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An Inklings' Bibliography (32)

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An Inklings' Bibliography (32)

Abstract

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

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An Inklings' Bibliography

[32] Compiled by Joe R. Christopher

Beagle, Peter S. *The Folk of the Air*. New York: A Del Rey Book (Ballantine Books), 1986. [vi] + 279 pp. [Tolkien, 44, 139.]

A fantasy novel, involving Joe Farrell (of Beagle's "Lila the Werewolf") and the League for Archaic Pleasures (i.e., the Society for Creative Anachronism). An allusion to Tolkien appears at one point when Farrell is approaching a woman he recognizes, when she is on her motorcycle down the street from him: "On his way to her, he knocked a board covered with copper brooches out of the hands of a hobbitish young couple, caromed unaware off a pushcart selling hot soft pretzels, and charged straight through an incipient religious conversion" (44). Later, a more significant borrowing occurs when the households of the League are being described: "Hamid's grin sharpened. 'You wait till you play [for Farrell is a lutist] some place like Dol Amroth or Storisdene.' Farrell recognized the names from Tolkien and Cabell." A woman explains: "'Households,' she said. 'There are four or five real ones -- four, I guess, Rivendell keeps breaking up and starting over. They're like communes...'" (139). The household names are legitimate enough as an indication of the partial influence of Tolkien on the S.C.A.

Bellairs, John. *The Face in the Frost*. (1969). New York: Ace Books, 1978.

Bellairs commented in his guest-of-honor speech at the eighteenth Mythopoeic Conference, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, on 25 July 1987, that the inspiration for *The Face in the Frost* came from *The Lord of the Rings*; it must have been simply the inspiration to write an adult fantasy, for the works, besides having wizards, have little in common. More significantly, in reply to a question from this bibliographer immediately after the speech, he said that the episode in the eighth chapter in which Prospero ("not the one you're thinking of") raises a storm by means of a Tarot deck, in order to destroy a bridge (117,119, with an illustration by Marilyn Fitschen on 118), was inspired by the storm raised by Henry Lee by means of a Tarot deck in the eighth chapter of *The Greater Trumps*. An imitation of this sort is, of course, an indication of the influence of Williams.

Cassel, M. Untitled limerick. *The Penguin Book of Limericks*. Ed. E. O. Parrott. Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England: Penguin Books, 1983. (The copyright indicates that "this edition" appeared in 1985, but there is no indication of what the variations consist of; perhaps the notice of the American copyrights of Ogden Nash's limericks and limicks was added then [p. 299].)

In the section titled "The Literary Scene," appears this limerick by M. Cassel (who has no other limericks in the book):

Said Old Nick: 'Mister Lewis and me
Is the best pals that ever was, see?
We both has our loyalties,
We both share the royalties --
I've a very warm corner for he!'

The placement of this verse in "The Literary Scene" and the reference to sharing royalties indicates that the limerick refers to Lewis's *The Screwtape Letters*. The copyright notices at the end of the volume do not refer to Cassel's contribution, so there is no easy way to find out where it first appeared. In his "Introduction," Parrott mentions limerick competitions in various publications, although he only dates them as having appeared (some of them at least) in the 1930s; he mentions six periodicals, including the *Church Times*, and various topics, including "the Devil"; perhaps one of these competitions was the source of Cassel's work (p. 15).

Paretzky, Sara. *Bitter Medicine*. New York: William Morrow, 1987. 222 pp. [Lewis, 59; Sayers, 40.]

Bitter Medicine is the fourth of Paretzky's novels about a female private eye, V. I. "Vic" Warshawski. At one point in this novel, a brief allusion to Lewis's Narnia appears: "A torrent of images cascaded through my head -- Sergio as a worm, me as the evil witch in *The Silver Chair* turning into a worm, my terror in that little back room [where Sergio used his knife], and a nagging fear that my face would be permanently scarred" (59). This is one allusion out of many to books in the novel, but most of them are to mysteries.

Of associational interest in this bibliography: an allusion to Dorothy L. Sayers' fiction appears as Warshawski looks at photographs of an apartment where a man was killed: Detective Rawlings "tossed over another sheaf, pictures of the smashed-in door, of rice flung over the floor and stove. No doubt Gervaud Fen or Peter Wimsey would immediately have grasped the vital clue revealing the identity of the murderer. But to me it looked like wreckage" (40).

