a peculiar thing with Tolkien. He is attracted by the figure of Hengest, the "hero" like his later Turin Turambar, whose betrayal in a British court led him in bloody revenge to inspire the first Anglo-Saxon invasion of Celtic Christian Britain in c. 450 A.D. The bits of the lost chronicle of events here take place just before (and explain) that tragic holocaust (the Saxons destroyed nearly all of the civilization the Roman-Celts tried to build up).

This is a specialized study, not for everyone. But it has some interest for LOTR/Silmarillion lovers in that it points out parallels to the curse of possessiveness and false pride that echoes all through Middle-earth's tragic struggles.

Thomas M. Egan

THE TOLKIEN TRADITION continued from page 27 the seventies. Throughout LotR, the destruction of nature indicates the presence of evil. Saruman's orcs fell Fangorn's trees and later he and his gang cut down the Party Tree and pollute the river in the Shire. Mordor is a waste of slag heaps and noxious fumes. One of the unstated assumptions is that if Sauron wins this blight will cover Middle-earth.

In Donaldson, part of The Land has been destroyed by a past cataclysm caused by misuse of power in fighting the eternal enemy. As a result, the people

have evolved an ethic in which nothing, not even racial survival, will justify jeopardizing the environment in such a way again. In The Land, as in Middle-earth, the ends do not justify the means.

The fact that the protagonist is a most unwilling hero who does not even believe in the reality of this world severely complicates the question of choice and responsibility. It is not until the final conflict (in which Donaldson dares to bring the antagonist on stage, and carries it off) that Covenant is able to reconcile his inner conflicts and save the Land as well as his own soul.

THE TRADITION AND THE FUTURE

What then is the Tolkien Tradition? What works qualify for inclusion? In what ways should such a tradition evolve?

At present, the marketing personnel at publishing houses use "Tolkien" as a synonym for adult fantasy, since they (perhaps correctly) assume that Tolkien is the only fantasy writer of whom everyone has heard. As long as they continue to do so, buyers will continue to buy, and sometimes to be surprised by what they get.

However I hope, that as The Lord of the Rings becomes absorbed into the literary canon, a genuine Tolkien Tradition will evolve, consisting of books which, like Donaldson's, do not imitate Tolkien but focus on elements implicit in his work in order to reinterpret them for themselves and their times.

[Editors Note: This paper was given at the 1979 Mythopoeic Conference]

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