Thompson, Raymond H. *The Return from Avalon: A Study of the Arthurian Legend in Modern Fiction*. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press (Contributions to the Study of Science Fiction and Fantasy, No. 14), 1985. x + 206 pp. \$29.95. (Lewis,

Continued on page 44

fantasy and science fiction have become. On a planet divided into northern and southern halves by a "River" (actually a world-encircling ocean), human colonists co-exist with the avian Thraish, who have exhausted their native food supply and now subsist on human flesh, which they cannot, however, eat unless it has been treated with a local fungus. A complex political relationship has arisen between the Thraish and the human social elite, who provide them with food while, of course, keeping the human masses ignorant of the arrangement. This involves the setting-up of a rigid religious hierarchy (actually a Thraish religion imposed on humans), in which only the upper echelons are aware of the true state of things (in exchange, the human elite gets a rejuvenation drug from the Thraish). The book's pivotal concern is the moral and existential dilemma facing the Thraish: they can switch to a diet of fish (as the despised Treeci have done) and live peacefully and openly with humans; but then they would lose their ability to fly, and this, out of pride and perhaps a congenital incapacity to adapt, they are unwilling to risk. Change does come, however, inexorably; and we are shown how it is observed, stalled or abetted by a wide range of characters, from the Peakean grotesques in the Chancery (the human governing body) to the humane idealist Tharius Don and a sensitive, intelligent "Everyman", the boatman Thrasne. Two female characters serve to focus the plot: the charismatic visionary Pamra Don, a former "Awakener" (i.e., unwitting food-preparer for the Thraish) driven by disillusion and a series of psychic upheavals to foment a Crusade which culminates in her horrible martyrdom; and Medcor Babji, a princess of the Noor (black-skinned humans whose flesh is completely inedible by the Thraish and who are thus considered expendable, at the bottom of the social ladder), a self-contained, balanced, conscientious girl who will eventually lead her people to safety and a new home on the Southshore. The two women are often placed in the same situations, to contrast their different responses. Observing the scene yet somehow detached from it are the Jarb Mendicants, ex-madmen who have acquired complete objectivity by smoking Jarb root -- a device which, however, works only on madmen! Although the psychological mechanisms that govern the functioning of reversion of "truth" is offered in response. One is left with a certain bleak agnosticism, a recognition of the all-importance and bitterness of the mystery of death, with no solution other than the existential decision to love and trust. In the "hardness" of her vision and of the questions she asks about the human condition, Tepper (in this book, at least) reminds one of Le Guin; but she has outgrown such obvious influences, and is very much her own writer.

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95-98, 111, 113, 172, 176; Tolkien, 87, 113; Williams, 94-98, 111.)

Thompson writes a survey of the Arthurian fiction published between 1882 and 1983 (3), having located 162 novels and thirty-four short stories which have either brief or extensive use of Arthurian materials (169). His survey, while incomplete

--for example, missing John MacCormac's "The Enchanted Week End," *Unknown*, 2:2 (October 1939), 115+ --is the best available. He has classified the works in these patterns:

- I. Realistic Fiction (Ch. 3)
 - A. Mystery Thrillers
 - B. Modern Transpositions
- II. Historical Fiction (Ch. 4)
 - A. The Dark Ages
 - B. The High Middle Ages
- III. Science Fiction and Science Fantasy (Ch. 5)
- IV. Fantasy (Ch. 6)
 - A. Low Fantasy
 - B. Mythopoetic Fantasy
 - C. Heroic Fantasy
 - D. Ironical Fantasy

As might be expected, the discussions of Lewis' *That Hideous Strength* and Williams' *War in Heaven* fall in the section on Mythopoetic Fantasy (93-114). Thompson's discussion of Williams' novel includes this comparison:

The search for the relic [the Holy Grail] does... recall traditional elements of Arthurian Grail quests: the torment and despair of the Arch-deacon on the very eve of triumph is the same as that experienced by Perceval in the Perious Chapel before his vision. (95).

Thompson notes the obvious Arthurian borrowings in *That Hideous Strength*: Logres, the Pendragon, the Fisher-King with his wound, Merlin. Thompson comments:

Among his [Ransom's] enemies is "Fairy" Hardcastle, a cruel woman whose name and personality recall Morgan le Fay. (95)

Thompson also indicates the borrowings from Lewis and Williams in Anne Saunders Laubenthal's *Excalibur*: the hereditary Pendragonship from Lewis, the bearing of another's burden from Williams (96). However, the author is not always accurate in his comments -- for example, in saying that Ransom, as the Fisher King, "expiates his former sins through suffering from his wound" (98). The references to Tolkien are a few citations from "On Fairy-Stories." (Notes on pp. 8 and 163 expend these Tolkien references slightly).



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